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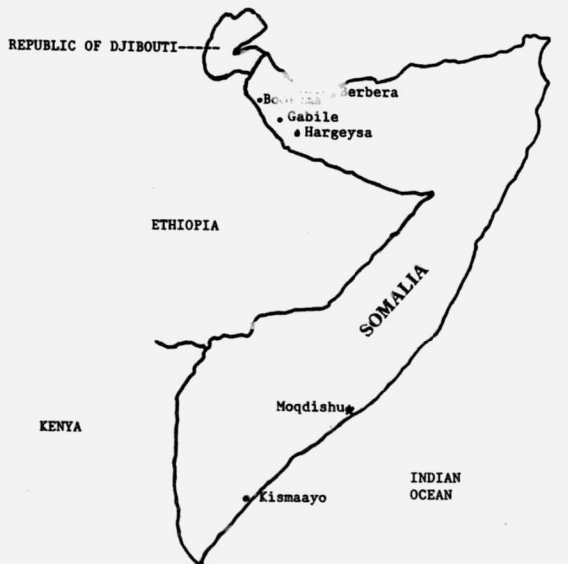
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## Map of Somalia



### KEY

- ★ National capital
- Towns and cities referred to in this issue

0 50 100 150 miles



SOURCE: Adapted from Harold D. Nelson, ed., *Somalia: A Country Study*, American University Foreign Area Studies Handbook Series, 3rd ed. (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1982), p. 165.

## Guest Editor's Preface

Ahmed I. Samatar

This special issue on Somalia is "occasioned" — to borrow from Thomas Hobbes — "by the disorders of the present time" in the Horn of Africa. The chaos in the region covers a wide canvas: ecological destruction; acute economic stasis; heavy militarism of polity; social fragmentation; seething conflict over the state; and superpower involvement and intervention.

The materials presented in these pages are modest and beginning steps to bring into sharp relief, through sober analysis, the nature of the contemporary Somali predicament. It is our hope that this attempt will help channel the currently moribund discussion which, when active, can be somewhat free-wheeling and unfocused among Somalis, into a more informed, concrete, reasoned, and disciplined direction. It is only through such a laborious and painful engagement, the effect of, to use Nietzsche's memorable phrase, "the iron hand of necessity shaking the dice-box of chance" will be, at least, less cruel and malevolent.

We start the issue with a contribution by Professor George W. Shepherd, Jr., in which he puts to good use knowledge — honed over a period of more than thirty years — about Africa's international relations. Specifically, Dr. Shepherd's article explores the reasons behind superpower intervention in the "Northwestern extension of the Indian Ocean" — particularly the Horn. His observations focus upon the making of "tributary states" in a "new phase of imperialist rivalry," and the ramifications for the political economy and security of the area. My own article, by deploying Gramscian theoretical concepts of "dictatorship" and "hegemony," lays bare — in a macro form — the marked dissonance between the Somali regime's pronouncements and the empirical record of more than a dozen years of military rule. Extracted from a larger body of research presently under preparation for publication by Zed Press, the article also brings out some of the lessons from the Somali

3rd Quarter, 1985

experience, and suggestions towards the creation of a different order. The third essay, by Professor Abdi Samatar, is written to specify part of the micro-matrix from which the current despotism is emerging. Based on first-hand observations made during recent intensive field-work (1983-84), this piece provides a vivid magnification of the travails of peasant life in a farming district in Northwestern Somalia, where the naked force of an almost unhinged state seems to play havoc with an already precarious rural condition. Finally, we present an interesting discussion by Dr. Juliet I. Okonkwo on the writings of Somalia's prime man of letters, and social critic, Nuruddin Farah. As far as we know, this is the first time that Farah's highly acclaimed works — especially the first two books in his latest trilogy — have been put to systematic review and lengthy evaluation. We think this is much deserved attention, and an affirmation that exile from home has not silenced his artistic imagination and creative pen. At the end of the contributions, we offer a short bibliography on recent writings on Somalia.

To conclude, this is probably the only time, thus far, that any major journal of African studies has put out a special issue on Somalia. We hope that the analysis and reflections presented in these ensuing pages will be a positive addition to the debate about the "African condition," and the much needed search for an alternative political economy.

Ahmed I. Samatar  
Guest Editor

## ***Dominance and Conflict on the Horn:***

### ***Notes on U.S.-Soviet Rivalry***

— George W. Shepherd, Jr.

The failures of African state policy that have led to war and famine and many other tragedies for the peoples of the Horn of Africa are in part directly attributable to superpower rivalry as well as inept, aggressive and foolish decisions on the part of their leaders. There is a very important inter-relationship between the tributary governments of the region and the dominant powers. Responsibility for famine in Ethiopia and civil war in the Sudan cannot be simply explained as a continuation of "neo-colonialism," but the tendency in super-power circles to dismiss responsibility for the millions who have perished minimizes the importance of the history of thirty years of intervention and rivalry in this northwestern extension of the Indian Ocean. There are several lessons that might be learned by Third World states, in terms of the utilization of their rivalries by superpowers for their own interests. In the words of the 19th Century resistance leader Sayid Maxamad Cabdille Xasan:

"Behold how the infidel lays traps for you (Somalis) as you become less wary. The coins he dispenses so freely now will prove your undoing. . . ."

The Horn of Africa should be seen as an extension of the major security and economic interests of the United States and the Soviet Union into the Middle East and the Northwestern Indian Ocean. This region became a new security zone for both powers in the mid-1970s, but the roots of this policy go back earlier, into the post-war settlement which brought both superpowers into the region.

\*Abdi Shalkh-Abdi, "Sayid Mohammed Abdille Hassan and the Current Conflict in the Horn," *Horn of Africa* 1, 2 (April-June 1978), p. 61.

George W. Shepherd, Jr. is Professor of International Relations at the Graduate School of International Studies, University of Denver, and an editor of *Africa Today*.

The major conditioning factor has been the creation by the superpowers of new security zones. Since 1950, Northeast Africa has become a major security area for the U.S. and the Soviet Union. This region has been the scene of a growing arms race, and increasing warfare. Revolution, since the early '60s, with the Eritrean secession and the renewed revolt in the Southern Sudan, has spread. Conflicts between the states on the periphery of the region — Libya, Sudan, Chad, Uganda, and Tanzania — have added to the turmoil. The usual explanations of tribal and elite rivalry are only a small part of an adequate analysis. External intervention and the dependency of these states has in general been poorly recognized.

### U.S.-Soviet Rivalry on the Horn

Superpower rivalry in the Middle East, the Gulf, and the Arabian Sea, directly through the intrusion of forces, but primarily indirectly through their tributaries, has been caught up in the ancient conflicts of the Horn of Africa. Arab and Islamic politics of the Middle East between conservatives and radicals, as well as the Arab-Israeli conflict, have spread to the new states of Northeast Africa. From Egypt to the Sudan and Somalia, majority Arab and Islamic populations are super-charged with these issues and the issue of Iran-Iraq, and the politics of oil prices. Saudi Arabia and Libya have emerged as two major regional contenders for leadership. Qadhafi has established a radical tripartite relationship between Libya, Ethiopia, and South Yemen, while the Saudis have coordinated their politics with the Sudan, Somalia, and Kenya.<sup>1</sup> Only Tanzania has disengaged herself from this network of rivalry.

Behind these maneuvers, the dominant powers have supplied arms, money and moral support in pursuit of their major strategic and economic objectives. No other region of the world presents a greater confusion and conflict of regional and global interests. Thus, a pattern of tributary development has clearly emerged in this new phase of imperialist rivalry.

Geopolitically, the countries of Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti, Sudan, and the two Yemens guard the southern access to the Suez Canal through the Red Sea. Their resources are considerable; but very undeveloped. They have virtually no oil (except the Sudan), and they number among the poorest countries in the world, yet their seaports have provided bases and communications facilities of major importance to the two superpowers. While the full strategic significance of the region was not apparent until the '70s, the U.S. had established, in 1953, a communication base at Kagnew in the Eritrean Highlands and the U.S.S.R. began aiding Somalia's armed forces in the

mid-1960s. Anglo-Egyptian withdrawal from the Sudan took place in 1956 and Chad became independent in 1960. Superpower rivalry penetrated into the Sudan and Chad in the '70s; it became a part of the total struggle for control of the trade routes, strategic positions, and resources of Northeast Africa. However, the major issue remained the African-Arab rivalry which has flared periodically into civil war and has involved the superpowers indirectly through third parties in dangerous unsettled conflicts. Kenya and Tanzania are important because they both have strategic facilities and provide different types of leadership. Kenya has become a center for multinational corporate development and Tanzania is the titular leader of the self-reliance movement against dominant powers.

The U.S.S.R. has established tributary relations with Somalia, the UAR, Sudan, Libya, and Ethiopia through whom it has intruded into the regional conflicts of Eritrea, the Ogaden, the southern Sudan, and Chad, as well as gaining important surveillance over U.S. naval operations in the Arabian Sea. In competition, the United States has established close tributary links with Kenya, Somalia, and the Sudanese-Egyptian linkage. From these bases, it has tried to project its power into the Indian Ocean, to offset Libyan and Ethiopian influence on the African-Arab conflicts and prevent Soviet predominance on the Horn and the Arabian Peninsula. Through the wealth of Saudi Arabia, the population of Egypt and the strategic positions of Somalia and Kenya, the U.S. has attempted to contain both radical Arab influences and Soviet penetration into the Nile Valley basin and limit their influence on black Africa to the south. The vital oil route partially flows through the Suez but the primary U.S. preoccupation is the strategic bases needed to protect its tributaries in the Middle East, especially Saudi Arabia and Israel, that dominate the Gulf and control the politics of the Arabian Peninsula.

### U.S. Policy

Designs for U.S. dominance in the region were predicated upon security links and limited economic interests established as a result of British and Italian withdrawal from the Horn following World War II. After the defeat of Italy on the Horn, Great Britain and France collaborated with the U.S. in the creation of Somalia, Libya, and Djibouti, and returning Eritrea to Ethiopia. The Sudan gained independence in 1956, with the southern Sudan as a reluctant inclusion.

Unification of British and Italian Somaliland formed the Republic of Somalia in 1960. Ethiopia protested against a separate Somalia and the British government, which favored a unified Somalia, rejected her claims

1. Colin Legum, ed. *Africa Contemporary Record 1981/82*. (New York: Africana Publishing Co., 1982), p. B150.



of prior control. They thereby opened the door to further Somali demands on the Ethiopian Ogaden, the Kenya NFD, and French Somali territory.<sup>2</sup> France did not actually declare independence for her territory of French Somaliland until 1979 when Djibouti finally gained independence in an agreement which left France an important military base and naval port facilities.<sup>3</sup>

The U.S. initial interest in Ethiopia as a client and tributary state was as a buffer against radical Arab nationalism which had begun in the Middle East wars over Israel and culminated in Nasser's revolution in Egypt and the struggle over the Suez Canal. Sudanese nationalism established a Republic in 1956 which became increasingly pro-Egyptian, particularly after the Gen. Abboud coup in 1958. The British position in Aden and Yemen across the Straits of Babel Mandel, was under attack by pro-Nasser insurgents, assisted by the Soviet Union. Therefore, the U.S. saw the Ethiopian Highlands as a strategic center to counter radical Arab and African nationalism, as well as a controlling communication center for the new nuclear submarine activity in the Indian Ocean. As Thomas Farer concluded, concerning this U.S.-Ethiopian alliance, "The Ethiopian armed forces fly U.S. planes, fire U.S. rifles loaded with U.S. ammunition, and roll on U.S. tanks and trucks. Most of the officer corps has gone through U.S. training programs. Dependence on the United States for spare parts is virtually total."<sup>4</sup> After the nationalization of the Suez Canal by the UAR (1956) and the formulation of the Baghdad Pact, including Turkey, Iran and Pakistan (1955), the U.S. expanded its security network against the U.S.S.R. into the Northwestern Indian Ocean, and began to seek out client and tributary states.

Ethiopia became a prime candidate for tributary state status because of its strategic location on the Red Sea, and its ruling Coptic class, which was both anti-Muslim and non-Arab. The Emperor was pro-Western and the Amharic aristocracy were trained in English and European values. The regime appeared stable and willing to provide the facilities the U.S. needed to deploy its forces and counter the growing influence of Abdel Nasser south of Suez. John Foster Dulles, who had become Secretary of State in 1952, was an implacable foe of Nasser, whom he considered a Soviet client. Dulles set out to construct a Middle Eastern and African network of containment. The colonial areas in Africa were not available to U.S. intrusion at the time. But the re-installed Haile Selassie was an obvious target for U.S. military

links. Naval and air bases were expanded to the area under an agreement which gave the U.S. naval facilities at Assab and an air force communication base at Kagnev near Massawa. At their peak, these facilities had between three and four thousand American personnel.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the U.S. had direct land-based air facilities for 25 years under the agreement, as well as another stage in the global network of communication facilities for the strategic submarines it had begun to deploy in the Arabian Sea by the late 1950s. The Indian Ocean served as another important area for strategic missiles against the U.S.S.R. and the Kagnev base participated in the sophisticated LV3 Sonar system, established on the northwest Cape of Australia in the 1950s for guiding SSBMs against U.S.S.R. targets.<sup>6</sup>

The prominent position of the U.S. in the disposition of Eritrea gave it the needed opportunity to begin discussions with the Emperor regarding base facilities.<sup>7</sup> The close coordination of these policies with Israel, the principal sub-imperial state for U.S. policies in the Middle East at that time, led to the establishment of diplomatic ties and a military training unit of Israel for counter-insurgency in Eritrea.<sup>8</sup> American training of Ethiopians through the MAAG (Military Assistance Advisor's Group) was the largest in Africa, covering a 40,000-man army. The air force was a priority and the U.S. helped establish, through TWA, the new Ethiopian airlines.

By the early '60s, the U.S. had established a tributary relationship with the Emperor's government. His Majesty could be counted upon by the U.S. in African and Arab circles, to take the moderate line. He even retained diplomatic ties with Israel until the Arab-Israel October War of 1973.

American economic interest in Ethiopia was marginal and the bulk of the Ethiopian trade in this period was with the U.K. and the EEC. At most, 100 American corporations operated in Ethiopia. A large U.S. AID mission, especially concerned with agriculture, was established and thousands of Ethiopian students studied in the U.S. The majority of Ethiopia's principal crop — coffee — was exported to the U.S.

The lack of a significant economic base and the Ethiopian revolution in 1974, plus the change in U.S. strategic policies in the mid '70s, after the Vietnam War debacle, meant that Ethiopia, in the eyes of the U.S., was

2. Margery Perham, *The Government of Ethiopia* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), pp. xxv-xxvi.

3. Faruq Agonai, *The Independence of Djibouti*, Unpublished Dissertation, University of Denver, 1980.

4. The U.S. supplied Ethiopia from 1953 to mid-1975 with virtually half of all its military aid allowed to sub-Saharan Africa. Tom S. Farer, *War Clouds on the Horn of Africa: A Cradle for Detente* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1976), p. 2.

5. Based on interviews with diplomatic personnel in Addis Ababa. Such figures are disputed by U.S. official sources, but Marina Ottaway uses the figure of 3,200 in her *Soviet and American Influence in the Horn of Africa* (New York: Praeger, 1982), p. 51.

6. John Markakis and Nega Ayale, *Class and Revolution in Ethiopia* (London: Spokesman, 1978), pp. 40-42. T. B. Miller, writing in 1969, saw this development: "Yet as the Polaris and Poseidon submarine systems developed, it became obvious that the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal should provide a most valuable area for missile operations if necessary against Southern and Central Russia and Western China. The VLF (very low frequency) communication station was accordingly built on the Cape in Western Australia." Miller, "The Indian and Pacific Oceans: Some Strategic Considerations" (London, U.S.S., *Geopolitical Papers*, May 1969), p. 6.

7. John H. Spencer, *Ethiopia: The Horn of Africa and U.S. Policy* (Cambridge, Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, 1977), p. 150.

8. Marina Ottaway, op. cit. p. 29.

not to be raised to sub-imperial status in the tributary system. It is doubtful that the revolution alone led to this decision, since the U.S. was not opposed initially to the take-over by military officers in 1974, most of whom had been trained in the U.S. Military aid and training on a reduced scale continued until the new Government requested the withdrawal of MAAG in 1977. This disengagement policy of the U.S. was a significant example of a shift in superpower strategic policy which resulted in the hastened demise of the feudal comprador class and aided the takeover by anti-Western revolutionaries. The interpretation of the step as an example of small power autonomy is quite erroneous, since the U.S. decision to shift its interests facilitated the revolution. If Ethiopia had been a full-scale sub-imperial tributary, such withdrawal would not have taken place and the U.S. would certainly have intervened in the civil war against the Derg, probably through arms supply to Somalia and support for the Sudanese-backed invasion of the North.

However, before the Ethiopian revolution in 1974, U.S. policy began to change toward Ethiopia, as its center of security in the Northern Indian Ocean shifted to the new pro-American governments, Egypt under Sadat and Sudan under Nimeri. The Shah of Iran was viewed as more reliable as an anchor to the new security system. Moreover, the decision was made to build a major communication point on Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, and to phase down the Kagnew base. Soviet influence in Somalia was a worry from a strategic standpoint; but detente with the Soviets was believed to restrain them. In addition, Ethiopia was caught between the Arab states and Israel. The former were backing the growing Eritrean secession, and the latter were training the Emperor's counter-insurgency forces until 1973.

Unable to obtain from the U.S. all the aircraft, M60 tanks and air-to-ground missiles he sought for his army,<sup>9</sup> the aging Emperor was surrounded by his enemies and losing to the Eritrean insurrection at home. Thus, the Amharic aristocracy that had become dependent upon U.S. and Western protection was unable to hold back any longer the tides of revolution that broke over Ethiopia in 1974. The U.S. did not intervene to save the Lion of Judah, who had been such a close ally, because he was expendable. More defensible tributary relations had been worked out with Nimeri to the West and Sadat to the North. While the initial phase of "the officers' revolt" was not seen as anti-western or a threat to the feudal system, this changed as the old empire began to fall apart under the attack of external enemies and the rebellion of long-oppressed minorities.<sup>10</sup>

9. Colin Legum, *Ethiopia, the Fall of Haile Selassie's Empire* (New York: Africana Publishing Co., 1975), p. 21.

10. Farer, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

## Soviet Policy

Somalia's invasion of the Ogaden in 1977, while not planned by the U.S.S.R., was made possible by their aid. By 1974, the Soviets had transformed Somalia's armed forces into the best-equipped force on the Horn and had made Somalia essentially a tributary in their strategic interests in the Indian Ocean to counter the U.S.<sup>11</sup>

The Russians began in the mid-'60s to build surrogate links with the Somalis and the Sudan and when Gen. Barre came to power in 1969, proclaiming his particular brand of "Islamic Scientific Socialism," the Soviets seized the initiative. Their own trading interests through the Red Sea and the Suez Canal-Indian Ocean connection had matured. With the help of Nasser, they had gained direct access to the Indian Ocean and they were looking for ways to strengthen their own defenses against U.S.-SSBM deployment in the Arabian Sea. Somalia's banana exports and nomadic tribes held little economic prospect for them; but the position of the port of Berbera, and Somali antagonism with U.S.-dominated Ethiopia, fitted their grand strategy to protect their shipping and promote revolution in the northwestern region of the Indian Ocean.<sup>12</sup> The Russians had increased shipping lines of supply to North Vietnam, using the Suez Canal, and they wanted to protect them against U.S. hostility with naval surveillance.

A new factor was the growing military capability of the U.S.S.R. which, by the '70s, had begun to match the U.S. in the Indian Ocean. Their navy was a rapidly expanding force, with long-range submarines and small attack carriers. Thus, both the U.S. and the Soviets entered the region simultaneously with new military technology. The northwestern zone of the Indian Ocean became a major security objective for both.

The turn-over in the U.A.R., following the October War, convinced the Soviets to consolidate their position on the southern entrance to the Red Sea and the Suez Canal, which was their major link between their Mediterranean and Pacific fleets. The relationship between the Soviets and Somalia became a full tributary one in the early '70s, after the U.S.S.R. was ousted from the U.A.R. and the Sudan by Sadat and Nimeri. The Berbera base gave the Soviets virtual control over the access to the Red Sea and direct surveillance over U.S. operations in the Arabian Sea and into the Gulf.

In return, the Russians provided Barre with heavy armored cars and

11. Adm. Elmo Zumwalt, Jr., Testimony, *Hearings*, U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Sub-Committee on Near East and South Asia, March 20, 1974, p. 132.

12. Some controversy exists over whether the Russians were ousted or made their own decision to switch. The best assessment of this is found in Michael A. Samuels, "White Paper on the Horn of Africa," *Washington Review of Strategic and International Studies*, 1978.

tanks, as well as MIG fighters, which more than matched the Ethiopian forces. Economic aid and training ties with Moscow began to transform this small Islamic Republic into a center of radical influence in northeast Africa. Indirectly, this sparked the growth of the leftist Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) in the Eritrean secessionist province of Ethiopia. Also, the Western Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF) in the Ethiopian Ogaden was even more directly aided by the Soviet presence and arms supply.

When the Somalis attempted to use this Soviet support in 1976 for their own pan-Somali ambitions in the Ogaden against Ethiopia, Brezhnev sought to restrain them and to arbitrate with the help of the Cubans. Fidel Castro made a final effort to find a compromise by a flying visit in 1977 to the Horn of Africa, in which he visited both Ethiopia and Somalia and suggested a Socialist Federation be formed of the three "Socialist republics," Ethiopia, Somalia, and the Peoples' Republic of Yemen, which would be backed by the Soviet Union.<sup>13</sup> This idea caused alarm in Saudi Arabia and the Sudan. However, Castro had underestimated the force of Somali irredentism and Ethiopian imperialism. Gen. Barre agreed to the Federation, provided the Ogaden was returned to Somalia and Eritrea was allowed to enter as a separate state. This was immediately rejected by Mengistu and the Somali forces pressed ahead.<sup>14</sup> With their modern weapons, they soon routed the Ethiopian army.

The Russians were therefore faced with the choice of continuing to back Somalia or disengage. By this time, the Ethiopian Revolution had declared itself "Scientific Socialist" and had defeated pro-Western Socialist insurgents of the MEISON and had requested Soviet assistance.<sup>15</sup> The U.S. had already disengaged and was at this stage not backing either Ethiopia or Somalia in the spreading war. Thus, the Russian decision not to re-supply Somalia and to throw its support to Ethiopia was a classic in tributary politics. Despite their treaties with Barre and many professions of solidarity, they suddenly switched sides in late 1977. In less than a year, Soviet commanders with Cuban troops were assisting the Ethiopians before the gates of Harar and reversed the tide of war which was almost certain to have defeated and divided Ethiopia into several parts. The Derg had been besieged on four sides with a Sudanese army in the northwest, the Eritreans and Tigreans in the northeast, and the Somalis and Oromos attacking in the south. The importance, often cited, of the Somali ouster of the Soviet Mission in 1977 had little to do with the reasons why the Soviets chose the Ethiopians against Somalia.

13. Marina and David Ottaway, *Ethiopia: Empire in Revolution* (New York: Africana Publishing Co., 1978), pp. 27-28.  
14. Bereki: Habte Selassie, *Conflict and Intervention on the Horn of Africa* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1980), p. 11.

15. Michael Chege has a comprehensive account of this infighting in "The Revolution Betrayed, Ethiopia 1974-79," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 17: 3 (1979): pp. 359-81.

George W. Shepherd, Jr.

Soviet strategy had been shifting for some time. The rise to power of Mengistu gave them the tributary leader they wanted to defeat the "counter-revolution" and obtain a strong base. They were worried over the success of conservative Arab backing of Eritrea, and the defeat of the Derg might well have returned pro-Western feudal groups to power in Ethiopia. Ethiopian manpower, combined with its strategic position, could make it a major force in the region in time. The naval and air facilities on the Dahlak Islands off Massawa and the Aden base gave them control over the entry to the Red Sea.<sup>16</sup> Their air surveillance and anti-submarine sonar equipment operated more effectively from communication stations in the Ethiopian Highlands. In the late 1970s, the U.S.S.R. was worried about war with China and the Red Sea link was important to them in the event of the severance of rail connections to Vladivostok. China's submarine capability in the Gulf of Aden was a threat to their shipping. It was a difficult choice for which Brezhnev's doctrine of defending "socialist revolution" gave them an excellent rationale.

#### U.S. Tributary Status of the Sudan

The basic economic problem of the Sudan has not been resolved by Western economic investment and aid. Development is for the benefit of a small privileged class, notwithstanding all the slogans of equal rights of Islamic Africa or Scientific Socialism, or the well-laid plans of the World Bank and the U.S. AID missions. The comprador class and Western technicians enjoy a quality of life that is a hundred to a thousand times better than that of the peasants who never see a doctor or a trained teacher, and whose children die in their arms, rather than a hospital bed.

The economy is oriented to the desires of the Westernized elite. This is reflected in the export cash crop economy, which does not produce enough food for its own population. Exports are a few raw materials — cotton, gum, dura, and hides, with minimal processing, while imports are machinery, flour, petrol, cars, TV sets, and numerous luxury items, producing a deteriorating balance of trade. The Sudan had a \$9 billion foreign debt in 1982. Repeated devaluation has not solved this problem which is a fundamental one for all African economies tied to Western markets and capital.<sup>17</sup>

Since 1971, the Sudan has slowly swung toward a full tributary relationship with the U.S. Sudanese leaders repeatedly profess a desire to remain non-aligned but they are worried about the Soviet Union's intentions in Chad, Ethiopia, and the Red Sea regions. They view the U.S. as the only

16. *Newswatch*, July 6, 1981.

17. Ali Ahmad Sulman, *Issues in the Economic Development of the Sudan* (Khartoum: Khartoum University Press, 1975), p. 35.

power able to prevent the intrusion of the Russians into the region and a new Ottoman Empire. This was a remarkable turn-around in their attitude toward the U.S., which this writer experienced in the Sudan in the mid-'60s, as a visiting professor at the University of Khartoum. The elite has gone from one extreme to the other, while the masses of peasants remain stolidly in the middle, worried more about the price of flour than whether the Sudan has MIG-21s or F-15s in its Air Force.

Over the 1973-77 period, the largest supplier of weapons was the Soviet Union (\$20 millions), apparently based on pre-1971 agreements. The U.S. is recorded as supplying no weapons during that period. United States' aid has dramatically increased since 1979 with the U.S. realization of the key strategic role of the Sudan. The Carter Administration approved a \$140 million aid program.<sup>18</sup> Most of this was for military purchases. The Reagan Administration has agreed to supply sophisticated aircraft and desert warfare tanks, as well as F-6s. In 1983, the U.S. Air Force, based in Egypt, deployed AWAC air surveillance against Libya on behalf of the Sudan. General Nimieri invited the U.S. to establish several military airfields, similar to those in the UAR, and with these, the U.S. set up a chain of supply for the CENTCOM from the Red Sea into the Gulf of Pakistan.

#### Civilian Rule and Reconciliation

People danced in the streets when Gen. Abboud was overthrown in 1964 and demanded return to civilian rule and they danced again when Gen. Nimieri was ousted by a popular military coup in April 1985. "Al Bahlawan," the tight-rope artist, was gone. He had survived so many previous attempts to remove him from office by the military and civilian groups. A University of Khartoum professor, Mohammed O. Beshir, recalled the similarity between the two periods and circumstances when the civilian rule ended in the return of the military but stated hopefully that "perhaps history does not always repeat itself." The new leader, General Abdel Rahman Siwar el Dahab, had promised that after one year of interim government there would be elections and the political party system would be restored. In the meantime, they would attempt to re-establish peaceful relations with the South and work on resolving the country's economic problems.<sup>20</sup>

The overthrow of Nimieri was a result of the growing austerity he had imposed on the urban classes in an attempt to meet the stringent requirements of the World Bank and the IMF for the extension of further loans. Restrictions on imports increased the price of bread overnight by more than 30% and petrol was rationed to less than a gallon a week, if it could be

obtained. Intensification of the fighting in the South resulted from an attempt to extend Islamic laws into the region, including the punishment under Shari'a law of cutting off the hands of thieves. Inclusion of Moslem brothers in his Cabinet had further alienated southern leaders. On another note, the generosity of the Sudan in opening up its borders to the huge influx of refugees from Ethiopia (and previously, Chad) had worsened the food shortage caused by the drought. At the root of the Government's difficulty was the fact that a country which once exported food and was regarded as the prospective breadbasket of the Middle East could no longer feed its own population. And in 1985, the Sudan was placed on the list of the 12 most endangered countries by the United Nations Emergency Relief Program.

It was to the credit of the Sudanese that they have managed fairly bloodless change and that the military stepped in from popular demand, as demonstrated by the huge crowds that filled the streets for weeks before the overthrow. Fortunately for Nimieri, he was out of the country at the time and went into exile in Cairo. His own Defense Minister had taken over and it was reported that the more extreme Moslem militants led by Al-Sadek el-Mahdi had declined to intervene and form a government because of the need for reconciliation with the South. Gen. Abboud himself, after his decline, walked the streets of Khartoum untouched and quite probably Nimieri will be allowed to return from Egypt after memories have mellowed over cases such as the elderly reformer Mohamed Taha, hung by Nimieri for opposition to his religious views.

The role of the Protector is of some significance when such a change occurs. There was no evidence of direct U.S. involvement, but the choice of a successor such as Gen. Abdel Rahman was not objectionable to Americans who had made it clear something had to be done about the deteriorating state of affairs if the \$180 million of new credit was to be extended. A petition had been presented to Vice-President Bush by a group of intellectuals during his visit to the Sudan earlier in the year. Nimieri was on his way back from Washington, D.C., presumably with President Reagan's promises in his pocket, when the coup took place. It had all the characteristics of a staged turnover. Loans and military agreements were to be honored on all sides. And Egypt, the closest ally of the U.S. in the region, was amenable. The first Government to recognize the new leader was Libya; but this did not indicate any change of course for the Sudan. Some of the political parties put forward a demand for the removal of foreign bases; but there was no indication of a shift toward non-alignment.

Any civilian government moving into the leadership of the Sudan has to ask the question whether the basic problems can be solved. These have only grown worse over the years of independence. Unless certain drastic

18 *New York Times*, March 12, 1980.

19 "Battle for the Sudan," *South*, May 1985.

20 "What Next for Troubled Sudan," *Africa News*, XXIV, 8 (April 22, 1985).

new steps are taken, they will become overwhelming. These are related to the tributary system which the Sudan is not likely to change very quickly. However, there are certain demilitarization and self-reliance measures which such states can undertake, preferably in concert with other African dependencies on the Horn. As a last resort, unilateral action would be preferable to the continued disaster course.

Clearly, the militarization of these countries' economies leaves them without the foreign exchange, petrol, and other resources so desperately needed for economic development. The arms race with Ethiopia is not in the interests of either country and agreements should be reached to limit the importation of types of weapons and amounts. Libya has been suggested as a primary threat; but there is little substance to this charge and Libya as well as Egypt and Somalia might well become parties to a regional disarmament agreement covering arms transfers, bases and nuclear weapons.

Agreements with internal rebel groups are a necessary part to such a demilitarization process. In the Sudan, this would appear to be much easier than in Ethiopia, though major concessions by Governments will be needed. Southern Sudanese clearly resent the attempt to impose the Shari'a Law and other forms of Arabization on them. Moderate and secular Arabs in the north understand and respect these differences, and a civilian government is more likely to represent these secular forces than the military. If the militant Islamic groups such as the Moslem Brothers can be kept out of the Government, grounds for peace may be found. The Ansar and Umma are more reasonable parties. Of course, economic development has to move forward equitably as well. This is not impossible, even in divided African societies, provided the greed of the comprador class is controlled. Col. John Garang's SPLM seeks social justice rather than secession, at this point. On the other hand, the EPLF has passed beyond that stage of re-integration.

Reconciliation is more easily said than done because rebels have become very powerful internally and have the support of external powers, whose interests they serve. But if African governments can reach agreements about arms transfers and refugee flows, these can be used to deflect the demands of the superpowers, rather than play into their hands. And there are grounds for the case that the real interests of the superpowers in the military build-up on the Horn are beginning to fade. The Gulf is far less crucial than it had been in the late '70s. China is not a threat to the U.S.S.R. in the Gulf of Aden and the Iranian revolution seems contained, at least for the present, in terms of the U.S. and conservative Arab state concerns. Libya is outspoken and anti-American but the issues are much less military and far more diplomatic than generally accepted. The new Soviet leadership under Gorbachev appears ready to discuss differences in all parts of the world as well as in the Middle East. And the Reagan Administration is beset with financial problems of a huge deficit at home which expanded military struc-

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tures like the Rapid Deployment Force and The Central Command only aggravate. Thus, the underlying interventionary forces are shifting to new grounds of rivalry and may well leave the tributaries of the Horn and northeastern Africa the opportunity to work out their differences in greater freedom than they have had since the time of independence.

The status of the Horn, even if significant military and political disengagement occurs, will still be subject to the economic disadvantages endemic to tributary states. But if disengagement takes place, and problems of distribution are faced and alleviated, chances are good for reconciliation of most of the current internal conflicts, Eritrea being a likely exception. Here, the result is more apt to be a military de facto decision for separation; but negotiation could bring that about more rapidly once this outcome is recognized as inevitable.

### Conclusion

Superpower rivalry has given new significance to the security origins of imperialism and the role of a comprador class. Because the global powers are able to establish new fronts from which to threaten each other, their traditional security zones in Europe and Asia have been extended to the Gulf of Aden and the Horn of Africa. Within this new theater, each has assembled a group of tributaries by using its military and economic aid systems. They have therefore been able to achieve their objectives indirectly through the elites, military coups, and ruling classes.

The ruling comprador class of the new states of the Horn have accepted this new dependence because they have been convinced they could carry out their particular version of the revolution with the help of a superpower. They entered into pacts, accepted military aid and training and economic assistance in the pretense that it was for development. Their enemies they believed (with some justification) were deterred by the presence of the superpowers' arms and protection system. However, they believed that they would be able to use the superpower for their own ends and by playing them off against each other they could advance their own interests of class and ethnicity, rather than serve the ends of their protectors.

The results have shown this to be illusion. Their revolutions have been coopted by foreign interests. Advanced technology and expensive arms transfers have distracted them from sound economic policy into shows of military power and often fatal aggression. Their economies have produced what they did not consume and failed with the heavy debt and waste they have acquired. Famine is directly attributable in many cases to their misjudgment over land reform, cash crop production, and foreign trade. And



instead of coming to terms with internal opponents and honestly resolving the national and class issues, they have engaged in aggressive external and civil war. Increased militarization has intensified the repressiveness of these regimes. Attempts to give them the cloak of "Scientific Socialism," "self reliance," or "Islamic brotherhood" has been a fraud and led to the intensification of insurrection against them.

The share of responsibility of the superpowers for this colossal failure and growing conflict is considerable. They are the suppliers of "the addicts" and are, of course, convinced that they only sell what other people in the market demand, and if they did not, then rivals would supply them. The two superpowers in the world have demonstrated that they are gigantic concentrations of self-interest who manipulate the small states of the Horn in "the great game" like pawns on the chessboard. Their pretense to advance world order or world revolution is little more than the claim of colonial powers in the past to be the missionaries of a new civilization. Regimes are created, protected for a time, and then abandoned to their own internal conflicts.

This may appear to be a harsh judgment of the causes of the starvation and rise and fall of regimes on the Horn. But it is simply a perspective that sees little change in the structure of inequity and injustice of the dominance of the strong over the weak during the course of the last 500 years. While there are signs of possible change in the self-reliance movements of Africa and the Third World, they are only green shoots in the grass that has been trampled by the combat of the giants.

Such conditions have ignited the flames of revolution against these repressive and inept regimes that only serve the special interests of their ruling class and foreign patrons on the Horn of Africa. These rebellions are begun by ethnic and racial groups. This rebel consciousness has then spread to other groups, who found their economic rights and political expectations violated. And as Cabral predicted, the true revolutionary spirit based on historic consciousness of equality and justice will unite them in a mass tidal wave that overwhelms, by repeated assaults, the assimilated tributary class.

This has begun to happen in all of these tributary states. In the Sudan, the force of the SLM has gone beyond the ability of the North to simply crush it. And the Eritrean revolution has spread in Ethiopia to Tigre as well as the Ogaden. Siyaad Barre's days are also numbered. Failure to recognize the valid grievances of peoples' rights will topple these regimes. The national crisis is justice and the needs of a politically conscious people. Unless these tributary regimes find ways to provide for basic human needs and democratic participation in development, they will be overthrown whether they are military or civilian in origin.

To assume the democratic revolution has been spent in Africa is the illusion of ruling classes. The liberation movement knows that a system of

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500 years of dominance is not quickly ended, especially when its origins in the centers of power are changing very slowly. Counter-revolution has been repeatedly fueled by the superpower rivalry. The ensuing conflicts have had horrendous effects, wiping out tribes and intellectual groups, and causing racial and genocidal strife. But the resilience of people despite their suffering in the southern Sudan and Eritrea and the Somali intellectuals is beyond comprehension in its courage and belief.

There is one final trend worth noting. Western dominance has begun to recede. The rivalry is less intense over the Arabian Sea and the Gulf. The Red Sea has become again an open waterway. And the cost of maintaining tributary regimes in Somalia, Sudan, and Ethiopia is increasingly questioned. Once this becomes recognized, new political possibilities appear. As dominance withdraws its grip, it intensifies the paranoia of the repressors while it weakens their capacity to control. Therefore, new opportunities for revolution, negotiation, and settlement appear.

When revolutionary regimes emerge, they will be more self-reliant, less militaristic, and more ready to undertake regional and South-South forms of collective action. To break with dependency is one of the most difficult steps for tributaries. But some of the ways to do it have been charted and many of the pitfalls are known. Hopefully, these experiences will help the long-suffering peoples of the Horn to find their way to a better way of government and a more humane existence. If the superpowers reach arms control agreements specifying regional limits in their rivalry, the internal changes will be given impetus. The direction such agreements might take have been discussed in earlier naval limitation talks (1977-78). A decision by the U.S. to eliminate its base at Berbera, Somalia, and its Kenya "facilities" at Mombasa, in return for the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from its "limited bases" in Ethiopia and Aden, would be a major first step in the demilitarization of the entire region. Other agreements about amounts of weapons transfers, uses of foreign troops, and the limitation of the deployment or sale of destabilizing weapons technology from cruise missiles to nuclear SSBMs might well follow, as a prelude to more extensive disarmament and an Indian Ocean Nuclear Weapons Free Zone.<sup>21</sup>

21. Balfour Agnew-Dunn, "Nuclear Weapons Free Zones and Disarmament," *Africa Today* 32, 1 & 2 (1985): 77-89 (see especially 85-87).

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TRANSACTION PERIODICALS CONSORTIUM

## Underdevelopment in Somalia: Dictatorship without Hegemony

Ahmed I. Samatar

*[Our task is] to drag the old world into the full light of day and to give positive shape to the new one.*

— Karl Marx, letter to Arnold Ruge, May 1843.

One of the most salient features of Africa's continuing and existentially tragic drama is the debilitating contest between the leaders and the public over the nature and form of state-societal relationship.<sup>1</sup> The resulting chasm between the contestants has profound implications for the epochal struggle of subaltern peoples against underdevelopment in the Third World.

There is no gainsaying that the role of the national state and those social forces which shape its behavior, at a given historical moment, are preeminently responsible for the kind of societal visions painted, the composition of a development agenda, and, consequently, the choice of strategies for optimum consummation. The centrality of the state and leading social forces is inescapable because, in the case of the former, its institutions are the nerves and nodal points of collective power; as for the latter, the viability of the state aside, their very existence and reproduction as commanding classes bestows upon them responsibilities of leadership. Modern Somalia is a case in point.

1. The state is defined here as the sum of public institutions — primarily political, economic and ideological — that manifest, in their workings, the interest of the dominant social forces anchored in the structure of production and, perhaps more so in the African milieu, enmeshed at the upper levels of political and ideological power. This preliminary definition should not be interpreted as radical instrumentalism; rather, our complete conception acknowledges the place and impact of secondary classes and fractions in creating legitimacy. The literature on the state is vast and growing. For a succinct and masterful survey of the two major theoretical traditions, see Martin Carnoy, *The State and Political Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984); also, David Held et al., *States and Societies* (New York: New York University Press, 1983); John S. Saul, *The State and Revolution in Eastern Africa* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979); and H. Goulbourne, *Politics and the State in the Third World* (London: Macmillan Press, 1979).

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The main arguments of this paper are twofold: One, the ruling Somali petty bourgeoisie<sup>2</sup> and the state structures they have controlled since the current regime came to power in 1969, despite the initial wellsprings of mass enthusiasm, have miserably failed to put together, within the limits of the possible, a national project that could genuinely address the deep yearnings of the people of the area, and, in the process, have mortally undermined their own acceptance and longevity as a leading class. The ongoing and vicious struggle over the state, the resultant and prevailing conditions of seige,<sup>3</sup> and the disappearance of any semblance of convivial and communitarian politics, are a reflection of political turpitude and economic involution — thus, the rise of a malignant and cruel dictatorship.<sup>4</sup>

Secondly, it is only by establishing a new and positive hegemony, through substantially different class alliances and the constitution of a more competent and progressive ideological bloc, that Somalis can hope to move beyond the inhumanities of this age and "primitive rebellions"<sup>5</sup> based on generic dislikes for the current order. Such a transformation is necessary if the making of the future is to be less capricious and more purposive and coherent.

This article has three main components: First, it will articulate a brief discussion on the pivotal concepts of dictatorship and hegemony, understood in the Gramscian sense. Secondly, to bring out the relevance of both terms, it will lay bare the main political and economic aspects of the Somali regime's record. Thirdly, by teasing out the implications of the analysis, concluding statements will be made, with an eye for lessons from that experience and suggestions to "give positive shape" to the future.

## The Dialectics of Dictatorship and Hegemony

Gramsci's theoretical works and clairvoyant insights are enjoying a long

2. This term is used to conceptualize two kinds of social forces in the Somali context: "new" salaried employees and managers of the state structures (e.g., civil servants, members of the armed forces, and intellectuals); and "traditional" small scale producers and traders. The first group is particularly emphasized in this article due to their domination of the state.

3. "Opposition Gathers Force in Somalia," *Jaleel World Review* 1, 1 (September 1981):20-22. Two of the major insurgent groups are: The Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) and the newer but increasingly more organized Somali National Movement (SNM). Both of these organizations are based in neighboring Ethiopia. For more intimate details on their identity and intentions, see their respective publications, *Somali Salvation Democratic Front*, *Milidimo*, a quarterly journal; and *Somali National Movement*, *General Guidelines on the Policies of the Somali National Movement* (October 1981). Also, on the growing internal strife, see the knowledgeable insights of I.M. Lewis, "Somalia: Nationalism Turned Inside Out," *Middle East Research Information Project*, report no. 102 (June 1982):6-2.

4. Osman Mohamoud, "Somalia: Crisis and Decay in an Authoritarian Regime," *Horn of Africa* 4, 3 (July/September 1981):7-11. Clive Thomas refers to this as "degeneration." For an excellent and very cogent argument along these lines, see his, *The Rise of the Authoritarian State in Peripheral Societies* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1984); also, Eghal Ahmed, "The Neo-Fascist State: Notes on the Pathology of Power in the Third World," *International Foundation for Development Alternatives* 19 (September/October 1980):15-26.

5. Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1959), p. 14. "Primitive rebellions," as used above, refers to expressions of basic, unorganized, unfocused, apolitical anger on the part of subordinates' peoples.

overdue renaissance in critical social thinking.<sup>6</sup> This renaissance is due to a number of historic reasons: First, the expected revolutionary upsurge of working classes in industrial capitalist social formations, and the consequent collapse of that order, has not materialized. Secondly, earlier Marxist analysis (the classics) that focused heavily on the "substructure" — to the neglect of human subjectivity and the role of ideas — is now found to be incomplete and wanting. Thirdly, and perhaps less known, the continuing struggles against underdevelopment in peripheral societies are increasingly demanding theoretical and axiological explorations that need not give in to certain radical analyses that: (a) enshrine the "historical mission" of capitalist development,<sup>7</sup> or (b) cogently expose the untenability and deleterious consequences of such penetration and integration, but which say very little in terms of actual strategies for counter-hegemonic efforts.<sup>8</sup> In all three areas and issues, Gramsci's writings are of immense value. This article's purview, however, is limited to the last two reasons.

Schematically, Gramsci suggests that ruling classes sustain their preponderance in one of two ways: coercion, through the display of brute force, or "intellectual and moral leadership."<sup>9</sup> The first type is dictatorship and manifests itself in those situations where the state and its managers have become incapable of fulfilling and maintaining basic economic, political, and ideological viability. Consequently, in such a scenario, the social hallmark is a paucity of voluntary allegiance by the vast majority and, in acute cases, the appearance of insurgent activity.

But if a society is to go beyond a condition of perpetual chaos and disorder, tenaciously held together by the unmitigated force of the state, ruling elites<sup>10</sup> must embark upon the creation of cognitive and effective structures that not only positively shape the external behavior of the majority, but, more crucially, facilitate the internal affirmation of development direction and

6. A preliminary catalogue of this intellectual celebration — in English language translations and works — includes Chantal Mouffe, ed., *Gramsci and Marxist Theory* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979); Christineucci Gramsci, *Gramsci and the State* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1980); Ann Shawstuck Sasson, ed., *Approach to Gramsci* (London: Writers & Readers Publishing Cooperative, 1982); and Gramsci's *Politics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980); Carl Boggs, *Gramsci's Marxism* (London: Pluto Press, 1976); and Joseph V. Ferris, *Gramsci's Political Thought: Hegemony, Consciousness, and the Revolutionary Process* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981).

7. E.g., Bill Warren, *Imperialism: Pioneer of Capitalism* (London: New Left Books, 1980); and Goran Hyden, *No Shortcuts to Progress: African Development Management in Perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

8. For example, two otherwise commendable works are, Claude Ake, *The Political Economy of Africa* (London: Longman, 1981); Ivry Leonard Markovitz, *Power and Class in Africa: An Introduction to Change and Conflict in African Politics* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977). An exception to this genre is James H. Mittelman's slim but very valuable volume, *Underdevelopment and the Transition to Socialism: Mozambique and Tanzania* (New York: Academic Press, 1981).

9. Antonio Gramsci, *Il Risorgimento* (1949), trans. and cited by Ferris, *Gramsci's Political Thought*, p. 24.

10. "Elites," "leading class," "ruling class," and "state-elite" are all being used interchangeably.



leadership veneration. The launching of such a relationship can be accomplished by way of integral hegemony.<sup>11</sup> Paraphrasing Gramsci, Femia proposes that,

[Hegemony is] the creation of a substructure of social agreements so powerful that it can counteract the division and disruptive forces arising from conflicting interests. And this agreement must be in relation to specific [common] objects — persons, beliefs, values, [and] institutions. . . .<sup>12</sup>

Gramsci propounds that the initial basis for the building of such an "organic" affiliation between the governors and the rest of the population — i.e., the composition of a community — must start with the clear demonstration of moral and intellectual commitment on the part of the state elite. The authenticity of whether elite behavior measures up to such a call can be gauged through an examination of how power is exercised, and the degree of participation — i.e., the ethics of politics.<sup>13</sup> To be sure, integral (positive) hegemony cannot be sustained for long on the performance within the purview of politics alone. Rather, and especially given the glaring material needs of the vast subordinate groups in a largely predatory modern world-system, leading classes must give substance to participatory politics by buttressing it with equally efficacious actions in the economy. More specifically, the politics of the state elite must

... cause the entire society to move forward, not merely satisfying its own existential requirements but continuously enlarging its social framework for the conquest of ever new spheres of economic and productive activity.<sup>14</sup>

Operationally, then, a "degenerate" and dictatorial political economy, one bereft of integral hegemony, is a social formation where: (a) political power is highly concentrated and whimsically exercised, and (b) economic well-being is disastrously neglected. The following section is a description of such a situation in contemporary Somalia.

11. There are a number of essential points that need to be made about this concept before a definition is offered. First, hegemony, in Gramscian terms, should not be confused with its other more conventional uses — usually as a general synonym for dominance. In contrast, hegemony is deployed here as a particular kind of dominance — i.e., leadership that is informed by a comparatively high degree of consensus and legitimacy. Secondly, our borrowing of a concept out of European experience should not cause unnecessary alarm. This is because some of the basic questions of underdevelopment that faced the southern Europe of Gramsci's time are not that alien to contemporary Africa. Further, particularly on the issues of leader/matrix, Cabral had, independently, made similar theoretical insights. Thirdly, as Femia argues, most students of Gramsci talk about the concept in only one way and, consequently, overlook the fact that Gramsci "... speaks of three different levels or types of hegemony." These are "minimal," "decadent," and "integral." Our use of the concept is in line with the last. For details on this, see Femia, Gramsci's Political Thought, p. 46; Antonio Gramsci, *Selections From the Prison Notes*, trans. and ed. by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey N. Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1980), especially the chapter on "State and Civil Society," and Amílcar Cabral, *Revolution in Guinea*, trans. by Richard Hardyside (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969), especially the chapter on "The Weapon of Theory."

12. Femia, Gramsci's Political Thought, p. 39.

13. Antonio Gramsci, *Note sui Machiavelli, sulla politica, e sulla stato moderno*, trans. and cited by Femia, Gramsci's Political Thought, p. 24.

14. Gramsci, *Il Risorgimento*, trans. and cited by Femia, Gramsci's Political Thought, p. 46. For a creative and delicate theoretical elucidation of the nature of political and economic hegemony, see Robert W. Cox, "Production and Hegemony: Towards a Political Economy of World Order," in *The Emerging International Economic Order: Dynamic Processes, Constraints and Opportunities*, ed. by Harold K. Jacobson and Dusan Sidjani (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1982), pp. 36-58.

## The Failure of Leadership: Politics and Ideology

Among the earliest promises by the new and self-styled "socialist" regime, released on the heels of the takeover of state power by the military wing of the Somali petty bourgeoisie, was the revival of democratic culture, which had fallen into, as Professor I.M. Lewis observed, "commercialized anarchy."<sup>15</sup> This pronouncement and its subsequent embellishments expressed the replacement of the callous exercise of power and moral authority with a more sensitive and benevolent approach<sup>16</sup> — the inauguration of genuine participatory politics.

### *Inside the Supreme Revolutionary Council*

After the initial euphoria of the inception of the new and "revolutionary" order began to wane, 1970 saw the first major sign of heated discussion and serious disagreement among the members of the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) — the new governing body of Somalia — over collective leadership, accountability, individual democratic rights, and the diffusion of power. In this context, two of the very senior members — General M. Cinaanse (the Vice President) and General S. Gabeire (a leading coup maker and Defense Minister) — were accused of "counter-revolutionary ideas." Further, two hundred people were arrested in a gigantic security sweep. A year later, in July 1972, the two Generals and a Colonel were convicted and publicly shot. While there is no evidence — to date — for the accusation, Luigi Pestalozza argues that their crime was an adherence to "Islamic nationalism."<sup>17</sup> It is difficult, however, to decipher what "Islamic nationalism" means — especially in those early years of the new order. In conversations conducted in our field-work (1982-83), some prominent members of the SRC and the Civilian Council of Secretaries at the time spoke about the intense debates over the integrity of collective leadership in Somalia and a concurrent competition for personal power. Most interviewees concur that General Siyaad Barre — the strongman of the twenty-three man SRC — began to manipulate junior SRC members by playing one group against the other; tactics which proved effective among considerably younger and more naive

15. I.M. Lewis, "The Nation, State and Politics in Somalia," in *The Search for National Integration in Africa*, ed. by David R. Simcock and Kwamea Benati-Enchill (New York: Free Press, 1975), p. 298.

16. Siyaad Barre, *My Country and My People: Selected Speeches* (Mogadishu: Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 1979), pp. iv-5; and "Somalia: After the Coup," *Africa Confidential*, no. 21 (24 October 1969), pp. 7-8.

17. Luigi Pestalozza, *The Somalian Revolution*, trans. by Peter Glemsering (Bari: Dedalo Librai, 1974), p. 127.

officers. But Cainaashe and Gabeire were not easy to intimidate, and having an old-fashioned Somali sense of fairness and democracy (*xær*), in addition to playing an important role in the making of the coup, both recoiled from the encomiums that were already being heaped upon Siyaad Barre.

With the elimination of the two Generals, what was originally hailed as a collective leadership conspicuously took the form of a one man rule. Siyaad Barre's personality was elevated to unprecedented heights, and the coercive and ideological apparatuses of the state — the latter beefed up by the nationalization of all the media — were mobilized to build what Lewis calls "a Maoist cult."<sup>18</sup>

### *The SRC-Nation Interface*

After its ascendancy, the SRC cancelled the constitution, and availed itself of all the functions and powers of the now abolished structures of government — from the Presidency to the Supreme Court. Soon, fundamental changes were enacted in the areas of general laws, and the administration of justice and civil rights — the last being totally abrogated. Moreover, in place of the Supreme Court, a National Security Court, manned by the military and directly controlled by the SRC, was created. In addition to the finality of its verdicts, with the exception of Siyaad Barre's interventions, the new court and the justice system behind it were designed as political instruments responsible for the security of the new state. Further, a new and pervasive security network, the National Security Service (NSS), was established to function as the long and strong arm of the state, with unlimited power to search, detain, and even torture and kill suspected dissidents.

At the regional and local levels, civilian administrators previously appointed by the central government were replaced by new military/police governors and district commissioners — all creatures of the SRC. These local commanders were named as "chairmen" of local Revolutionary Councils and assigned responsibilities for bureaucratic administration, adjudication of justice, and the maintenance of order.

In the work place, as early as 1972, the regime dismissed the old trade union organizations and ordered, in its place, the formation of workers' committees; nonetheless, the latter's authenticity as representative structures of

<sup>18</sup> I.M. Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* (London: Longman, 1980), p. 211. We think the comparison is rather unfair. After all, Siyaad Barre had no claim to a history of glorious revolutionary leadership, as is the case of Mao. On the contrary, some older Somalis of Siyaad Barre's generation vehemently argue that he was, in fact, an active collaborator with Italian colonialism. Nonetheless, Lewis is right in drawing the image. This author was living in Mogdishu during part of those early years, and, by then, the glorification of Siyaad Barre was already in high gear, as state employees were instructed to sing, before work each morning, the praises of the "Saviour of the Nation." Moreover, all over the country, a tasteless competition (primarily coerced by newly created "victory plonies") for erecting Siyaad Barre's portraits and busts were under way. In the capital, for example, almost every block had the President's picture beaming from its street walls.

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workers' interest and power was undercut by an earlier edict, part of the Law of Twenty-Six Articles, which sanctioned the death penalty for strikes. In another equally instructive moment in the early seventies, the SRC's ideology of "socialism" confronted one of the oldest Somali belief systems (faith), Islam, in the crucible of women's role and place in society. In an effort to undo the traditionally prescribed patriarchal subjugation of women in the Somali culture, the SRC legislated the 1974 Family Act, which extended equality to women in, among other things, divorce and inheritance rights. Alarmed by the SRC's attempt to establish links between basic canons of Islam and the new law, religious leadership — particularly in the capital — took to the mosques to denounce and decry the "permissiveness" of the act. Tragically, as the debate heated up, the regime, rather than sticking to its intellectual guns and, in the process, encouraging discussion and debate, brought the full coercive weight of the state down upon the recalcitrant "mullahs." In January 1975, ten theologians were executed for seditious activities.<sup>19</sup>

Five years after the coup, the spirit of mobilization and national enthusiasm it sparked had petered out, and most Somalis, especially in light of the regime's repetitive incantations, so removed from reality, began to grumble and groan about the conspicuous absence of participation in public affairs — at all levels. Also, at this time, the Soviet Union, which in 1974 had signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with Somalia, is reported to have urged the SRC and its Chairman to institutionalize the "revolution" by creating a political party. In early 1976, word went out of Siyaad Barre's office that the process of party formation should roll on.

Formalistically, workers' committees, peasant associations, civil service committees, and women's organizations were advised to select delegates to village councils who, in turn, elected representatives to districts and regions. At that stage, three thousand regional delegates were sent to the new National Congress, which met in Mogdishu in June 1976.<sup>20</sup> The congress went on to elect a seventy-three member Central Committee — with only one woman — which, later, elected a four member Politbureau. The division of labor between these units was primarily hierarchical, with the Congress assigned to meet every five years, and the Central Committee every three months. Further, eleven bureaus were established to take up administrative responsibilities of the new party, named the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party (SRSP.)

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 213.

<sup>20</sup> Graham Hancock, "Somalia's Single Party Government," *Africa Development* 10, 9 (September 1976):934-35.

If the inception of the SRSP was part of an endeavor by the state elite to decentralize and share power in the Somali polity, the final outcome and actual workings of the structure are far from ideal. For instance, it is no secret that, despite the appearance, regional, district, and village delegates are nominated and approved by the central authorities' representatives in the provinces — the military governors and district commissioners. As for the Central Committee, not only have all SRC members been given automatic seats, but all other candidates and subsequent members are approved and confirmed by the Secretary General of the SRSP, President Siyaad Barre. Moreover, leadership in the administrative bureaus, much like the Council of Secretaries, are directly appointed by the President-cum-Secretary General. Finally, since the SRSP was created as the supreme national organization, the more specialized associations — the organs of civil society — have been brought into the party's orbit. For instance, Somali workers' committees, youth organizations, and the Somali Women's Democratic Organization are all creatures of the Secretary General, through his control of leadership choices, budgetary allocations, and programmatic direction.<sup>21</sup>

In short, despite the creation of a labyrinth of bureaucratic structures, the regime's claims of power decentralization are largely untenable. The immense concentration of political and economic power (local councils are dependent on allocations from the center) belies the rhetoric and underscores the gap between formal structures and actual power relations, and the growing list of human rights violations.<sup>22</sup>

In the closing stages of the decade of the seventies, serious rifts among the ruling petty bourgeoisie appeared. In addition, by 1978, nearly a million refugees and a war with Ethiopia — which cost tens of thousands of lives — brought the economy to a virtual halt.<sup>23</sup> In that same year, an attempt to overthrow the regime by disgruntled members of the military was put down, with bloody retaliation. Out of these developments, the Somali Salva-

tion Democratic Front, the Somali National Movement, and other oppositional forces were born, ushering in the continuing politics of insurgency. Threatened by the growth of dissidence and the loss of legitimacy through the shrinking of their popular base, Siyaad Barre and his acolytes have reignited clanist propensities of the Somali culture by increasingly filling important positions in the government with members of the President's clan, and those of his mother and his son-in-law — the infamous Mareexan, Ogaaden, and Dulbahante clan alliance. More than any other action, this re-tribalization of the state has kindled ancient discordances and bestial passions, and has given a new lease of life to centrifugal ambitions.

In sum, with the loss of the war, and the concomitant forfeiture of Soviet friendship, a frantic search for a new patron began. Soon, negotiations were opened with the United States, which culminated in a new friendship agreement in 1980.<sup>24</sup> One of the main attractions of the U.S. connection for the Somali state elite was, and is, the easy accessibility to more military supplies to strengthen their capabilities to fight off insurgents, and assure themselves of the domestication of the rest of society. Of course, while all this was taking place in the realm of politics, the economy was also deteriorating. It is to this we now turn.

### The Failure of Leadership: The Economy and Society

By the account of most Somali and external observers, the years immediately preceding 1969 were not only replete with the jettison of democratic practices, but also showed serious signs of economic disarticulation and imbalance, acute external dependency, and poor overall growth.<sup>25</sup> More precisely, during those years, governmental allocations showed large military and defense outlays — nearly 17 percent of the 1969 budget — and meager investments in agriculture (2.3 percent), education (2.9 percent), and health (3.4 percent).<sup>26</sup> Faced with this, in one of the earliest speeches designed to set the tone and mark the new policy grooves of the regime's economic actions, Siyaad Barre declared:

21. We warn here of the danger of jumping to the conclusion that a single party system is inherently undemocratic and authoritarian. Our position is that such a characterization is true only when the Party — particularly the elite — accends centralism and undermines the needs of democracy. In other words, there are enough spaces in a single party system to create a division of power and its accountability to insure — constitutionally — against an inexorable descent into caesopism: If a particular "progressive" regime is not under immediate attack, there is no reason why what is only permissible as an emergency measure should be institutionalized as a normal procedure of democratic-centralism.

22. U.S., Department of State, *Country Reports of Human Rights Practices for 1978*, Report submitted to the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, and the Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, 95th Congress, 2nd Session, 3 February 1978. For more information, also see the reports for 1979 and 1980; and Ruth Seward, *World Military and Social Expenditures, 1978* (Lanham: World Publications, 1982).

23. For a more detailed discussion of this disastrous war, the politics surrounding it, and the change of alignments in the Horn, see my, "Self-Reliance in Theory and Practice: A Critique of Somali Praxis, 1969-80" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Denver, Denver, 1984), pp. 318-50; and Peter Schwab, "Cold War on the Horn of Africa," *African Affairs* 77, 306 (January 1978):6-21. The flood of refugees into Somalia aggravated the already limited food supply and disrupted the urban and agrarian economies. Later the drought added to the loss of life and accelerated the economic deterioration.

24. At the onset, the regime asked for \$2 billion — primarily in military aid — in exchange for U.S. strategic use of Somali territory and facilities. However, after some stiff bargaining by the American negotiators, the regime's position was reduced to a pithy \$64 million. For more, see Donald Petterson, "Somalia and the United States, 1977-83: The New Relationship," Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Somali Studies Association, Frankfurt, Germany, Fall 1983; and "American-Somali Military Alliance?" *Horn of Africa* 3, 3 (July/September 1980):53-54.

25. Although the export of bananas and livestock was up in 1968-69, the general trade deficit was nearly \$20 million in 1969. For more, see United Nations, Social and Economic Council, Economic Commission for Africa, *Summaries of Economic Data: Somalia, 1968-1969*, 2nd year, no. 9 (070-702), Addis Ababa, August 1970.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

We will make Somalia a respected country in its internal and external policies. We want the Somali people to use the wealth and prosperity hidden in their land and avoid begging other nations.<sup>27</sup>

Operationally, the SRC, after six months of sporadic economic activities, such as the nationalization of the largest industrial plant, Società Nazionale Agricoltura e Industria (SNAI), which processed sugar and its by-products, outlined the state take-over of other major industries and financial institutions.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, special emphasis was placed on the development and improvement of local resources — especially the agricultural sector — to produce enough food for domestic needs and to lay the basis for a less hungry order.

### *The First Development Program (1971-73)*

The rural sector (pastoral, agriculture, and fisheries), the largest in the economy, accounts for two-thirds of the Gross National Product, four-fifths of the labor force, and about 98 percent of exports. Obviously, what becomes of this sector determines the economic well-being of Somalia. In recognition of this, the SRC launched its First Development Program.<sup>29</sup> Among its specific objectives were: the control of animal disease; the extension of agricultural crash programs; and an improvement of food grain production and marketing — the last two were also expected to open up jobs in rural areas and, therefore, ease the increasing movement to urban centres.<sup>30</sup>

By 1974, most of the evidence was in. In summary, while some gains were made in re-vitalizing the spirit of *Iska Wax Ougabso* — self-help initiatives taken up by rural communities in the early sixties — primarily through food-for-work programs, attempts in other areas were unsatisfactory. To begin with, rural allocations were small — 31.7 percent — compared to the ballooning of the service sector, which received more than 50 percent of the national budget.<sup>31</sup> In addition, if the state's actual development expenditures in rural projects were disappointing, the Commercial Bank's (also state owned) credit extension was equally not forthcoming, being heavily skewed to trading and merchant interests; of the total credit granted by the bank, less than 11 percent went to farmers, and more than 70 percent to

27. Syaad Barre, *My Country, My People*, p. 3.

28. This came as part of the declaration, made during the first anniversary of the revolution of "Scientific Socialism" as the basis for the new ideological guidelines of future state policies: Somalia, Supreme Revolutionary Council, *Second Charter of the Revolution*, Moqdishu, October 1970.

29. For details, see Somalia, Ministry of Planning and Coordination, *First Development Program, 1971-1973*, Moqdishu, 1971.

30. Somalia, Ministry of Labor and Sports, *The Manpower Implications of Current Development Strategies*, vol. 1, Moqdishu, 1972.

31. Calculated from Somalia, Ministry of Planning and Coordination, *Five Year Development Program, 1974-78*, Moqdishu, 1974, p. 5.

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commercial enterprises.<sup>32</sup> Perhaps the one productive area in which state intervention created expansion was the industrial sub-sector. Here, public establishments grew from fourteen in 1970 to forty-six in 1974.<sup>33</sup> Even in this area, however, societal windfall was extremely limited because, aside from its negligible portion of the total economy (about 9 percent), industry was severely handicapped by a limited domestic market, the lack of technical manpower and infra-structure, and a high degree of capital intensive policies.

### *The 1974-78 Development Plan and Beyond*

More than ever before, this five year plan emphasized the need for food self-sufficiency, particularly agricultural crop production. The nomadic component was deemed less urgent, partly because it had become common knowledge that pastoralism could never be an engine for development and, consequently, its place in the economy should be curtailed. In addition, the plan recommended the gradual transfer of nomadic populations into more sedentary livelihoods in the future — e.g., agriculture and fisheries. However, this recommendation was never carried out. A major reason for the regime's inaction related to pastoralism's relative vitality. For, given the increasing demand for Somali livestock in the Gulf states and subsequent positive terms of trade (nearly 20 points above the 1979-81 General Consumer Index), substantial amounts of revenues were coming into state coffers and banking accounts of export traders<sup>34</sup> — circumstances that discouraged any tampering with, as it were, the goose that was laying the golden egg. We will examine the consequences of this in agriculture and the modern sector.

To underline and activate the Development Plan, the Law of Cooperative Development of 1974, which focused on the establishment and expansion of "agricultural crash programs," was enacted. The promulgation of this edict was seen as the first serious step to move agriculture from its fragmented and unproductive condition. In line with this, therefore, three kinds of cooperatives were proposed: Multipurpose; Group-Farm; and Full Communal.<sup>35</sup> In the first, while property remained private, the cooperative was designed as a mechanism for sharing marketing and supplies, and to

32. Somalia, Somali National Bank, *Annual Reports*, Moqdishu, 1974.

33. United States, International Development Organization, *An Industrial Development Survey of Somalia*, Moqdishu, January 1973.

34. For an incisive and critical analysis of Somali pastoralism, see Dan R. Aronson, "Kinsman and Comrades: Towards a Class Analysis of the Somali Pastoral Sector," *Nomadic Peoples*, no. 7 (November 1980).

35. Somalia, Department of Cooperatives, *Five Year Development Program, 1974-78*, Moqdishu, 1974.

cooperatively undertake self-help projects (e.g., building schools and clinics). Group farms, beyond mutual social efforts, were intended to be more associative, with common ownership and cultivation of land, and four-fifths of the income from production distributed on the basis of work contributed. Finally, Full Communal settlements were proposed as the culminating stage of the socialization of cooperative farming, in which the use and ownership of land, equipment and labor would be completely communally based.

To round up the agricultural policies, a land tenure scheme was announced in 1975. In it were included the nationalization of all holdings, and legal limits on property size and transfers. Under this law, individual families were to hold land only by a concession, renewable in fifty years. Further, land was to be excluded from selling prices, with any sale covering only improvements and use-value; and old plantation owners were to register in compliance with concession requirements.

Before we move on to an assessment of these programs and intentions, it is of utmost importance to include in the picture the onset of the great Somali drought of 1974-75. Coming after a number of rainless seasons, it brought ruin to more than two-thirds of the country. In an interview with this writer, General Siyaad Barre argued that it was the worst drought in Somalia's modern history, with the name of *dabaadeer* (the one with the long tail) to underline its endless punishment.<sup>36</sup> During this calamity, the nomads were the hardest hit, with tens of thousands dead and many more left destitute. Consequently, the first two years of the plan were primarily spent on relief operations and, thanks to massive help from the Soviet Union, many were saved and resettled.

In evaluating agriculture in Somalia in the early 1980s, the record of the cooperatives, state, and private farms is a disaster. To start with, cooperatives — the third type, "full communal" was never established — have been unable to produce even enough for self-sufficiency; rather, many members have since abandoned such farms and left for the towns, or have become dependent on international donor aid. Moreover, the productivity of state farms and privately cultivated plots went down sharply, compelling the country to import food or beg. In the process, this aggravated inflation (nearly 50 percent per annum), worsened the balance of payment deficits, exploded the international debt burden, and contributed to a 50 percent devaluation of the Somali shilling in 1984 alone.<sup>37</sup> Table 1 illustrates the decline of agricultural production.

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36. Interview with Siyaad Barre, President of Somalia, Mogadishu, 26 December 1982.

37. By the early 1980s, Somalia had accumulated over \$600 million of debt — four times the revenues from exports. Put another way, in 1983, the country's service payments on existing debts were well over 25 percent of expected revenues from exports. Interview with Xusein Cilaaqay, Director General, State Planning Commission, Mogadishu, 12 December 1982. Moreover, the economy's dependence on foreign aid is put around 40 percent (\$400 million) of the Gross National Product. Virginia Luling, "Somalia," *Africa Review*, 1985, 9th ed. (Essex: World of Information, 1985), pp. 290-92.

**TABLE 1**  
**Somalia: Production of Principal Crops**  
 (In thousands of tons)

Item	1970	1972	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1980
<b>Staples</b>								
Sorghum	158.1	149.1	134.7	134.7	139.9	145.1	141.1	140.0
Maize	122.1	114.9	103.6	103.6	107.6	113.3	107.7	100.2
Rice	2.9	3.5	4.9	4.9	5.4	8.4	12.1	10.0
Beans	10.9	10.5	9.4	9.4	9.8	10.2	10.1	8.2
<b>Industrial Crops</b>								
Sesame	43.4	41.0	34.7	37.3	38.8	40.6	40.0	35.6
Groundnuts	3.0	2.9	2.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.1
Cotton	3.6	3.3	2.8	3.0	3.1	3.3	3.2	2.5
Sugar Cane	45.05	401.0	382.6	370.0	333.3	320.0	311.5	300.2
<b>Export Crops</b>								
	145.5	188.5	157.5	106.0	96.6	65.2	69.7	62.3
<b>Other</b>								
Vegetables	28.8	27.2	23.0	24.7	25.7	26.9	26.5	24.0

SOURCE: Somalia, Central Bank of Somalia, *Annual Report and Statement of Accounts, 19th Financial year (1979)*, pp. 12-19; International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *World Bank, World Development Report, 1984* (Oxford: University of Oxford Press, 1984); and *Africa News* 23, 13-14, (8 October 1984). Latest reports register that Somalia's average index of food production per capita has dropped from 100 in 1969-71 to only 60 in 1982.

Besides the cruel vagaries of the Somali climate, some reasons behind these negative performances are: the lack of economic incentives and state controls of producer prices — heavily favoring urban consumers; the shrinkage of the overall area of banana cultivation — only 1 percent of the country's 8.2 million hectares of good agricultural land was under any kind of cultivation; the dearth of inputs; the inefficiency of marketing boards; and the decline (by 50 percent) of international prices for Somali bananas, the second largest export next to livestock. In addition, in the other component of the rural strategy, fisheries, the results have not been better. By the beginning of the 1980s, production declined by almost half from what it was in 1970. This is due to very meager investments — 2 percent of the total development funds, an absence of local management, idle equipment because of unavailability of maintenance and repairs, and the termination of Soviet technical help.

If the tidings from the rural sector — particularly agriculture and fisheries — is dismal, industry is equally in poor shape. For despite its expansion to over 12 percent of the economy by 1982, with employment up by 21 percent, its record is one of diminishing productivity (-12.5 percent per annum in added value between 1970-1981) and profitability.<sup>38</sup> Consequently, the crises in industry, coupled with the rise in the number of employees, has resulted in draining and siphoning off resources, in the form of subsidies, from the already emaciated non-industrial sectors of the economy. Table 2 shows the pattern of decline in major industrial products. An analysis of the Somali industry shows that its ailments are many. Five of the major reasons for its stagnation are: the inadequate incentives for employees — average wages are reported to have declined 50 percent, in real terms, by 1981; the lack of managerial staff and skilled workers — more than 100,000 skilled people have left for the oil rich countries of the Gulf; the underutilization of industrial capacity — mostly because of insufficient domestic inputs and a shortage of import supplies; high taxes and interest burdens; and the non-payment by the state for goods and services performed by the public enterprises.

All in all, and in addition to the aforementioned shortcomings, most productive sectors of the economy have been starved of investments and proper management. In their place, attention has been heaped on defense<sup>39</sup> and what is conveniently called "General Public Services" — funds for the secret police and elite personal expenses. Table 3 underscores this imbalance.

38. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, World Bank, Memorandum on the Economy of Somalia, Report no. 3284-SO, (Mogadishu, 16 March 1981), p. 12.

39. By the early 1980s, military expenditure was so taxing on the economy that it was consuming more than 150 percent of the export revenues, and accounted for nearly 70 percent of all imports. For more, see Paul B. Hines, *Arming the Horn, 1960-80*, International Security Studies Program Working Paper, no. 43 (Washington, D.C.: The Wilson Center, July 1982).

TABLE 2  
Somalia: Industrial Output of Selected Products

Item	Unit Of Measure	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1981
Sugar	thous. of tons	30.00	33.60	30.00	24.00	21.10	20.90
Canned Meat	millions of tons	14.43	10.00	6.63	—	1.50	1.20
Milk	mil. of liters	2.16	3.67	3.84	3.31	2.70	2.00
Pasta and Flour	millions of tons	7.85	7.90	8.40	8.10	5.80	4.30
Canned Fruit and Vegetables	thousands of tons	.94	1.50	1.20	.90	1.00	.90
Textiles	mil. of yards	5.50	7.30	12.92	13.80	9.93	9.00
Boxes and Bags	thousands of tons	5.20	6.77	5.04	4.75	5.20	4.50

SOURCE: Somalia, Central Bank of Somalia, Annual Report and Statement of Accounts, 19th Financial Year (1979), pp. 12-19; United Nations, Industrial Development Organization, Industrial Sector Review of Somalia, prepared at the request of the Government of Somalia (Mogadishu, January 1976), p. 82; and an interview with Xuseen Celsabay, Director General, State Planning Commission, Mogadishu, 12 December 1982.

TABLE 3  
Somalia: Central Government Ordinary Expenditures, 1975-80 (in percentages)

Item	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
General Public Services	33.9	31.7	32.4	32.4	35.1	31.8	32.00
Defense	25.6	25.5	25.9	37.1a	39.6	41.6	45.0
Total	59.5	57.2	58.3	72.2	71.4	73.4	77.0
Social Services	22.5	24.7	25.8	16.7	18.2	17.5	15.0
Economic Services	17.9	18.1	13.0	11.0	10.5	10.00	10.00

SOURCE: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, World Bank, Memorandum on the Economy of Somalia, Report no. 3284-SO, (Mogadishu, 16 March 1981), p. 19; also, Somalia, State Planning Commission, Statistics (1975-81).

a This is the wartime figure. However, even before and after that, defense expenditures have taken from one-fourth to almost one-half of state funds.

## Conclusion

While some initial accomplishments were made in the early years of military rule — e.g., the establishment of an official orthography for the Somali  
3rd Quarter, 1985



language; the expansion of education through literacy campaigns; and a commendable effort in the handling of the 1974-75 drought — the Somalia of the early 1980s is far from the "socialist" and "non-aligned"<sup>40</sup> society that is still so dear to the rhetoric of Siyaad Barre and his military and civilian subordinates. On the contrary, the country is literally a "basket-case," surviving primarily on international charity and hand-outs. Moreover, all the evidence for a moribund and marooned order is convincingly bare: ecological disasters; economic decline;<sup>41</sup> political autocracy and tyrannical militarism;<sup>42</sup> and chaos, catapulting the society into a state of civil strife, fragmentation, and possible dissolution.<sup>43</sup> A measure of the prevailing underdevelopment was highlighted in a recent report by London's Overseas Development Council. In comparison to the neighboring countries of Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi, and Rwanda,

... Somalia had the lowest GNP, the lowest physical quality of life index, the lowest per capita public education expenditure, the highest infant mortality per 1,000 live births, and the highest per capita military expenditures.<sup>44</sup>

The Somali experience is pregnant with numerous and hard lessons for other African countries caught in the worsening syndrome of underdevelopment. We list here only five that seem glaringly crucial.

First, there seems to be an urgent need to bring the social question to the forefront of the agenda of development. In the long run, only such a strategy can help the peoples of the Horn to relegate nationalist and ethnic issues to their less prominent, but rightful place. No doubt, in the past, nationalism has been a progressive force against colonialism and an adhesive that bonded communities together in the face of powerful external forces. Nonetheless, as African societies come to confront divisive residues left behind by colonialism and, most importantly, development contradictions embedded in their own environment, nationalist ideology and primordial affections work to hinder the emergence and effectiveness of a new Pan-Africanist consciousness. Such was the moral of the Somali-Ethiopian war. The dawn of such a transnational *Weltanschauung* and its nurturing will, in our opinion, largely depend on the place allotted to the social problematic, and could facilitate the conception of new non-familial common identities

that grow from mutual needs.<sup>45</sup>

Second, Somali politics in the last decade and a half abundantly display the pitfalls of uncontrolled and unrealistic promises, in the face of meager capabilities and resources. In ploughing through Siyaad Barre's speeches, regime enunciations, and articulated development intentions, one is often struck by the incredible dissonance and gulf between proliferous and highly inflated statements, and the absence of commitments to see through their realization and institutionalization. Inevitably, such an atmosphere creates explosive expectations and leaves behind dejection, despair, and distrust. Anyone who has lately travelled to Somalia witnesses the unmistakable abandonment of civic and communitarian responsibilities, and the retreat to a dreadful and crude social Darwinism.

Third, the Somali condition underscores the dangers inherent in the neglect of capital accumulation and economic efficiency — even when redistributive policies are a main objective. This particular point becomes more pressing in a society constrained by an exiguous environment, an extremely underdeveloped productive force, and a mounting growth in population.<sup>46</sup> Further, wasting precious resources on unproductive and sometimes destructive projects — such as runaway military expenditures — not only bankrupts a community, but it unleashes crippling scarcities that, in time, eat away at the bonds of solidarity and fraternity — i.e., integral hegemony. Indeed, as the venerable fathers of socialism warned us,

... this development of productive forces ... is an absolutely necessary political premise because without it want is made general, and with destitution the struggle for necessities and all the old filthy business would necessarily be reproduced.<sup>47</sup>

Fourth, our analysis stresses the critical point that authentic and bona fide democratic procedures and practices are indispensable to the making and sustaining of positive hegemony. For an egalitarian, moral, rational, and libertarian order cannot become a plausible societal project if, from its inception, civic freedoms and empowerment are not made the basis of the new community.<sup>48</sup> The successful implementation of such a credo will, in our opinion, bode well for popular confidence in the battles ahead, defining politics not only as a struggle for power, but also turning it into a mutual

40. It has been reported that South African Foreign Minister Roelof Botha made a secret trip to Mogadishu to establish, among other things, air links with Somalia. "Bits & Pieces: Somalia," *Africa News* 24, 1, 2 (14 January 1985): 16.

41. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, World Bank, *Policy Measures for Rehabilitation and Growth, Special Confidential Study for the Somali Government* (Washington, D.C., 1982).

42. David D. Lattin, "Political Crisis in Somalia," *Horn of Africa* 5, 2 (April/June 1982): 60-64.

43. Perhaps no other writer has captured better the social morbidity and cultural debilitation of the Somali people under Siyaad Barre's regime than Somalia's preeminent novelist, Nuruddin Farah. His latest works are discussed in this issue.

44. Norman N. Miller, "The Other Somalia: Black Trade and the Hidden Economy," *American Universities Fieldstaff Reports: Northeast African Series* 29 (1981), p. 4.

45. Basil Davidson, *Let Freedom Come: Africa in Modern History* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1978), p. 378.

46. The Somali annual rate of population growth is put around 2.8 percent. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, World Bank, *World Development Report, 1984* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 254.

47. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, ed. by C.J. Arthur (New York: International Publishers, 1978), p. 59.

48. Svetozar Stojanovic, *In Search of Democracy in Socialism: History and Party Consciousness*, trans. by Gerson S. Sher (Buffalo, Prometheus Books, 1981); Mihailo Markovic, *Democratic Socialism: Theory and Practice* (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1982); and Steven Lukes, "Marxism, Morality, and Justice," in *Marx and Marxism*, ed. by G.H.R. Parkinson (Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 177-205.



responsibility and common endeavor.

Fifth, situated at the outer rim of the international system, and not so deeply integrated in that system as to generate rigid and profound class divisions, the Somali case calls attention to the existence of some margin of maneuverability to steer the political economy in a more self-reliant manner. However, for African societies to take advantage of those opportunities which result from global "disparities of attention," a conscientious, creative, and competent leadership is necessary — something quite absent, so far, in Somalia.<sup>49</sup> As Gramsci writes,

What is needed for [integral hegemony]... are men [and women] of sober mind, ... who don't cause an absence of bread in the bakeries, who make [forges] run, and who provide the factories with new materials and know how to turn the produce of the country into industrial produce, who insure the safety and freedoms of the people. ... who enable the network of collective services to function and who do not reduce the people to a despair and to a horrible carnage.<sup>50</sup>

Based on a reading of the past dozen or so years of Somali political economy, the future looks very grim indeed. To be sure, the articulated principles of the opposition groups are plausible grist for a struggle against emphysema, acquiescence, and resignation. Nonetheless, before genuine hopes are built on such a fragile reed, a series of notes of caution are in order. First, the social base of the opposition groups is from the same pool of the petty bourgeoisie (with a different ethnic cast) who took power in 1969, and have, thus far, not made any demonstrable strides towards involving the larger masses of the Somali people in the creation of a new agenda. Secondly, their manifestos are still too general and, in many cases, contradictory — ranging from Islamic fundamentalism, clanism, and socialist sentiments. In time, a more coherent ideology, beyond the common animus against the current regime, must be forged and worked out. Thirdly, the movements have yet to pass any tests of credibility regarding their claims to regional solidarity, and democratic aspirations and competence to lead a meaningful reconstruction.

In sum, there is little doubt that all of the above are shot with potentially destructive tensions and traps. Their mature, and hopefully successful, treatment seems unavoidable if the day is to come when militaristic despotism will be eliminated; primordial atavism subdued; the incalculability of war and violence realized; hunger and destitution kept at bayance; and a new vision will allow Somalia (and Africa) to reach for liberty, dignity, and virtue.

49. Contrary to the claims and interpretations of structural determinists, Marx has, on many an occasion, instructed us on the importance of contingencies and the significance of personal and group volition. These are part of historical accidents — "accidents which include... the character of those who at first stand at the head of the movement." Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, 2nd ed. (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1965), p. 209; Ralph Miliband, "Political Action, Determinism, and Contingency," in *Class Power and State Power* (London: Verso, 1983), pp. 131-53; and, of course, the magnificent and fierce critique by E.P. Thompson, *The Poverty of Theory* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979).

50. Antonio Gramsci, *Ordine Nuovo*, quoted in Ralph Miliband, *Marxism and Politics* (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 181.

## **The Predatory State and the Peasantry: Reflections on Rural Development Policy in Somalia**

Abdi I. Samatar

Recent reports, from the drought and famine stricken countries in sub-Saharan Africa, that speak of the incredible loss of human life are sobering reminders of the continuing and deepening crises that have come to symbolize African poverty and underdevelopment. How can one explain this tragedy? Why has Africa come to this grief, and why is there so much destitution? Before one begins to analyze the African situation, it is crucial to remember that even in the most marginal of conditions not everyone is struck by these scourges; the poor and the powerless are the ones that invariably fall victims to calamities. This is so even in a place like the Somali Democratic Republic (hereafter Somalia), which was hailed, in the early 1970s, for its attempts to restructure its economy in order to reduce economic disparity between different social groups.<sup>1</sup> Contrary to the rhetoric of the seventies, this brief article will suggest that, even more than the eco-climatological limitations of the Somali environment, the state structure and state authorities are a direct and immediate impediment to economic growth, economic development, and the assault on rural poverty.

Hunger, the most dramatic and vivid manifestation of poverty, is to a significant degree the result of a society's socio-economic policies and practices. The economic and social policies which a society follows have a tremendous bearing on the well-being of its people. Within Africa, nations have pursued a variety of social and economic policies, with similar policies sometimes producing different consequences, and vice versa.<sup>2</sup> In the case

1. International Labour Office, *Jobs and Skills Program for Africa, Economic Transformation in a Socialist Framework: An Employment and Basic Needs Oriented Development Strategy for Somalia* (Addis Ababa, 1977).

2. To address this conundrum, scholars in development studies have come up with a plethora of theories. For a good review of them, see Richard Sandbrook, *The Politics of Basic Needs: Urban Aspects of Assailing Poverty in Africa* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982).

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of Somalia, the government chose the course of "Scientific Socialism." The policies that have propagated, however, have not been conducive to either economic growth or social equity. The evidence to support these contentions is drawn from data collected during fieldwork in 1983-84 in the Northwest region of Somalia. More specifically, the argument is based on close observation of a rural development campaign that was implemented by the state during the first quarter of 1984. Finally, the Jobs and Skills Program for Africa's (JASPA) suggestion that Somalia's development policy is uniquely redistributive will also be challenged.<sup>3</sup>

### Ecology, Climate and Historical Setting

Agriculture, including livestock raising and farming, is the mainstay of the Somali economy. It has been estimated that about 50 percent of the Somali population make their living in the countryside, the overwhelming majority of them pursuing pastoralism. Only about 20 percent of the rural population earn their subsistence through cultivation.<sup>4</sup>

In a country located in a semi-arid region the main natural constraint to the development of herding and farming, and hence the human condition, is the scarcity and unreliability of rainfall. The average annual precipitation is nowhere more than five hundred millimeters (less than 20 inches), and it is considerably less than that for most parts of the country. Rainfall of this magnitude is sufficient for dryland farming in only a few areas of the country, e.g., the lower third of the Southern region and parts of the Northwest. Outside these areas, most of Somalia is covered by thorn bush and poor savana grass.

Over the centuries, Somalis have developed the means to eke out an existence from this harsh environment. Pastoralism, an adaptation to the dictates of the difficult environment, has been the primary means of exploiting nature. The continuous and dialectical intercourse between the various units of production (families) and the environment has left an indelible mark on the Somali social structure: a segmented order. Given the low level of technology and the scarcity of water and grazing resources, the pastoral unit of production had to be small in order to spread out the population and avoid resource depletion. The social, economic, and political linkages between the family and the larger society were mediated by the particular

material needs of the family. The continually changing material conditions of the family, and the resultant form of interaction with other families, substantially laid the basis for the segmented and clan rooted social structure that evolved.

The adaptation to the dictates of the environment, and the subsequent segmented social structure, did not provide a socio-economic climate propitious for the growth and development of the Somalis.<sup>5</sup> Given such a situation, the Somalis had very little leverage to even marginally manipulate their ecosystem, so as to be able to extract a larger basket of necessities. Consequently, the endemic cycles of the region's climate continue to bring havoc and devastation to the society. The most relevant question in the lives of the majority of Somalis is, "what will next winter bring?" Here, one should take note of the credence given to the argument of those who propound the ecological basis of African poverty.

From this brief outline of pre-colonial pastoralism, we will now shift to an analysis of the contemporary Somali condition.

Somalia is among the least developed of the Third World countries. In fact, it is almost at the bottom of the list of those countries that are frequently referred to as the Fourth World. In 1978, Somalia's Gross National Product (GNP) per capita was estimated at \$185.<sup>6</sup> Although the accuracy of this estimate is suspect, it still suggests that Somalia is one of the most impoverished societies. These bleak statistics are doubted by some, such as JASPA, who have conducted research on rural poverty in Somalia. JASPA contends that a significant portion of the non-cash, non-marketed commodities that are consumed in Somalia never appear in such statistics (e.g., milk consumption in rural areas), and therefore the country's economic situation is not as hopeless as such estimates seem to suggest. To give strength to their proposition, JASPA notes that Somalia produces around 93 percent of its food requirements.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, they argue that the exports of live animals and bananas earn more than enough to cover the cost of necessary food imports.

3. International Labour Office, Jobs and Skills Program for Africa, Rural-Urban Gap and Income Distribution (A Comparative Sub-Regional Study): The Case of Somalia (Addis Ababa, 1982), pp. 22-23.

4. Usually, the Somali rural population is considered to constitute 70 percent of the total population. However, any reasonable and knowledgeable observer will note that this estimate is inaccurate. Mogadishu alone had almost a million inhabitants as of 1984. Hargeisa, the second largest city, has an estimated population of over 300,000. Therefore, these two cities alone have about 30 percent of the country's population of 4.5 million. It is our contention, therefore, that the rural population constitutes no more than 50 percent of Somalia's total population.

5. Here we are referring to the "stateless" culture of the Somali pastoral social system. This subject has been dealt with in Chapter Two of my dissertation, where I theoretically and historically develop the idea of the Somali state form. Two important variables of economic growth and development will be highlighted: (a) the constant eco-climatology; and (b) the degree of articulation within the social system. Abdi I. Samatar, "The Predatory State and the Peasantry: Agrarian Change and the Nature of Rural Poverty in Northwest Somalia, 1880-1984" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California-Berkeley, 1985).

6. United Nations, Food and Agricultural Organization, Report of the High Level WCARRD Follow Up and Lagos Plan of Action Strategy Review Mission, 1-20 May 1982: Review of Rural Development Strategy and Policies in Somalia (1982), p. ii. If one converts \$185 into Somali shillings, even at the lucrative black market rate of 1984, which was \$1 = 56 So, this makes per capita income at 10,360 So. or 28.5 shillings a day. Consider how far this will go when a loaf of bread costs 7 shillings in April 1984. This little exercise underscores the gravity of the situation.

7. International Labour Office, Jobs and Skills Program for Africa, Rural-Urban Gap and Income Distribution, p. 22.

JASPA is quite correct in its contention that some of the non-marketed commodities consumed in Somalia are not accounted for in GNP estimates, and there is something to their suggestion that milk consumption is underestimated. These points notwithstanding, however, the suggestion that Somalia produces 93 percent of its food needs can be challenged. Data collected after nine months of fieldwork in Somalia indicate that these figures on food production are greatly exaggerated. Three points made by JASPA are pertinent to this discussion: first, that the main exports, livestock, and bananas, cover the cost of food imports; secondly, that agricultural production has not only been stagnating, but in many cases declining; and finally, that this agricultural decline is primarily due to outmoded methods of production.

Why are these points relevant? First, if the earnings of the two principal exports are spent on food imports, which consist mainly of produce that can be grown domestically, and there are no other exports of significant value, then Somalia has neither investable capital for increasing productivity in agriculture, nor investable capital for the non-agricultural sectors. Secondly, it is poor economic and social policy to encourage the import of commodities that can be produced locally.

As this brief historical overview shows, given the limits of the natural environment, conditions in Somalia have been less than favorable for development. With this in mind, the role played by the state to expand the productive basis of the society becomes even more important. The next section examines the objectives put forth by the state for the development of the rural sector in Somalia, and the structures that were created to help attain those objectives.<sup>8</sup>

### The State Structure and Rural Development

At the outset, one must stress the dearth of known exploitable mineral wealth in Somalia and the scarcity and unreliability of precipitation. Nevertheless, given such conditions, is the Somali state doing its utmost to create a socio-political environment conducive to economic development and the alleviation of rural poverty? To properly assess the role of the state, it is important to lay out the structures of the state apparatuses that are designed for this purpose. In other words, we will closely scrutinize specific state structures and programs that are geared to addressing the problems of economic underdevelopment and rural poverty. Ultimately, we will gauge the level of correspondence between the blueprints and the reality of the social intercourse that is taking place in the Somali countryside.

8. The evolution of the colonial and post-colonial state and the subsequent intercourse with the Somali social structure has been more fully explored in my dissertation. For the full citation, see footnote 5.

According to a JASPA report, Somalia's development objectives are very unique in tropical Africa. To quote at length:

Since the October 1969 revolution the Government of Somalia has adopted within the framework of its chosen ideology of "Scientific Socialism" a number of policies and programs for economic development which would ensure re-distributive justice as well as provide as much productive employment to its people as possible. One of the first objectives of the current development program (1974-78) is to create conditions where the national product is distributed equitably among the people. Although the objectives of maximization of productive employment is mentioned in the Development Program in a rather general way, the government has been keenly alive to the problem and is perhaps one of the very few countries in Africa which have taken concerted measures to reduce, if not wipe out, unemployment and underemployment. It is again one of the very [few] developing countries which is keen and ready to evaluate earnestly the performance of its policies and programs and take corrective measures.<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, JASPA identifies four major objectives of the Somali development policy: greater self-reliance in development; collective ownership of resources; creation of sufficient productive employment; and, inculcation of the spirit of self-help.<sup>10</sup> A critical component of this policy was the development of the small-scale sector.

How valid are these objectives then and now? To bring this discussion into sharper focus, we turn to the main policy instruments that formed the cutting edge of the "broad and well conceived" program. The first steps taken by the Somali government were aimed at decentralization of the state authority and administrative infrastructure, in particular the sector responsible for rural activities. It was the authorities' contention that such decentralized reform was crucial in order to harness the energies of the masses for socialist construction. Decentralization, unlike administrative deconcentration, supposedly involved the reshaping of state structures so that the local population could have more meaningful input into the development decisions being made. In other words, this reform was designed to enhance state responsiveness to the public.

Somalia's Rural Development Strategy 1981-90 details the reshaping of the state administrative form and function.<sup>11</sup> The objectives of the new strategy were:

1. Reduced rural poverty;
2. Increased rural participation;
3. Increased food production, especially cereals, and improved nutritional levels.

9. International Labour Office, Jobs and Skills Program for Africa, *Economic Transformation in a Socialist Framework*, p. 3.

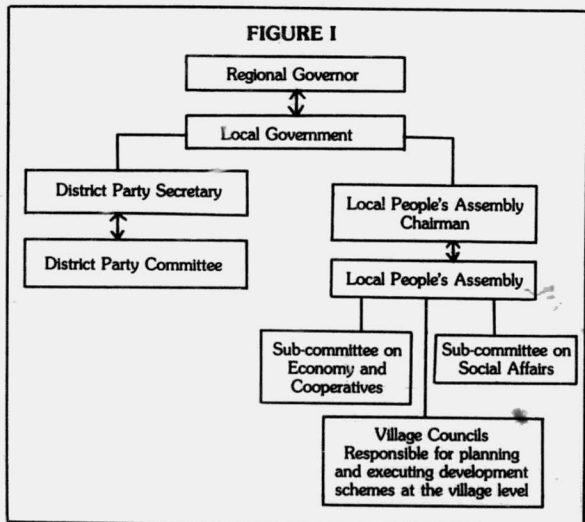
10. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

11. Somalia, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, *Somalia's Rural Development Strategy, 1981-1990*, (1981).

The policy reforms that were to aid in the accomplishments of these objectives included:

1. Development of a set of regional and local government development oriented rural institutions to encourage grass roots participation;
2. Training for rural development at the grass roots and higher levels, and research into the rural development problem;
3. Carrying out a food strategy study to assure adequate food production and food stock.

The administrative structure and the institutional vehicles through which these policy intentions and objectives were to be implemented were the Regional Development Council and, more crucially, the district level organs: the District Party Committee and the Local People's Assembly. Since the essence of the intercourse between the state and the public is the most explicit at the local level, the composition of the local state structure deserves the most attention. Figure 1 shows the main organs of the state at the local level.



As illustrated, the District Party Committee and the Local People's Assembly constitute the governmental structure. Members of the District Party Committee are inducted into the Party after having demonstrated their loyalty to the Party authorities; they are not accountable to the electorate.

The District Party Secretary, formerly known as the District Commissioner, is appointed by the Central Government and is therefore accountable to it. As indicated in Somalia's Rural Development Strategy of 1981-90, the Secretary supervises and coordinates political and administrative activities. He is also responsible for law, order, and security.<sup>12</sup> In contrast to the Party, the Local People's Assembly is an "elected" body (to stand for election, however, one must have the approval of the Party). The Chairman of the Assembly and the Party Secretary are both responsible to the Regional Governor. The Local Assembly has the legal authority to establish a village council. The two standing subcommittees are responsible for (i) the economy and cooperatives; and (ii) social affairs, i.e., public health, justice, and education. Finally, the village council is responsible for planning and executing development schemes at the village level.

Given these administrative arrangements, how effective have they been in practice? In other words, how effective is this reformed structure at harnessing the energies of the rural population? How well does the "new" authority structure accommodate popular input into policy formation? To provide some tentative answers to these crucial questions, we will examine the mechanics of a rural development campaign that unfolded in the first quarter of 1984 in the Northwest region of Somalia. Briefly, it is our position that the relationship between the authorities (national, regional and local), and a segment of the rural population, as observed during this campaign, is characteristic of other government efforts at rural development.

### The State and Rural Society: A Litmus Test

#### Northwest Somalia

The Northwest region (*Woqooyi Galbeed*) is located at an elevation ranging between sea level and a height of five thousand feet above sea level. By Somali standards, it is ecologically one of the better parts of the country. Significant areas of the region receive enough rainfall to allow the cultivation of sorghum and maize on a yearly basis. Although the area receives its share of climatic cycles, on the average 30 percent of its population subsist primarily as cultivators. The Northwest, like other parts of Somalia, was historically used for pastoralism. The transition from pure pastoralism to cultivation started in earnest around the turn of the century.<sup>13</sup> Although

12. *Ibid.*, p. 4

13. The origin of the historic conditions that brought about such a transition has not yet been worked out. I.M. Lewis tangentially touched on this subject in his book, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics Among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961).

farming was practiced by a large segment of the rural population early on, it was only in the last forty years that most of the arable land in the Northwest has been brought under the plough. Mixing pastoralism and cultivation was a temporary panacea for some of the weaknesses of the pastoral economy. Farming enhanced the food self-reliance of the pastoral household. Instead of the customary barter of animals for food grains, several members of the household were left to grow grain. Farming also provided a safety valve for the pastoralists at times of epidemics, when most of their herds would be decimated.<sup>14</sup> The reliability of that safety valve, however, depended very much on good rains in the spring and summer to guarantee a harvest.

Although dryland farming partly relieved some of the old problems that bedeviled pastoralists, it also generated new difficulties. As more and more land was brought under cultivation, particularly in the last four decades, the pastoral sector began to feel the squeeze as it lost its traditional grazing areas, especially pasturelands that had been used during dry seasons and droughts. Secondly, pastoralist/peasants found themselves depending increasingly on cultivation. Hence, increased cultivation created new limits for both pastoralism and farming. Pastoralism, which originally complemented dryland farming and made it a feasible vocation, was now being undermined as cultivation expanded.<sup>15</sup> The result has been the gradual separation of the rural population into two segments: those who are pastoralists in the main, and those who primarily depend on farming. It is the interaction between the latter group and the state that we are concerned with.

At present, it is estimated that about twelve thousand to fifteen thousand families in Northwest Somalia make their living as peasants.<sup>16</sup> Table 1 shows the breakdown of agricultural land in the region.<sup>17</sup>

Estimates indicate that an average peasant family owns 17.5 cropped acres and 8.75 fallow acres. However, our fieldwork suggests these figures to be rather high in the most settled district, Gabile. In research conducted in that region, this writer discovered that there was very little land left in the area to accommodate further horizontal expansion of cultivation.

Historically, the Northwest and its people, like much of the rest of what

TABLE 1  
Cropped and Fallow Area by District  
(in hectares)

	Hargeysa	Gabile	Boorama	TOTAL
Cropped	4,000	60,000	20,000	84,000
Fallow	2,000	30,000	10,000	42,000
TOTAL	6,000	90,000	30,000	126,000

SOURCE: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, World Bank, Appraisal of the Northwest Region Agricultural Project, (1976), Annex 2, p. 3.

used to be the British Somaliland Protectorate, benefited very little from the colonial state in regards to increasing productivity. The most important colonial agricultural program was the bunding (earth banks to conserve water) of some farmland in the mid-fifties. Other projects included the establishment of an agricultural experimental station in Abu Riin, a small village about thirty miles west of Hargeysa, during the same period. Several laws were also passed that confined cultivation to particular areas. True to its lineage, the post-colonial state did very little to increase agricultural/food production in the peasant sector. It also did little to explore ways and means that would enable the peasant household to weather the climatic changes that had for so long endangered rural existence. The bunding program continued into the mid-sixties; however, when this came to an end, it covered less than a quarter of the region's cropland. The most visible agricultural program in the Northwest during the sixties was the establishment of a state farm in Tugwajaleh, twenty miles west of Gabile. Intended as a demonstration project for the peasants in the surrounding areas, there were tremendous amounts of labour and machinery at its disposal. The farm was also supposed to contribute significantly to national food production. It is inconceivable how the peasants could have learned from the workings of the state farm when the conditions on the peasant farms contrasted so sharply with those prevailing in the state farm — especially in terms of available manpower and access to machinery.

According to conversations with a cross section of peasants, critical problems which nag the rural area include scarcity of water, plant disease,

14. The last major devastating epidemic in the Northwest was in 1979-80. According to our informants, this epidemic virtually wiped out the peasants' herds. This epidemic was named "Duuga," meaning the sweeper.

15. In some of the colonial agricultural reports in the fifties, there are hints of the emergence of this. Another development which added to the emerging conflict in the rural sector was the commercialization of livestock and the consequent private development of water points in areas that were previously common grazing grounds. See Somaliland Protectorate, Department of Agricultural and Veterinary Service, *Annual Report for 1953*, (Hargeysa, 1953), p. 2.

16. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, World Bank, Appraisal of the Northwest Region Agricultural Development Project: Somalia, Report no. 912-SO, (Nairobi: East Africa Projects Department, Central Agricultural Projects Division, 1976). The World Bank puts the Northwest population at 120,000 but we think this is an underestimation.

17. SOGREAH, Northwest Region Agricultural Development Project, Technical Report No. 9 (July 1981).

soil erosion, low producer prices, and the lack of agricultural extension services. The toll of these problems is such that the peasant household is almost always on the verge of disaster. On the average, crop failures have occurred once every four years since 1960, and there is no guarantee that production in a good year will cover the lean years. The situation is further compounded when one takes into consideration the natural increase in population which must be accommodated (Somalia's annual population growth is a staggering 2.8 percent). A human crisis was unfolding in the rural areas of Northwest Somalia. Not only were the rural producers not self-sufficient in food, but they were also unable to purchase food commodities from urban towns on a regular basis. In essence, there was very little difference between the post-colonial government's policies<sup>18</sup> and those of its predecessor.

Out of desperation, peasants who had left the rural areas returned to experiment with *kat* (*Catha edulis*, a mild stimulant), a lucrative cashcrop, in the mid-sixties.<sup>19</sup> During the experimental phase, 1965-75, only a handful of rural residents had more than two hundred plants. As the droughts of the 1970s devastated the rural economy, and urban consumption of the drug increased, those with *kat* farms took advantage of the opportunity to reverse their declining fortunes. This lesson was not lost on others, who saw a chance to improve their income. As a result, *kat* farming became a visible cashcrop in the Northwest from the late 1970s to 1983. Of course, this burgeoning economic change was occurring within the perimeter of the "revolutionary" law. As the income earning power of *kat* became increasingly known (1978-79), many members of the urban petite bourgeoisie, such as merchants and state officials, moved back into the rural areas. In fact, some of the largest *kat* farms were owned by individuals who belonged to these two social categories, as the average peasant's involvement with its production was significant, but not substantial. During the few years before 1983, when the government banned *kat* imports and production, the impact of the financially successful rural growers was felt in many of the towns in the Northwest. Seen as worthless for so many years, a farm in the drylands of the Northwest suddenly became a precious commodity. By 1980-81, *kat* had become the most important income earning, domestically grown cashcrop in the region. The appearance of permanent town-like housing in place of huts and adobes in the rural landscape was evidence enough that something dramatic was taking place. For most peasants, the little cash they earned from *kat* was an important supplement to their old means of earning

a living. For instance, milk, which was usually sold to purchase sugar or other items, could now be saved for consumption as cash from *kat* sales could be used in its place.

All this agro-business bustle occurred with the full knowledge of the Ministry of Agriculture, the regional authorities (some of whom owned *kat* farms), and the national ministers. The monetization of the rural economy unfolded with the total awareness of the "revolutionary" government, whose rural development, food-oriented strategy was well known. During these years, not a single study was conducted by the concerned ministries, or any other authority, to assess and evaluate the impact of *kat* farming on food production or other aspects of the rural economy. Paradoxically, the first statistical survey of the drug was compiled in September 1974, almost a year after the ban on the production, and importation of *kat* was instituted. The law that banned it also set a deadline for the destruction of *kat* farms, the so-called eradication campaign. The D-day was 19 March 1985.

### The Eradication Campaign

In announcing the ban on *kat* the Somali government contended that it had five ill-effects on the peasant family and the society at large.

1. All family members of the grower household develop the habit of chewing *kat*. Consequently, this induces economic, health, and moral problems in the family.
2. Family conflict over the *kat*'s income occurs. Such squabbles and strife within the family is due to the ease with which income from the drug is generated. In other words, the money belongs to no particular person.
3. Most *kat* growers have given up food production and animal husbandry after having earned such easy money. Instead of working hard, these growers waste a lot of time in chewing rituals.
4. *Kat* thefts are common. These could result in injury or death;
5. *Kat* induced laziness occurs in the work force.<sup>20</sup>

The Somali government claimed that these shortcomings, and, more importantly, the fact that most of the *kat* growing farms can easily be used to grow food crops, were convincing enough to outlaw and eradicate *kat*.<sup>21</sup> How valid are these claims? Let us confront these arguments in the order in which they were presented.

First, the argument that the chewing habit is contagious is quite valid. What must be questioned, however, is the assertion that the habit has become an obstacle to the family's economic progress. In other words, what

18. Among its programs were the Crash Agricultural Program, the Agricultural Development Agency, and, more recently, the Northwest Agricultural Development Project.

19. *Kat*, a herb grown in Ethiopia and Kenya, has been — until very recently — a major import of Somalia. Chewing *kat* was the main form of entertainment in the urban areas. Approximately one pound of *kat* cost 100-200 Somali shillings in early 1984.

20. Jamhuuriyada Demoqradiga Soomaaliya, Tiiro Koobayso Qilmaynta Qaadka, (Mogadishu, 1983), pp. 1-4.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 4.



economic progress are we talking about? Were there any economic improvements taking place in the rural Northwest during the two decades that preceded the *kat* phenomenon? The answer is a simple no. Indeed, an ex-colonial agricultural officer, after being away from the region for twenty-two years, commented that the only progress he noticed upon his return in 1983 was the highway linking Hargeysa and Gabile.<sup>22</sup>

Secondly, it is an economic fact that *kat* is a quicker generator of income (e.g., it is only planted once and yields numerous harvests a year), than sorghum growing and livestock raising. Moreover, there is little evidence to suggest that conflict over *kat* income is a widespread rural problem.

Thirdly, government data does not prove that the peasants were abandoning food production.<sup>23</sup> There is not a shred of evidence in the statistical compendium to substantiate this claim. In Gabile, for instance, contrary to the rhetoric, our sample indicates that 10.2 percent of the cropland was under *kat*, and only 8 percent of all farmland (this includes fallow land) was being sown with the drug. The survey covered 80 farms in the area most densely cultivated with *kat*. Of almost 2447 acres of farmland, only 195 acres were sown with the drug. The peasants in the district overwhelmingly argued that income from *kat* had enabled them to extend their areas under cultivation, as they could afford to pay for more tractor time. Furthermore, peasants were able to re-sow if and when the first seeds failed to germinate, and they could store some grain for bad years. However, as peasants began keeping more of their grains, fewer quantities found their way to urban towns. This, of course, became a concern to the government.

Fourthly, the "life threatening" *kat* thefts were usually committed by members of the local contingent of the armed forces, and not rural peasants.

Fifthly, using stereotypical and prejudicial explanations — e.g., induced laziness in the work force — without, in fact, having hard evidence to pin-point the real factors that may be responsible for poor labor productivity may put the blame on the wrong place.

Finally, the claims over the national radio, that experts in the agricultural sciences had studied the region and concluded that *kat* farms were also suitable for food production are questionable. Even if such studies were carried out, the results were never shared with the peasants.

Thus, without much real knowledge of the problems caused by *kat* farming and the conditions of the rural people, the government passed its infamous banning law. The ordinance initially stipulated that *kat* eradication must be completed by 19 March 1985, but the National People's Assembly recommended to the government that this grace period be shortened. The

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government accepted this recommendation, and the deadline was re-scheduled for 19 March 1984.

As the day of reckoning approached, state propaganda increased. During 1983, the first international annual conference on *kat* was held in Moqdishu. Representatives of international agencies and governments in the region were invited. Among the issues that were discussed in the conference were its social impact and whether it was a drug or not. Partly because of the haste with which the conference was organized — to attract foreign financial assistance and to give an aura of legitimacy to the eradication campaign — the paucity of first hand research on the economic and social problems of *kat* was quite conspicuous. The hopes of *kat* growers, far away from the conference room, that the participation of international agencies would have some moderating influence on the state's decision to eradicate the drug were dashed as the conference quietly came to an end.

With the tacit support of the conference proceedings, national, regional, and local authorities stepped up and heightened their propaganda machinery. Through the use of scare tactics such as huge fires, long term imprisonment, and possible confiscation of farms, the social terrain was softened enough to carry out the eradication campaign without any visible resistance, except in the most sullen form. Moreover, although there were promises of technical assistance for those who willingly destroyed their *kat* plants earlier than the deadline, the only ones who benefited from this were non-peasants. For example, the Northwest Regional Governor received a cash reward and other compensations for destroying his *kat* holdings with "revolutionary spirit." The authorities also targeted their venom on particular growers who they thought were possible leaders of resistance. The crops of these individuals were destroyed first to demonstrate to the small-holders that there was no escape. In addition, any grower who showed any recalcitrance was humiliated, threatened with imprisonment, and never given a chance to utter a word in protest. By mid-March, the peasants took to their farms, having finally realized that their saints and prayers could not save them from the wrath of the state. As an eighty year old peasant said,

... in the colonial days we were able to argue with the colonial authorities and question the merits of their ideas. Occasionally, we won the arguments; and the officers used to heed what we had to say. Nowadays, neither can we utter a word to the authorities nor resist if all our properties are taken. Despite humiliation, abuse, and injustice, we must always exude our admiration for these rapacious and venal powers.<sup>24</sup>

22. Interview with unnamed source, February 1984, Northwest Somalia.

23. See footnote 21.

24. Quite often, after returning to town with the authorities after a couple of hours of destructive campaigning in the countryside, these awaited a levish, many course meal paid for by state funds. In contrast, the crops of those peasants who paid for the officials' meals through their taxes lay in ruin, with no source for funding their already hungry families. Translated interview, Gabile, Somalia, March 1984.

By the end of the third week of March, the campaign was nearly over. *Kat* farms were destroyed and although spring was beginning, and it was time to plant, there was no material help from the state in sight. The promises of assistance were nothing more than a cruel hoax.

What does this example tell us about the post-colonial military state and the relationship between the state and the peasantry? Of what consequence are such state actions to rural development and the alleviation of poverty? A re-examination of the claims of the 1981-90 Rural Development Strategy may be suggestive:

1. Decentralization of state authority and administrative structure was one of the cornerstones of the strategy. Our research and field observations reveal that:

a. Decentralization (if this means devolution of authority) in Somalia is a myth. What has taken place is nothing more than administrative deconcentration. Deconcentration means moving part of the state administrative structure from its headquarters in the city to the periphery, without delegating more authority to lower levels

b. The elected Local People's Assembly is not accountable and responsive to the local electorate except in the most trivial ways<sup>25</sup>

c. There is, in some cases, an alliance between members of the Local People's Assembly and representatives of the central government, i.e., the District Party Secretary. This alliance is usually forged when it legitimates the demands of higher authorities on the public

d. No matter how blatantly abusive the local authorities are, the public has no recourse to the law to mitigate the maltreatment. In fact, whoever dares to raise their voice could suffer more humiliating consequences.

e. In the two districts we had the opportunity to work in, none of the authorities knew about the existence of Somali's Rural Development Strategy, in spite of the fact that it was in its fourth year.<sup>26</sup> There were neither economic nor cooperative committees, not social committees.<sup>27</sup> The entire program was simply non-existent beyond paper.

25. This was clearly demonstrated during the eradication campaign. Apart from carrying out the state plan, these supposedly elected officials had no say whatsoever in the decisions that were being made. In fact, one of them confided that he saw himself as "nothing more than a search dog for the authorities."

26. Somalia's Five Year Development Plan, 1982-86 does not mention the existence of the Rural Development Strategy. This is more than an oversight. Somalia, Ministry of Planning and Coordination, Somalia's Five Year Development Plan, 1982-86, (1982).

27. On one occasion, we asked two senior assembly members in one district about these committees. Surprisingly, one rhetorically explained that such committees should be created. This does not mean that the establishment of rural organizations would make a difference, especially given the nature of contemporary Somalia.

f. Peasants and pastoralists had no one to talk to about the difficulties they were having. These difficulties included severe water shortages in the winter, food shortages, and abusive tax collectors

2. Regarding popular participation, we quote from the strategy:

Fundamental to the rural development efforts envisaged for the coming decade is the increased participation of the rural population, including women and youth, through rural organizations and institutions at the various levels. Increased rural participation will be fostered in the decision-making process to influence the nature, process, sequence, and implementation of natural rural development programs and rural development projects at various levels.<sup>28</sup>

In spite of the rhetoric, the only form of "participation" by women and youth that was observed was in forced marches, parades, and rallies to demonstrate their "loyalty" to the state. There was never any real discussion of policies. Voluntary civil associations are crucial vehicles for participation to take root. Yet the abuse by state authorities of such civil organizations as the women's association, the neighborhood association, and the youth association will have a negative effect on voluntarism for years to come. Indeed, there is an absence of self-help in present-day Somalia, a phenomenon that has informed mass mobilization and revolutionary fervor in the past

3. Alleviation of rural poverty and increased food production. The destruction of an income generating cashcrop without the provision of compensatory assistance, such as technical, organizational, and agricultural inputs, is a sure way to condemn Northwestern peasants to their cruel past — a past that those forming "development" policy know little about. Without having a clear idea about the impact of *kat* growing on food production, the authorities blindly and brutishly massacred the goose that may have laid the golden eggs. For the present, it is very difficult to see how the eradication campaign may have aided either the relief of rural poverty or increased food production.<sup>29</sup> To add to the sorry tale, the ban on *kat* imports was not very effective, particularly in the Northwest. In fact, before the beginning of the campaign, this writer made frequent visits to a District Commissioner's home and often found the security guards chewing the herb inside their tents. It was also common knowledge that

28. Somalia, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Somalia's Rural Development Strategy, p. 11.

29. It is quite likely that further expansion of *kat* farming would have occurred, given the lack of intelligent state programs for agriculture and the drug's income generating capacity. The data collected from field research is pregnant with this likelihood. If such an expansion had continued, it is probably that *kat* would have taken up a significant portion of the region's agricultural acreage. This is all based, of course, on the assumption of continued growth of the *kat* market without severe decline in the price of the drug as the quantity produced increased. Fortunately, or unfortunately, the state authorities did not have any sensible ideas on this.



vast quantities of *kat* were smuggled into the cities using military vehicles.

On three occasions, we were able to witness such bureaucratic hypocrisy.

In Northwestern Somalia, then, the relationship between state authorities and the peasantry highlights the perversion of rule and governance. More to the point, the situation resembles one of a predator and its prey — as country folks allegorized, “the hyena-state.” In retrospect, the words of the eighty year old peasant seem rather instructive.

Was the eradication campaign, in the form it was implemented, the only practical option for the state? We suggest it was not. In fact, if the state was really being serious about participatory and distributive development, then ways and means could have been fashioned to use the income from *kat* to rejuvenate the rural economy. For instance, by extending the grace period, say to four years, while curbing further expansion, state authorities could have used this time to instruct peasants in developing water resources or increasing food production, using local resources for development. From our observations and discussions, it appears that the majority of peasantry would have been more than willing to participate in such an effort.<sup>30</sup>

### Concluding Remarks

The neglect, abuse, and abandonment of popular organizations, such as the women's association, and self-help schemes in the rural areas are indicative of the lack of state commitment to participatory and distributive development programs. Furthermore, the present neglect, and consequent destruction, of the private small-holder sector squarely contradicts the political rhetoric used by the state in its appeal to donor agencies.

The Five Year Development Plan, Somalia's Rural, Development Strategy, the Somali Socialist Party, the National People's Assembly, and the Local People's Assembly are, at best, crude and grotesque parodies of the ideas and the substance they supposedly embody. In short, the state is not helping the peasant small-holder to challenge the perpetual demands of the Somali ecosystem; in fact, it is stultifying his efforts.

30. But to think in these terms under the dominance of the present government is wishful. This is not the first campaign or program that was conducted in this manner. For example, the Arabic language literacy campaign that was carried out between December 1983 and May 1984 also shared many of the same problems. To conduct the eradication campaign in a different and more enlightened manner presumes a different state logic.

## Literature and Politics in Somalia: The Case of Nuruddin Farah

Juliet I. Okonkwo

Many critics of the political novel have often speculated on whether the novel, as an art form, can successfully absorb political ideology without doing violence to the aesthetics of the novel genre.<sup>1</sup> Occasionally, as in Armah's *Two Thousand Seasons*, Soyinka's *Season of Anomy*, or Ngugi's *Petals of Blood*, the techniques of the novel are manipulated to accommodate the writer's social, economic, and political message. The political novel, whatever the realities it explores, or the ideological fervour propagated, can be faithful to artistic aesthetics. It can describe and interpret human experience, “selectively taking the facts of existence and imposing order and form upon them in an aesthetic pattern,”<sup>2</sup> thereby making them meaningful and relevant. Nuruddin Farah has been able to achieve this in his two political novels, *Sweet and Sour Milk* and *Sardines*, by bringing his creative imagination to project characters who move about in the mainstream of politics within a realistic setting. He has marshalled his creative resources to mold his readers' opinion against social and political oppression; to champion the cause of individual or corporate freedom; to expose those aberrations, such as nepotism, tribal allegiances, and materialism, which are responsible for the debasement of humanity and the corruption of African values.

Farah's political novels have great relevance for the growing reaction against the debilitating developments in most post-independence African societies. Thematically, they are significant not only in their Somali or African context, but also in all societies where oppressive regimes have become entrenched. In an age in which people have become more politically conscious, national politics have progressively assumed more complex dimensions in the African continent, and Farah's novels present an incisive picture of contemporary politics and politicians. He leaves one in no doubt about his attitude to the maneuverings of the Jomo Kenyattas, the Idi Amins, the

1. Some of the more recent expressions of this are summarized in Bernth Lindfors, “Petals of Blood as a Popular Novel,” Hal Wylie, et al., eds., *In Contemporary African Literature*, (Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1983), pp. 50-52.

2. Nuruddin Farah, “The Creative Writer and the Politician,” paper presented at a Writer's Workshop in Zimbabwe, 25 August 1983. Also published in *The Guardian* (Nigeria), 7 September 1983, p. 11.

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Bokassas and the Siyaad Barre of Africa. Although his novels manipulate a deep political consciousness, he is careful not to adopt an ideological stance as Ngugi, Armah, Soyinka, or Sembene Ousmane have done. He seems committed to the mirroring of the foibles, cruelties, and imperfections of men in society; and this has contributed to his success.

In portraying the realities of the Somali Republic for approximately twenty-three years, Farah constantly refers to sociological and historical signposts as reference points in depicting related events in the lives of his characters. The setting of his novels is without doubt the Somali Democratic Republic. The Republic was formed from the amalgamation of the Somaliland Protectorate and the Italian-administered United Nations Trusteeship in 1960. Its society is one where nomadic values conflict with Muslim and European cultures. The former, however, seem to be strongly enshrined and are central to the country's national image. A coup d'état brought its military government into power in 1969. The chief city of Moqdishu is real and symbolic to all the characters in Farah's novels as the melting pot of all cultures.

*Sweet and Sour Milk* and *Sardines* present the terror and inhumanity which are the hallmarks of a tyrannical and dictatorial fascist state. The novels register with suffocating intimacy the brutality, suspicion, mental and physical degradation which are consequent upon unstable, totalitarian governments operated by megalomaniacs with a lust for unbridled power. In *Sweet and Sour Milk*, the General, who is also the Head of State, had declared that he is the country's constitution, and possesses the right to pass laws and sign decrees at will.<sup>3</sup> The General employs all the resources he can muster to keep the people in abject subjection and a state of humiliation. There is no longer the tragicomedy of revolutionary rhetoric in the midst of gross underdevelopment, as found in Farah's previous novel, *A Naked Needle*. *A Naked Needle* had quietly registered the Revolution ushered in by a bloodless coup.

Like all such new governments in Africa, the change of leadership from civilian to military had been jubilantly welcomed; and most intellectuals were loyal to the new administration. Disenchantment, however, crept in when it became evident that a world of difference exists between "the theory and practice of an ideology which was meant to convert the country into a truly independent socialist state."<sup>4</sup> The Revolution, in its embryonic stage, had held out the prospect of freedom for the people who expected that they would be given an opportunity to develop the country for the benefit of its citizens. Expectations had been high that the resources of the country would be harnessed for the general welfare in a state of reasonable freedom. There

3. Nuruddin Farah, *Sweet and Sour Milk* (London: Heinemann, 1979), pp. 226-27. Other quotations from this novel are taken from this edition.

4. *Ibid.*, *A Naked Needle* (London: Heinemann, 1979), Prelude.

was also the hope that the disparate units which make up the country would be unified and mobilized to transform Somalia into a truly modern state. To a representative intellectual:

... the freedom of a nation is common property, which a dozen men of whatever persuasion should not do away with at their own discretion. Loyalty to the Revolution is a necessity in order that unification of the different sectors of this society be made a reality.<sup>5</sup>

Before long, however, an allegation is made that Siyaad Barre's leadership has gone entirely into the Russian Reserve. This allegation is confirmed as the Revolution crystallizes into a repressive dictatorship backed by the Soviets.

Farah conceives his political novels as "an alternative to the propaganda that the state mediocrity in Somalia produces and puts on the shelves, an alternative and true record of history."<sup>6</sup> One significant aspect of the General's regime is its censorship and monopoly of information. It practices selectiveness, distortion, and, often, fabrication of information which it feeds the public. For instance, the claim that the regime is a "revolutionary" one is contradicted by events in the novel. The government's assumption that Somalia has achieved independence balks in the face of the obvious Soviet dependency and citizens are often molested for expressing anti-Soviet sentiments — as revealed in the reason given for the detention of Ibrahim II Siciliano:

'Why are you holding Ibrahim?' . . .

'For anti-Soviet activities.'

'Anti-Soviet?'

'Anti-Soviet activities.'

'But we are not in the Soviet Union. We are in the Somali Democratic Republic, a sovereign African state. Not in the Soviet Union. We are not.'

The General employs sycophants, like the singer Dulman, to "sing the psalms of the General's praise names."<sup>7</sup> School children and a special organization called the Green Guards mouth slogans to boost the General's image. Great effort is expended to sell the idea to the national that the General is "The father of the nation. The carrier of wisdom. The provider of comforts. A demi-god."<sup>8</sup> It is this diversion of the nation's mass media organs, from the dissemination of authentic and useful information to the persistent adulation and ego-boosting of the General, that keeps real knowledge from the

5. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

6. James Lampley, "A View of home from the outside" (interview), *Africa*, No. 124, December, 1981, pp. 81-82.

7. Farah, *Sweet and Sour Milk*, p. 198.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

9. *Ibid.*

people of the country. Baako of Armah's *Fragments* is compelled by the same situation to relinquish his job. In a rural, nomadic, educationally backward country as Somalia, right information is a prerequisite for progress, especially rapid progress that is envisioned in a revolutionary state; but that is kept away from the people. Soyaan of *Sweet and Sour Milk* believes that what Somalia needs is

The demystifica-hic-tion of in-hic-formation. Tell the hic masses in the simplest hic of terms what is happening. Demystify hic politics. Empty those heads filled with tons of rhetoric. Uncover whether hiding hic behind pregnant letters such as KGB, CIA, or other hic wicked alphabet of mysteries.<sup>10</sup>

The extent to which the General and his agents control and manipulate information is demonstrated in the manner by which they process the posthumous image of Soyaan himself. Soyaan had been one of the General's greatest opponents and critics. He belonged to a group who dedicated themselves to the overthrow of the General and the dismantling of oppressive state institutions. Soyaan considers "the General is usurper, a tribalist, a fascist of the first grade, a Dionysius."<sup>11</sup> In fact, investigations suggest that Soyaan was eliminated on the orders of the General, who feared his dedication to justice and the democratic process. Yet, at Soyaan's death, the General set his men to reverse that image, and instead built it up to make Soyaan appear as one of his most loyal supporters. This underhanded clever ruse is designed to break the ranks of Soyaan's associates and win favour for the General. It is meant as an apple of discord among the opposition.

Another example of the repression and intrigues of the Somali government can be seen in the fate of Farah's character Medina, in *Sardines*. When Medina is appointed editor of the government's main propaganda machinery, the nation's most important daily newspaper, her genuine revolutionary tendency propels her to challenge the editorial policy of singing the General's eulogies daily. Committed to the objective of disseminating truth about the corrupt and horrifying activities of the government, she falls afoul of the regime. She is relieved of her post, and banned from writing or publishing any written word. To force her loyalty, her husband is offered a ministerial appointment.

Yet another instance of the General's cruel rule is found in the tragic circumstances which befall Amina in *Sardines*. In order to safeguard the image of the General and his regime, Amina's father is intimidated into muteness when his daughter is subjected to rape. Her three assailants had been apprehended, but, on the orders of the General, they are released

without punishment:

"The case of your daughter," said the General, "must be isolated; it must be treated as though it were devoid of any political significance; it must be dealt with as having no political implication whatsoever." Her father, a major and a government minister, had no choice but obey the General's orders. Loyalty to the Revolution. He would do it for the good name of the Revolution.<sup>12</sup>

As shown in *Sardines*, and *Sweet and Sour Milk*, the maintenance of the General's public image is expensive to the nation, whose citizens remain in abject ignorance of the true events in their country. Thus, such atrocities as the forcible abduction and circumcision of a visiting, western-born sixteen year old girl of Somali parentage are perpetrated without public outcry (*Sardines*). The event leaves the girl in a state of perpetual mental derangement. The torture and mutilation of citizens that have become daily occurrences in detention camps and prisons are carefully hidden from the people. Instead, citizens' minds are directed to religious concerns.

Farah's political novels have been aptly described as an exploration of a system of protected disorder, "a dismantling of the organic elements of an old society — family, religion, affections, passions, customs — reassembled into a bogus structure."<sup>13</sup> All those family and kinship relationships which work for stability and well-being in the traditional system have been converted by the General into instruments of terror, coercion, and suppression. The family patriarchs, like Keynaan of *Sweet and Sour Milk*, have been turned into purveyors of suppression. Part II of *Sweet and Sour Milk* is introduced with a short epigraph from William Reich:

In the figure of the father the authoritarian state has its representative in every family, so that the family becomes its most important instrument of power.<sup>14</sup>

This epigraph summarizes the parallel which the author establishes between the family patriarch and the Head of State. Starting from Chapter Six and ending in Chapter Ten, Farah explores the operative mode of the patriarchs of the family and the state. He delineates the unnatural use to which the dictator has put the revered role of the father figure in the family. Chapter Six is devoted specifically to an extended conversation between Loyaan, the son, and Keynaan, in order to examine the high-handedness of the patriarch in the family. Like the General, Keynaan plays the outrageous role of oppressor, instead of the expected protective father. There is no love lost between Keynaan and the members of his immediate family. An almost Oedipal hatred exists between him and his sons (Soyaan and Loyaan).

12. Nuruddin Farah, *Sardines* (London: Allison & Busby, 1981), p. 120

13. D.R. Ewen, "Nuruddin Farah, *Sweet and Sour Milk*," *World Literature Written in English*, 1981 Autumn, Vol. 20, No. 2, pp. 221-224.

14. Farah, *Sweet and Sour Milk*, p. 97.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 20. In this speech Soyaan has the hiccups.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 178.

Keynaan's loyalty and silence to the General is bought by his appointment as a Security Officer. With this new found favour, he is prepared to collude with the General against his family. He becomes an accomplice in the desecration of Soyaan's memory, joining the General's regime in proclaiming Soyaan an apostle of the dictatorship. His dishonesty lends credence to the falsehood being peddled about that Soyaan's last words were: "Labour is Honour — And there is no General but our General,"<sup>15</sup> giving the impression that Soyaan died serving the General.

Keynaan prevents a medical autopsy on Soyaan in order to forestall the discovery of Soyaan's death by poison. The threat to peaceful existence in the family is echoed in Keynaan's defense of the official glorification of his dead son:

I am the father. It is my prerogative to give life and death as I find fit. I've chosen to breathe life into Soyaan. And remember one thing, Loyaan: if I decide this minute to cut you in two, I can. The law of this land invests in men of my age the power. I am the Grand Patriarch.<sup>16</sup>

When Loyaan collides with the forces of the government who demand his exile, Keynaan lends his authority and weight to the resolution of that political confrontation.

In addition to the use of the patriarch, the General utilizes other blood relationships to coerce individuals into conformity, much in the same manner that Soyinka indicates in *The Interpreters*<sup>17</sup> and Legson Kayira in *The Detainee*<sup>18</sup>, for

The essence of a totalitarian regime is that the citizen is deprived of all other responsibilities than his responsibility to the state. . . . Everything is reduced to a formula in monochrome. In that atmosphere no exercise of responsibility is required or indeed tolerated. All that is asked is conformity.<sup>19</sup>

In this drive to extract conformity, members of a family are held responsible for the recalcitrance of each one of them. Women are the most exploited over this, and they have the obligation to ensure that their sons and husbands comply with the General's directives. One security guard explains to a woman who tries to protect Loyaan during the public demonstration of the Rendezvous of the Brooms:

We want you to guarantee before everybody here that this man will behave and not make a nuisance of himself again. And to do that I need your name, and your husband's name.<sup>20</sup>

15. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 95.

17. Wole Soyinka, *The Interpreters* (London: Heinemann, 1970), pp. 98, 107.

18. Legson Kayira, *The Detainee* (London: Heinemann, 1974), p. 142.

19. The Marquises of Reading, "These Freedoms," in *The Meaning of Freedom*, Viscount Samuel, ed. (London: Pall Mall Press, 1956), p. 86.

20. Farah, *Sweet and Sour Milk*, p. 189.

Thus,

. . . women as saviours, women as protectors; women as the backbone of the family's unity and safety. . . had the difficult task of making sure these men wouldn't lose their temper, not their heads, and speak their minds and in that way endanger their own lives and the lives of the women and the children who were financially dependent on them.<sup>21</sup>

Again, as in *The Detainee*, kith and kin are bribed or intimidated into becoming agents of the system. The result is the erection of an atmosphere of fear and suspicion, where each individual owes it to himself to guard his utterances and avoid "indiscretions," even within the family. Ibrahim complains that:

One cannot disguise the fact that our people have been made suspicious of one another, that this regime has given a two-handed sword sharp at both ends to each of us. Must everything be reinterpreted according to the code of clan-, class- or group-interest, must everything be seen in this light? Nothing escapes the close scrutiny of the security system whose planted ears have sprouted in every homestead.<sup>22</sup>

On the other side of this kinship coin is the General's manipulation of his own familial extensions. His repressive regime is propped up by a sophisticated network of clan-based nepotism. "Tribalism which had under heavy attack by Koshin in *A Naked Needle* as an agent of division that militates against nation-building, is now resuscitated and organized into a potent base of the General's power structure."<sup>23</sup> The General recruits his lieutenants from among his tribe and puts them into sensitive positions. Thus, some barely literate officials occupy exalted positions. For instance, the Minister of Presidency, who is second to the General in status and wields extensive power, had been only a junior officer in the navy. In order to feel well-guarded, the General also appointed a number of his tribesmen to prominent, key army positions, and sent their rivals from other clans into prison or exile, where they are jobless and humiliated.

Methods of harassment of the opposition include persistent power-manipulation, and dawn disappearances of friends, who are either sent into exile or detention, or tortured or killed. All over the country, militia men in their green uniforms symbolize the General's repressive tool. They beat the drums and sing the sycophancies of the revolution's "successes": "The Marxist-Leninist Islamic Revolution. . . Long, long live the General, the Father of this nation."<sup>24</sup> Another symbol of oppression is the security services, which

21. *Ibid.*, p. 191.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 138-39.

23. Juliet Okonkwo, "Farah and the Individual's Quest for Self-fulfillment," *Okitie: An African Journal of New Writing*, No. 26 inc.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 187.

recruits its main crops from illiterate men and women who eavesdrop on conversations and report verbatim what they think they heard when they entered a shop or a house. They have the power to arrest people without warrants. Thus, prisons are overpopulated, and as most of the prisoners have no records, there is no limit to their detention or imprisonment. Since most of the regime's critics are intellectuals, a large number of them, and other intellectuals, languish in prisons, while in their places Soviet technocrats and "Cuban sugar-cane experts" are employed. The horror of *Sweet and Sour Milk* in many ways approximates that of Soyinka's *Season of Anomy*, except that instead of the expansive massacres of *Season of Anomy*, which are conducted in open spaces that somehow diffuse the atrocities, in *Sweet and Sour Milk* the cruelties are concentrated and intense, administered in small but continuous doses, in secret places.

Somalia under Siyaad Barre, then, is nothing but a modern torture chamber, a concentration camp, a Gulag. By reference to Solzhenitsyn's book, Farah draws an analogy between Somalia and the Soviet Union, and he makes Loyaan reflect that "Somalia is a prison. We are the prisoners; the Security, the Green Guards, are the jailers; and the General, the Grand Warder of them all."<sup>26</sup> It was embarrassing for people like Soyaan to watch re-enacted the thumb-screwing, the whip-lash, and the removal of testicles that characterized the slave trade era. That these humiliating and degrading measures should be repeated by African elites who had been the false hopes of the silent, suffering masses is a betrayal, a tragedy of unfathomable dimension. For opposing the General, Soyaan has been murdered; his brother Loyaan is exiled because of the knowledge he acquired into the workings of the General's system during investigations to discover his brother's murderer. Other characters of Farah's two novels, *Sardines* and *Sweet and Sour Milk*, suffer similarly: Koschin is tortured in prison, and so is Ibrahim Siciliano; Nasser, Dulman, Cadar, and Hindiya, young student demonstrators, are rounded up periodically and punished.

Medina, who features prominently in *Sardines*, considered the General the Master of Grand Irrelevances, a grand fool who defied any scientific analysis of his crazy mind. But Soyaan and a few others rightly believed that there was a recognizable pattern and logic behind everything that the General did. The General had to be taken seriously if Somalia was to avert the repetition of developments seen under the regimes of Idi Amin of Uganda, and Emperor Bokassa of the Central African Republic.

Against the ethics of political violence, the weak have no means of survival other than to collaborate with those in power or face elimination. This happens in the home as well as at the State level. Qumman and Beydan,

Keynaan's two wives, have no recourse but to submit to his brutality and general maltreatment. It was easy for Keynaan to blatantly desecrate the memory of his dead son.

History demonstrates, however, through its accounts of national developments, that unjust, repressive regimes challenge a man's inherent desire for justice and equity. Consequently, such regimes as the General's invariably encounter opposition from dedicated and determined nationalists. A group has been formed with Soyaan, Medina, Ahmed Wellie, Samater, Ibrahim Il Siciliano, and others as the founding members. Loyaan joins later after the death of his brother. The organization concentrates on the spreading of counter-information against the General's false revolutionary government. They conduct investigations into the General's methods and techniques in order to understand them and be in a position to obstruct them. Their work involves research, analysis, and documentation, hence they write many memoranda. Their position is similar to that of the intellectual activists of *Armah's Two Thousand Seasons*, Soyinka's *Season of Anomy*, Serumaga's *Return to the Shadows*, or Ngugi's *Petals of Blood*. Driven underground, Soyaan and his colleagues operate clandestinely. Most of the country's committed and sensitive citizens belong to this association. From this body emanate memoranda such as the one found hidden under Soyaan's pillowcase, or the bills posted on the "walls of dawn" by young activists.

The organization, in spite of the government's continuous harassment, grows in strength with time. In *Sardines*, Dulman, who used to sing the General's praise names over the radio, has been converted to work against him. She and her boyfriend, Nasser, Medina's brother, engage in recording critical folk songs, which they hope to use among the illiterate masses against the General. Youths have also signed in, and a section of the University's Students' Union organizes regular demonstrations against the regime. Some bolder ones, like Sagal, Amina, Cadar, and Hindiya, brave the dangerous undertaking of painting anti-government slogans on public buildings. The impression, therefore, as in the other novels of political activism mentioned before, is that the movement for the establishment of democratic processes within the nation is gathering momentum and will ultimately achieve its objectives. Yet Farah's sometimes ambiguous development of his characters' ideological thrust obscures the resolution that he seems to be striving for. Nevertheless, the novels "represent a small and somewhat timid beginning of a crucial awareness which, however, in the Somali context, is enough to keep Nuruddin Farah in exile."<sup>26</sup>

26. Kirsten Holst Petersen, "The Personal and the Political: The Case of Nuruddin Farah," *Ariel* 12, 3 (July 1981): 97.





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## Africa Rights Monitor®



March 1986

The introductory issue of the **Africa Rights Monitor (ARM)** alluded to the problems of drought and famine that afflict large parts of Africa. In this issue ARM examines these problems in relation to militarization in three countries, Ethiopia, Somalia, and the Sudan, where drought and famine have assumed unsurpassed proportions.

Nowhere does the human tragedy resulting from the food crisis find a more vivid expression than in these countries. The sufferings of countless millions have already aroused world attention. What is often forgotten is that the crisis is far from over, which necessitates careful analysis of the situation. In the absence of fresh ways to deal with the crisis, millions of lives will be threatened and the long-term effects of such a catastrophe on the African continent may indeed be enduring.

Over the past two years, as well as during earlier famines, images of the agonizing plight of starving Africans helped mobilize international relief efforts on a massive scale. The world press played an indispensable role in drawing world attention to the human tragedy as have rock stars, actors and artists. As the magnitude of the task before the international community became clearer, policy-makers within governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations devised strategies to meet the threat of famine, and to facilitate the movement and distribution of relief supplies to areas in urgent need. These efforts have meant the difference between life and death for many.

Africans themselves have mobilized human and material resources to reverse the tragic cycle of death and famine, efforts which have generally been ignored in the Western press. Djibril Diallo recently conveyed this sentiment well in *The Guardian* (UK): "In the millions of words that have been

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written and thousands of feet of film shot about the crisis, very little can be gleaned regarding the African role and perspective in dealing with the crisis. By focusing on external relief efforts, news stories have inadvertently, and incorrectly, portrayed Africans as passive bystanders in the midst of a mess of their own making.<sup>1</sup>

As instrumental as these domestic and international relief measures have been in ameliorating the food situation, they fall considerably short of even basic requirements to avert another large-scale human tragedy. In themselves, relief efforts only touch the surface of the problem. An adequate and durable solution to the food crisis demands a longer view of the forces that shape the African reality.

The problems of drought and famine in the Horn are the result of wider historical and structural forces. Ecological factors, important as they are, must be placed within the context of societal processes. The present crisis has its origins in the transformation of the African continent under colonialism from subsistence-based production to cash crop economies. The displacement of large populations begun in the age of slavery has had crippling effects on Africa's capacities to combat natural forces.

More recently, the establishment of tributary systems in the Third World, including the region of the Horn, has placed these once colonized countries into an unequal network favoring the North. Specifically, as subordinate actors in the superpower conflict, countries like Ethiopia and Somalia have been led to squander their limited national resources on unproductive militarization. Regional conflicts, in turn, have exacerbated the political climate and intensified militarization. Finally, within these countries, struggles for self-determination and domestic unrest have pushed the leaders to expand already oversized armies.

The historical conflicts between Ethiopia and Somalia, on the one hand, and the Eritrean Revolution, on the other, are examples of local developments that have directly contributed to the food crisis. In particular, the sufferings of the refugees owe their inception to the twin problem of famine and war. And one of the chief catalysts for reproducing the situation in the region has been the rapid militarization by both Ethiopia and Somalia. The resulting military conflicts have caused both the dislocation of populations in the affected countries as well as a net drain on the productive capacities of societies.

The relationship between food shortages in the region of the Horn and militarization in Ethiopia and Somalia is crucial to an understanding of the overall problem of second-generation social and economic rights. This issue of ARM provides only a direction to view these rights from a perspective that is different from conventional wisdom.

1. The Guardian, January 10, 1986.

## The Current Situation

The problem of food shortages continues to haunt Africa. Despite the world attention this problem has received in recent years, there appears to be no let-up in its severity. In fact, the tragic loss of about 300,000 Ethiopians (based on conservative estimates by various international organizations) has brought to the forefront the plight of many more who may die if urgent steps are not taken by the world community in the months ahead. The following map illustrates the breadth of the food crisis throughout Africa.



■ Still critically affected: Angola, Botswana, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Sudan  
 ■ In transition: need close monitoring: Burkina Faso, Chad, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Somalia

Source: See footnote next page.

Several millions face the scourge of famine and starvation in many parts of the continent. In the region of the Horn, Ethiopia, Somalia, and the Sudan confront dangers of massive proportions. According to the United Nations Office for Emergency Operations in Africa (OEOA), over US \$900 million are required to meet the emergency needs in 17 countries. These findings in the form of a summary profile for 1986 are presented in Table 1. There is consensus among relief officials that in several still critically-affected countries, like the Sudan, "lagging international interest could spell serious trouble in the coming months."

Table 1  
A SUMMARY PROFILE OF 1986 UNMET EMERGENCY NEEDS

Figures in U.S. \$ Million

	POPULATION <sup>1</sup>	AFFECTED <sup>2</sup>	FOOD	LOGISTICS	HEALTH	WATER/ SANITATION	RELIEF/ SURVIVAL	AGRIC. INPUTS	TOTAL
<b>STILL CRITICALLY AFFECTED</b>									
Angola	8.8	0.5 (0.4)	9.76	12.58	4.06	2.39	11.57	10.11	50.47
Botswana	1.1	0.6	—	1.05	1.25	.75	—	2.85	5.90
Cape Verde	0.3	0.1	—	4.41	.81	3.12	—	2.37	10.71
Ethiopia	43.6	6.2 <sup>3</sup> (0.03)	271.70	62.10	17.45	25.62	21.85	90.60	515.42 <sup>4</sup>
Mozambique	14.0	2.2 (0.3)	25.70	7.40	1.74	6.55	3.44	6.10	50.93
Sudan	21.6	5.0 (1.0)	51.21 <sup>5</sup>	8.32	14.43	—	—	13.66	131.42 <sup>6</sup>
<b>IN TRANSITION: NEED CLOSE MONITORING</b>									
Burkina Faso	6.9	0.02	—	.12	3.17	5.10	.04	5.49	13.92
Chad	5.0	0.4 (0.2)	5.0	3.20	3.20	3.20	.70	6.70	22.00
Lesotho	1.5	0.8	—	1.40	2.55	5.41	—	4.26	13.62
Mali	8.1	0.4 (0.1)	5.14	.09	.85	3.59	—	9.50	19.17
Mauritania	1.9	0.9 (0.2)	—	2.86	1.13	4.18	—	2.71	10.88
Niger	6.1	0.4 (0.2)	5.42	.59	2.01	1.00	1.12	4.67	14.81
Somalia	4.7	—	7.61 <sup>7</sup>	—	—	—	—	—	13.71 <sup>8</sup>

Source: Compiled from information contained in the OEOA Special Report on the Emergency Situation in Africa: Review of 1985 and 1986 Needs. 1) Total Population in millions. 2) Affected Population. Displaced Population in parenthesis. 3) Emergency Food Aid (including overland transport handling costs) until next harvest (i.e., end of crop year). 4) Cash for local purchase and transportation. 5) Food Aid for new refugee population (107,000) in Somalia. 6) Includes \$26.1m. for Refugees Returnees. 7) Includes \$43.8m. for Refugees Returnees. 8) Includes \$6.1m. for Refugees Returnees. 9) In addition, almost 600,000 people in resettlement areas are in need of humanitarian relief aid prior to their first harvest.

## PROFILE OF EMERGENCY SITUATION IN THESE COUNTRIES

**ANGOLA:** Persisting emergency. Externally-supported insurgents sabotaging physical infrastructure and services. Agricultural recovery hampered. Airlift operation central provinces essential.

**BOTSWANA:** Drought continues for fifth consecutive year. Livestock mortality high. Malnutrition rates stabilized. Water supply critical. Prospects for recovery appear poor. Effective relief programme has prevented deaths from food shortages.

**CAPE VERDE:** Severe drought continues, has been on since 1969. 1985 food production half of previous year. A third of population receiving relief aid. Urgent logistics needs include a landing barge and two coastal vessels.

**ETHIOPIA:** Crop prospects in Eritrea, Tigray, Hararghe, Wollo and Sidamo poor. UN truck fleet operational and has eased transport bottlenecks. Airdrop operation withdrawn. Donor support urgently needed to meet April pre-position deadlines.

**MOZAMBIQUE:** Drought mitigated but emergency continues largely through externally-supported insurgency. Improved logistics but high attrition due to destruction by insurgents. Agricultural recovery hampered by lack of inputs and civil strife. Crucial to increase deliveries.

**SUDAN:** Overall surplus of cereals but arid zones face severe shortages. Donor support being urgently sought for local purchase in surplus areas for prepositioning of supplies in critical areas before end April. Hygiene and disease situation of urban squatters critical.

**BURKINA FASO:** 1985 harvest best in 10 years. Local surplus and deficit areas — need for assistance to purchase and transfer harvest.

**CHAD:** No exceptional food aid in 1985/86. Situation of displaced persons critical. Returnees from Sudan and Central African Republic reported. Possibility of cholera epidemic. Pest attacks on dry season crops.

**LESOTHO:** Drought broken by widespread rains. Tuberculosis, typhoid, diarrhoea and malnutrition prevalent among children. South African blockade in January led to delays in food shipments and to reduced stocks. Change of government.

**MALI:** A good rainy season now over. Return movements of displaced persons continue. Grasshoppers worsened and swarming observed. Outbreaks of measles; cholera epidemic not contained.

**MAURITANIA:** Rainy season ended. Harvest of 57,000 tons well above the average 20,000 tons of previous three years. Port facilities inadequate. Cholera still present. Grasshopper infestation.

**NIGER:** Rainy season ended. Post-harvest losses of 272,000 tons. Drought-affected population decreased from 3 million in early 1985. Malnutrition rate high. Logistics improved considerably. Village cereal banks being created.

**SOMALIA:** Signs of recurring abnormal drought conditions in N.E. Situation needs closing monitoring. 140,000 tons of food aid needed for 1985/86 of which 120,000 tons is for the 800,000 refugees. Storage facilities need upgrading.

One major dimension of the problem is the status of refugees in the Horn. Estimates compiled by the U.S. Committee for Refugees show that refugees in need of assistance or protection in 1985 for Africa amounted to 3,389,000. These estimates cited the Sudan with 1,094,000 (from Ethiopia, Uganda, Chad, and Zaire); Somalia with 550,000 (from Ethiopia); and Ethiopia with 72,500 (from the Sudan and elsewhere). The small nation of Djibouti alone had 16,700 refugees, primarily from Ethiopia. Ecology and politics have indiscriminately intermixed to produce these unfortunate victims. Needless to say, statistics barely tell half the story.

### Militarization

Unfortunately, the severity of the food crisis in Ethiopia, Somalia and other countries has not created new trends in national policy. A distressing fact about the food crisis is that it remains in large part a man-made phenomenon. Countries afflicted by drought and famine have not trimmed their armies, which continue to consume large proportions of vital national resources. The growth in the size of the armed forces in the Horn has been quite dramatic. The armed forces in Ethiopia grew from 50,000 in 1975 to 251,000 in 1980, a five-fold increase, and now are in excess of 300,000. If one also considers police and other paramilitary units, the figure rises to 320,000, and together with the security intelligence forces, more than 400,000 have been engaged in unproductive pursuits. Thus, Ethiopia has the largest standing army in black Africa, next only to Egypt in the whole of Africa. With a total population of 42 million people and GNP per capita of less than \$100, Ethiopia is one of the most militarized states in the world.

A similar picture emerges for Somalia. The Somalia armed forces have almost quadrupled in the years between 1969-1980 (62,550 in 1980). Together with its paramilitary units, Somalia has one of the world's highest ratio of armed forces to the population (4-5 million), and a GNP per capita of less than \$100.

If the presence of guerrilla movements in the Horn which accounts for a large proportion of military is also taken into account, these figures rise very quickly. For instance, in 1977, there were an estimated 59,000 guerrillas in Ethiopia, forming the seven different resistance movements. Estimates of the number of the guerrilla forces currently operating in Eritrea alone range from 20,000 to 50,000 and there are significant numbers of Tigrean and Oromo guerrillas as well.

These developments represent a perverse arrangement of national priorities. The fact that millions have starved and many more still face the threat of extinction, does not seem to influence state policy. The ironic thing is that countries that are not as bad off as Ethiopia and Somalia tend to field proportionally smaller armies. (See Table 2).

Table 2.

	Numbers in Uniform — Selected Countries		Total Population*
	Numbers in Armed Forces	Paramilitary	
Ethiopia	306,000	169,000	41.0
Somalia	62,000	29,500	5.0
Sudan	58,000	3,500	21.0
Nigeria	133,000	NA	94.0
Kenya	13,650	1,800	19.0
Tanzania	40,350	3,000	21.0

World Development Report 1985 (Published for the World Bank by Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 210. Source: The Military Balance 1984-85 (Washington, DC: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1984), pp. 69, 76, 78, 81, 83 & 87.

\*In millions

National budgets reveal this pattern more explicitly. Both Ethiopia and Somalia have continued to allocate a disproportionate share of their resources to defense, compared to some other nations in Africa. (See Table 3). This unproductive use of scarce resources clearly undermines effectiveness in responding to the food crisis, and undercuts any long-term strategies to prevent food crises in the future. Even if Ethiopia and Somalia manage to prevent decimation of their populations in the short-run, it is unlikely that they can avert future tragedy unless a major restructuring in national policy is attempted. The allocation of scarce resources to satiate military needs can only take place by starving the other sectors, like industry, agriculture and social welfare.

Table 3.

	Militarization and Defense Figures — Selected Countries*			
	1974	1978	1980	1982
Ethiopia	13.9	20.6	35.6	16.8
Somalia	11.5	21.2	18.4	20.0
Sudan	16.2	14.1	14.2	17.1
Nigeria	13.7	11.3	9.3	5.6
Kenya	6.7	14.4	15.3	12.4
Tanzania	12.1	14.7	7.5	6.7

Source: World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1985 (Washington, DC: U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 1985), pp. 61, 69, 75, 80-81, and 83.

\*Figures represent defense expenditures as a % of Central Government expenditures.

\*\*Source: Africa South of the Sahara 1986 (London: Europa Publications Ltd., 1985), p. 419.

In both Ethiopia and Somalia, defense expenditures have persistently exceeded public spending on social services. Available figures on some recent years present the contrast between these expenditures. (See Table 4). In most other African countries, the reported percentages allocated for defense are much lower, compared to Ethiopia and Somalia. (It is important to note that figures on defense and internal security are often disguised in national accounts statistics. Therefore, it is safer to assume that the actual percentages for defense are even higher than those presented here).

**Table 4**  
Public Spending — Defense and Social Services for  
Selected Countries for Selected Years\*

	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82	1982-83	1983-84
<b>Ethiopia</b>						
Defense & Internal Order		37.7	33.1			30.0
Social Services		15.1	13.4			11.1
<b>Somalia</b>						
Defense & Internal Order				28.8	26.7	32.3
Social Services				12.3	10.0	11.6
<b>Sudan</b>						
Defense & Internal Order	9.7	13.0		9.5		
Social Services	11.6	11.9		10.9		
<b>Nigeria</b>						
Defense & Internal Order				10.0		
Social Services				16.0		
<b>Kenya</b>						
Defense & Internal Order			9.2	11.6	11.5	
Social Services			28.5	27.4	26.2	
<b>Tanzania</b>						
Defense	24.0	8.9	11.0			
Social Services	17.0	18.7	17.5			

\*Figures represent % of total expenditure  
Source: Africa South of the Sahara 1986 (London: Europa Publications Ltd., 1986) pp. 419, 542, 743, 844, 923 & 960.

The Horn has long been a contentious area. Its recent history has been marred by wars, revolutions, famines and endless territorial disputes. For example, Somalia has claimed territory from three of its neighbors (Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti). Ethiopia has been waging wars against Eritrean, Tigrean and Oromo guerrillas in the north, the south and the southwest. Kenya fought a war against Somalia in the north-eastern region (NFD) during the 1960s and faced a new crisis in 1981. These regional conflicts have blended with external interventions to heighten militarization in the region.

One cause of militarization of the Horn has been the involvement of foreign powers in regional affairs. The distinctive feature of the Horn has been its strategic location. The Horn continues to straddle the oil routes and commercial sea-lanes of the Gulf, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. Nearly 90 percent of the oil supply for Japan, 20 percent for the United States, and 60 percent for Western Europe passes through this region.

The involvement of the superpowers in the Horn has gone through a number of phases. From 1953 to 1976, more than 50 percent of U.S. military aid to black Africa went to Ethiopia alone. During roughly the same period, the Soviet Union was the principal sponsor for Somalia. When the superpowers exchanged places in 1977-78, the Soviet Union mounted the largest and longest-lasting airlift in their history to assist Ethiopia's military govern-

ment in suppressing national resistance movements and the Somali aggression. The superpower rivalry takes place against the background of the regional and intra-state conflicts, mentioned above. Each tributary state has sought external support and arms to further its interests, while the superpowers have cultivated the local regimes for control over a critical area to advance their global interests.

Table 5 indicates the tremendous rise in arms imports by both Ethiopia and Somalia in the ten-year period for which information is available. The

**Table 5**  
Arms Imports — Selected African Nations  
(in millions of current US \$)

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978
Ethiopia	10	10	40	50	440	1100
Somalia	40	90	70	100	80	240
Sudan	10	30	0	50	100	120
Nigeria	20	20	90	50	10	50
Kenya	0	30	10	0	10	50
Tanzania	20	5	10	50	60	80
	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	
Ethiopia	210	625	260	290	525	
Somalia	130	200	50	140	60	
Sudan	110	100	170	180	80	
Nigeria	110	70	410	230	300	
Kenya	90	60	180	70	50	
Tanzania	220	80	40	20	30	

Source: World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1985 (Washington, DC: U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 1985), pp. 103, 111, 117, 122-123 & 125.

comparison with some other major African nations indicates the degree to which this build-up has exceeded that in other countries. Table 6 provides a breakdown of arms supplies by major suppliers. The shifts in superpower support are quite evident from this table. (See next page.)

## Eritrea

While the negative effects of militarization on development are clear, the effects upon human rights requires elaboration. Often arms received from abroad have been used against domestic enemies of local regimes. The clearest example of this pattern is in Eritrea, where war and famine have exacted a heavy price from its population.

The conflict in Eritrea, whether termed a war of national liberation or an internal rebellion, is one of the longest-lived ongoing conflicts on the African continent. After twenty-five years of struggle, neither party to the

**Table 6**  
Arms Transfers by Major Suppliers  
(in millions of US \$ - Cumulative 1965-1974)

	Total	USSR	US	Western Europe	Eastern Europe	China	Others
Ethiopia	151	0	120	15	0	3	13
Somalia	137	134	0	0	0	2	1
Sudan	99	65	2	13	9	3	7
Kenya	51	0	7	38	0	1	5
Tanzania	94	5	2	1	68	0	18
(1975-1979)							
Ethiopia	1800	1500	90	35	40	5	160
Somalia	440	210	0	65	0	5	170
Sudan	400	10	120	230	0	5	50
Nigeria	300	150	30	100	0	0	10
Kenya	120	0	50	30	0	0	35
Tanzania	440	300	0	15	0	30	90
(1979-1983)							
Ethiopia	1900	1900	0	20	10	0	70
Somalia	580	0	30	420	10	50	70
Sudan	640	0	110	300	60	70	100
Nigeria	1125	100	20	800	5	0	200
Kenya	450	0	60	270	0	0	120
Tanzania	390	270	0	10	0	40	70

Source: World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1965-1975 (Washington, DC: U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 1976), p. 79; World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1970-1979 (1982), p. 127; and World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1985 (1985), pp. 131-132.

conflict has been able to carry it to a decisive conclusion. The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) continues to take the leading role in the protracted struggle for self-determination for the Eritrean people. EPLF guerrillas claim control over eighty percent of the countryside, while Ethiopian troops maintain a tenuous presence in the principal cities of the territory.

The history of Eritrea is too complex to summarize here. This Red Sea territory has an area of 50,000 square miles and a population of approximately 3.5 million. At various times it has been controlled by the Turks, the Egyptians and the Italians. Ethiopia claims it as an integral part of its territory, but the ties have been weak and brief enough for this claim to be denied by most Eritreans. When Italy lost its colonies at the close of World War II, the fate of Eritrea was placed in the hands of the four victorious powers — the United States, the Soviet Union, France and the United Kingdom, with the latter as the temporary administering power. Unable to reach an agreement on the future of the colony, the four powers turned the matter over to the General Assembly of the United Nations, which agreed in December of 1950, to federate Eritrea with Ethiopia in September of 1962. Under the terms of the agreement, the Ethiopian Crown was to assume full responsibility for matters of defense, currency, and external affairs; power

over all other affairs was to be vested in a locally-elected legislature. Increasingly unhappy with an arrangement that permitted a great degree of autonomy from central government control, the Ethiopian regime of Emperor Haile Selassie annexed Eritrea in 1962 and brought the province to heel through direct rule by Addis Ababa.

The EPLF was organized as a direct response to these Ethiopian actions. Initially, the separatist movement in Eritrea engendered support from several of the Arab states — notably Syria and Iraq. During the 1970s, the armed struggle in Eritrea escalated as outside powers at both the regional and international levels supported one or the other parties to the civil war. In order to enhance their political and military leverage in this strategically important area of the world.

These attempts to forge tributary arrangements with the combatants have resulted in tragic loss of life for the Eritreans, and the recent famine has played havoc with their fate. The military regime of Haile Mariam Mengistu has been especially harsh toward the Eritrean population throughout the tragic famine. According to the Eritrean Relief Committee (ERC), more than 650,000 Eritreans (one-fifth of the population) have been forced to seek refuge in neighboring Sudan and elsewhere. Another 700,000 Eritreans have been displaced within Eritrea itself. ERC charges that at harvest time all crops growing in Eritrea have been subject to aerial bombardment and napalm attacks by Soviet MIGs of the Ethiopian Air Force. Nearly two million famine victims in Eritrea have been effectively denied access to food relief sent through Ethiopia. ERC further claims that the Mengistu regime has destroyed over 500 towns and villages with aerial bombardment; that over 200,000 civilians have been killed and tens of thousands wounded; that the territory's livestock population has been virtually eradicated; whole agricultural regions scorched by napalm, and wells poisoned at the height of famine.

These accounts tend to be substantiated by other organizations. For instance, Grassroots International (a private voluntary agency that has been supporting relief and development programs in Eritrea and Tigre, among other Third World areas) recently noted a similar scenario. Its Africa program coordinator told a U.S. House foreign affairs subcommittee that in EPLF administered areas alone there were nearly two million starving people. Renewed fighting involving at least 150,000 combatants is said to have caused widespread disruption of relief efforts, the burning of villages and crops, the bombardment of relief trucks and the displacement of tens of thousands of innocent civilians. The officials accused the Ethiopian government of preventing any relief aid from getting into Eritrea, where "nearly two million people were at risk."

Another serious charge levelled against the Ethiopian government con-

cerned its implementation of a massive resettlement scheme as a means to cope with the vast food shortages. Critics see the scheme as an attempt on the part of the government to disperse the population, especially in Tigre, where the Tigre People's Liberation Front (TPLF) is said to enjoy control of the countryside. The targeted population is thought to be hostile to the military government. Although senior UN officials confirm the charge, they emphasize that forced resettlement has occurred only in "isolated cases." The government itself admits that more than 500,000 people from Tigre, Wollo and Shoua (though not from Eritrea) have been resettled. But this is seen as a recovery plan.<sup>2</sup>

(ARM tried to seek a response to the above charges from the Ethiopian embassy in Washington, D.C., but received no reply).

In addition to these charges, serious criticisms were also levelled against the Ethiopian government for its management of the famine. In particular, critics claimed that the government was using food aid as a weapon against the guerrilla-administered areas. The Ethiopian government retorted by claiming the Western governments were slow in pledging and delivering aid and for "politicizing" the crisis. That famine aid was becoming a political weapon seemed quite noticeable. In its attempt to woo Ethiopia away from the Soviet Union, the Reagan Administration showed reluctance to provide direct aid to famine victims living in rebel-controlled areas. Instead, Washington agreed with Addis Ababa that aid would be delivered only through regular government channels.

Whatever the outcome of the political game in the future, the fact remains that the recent famine has continued to affect severely the population of Eritrea and the provinces of Tigre and Wollo. Sufferings in these areas show no signs of abatement in the short-run, though their own efforts and uninterrupted international relief aid (mostly from non-governmental organizations) may turn the tide in the long period. However a prime precondition for development in Eritrea and other parts of the Horn is demilitarization and the expenditure of resources, both human and material, on productive and peaceful concerns.

## Correspondent's Report

### American Studies in Africa:

#### Alive and Well

David S. Cownie

The subject of American Studies<sup>1</sup> has rarely been an important part of the curriculum at universities in Africa. R.F. Morton, in a recent article, notes that history student interest in American Studies at the University of Botswana campus is ephemeral at best. In an attempt to account for this continuing lack of interest, Morton reasons that "student perception of the U.S. as tangential to Southern Africa, in all but the most recent past, is probably decisive."<sup>2</sup> Yet Morton with regard to Botswana and Showers with regard to Sierra Leone both note that student interest in American Studies has increased substantially in recent years; in this respect Morton's proviso "in all but the most recent past" is important. For as Showers notes, "Since 1980, the program (American Studies at Fourah Bay College in Freetown) has witnessed an unprecedented increase in the number of students. Largely because of the intriguing role the United States is playing as a world power, students are becoming more curious about her history."<sup>3</sup> The same can be said, although with more negative connotation, with regard to American Studies in Botswana, given the increased perception of the United States as an ally of South Africa.

Awareness of this recent trend mitigates one's initial surprise upon learning that for the past three years American Studies in Africa symposiums have been held at various locations in Africa, with interest in the conferences growing each successive year. The most recent symposium was held in September 1985 at the University of Botswana campus in Gaborone with the theme *Africa and America: Mutual Perceptions*. Attending the conference were scholars from universities throughout Africa, and a few from Europe

1. The term 'American Studies' is meant to include both studies of the United States as well as with the rest of the Americas, although to date the focus has been primarily on the United States and the Caribbean.

2. R.F. Morton, "Minor Interest among Majors: U.S. History and History Students at the University of Botswana, 1976-1983," *American Studies in Africa Newsletter*, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 5.

3. U. Showers, "The State of American Studies at the University of Sierra Leone," *American Studies in Africa Newsletter*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 18.

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and the United States. The quality of the papers presented and the discussions which ensued clearly illustrated that the subject of American Studies has been given increased attention by African scholars at universities throughout the continent. One is also encouraged by the publication of an *American Studies in Africa Newsletter* (Vol. 1, No. 3, has recently come out), and that the University of Lesotho Press has published some of the papers presented at the first conference held in Lesotho in 1983, edited by Andrew Horn and George Carter. A second volume, based on papers presented in Lusaka in 1984, is expected out in late 1985.<sup>4</sup> The organization, according to its founders, has the following objectives: to hold an annual meeting, to publish a newsletter and a selected proceedings volume, and to establish a communications network among persons interested in American Studies in Africa.

In the case of the Gaborone conference (as well as its predecessors) the symposium was dominated by scholars in the humanities. The papers focused, not surprisingly, on the black American-African diaspora. Of these, the bulk searched for commonalities of oppression suffered on both sides of the Atlantic. These commonalities were often laid bare in the writings of literary authors, both African and black American. A second, and equally understandable focus of panelists at the conference was on black movements in the American south in the 1960s, both on the movement's leaders and its mass base. Scholars from outside the humanities focused more on America's economic and political linkages with Africa. Ray Bush offered a provocative analysis of agribusiness in Africa, and how Africa's present agricultural crisis stemmed in large part from the type of agricultural policies adopted by African countries and supported by Western imperial interests. While offering few solutions to the problems raised, Bush nevertheless challenged listeners to question the nature of Western links with Africa. Richard Fredland offered closing comments on how the United States and Africa were linked, and tapped many of the ideas implicitly and explicitly raised by other conference participants.

There was, however, one particularly troublesome issue which was never adequately dealt with by the panelists — the issue of the methodology of comparison. While almost all participants used comparisons between differing aspects of the United States and Africa, few offered definitions of what they meant by 'comparison,' and few questioned the validity of the comparisons made by others. Given its importance, future participants must deal more clearly with this issue. This in large part certainly reflects the youth of the field and over time one expects that boundaries for comparison will develop, and definitions of what it means to compare in American Studies

in Africa will emerge. In this respect Bush's suggestion, that the expansion of capitalism to the New World and to Africa could form the basis of some comparison, is of interest.

The conference was hampered by the enormous logistical problems incumbent when trying to organize an international conference, especially in the Third World. This resulted in panels on education, political science and geography having to be cancelled. Lacking, therefore, were discussions on neo-colonial and imperial links. Discussion in these areas would have been all the more interesting when one considers United States links with South Africa, especially during the Reagan Administration, the lack of a Namibian settlement (and Reagan's insistence on linking a Namibian settlement with a Cuban withdrawal from Angola), the militarization of the Indian Ocean and the Horn of Africa, and the repeal of the Clark Amendment banning aid to forces working for the overthrow of the Angolan government, to name but a few.<sup>5</sup> Since the problems were primarily logistical, the assumption is that with the growth of the organization these will diminish over time. As such, one can expect that issues as important as these just raised will be brought up at future conferences. More disturbing, however, was the surprising dearth of discussion on common liberation factors at work with regard both to American blacks and Africans, most especially in South Africa. One should also expect this to change as the association grows.

The conference closed with the question of mutual understanding, mutual perceptions. Is mutual understanding possible along the lines of literature, liberation, exploitation? Dr. Sithole of the University of Zimbabwe suggests that usually the relationship is characterized by mutual misunderstandings and mutual misperceptions. Perhaps this could serve as a focus for next year's meeting.

5. Indeed, the conference took place just a few hundred yards away from a house which was destroyed in the June 14 raid on Gaborone by South Africa.

4. Both the Roma and Lusaka conferences focused necessarily on learning how American Studies has been taught at various African universities. The Gaborone conference was qualitatively different since it consisted of the presentation of papers on substantive issues.



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## A Look at Books



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### *Land Tenure in Ethiopia:*

#### *A Thoughtful Analysis*

Simon D. Messing

Joanna Mantel-Niecko, **THE ROLE OF LAND TENURE IN THE SYSTEM OF ETHIOPIAN IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT IN MODERN TIMES** (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 1980) 289 pp., paper, Cena zł 40.

This is a thoughtful book, attempting to master the complexity of often contradictory subject matter. The approach is to seek "native conceptual apparatus" and to rely heavily on tracing the philological significance of terms relating to land tenure.

These point to widespread dependence of the peasant population on local, regional and state authorities. The principle of patriarchal authority has been so pervasive, even in the 20th century, that the Parliament introduced by Haile

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3rd Quarter, 1985

Selassie was perceived by the population as one more form of presenting petitions to the emperor. A sociological questionnaire applied to Ethiopian students in Poland in 1971 found that the concept "fatherland" was not yet in general use. The new government of 1974 had to coin a neologism to translate "Ethiopian socialism" into Amharic (p. 25).

One of the difficulties of deciphering the legal-structural basis of traditional Ethiopian land typology arises from the fact that it reflects regional differences (p. 148). In Begemdir, the land was treated as the property of the clan (p. 151). In the territories annexed in the 19th century, the policy of expropriation and land distribution was adopted where populations were larger, while small ethnic groups were treated to a policy of subordination to serfdom (p. 142).

This raises again the old question whether Ethiopian land tenure could be called feudalism. The author employs the term freely:

"It seems reasonable to classify Ethiopia as a feudal formation... The subordination of the people to the authorities... contained certain features of serfdom. And in Ethiopian serf relations we can discern three basic elements: land serfdom which expressed itself in the fact that the right to use the land was conditional on the decisions of higher authorities; personal serfdom, be it ascription to the land or the duty of fulfilling all the services...; and finally legal serfdom understood as the lack of legal possibilities of appealing from the decisions of the overlord... I propose for the moment to define the Ethiopian system as a feudal one..." (pp. 204-205)

This leads Mantel-Niecko to the thesis that the modernization of Ethiopia is merely an organizational modernization of the mechanism of authority, which is based on feudal relations of dependency (p. 214). Ethiopian feudalism even swallowed the introduction of the telephone in 1906. A new term was coined, *yesilkanya qelleb*, the "telephonist's wages." Imposed on farmers where such a service was set up, it included two goatskin bags of grain a month delivered to his home, and in regions containing adscripted farmers (serfs), these also had to build him a home (p. 131).

One point of criticism some historians might raise is that the book is not entirely fair to the younger years of Haile Selassie, when he tried to end feudalism. The author does credit him with abolishing slavery on 31 March 1924 (p. 136), but does not mention that for many years he strained all of his limited military power to deprive the feudal lords of their private armies.

However, her outlook appears more balanced. Noting that the Land Reform proclamation of 4 March 1975 abolished all forms of feudal dependence, she raises some serious questions for the future. Will not the abolition of feudal relationships be synonymous, for some, with the abolition of state authority, leading to "local autonomous tendencies," and "overshadow the banner of unity of the new Ethiopia"? (pp. 224-226). It would appear to this reviewer that this is already taking place, judging from the unending civil wars there.

Perhaps the main contribution of this book is that the author has attended to details, in facing the old question whether traditional Ethiopian land tenure can be defined as feudal. What remains to be done is a point-by-point comparison of similarities and differences between Ethiopian and European feudalism. Meanwhile this book can serve at least as an annotated dictionary of traditional Ethiopian land tenure.

## Mengistu — Robin Hood of the Army and Vanguard of Socialism

Paul Edwin LeRoy

Rene Lefort, ETHIOPIA — An Heretical Revolution? (London, Zed Press, 1983)  
pp. 201, \$10.75, paperback.

The noted French journalist, Rene Lefort, presents an intriguing analysis of the metamorphosis of Ethiopia in the years 1974 to 1979 from a feudal monarchy into a military dictatorship under Mengistu Haile Mariam with socialist jargon and with the sweeping rural land reforms. Acquainted with radical movements, author of many articles and reports, visitor to the Horn, Lefort puts the Army in the role of Russia's Communist Party and Mengistu in the shoes of Lenin. A part of the Zed Press African Contemporary History/Revolutionary Struggles, this monograph was originally published by Francois Maspero in Paris under the title *Ethiopia la revolution heretique* in 1981.

The book opens with a fluid and thoughtful comparative preface, and has eight chapters, each terminating in short notes, followed by brief but helpful chronology beginning 12 January 1974 and ending 12 September 1979. This is further supplemented by an all too brief appendix on statistics (not fully reliable) and a select bibliography pulling from a wide variety of sources, European and Ethiopic, but regrettably not listing oral interview sources. While many of the latest pertinent authorities are listed, some are missing, especially Bereket Habte Selassie and Robert L. Hess. He might have done well to consult the Register of Current Research on Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa, edited by Tadesse Beyene and Tadesse Tamrat, and Chris Prouty and Eugene Rosenfeld's Historical Dictionary of Ethiopia, as well as visit the Ethiopian Studies Institute of Addis Ababa.

Relatively little is supplied by way of historical background to the events of 1974, although the disintegrative tensions between the Solomon legends and the impact of Western technology and ideas, as Haile Selassie sought to increase royal authority, are examined. The Empire is portrayed as both progressive, in reducing the power of the local nobility, and retrograde, in the insistent retention of Shoan controls. The increased productivity of the recently conquered southern regions through plantations and mechanized farming, coupled with declines in the traditional imperial stronghold in Abyssinia, and the persistent milestone of secessionism in Eritrea, long contested by Arabs and highlanders, imposed additional pressures. While the Emperor became senile, the old nobles plotted to recover autonomy and the new elites of workers, soldiers, students, teachers and lumpen proletariat protested and went on strikes. Meanwhile, the peasantry slumbered, duped by Orthodoxy and ignorant loyalty.

Then came the murderous Wollo famine, which though not the first such occurrence, was rudely brought to the world's attention as oil prices traumatically upset Ethiopia's unbalanced subsistence economy!

Paul E. LeRoy is Professor of History at Central Washington University, Ellensburg, Washington 98926. We apologize to our readers for incorrectly replacing Professor LeRoy's first name with that of his brother, Professor Perry LeRoy, on page 43 of Vol. 31, No. 41, the third page of a review by Paul LeRoy, whose name appears correctly on p. 41, where the review begins.

On the 12th of January 1974, soldiers were blocked from using a water pump at a base in Sidamo. Collapse and uncoordinated spontaneous unrest spread rapidly. Then the reactionary faction of Princess Tanagmework (eldest daughter of the Emperor) demanded that the increase in soldier's pay be revoked and, with that, came the momentum! In Lefort's words, "... it was at this precise point" that otherwise ordinary disturbances "set going the mechanism that was to lead to the revolution." (p. 53-54) The Army waited in the wings to play the role of Russia's Worker Party. A committee had already formed to oust the administration of Akilu Habtiwolde demanding land reform and a constitution bourgeois style. But it soon split as conservatives set up a committee under Colonel ALEN ZEWDE. Their model and inspiration was the Imperial Bodyguard Coup of 1960. Yet Lefort here fails to present to the reader a clear explanation. Nor does he even mention the link of Mengistu Neway, his tragic leader, to the hero of the book, Mengistu Haile Mariam, pardoned prisoner! He notes the March of the Coordinating Committee of the Armed Forces of the 4th Division led by Abate and Sisay Habti, without explaining the role of its initial leader Major Teclab, "the presumed soul and brain" (p. 61) of the movement. When on the 18th of April the new premier Endalkatchew Makonnen asked the Army to order, the latter was ready to initiate land reform and the Emperor's asks, "Was this heresy?" (p. 60) By the 12th of the Emperor was gone and the only prop left of the Emperor's regime had come to terms with the military. As Lefort says, "The very nature of the

The Marxist jargon had entered. The 4 March 1975 Proclamation. There were to be innumerable ongoing revolutions. But who are the Oromo? He does not mention his heritage from the reform probably represents the "heresy of the revolution." (p. 128) Lefort is at the rule in the towns, with the Emperor. But his explanations of the Ethiopian proclamation do not equal the call of the MEISON, and the Kebeles. He splits though strong on the Son of Man.

His best chapters are the D conclusion in "The Future of Africa: A little unreal. Russia admired the revolution to Lefort, the first time they had seen it." (p. 270) The march of the continent of all would-be rivals. Having survived the EPRP terror, the Son of Man, Mengistu also outlived both the Emperor and, ex Harar Amharan ideologist, the Emperor's February 1977 against Teferi Benti. Only one remained -- the Emperor's son, the top, who was executed. Now Lefort states that the Emperor's son was coming back to its main purpose of eradicating hunger, poverty, and illiteracy." (p. 251) But inconsistently he sees the socialist shortfall and hence need of Western aid. The decisions were now made by one alone, Mengistu, the Robin Hood on a throne out to transform the wretched into upstanding cared-for citizens, hard to accept in view of recent events. He struck down all opponents having from the beginning

Paul Edwin LeRoy

calculated a full cultural change. "Where is loyalty or treason, where does heresy begin and orthodoxy end? Who decides? The Strongest." (p. 280) The theme is set, the arguments (not fully proved) end. All in all, though, this is a vigorous, balanced, carefully worded presentation of the birth of a new if disturbing regime.

## A Large, but Very Uneven,

### Collection of Ethiopiana

Simon D. Messing

Joseph Tubiana, ed., MODERN ETHIOPIA, From the Accession of Menelik II to the Present. Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Nice, 19-22 December 1977. (Rotterdam, The Netherlands: A.A. Balkema, 1978) 556 pp., \$45.

Most of the topics in Modern Ethiopia concern Ethiopian linguistics or history. On the title, only a maximum of nine out of 35 papers can be said to deal with temporary issues. Due to the large number and uneven quality of the papers, merely the more seminal ones can be cited here.

Tubiana presents a bibliographic survey of books published in Ethiopia which will be gratefully utilized by future scholars. This can also be supplemented by an appendix of Semitic loanwords in Oromo, by Gene B. Gragg. An recommendation that Oromo be written in the Latin rather than in Ge'ez probably arouse some controversy.

The similarity of the Sheikh Hussein cult of Bale, and the Western Somali Liberation Front, to the Saar cult. (The Saar cult found in traditional Amhara society — the reviewer).

Contribution to the psychological study of history. An incisive examination of traditional Ethiopian differences largely reflecting internal contradictions representing actual administrative units which are ethnomusicologist Kay Kaufman-Shelemay and change in the liturgy of the Falasha. A linguistic analysis is applied by Norman Singer to the social structure.

Why feudalism? Lefort includes the paper on the revolution of 1974. This is biased interpretations.

Time communication among the papers but who are mentioned in the title.

State University of Conn.

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State University, New Haven,

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## Islamic Art from Africa

Aaron Segal

Rene A. Bravmann, *AFRICAN ISLAM* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution and Ethnographica, 1963) pp. 120, \$15.

Islam has profoundly influenced Black Africa. But Black Africa has also profoundly influenced Islam. Nowhere is this syncretic interaction more clearly and delightfully revealed than in African arts and crafts. African art historian Rene Bravmann has contributed a series of essays on African Islam to the superbly illustrated catalog of a major exhibit organized by the national Museum of African Art. The result is a visual and intellectual treat.

The exhibit and text sagely organize African Islam around broad topics illustrated by historic and contemporary objects of art from a wide geographic range. The author delightfully shares his own personal encounters with African Islam in the Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Burkina Faso (ex-Upper Volta) and elsewhere.

The topics and exhibits constantly demonstrate the subtle interplay between Islamic themes and approaches and traditional African art. We are introduced to the words of the Koran elaborated into art forms, to charms, amulets and other devices; to military art in the form of swords, banners, and other weapons; to the Africanization with dancing, masks, and music of Islamic holy days such as Ramadan; to African interpretations of the Islamic theme of the visitation to Heaven by the prophet Mohammed and his faithful steed; and to Islamic continuities in the pursuit of abstract design and form in jewelry, leather, and ceramics. The only explicitly geographic material is an essay on the Swahili Coast of East Africa and its unique Afro-Arab syncretism plus Indian Ocean influences.

This publication stands out amidst the voluminous material on African art. It is readable and enjoyable by non-experts while its essays will offer insights to specialists. It is reasonably priced and the quality of its black and white and color illustrations is high. It is itself an object of pleasure and visual consumption as well as being of utilitarian teaching value. Bravo to Rene Bravmann, the National Museum of African Art, and to the Smithsonian for producing such a fine book.

Aaron Segal is Professor of Political Science at the University of Texas at El Paso

### CORRECTION:

In the review of Ethiopia at Bay by John Spencer on pp. 119-120 in *Africa Today* 32: 1 & 2 we erroneously characterized the book as a paperback. It is, in fact, published only in hardcover at the listed price of \$24.95. Orders sent directly to the publisher, Reference Publications, Inc. 218 St. Clair River Drive, Algonac MI 48001 require an additional \$2.00 shipping charge, plus \$1.00 additional for extra copies in a multiple copy order.

## A Contextual Case Study of Resistance to Colonialism in Kenya

Edward I. Steinhart

Cynthia Brantley, *THE GIRIAMA AND COLONIAL RESISTANCE IN KENYA, 1890-1920* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1981) 196 pp., hardcover, \$30.00

One would have thought that the study of resistance to colonialism in its early stages had lost the immediacy which it had a decade or more ago. The publication of Rotberg and Mazrui's *Protest and Power in Black Africa in 1970* did not represent a high watermark so much as a summation and epilogue on resistance studies. Since then, the disillusionment with the nationalist interjection of African anti-colonialism has led to a shift away from resistance studies towards a broader social and cultural history of African responses to colonialism. The appearance of Cynthia Brantley's *The Giriama and Colonial Resistance in Kenya, 1890-1920* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1981) 196 pp., hardcover, author was out of touch with the trends and currents of thought. But one would be mistaken.

The centerpiece of Dr. Brantley's study and the climactic chapter of the book on the Giriama Rebellion of 1914 is a fine example of the analysis of the techniques and methods of organization of a decentralized "tribal" population in active if futile military insurrection against colonial authorities and armies. Here we find the skillful combination of oral, archival and official publications which we have come to expect from students of the Ranger or "Dar es Salaam" school of African history. The role of the outbreak of the World War and the attempts to recruit Giriama for service as porters places the Giriama response in the wider context of African reactions to both the wartime and labor crises. The effort to attribute blame for these crises to particular colonial administrators' actions and attitudes might seem to detract from Dr. Brantley's cogent arguments placing the Giriama initiatives and responses in the more fundamental context of the economic and political crisis of colonial capitalism. But, even this shortcutting has its benefits. The discussion of the personalities and perceptions of the administrators adds a human element of foibles and failures which helps underline in a clear and convincing manner the basic conflicts between the demands of the colonial system and apparatus on one side and the Giriama social and economic order on the other. It is this conflict which shredded the fabric of the Giriama peasant economy and produced the 1914 rebellion, the most significant example of "tribal" or non-state armed resistance to colonialism in Kenya.

I. Robert Rotberg and Ali A. Mazrui, eds. *Protest and Power in Black Africa* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1970).

Edward I. Steinhart teaches in the Department of History, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas 79409.

The "resistance" study is rooted in the solid ground of the social and economic history of the coastal region of Kenya. This grounding begins with Dr. Brantley's discussion of the social and demographic shift of Giriama society away from the fortified *kayas* in the south towards the more open "frontier" of the trans-Sabaki region of grain growing villages in the north. The nineteenth century Giriama responses to commercial opportunities and pressures; to ecological conditions and crises (like the 1884-85 famine); and the emergence of a peasant-based and export-oriented grain surplus economy form the background to the analysis of British colonial policy in the coastal region. This policy (or preoccupation) to remake the economy in a capitalist image of landowning 'entrepreneurs' and landless wage laborers had a profound and deleterious effect on Giriama economic, social and finally political organization during the first decade and a half of the twentieth century.

Thus, in setting the stage for the resistance study, we are given a clearly written and concise analysis of the political economy of the Giriama under colonial rule. The role of labor recruitment for reconstituted plantations and the unwillingness on the part of colonial administrators to allow for a peasant-based coastal agriculture (no matter how efficient) combined with the relative neglect of the coastal region in favor of the settler economy of the highlands provide the bases for understanding both the depth of Giriama resentment and opposition and the ferocity of British punitive reactions, culminating in the rebellion and its reduction. Although it eschews direct theorizing on the nature of the colonial political economy, preferring a narrative approach, *The Giriama and Colonial Resistance* makes an important addition to the literature on Kenyan political economy. If read in conjunction with Frederick Cooper's masterful *From Slaves to Squatters*, it serves to make the Kenya coastal region a superbly well-documented example of the conflict between pre-capitalist modes of production and exploitation and the requirements of the "world system of capitalism" in its second great expansive phase.

Dr. Brantley is to be complimented for giving the reader more than promised. We have not only a fine contribution to the ongoing, even reviving, study of anti-colonial resistance and rebellion,<sup>2</sup> but an important addition to the history of colonial political economy. Our view of the colonial system is brought into fine focus by being seen through the crack in that system made by an African people's courageous acts of resistance and rebellion.

2. New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1980.

3. Renewed interest in the social history of resistance was signaled by the symposium on "Rebellion and social protest in Africa" held at the University of Illinois in April, 1982.

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## Publications

1. **THE SUDAN: Ethnicity and National Cohesion** is the first title in the *Bayreuth Africa Studies Series*. The 85-page volume includes three articles on different aspects of the problem of national unity and ethnicity: "Ethnicity, Regionalism and National Cohesion in the Sudan" by Mohamed Omer Beshir; "National Versus Regional: Some Methodological Problems in the Study of Nationalism and Nation-Building in the Sudan" by Mohamed A.R. Mohamed-Salih; and "The Dynamics of Ethnic Identification in Northern Darfur, Sudan: A Situational Approach" by Musa Adam Abdul-Jalil. The *Bayreuth African Studies Series* is published in cooperation with the Special Research Project "Identity in Africa" (SFB 2014) of the German Research Council (DFG) and the Africa Area Studies Programme of the University of Bayreuth, P.O. Box 3008, 8580 Bayreuth, West Germany. Price per copy: DM 10 in Europe (postage included) and DM12 elsewhere (postage included).

2. **HORN OF AFRICA**, has published a special issue, Vol. VIII, No. 1, 1985, on the Sudan entitled "Sixty Days that Shook Sudan," featuring articles on the events surrounding the coup, by Richard Greenfield, and other articles on recent and current political issues in the Sudan by Joseph Garang, John Garang, Tekie Woldemikae, Joseph Lagu and Abel Alier. This special issue is available from: Lilian Barber Press, P.O. Box 232, New York, NY 10163.

3. The Africa Fund (associated with the American Committee on Africa) has recently released the **UNIFIED LIST OF UNITED STATES COMPANIES WITH INVESTMENTS OR LOANS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND NAMIBIA**. This excellent sourcebook has been compiled from existing source lists by Pacific Northwest Research Center under the project management of Roger Walke and Richard Knight, and has been published in cooperation with the United Nations Centre Against Apartheid. To order write: The Africa Fund, 196 Broadway, New York, NY 10038. Cost: Individuals \$5 each; institutions \$20 each. All orders must be pre-paid.

4. Now in its second year of publication **SOUTHERN AFRICA REPORT** is the title of a new magazine published five times a year by a volunteer collective of the *Toronto Committee for the Liberation of Southern Africa* (TCLASAC). It is available to institutional and individual subscribers for \$30.00 and \$15, respectively. The Report follows on from an earlier publication, *TCLASAC Reports*, and focuses primarily on the Southern Africa region. To order write: Southern Africa Report, TCLAS, 427 Bloor St. W. Toronto, Ont. M5S1X7 Canada.

5. **SOUTHERN AFRICA REPORT** is also the title of a new weekly newsletter from South Africa which provides news on different aspects of that country's scene. Edited by Raymond Louw, this newsletter is airmailed in 12-16 magazine-size pages, and is indexed. Price for corporations is \$550, but the special introductory price is \$490. The price for universities, institutions and academics is \$275. A 10-week trial subscription is \$100. Write: Southern Africa Report, Seventh Floor, Union Centre West, 52 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg 2001, South Africa.



6. Several titles are available in the NOTES AND DOCUMENTS series of the United Nations Centre Against Apartheid: Special Issue (November 1984) on "Declarations of Conferences and Seminars Organized or Co-sponsored by the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid, May 1981-August 1984: No. 7/85 is Register of Sports Contact with South Africa, 1 July-31 December 1984; No. 8/85 is "South Africa's Offshore Oil Exploration" by Paul Conlon; No. 9/85 is "South Africa's Attempts to Reduce Dependence on Imported Oil" by Paul Conlon; No. 10/85 is "The Saal Coal Liquefaction Plants: Economic Implications and Impact on the South Africa's Ability to Withstand an Oil Cut-off" by Paul Conlon; No. 11/85 "Reflections of a Legal Observer" by Nathaniel R. Jones.

The Centre Against Apartheid has also initiated an occasional NEWS DIGEST, whose purposes are to keep all organizations concerned with South Africa informed of UN-related activities against apartheid and to promote an exchange of information on the progress of the international campaign against apartheid. No. 3/85 is the first issue in this new series.

All Centre Against Apartheid publications can be ordered by writing to: UN Centre Against Apartheid, United Nations, New York, NY 10017.

Two related titles, REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID and SPECIAL REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID, are also available from the United Nations General Assembly/Security Council. Contents of these official UN documents include: review of the work of the Special Committee, concerted international action for the elimination of apartheid, implementation of the arms embargo against South Africa, further action to intensify the anti-apartheid sentiment, and recent developments concerning relations between Israel and South Africa. These documents are available in the form of several mimeographed titles and will be issued in printed form in *Official Records of the General Assembly*, Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 22 (A/40/22)/ No. 22a (A40/22/Add. 1 to 4).

7. An important document from South Africa is CHALLENGE TO THE CHURCH, *The Kairos Documents*, a statement issued by 111 theologians and church leaders from all the major church groups in the country calling on the churches to take a forthright stand in favor of the immediate dismantling of the apartheid system, through civil disobedience and other available means. Copies are available from Kairos Theologians, P.O. Box 32047, Braamfontein 2017 South Africa, or the Theology in a Global Context office, Stony Point Centre, Crickettown Rd., Stony Point, NY 10983, but we do not have a price from either source.

8. Two important titles are now available from the *International Defense and Aid Fund for Southern Africa*: LET MY PEOPLE GO (An Autobiography of Albert Lutuli) (first published 1962), 220 pp., £1.95; and CRY IN THE WILDERNESS by Bishop Desmond Tutu (1980), 125 pp., £2.50. Write: IDAF Publications, Canon Collins House, 64 Essex Rd., London N1 8LR England. IDAF publications are available in North America through IDAFSA-NA, P.O. Box 17, Cambridge, MA 02138.

9. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN AND RELATING TO NAMIBIA is the title of the Report of the United Nations Council for Namibia to the International Conference in Support of the Struggle of the Namibian People for Independence, Paris, 25-29 April 1983. Readers interested in Namibia will still find this 1983 UN document of value in the question of South Africa's continued occupation of that country. 24 pp. + map. n.p.

10. COMPACT FOR AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT is the title of the Report of the Committee on African Development Strategies which deals with the problems of drought, famine, and debt emergencies in sub-Saharan Africa and offers recommendations for fostering African development. Prepared under the co-chairmanship of Lawrence S. Eagleburger and Donald F. McHenry as a joint project of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Overseas Development Council, this 24-page document presents a basically optimistic account for the future of sub-Saharan states, stressing the need for increased U.S. aid to tackle the urgent problems confronting Africa. Findings of the Committee's report will be published in Spring 1986 as a book entitled *Strategies for African Development* edited by Robert J. Berg and Jennifer Seymour Whitaker, and may be ordered (paper edn. \$14.95; cloth edn., \$39.50 — with check enclosed) directly from the publisher: University of California Press, 2120 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, CA 94720.

11. MUNTU: a scientific and cultural review is the title of a journal published by CICIBA (International Center for Bantu Civilizations) in Libreville, Gabon. This journal deals with countries which have a marked Bantu presence such as Angola, Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Rwanda, Sao Tome & Principe, Zaire, and Zambia. For more information on the contents and subscription of the journal, write: CICIBA, Service des Publications, B.P. 770 Libreville, Gabon.

12. The Third World Studies Center at the University of the Philippines has recently come out with the latest addition to its publication series, the journal KASARINLAN ("autonomy") which deals with the analyses and interpretations of Philippine and Third World underdevelopment written from the perspective of "a people constantly struggling for real autonomy and independence." So far three issues have been produced, and presently a special issue on the downfall of the Marcos dictatorship is under way. Cost: international edition US\$20 for individuals; \$30 for institutions. Make all checks payable to the Third World Studies Center, P.O. Box 2:0, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines.

13. Two significant new films are being released this month by the Southern Africa Media Center: WITNESS TO APARTHEID and NELSON AND WINNIE MANDELA. WITNESS was produced in collaboration with Bishop Tutu and presents a stinging indictment of the detentions, torture, shootings and other practices of the South African government. This movie is a moral appeal designed to move the conscience of the most quiescent. MANDELA is the first major production to examine the lives of these two revolutionaries. In many ways the film is really Winnie's story. It traces her evolution from a young, demure social worker to political leader. The film should help advance anti-apartheid sentiments to support for the liberation movement. For more information on these new releases and other Southern Africa-related movies write: The Southern Africa Media Center, California Newsreel, 830 Natoma Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 or call (415)621-6196.

## Coming Events

Critical Theory and Political Commitment is the theme of the annual conference of the *African Literature Association* to be held at Michigan State University on April 16-19, 1986. For more information write to: Prof. Kenneth Harrow, Dept. of Humanities, South Kedzie Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824-1035.

Readers are reminded that the seventeenth annual meeting of the *Western Association of Africanists* will take place at the University of Colorado, Boulder, from April 17-19, 1986. Merrick Posnansky, History and Archaeology, UCLA, is the guest lecturer. To register contact Dr. Louis Wilson, Department of History, University of Colorado, Boulder, CO 80309 (303) 492-6683 or 8180. One or two slots for papers may still be open.

The Annual Meeting of the *Sudan Studies Association* will be held April 17-19, 1986 at Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois. For further information call: Dr. James Hudson, Executive Secretary, SSA, Morgan State University, Baltimore, MD at (301) 444-3277/3571.

In recent years new field research has emerged on the art of the Bamana people of Mali. These findings have resulted in an exhibition, "A Human Ideal in African Art/Bamana Figurative Sculpture." Organized by the Smithsonian's *National Museum of African Art* with guest curator Dr. Kate Ezra, assistant curator, Department of Primitive Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the exhibition premieres in Washington, D.C. on April 30. The Bamana form the largest group of people in southern and western Mali.

The *Seventh Annual International Human Rights Symposium and Research Conference*, which will be held at the Center for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University on June 9-13, 1986, will focus on the theme of "Ethnicity and Rights: The Protection of Minorities." Participation in the conference and symposium is open to scholars, teachers, human rights specialists and others with related interests from the U.S. and overseas. Those wishing to apply should send the following: 1) an application form (available from the Center), 2) a current curriculum vitae, and 3) a proposed paper outline (if applicable) to: Center for the Study of Human Rights, 704 School of International Affairs, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027.

The 9th German Annual Conference on *Commonwealth and Third World Literature, Film, and Theatre* will be held in Laufen, near Salzburg, June 13-17, 1986. For further information write: Dr. Katrina E. Bachinger, Conference Organizer, Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, Den A-5020 Salzburg, Akademiestr. 24, Austria.

*Our Developing World* (a non-profit educational project) announces a 4 week study tour to Mozambique and Zimbabwe (similar to the one organized and led in 1984) between June 28-July 27, 1986. The tour is designed to enable visitors to see life at the grassroots as well as to meet with leading government officials. The tour offers opportunities for curriculum development, research or writing, important contacts, the acquisition of artifacts and awareness of the Southern Africa scene. For further information, write: *Our Developing World*, 13004 Paseo Presada, Saratoga, CA 95070 or call (408) 379-4431.

## Coming Events

A conference on "Hunger, Population and International Development" is to be held at California State University, Long Beach, October 15-17, 1986. The conference is being sponsored by the *Center for International Education* at CSU, Long Beach, the *Consortium for International Cooperation in Higher Education* (CICHE), the *Southern California Consortium on International Studies* (SOCCIS) and the *Global Education Project for Southern California* (GEPSCA). It will take place at the *Ramada Renaissance Hotel* in Long Beach, California. Program proposals and formal paper discussions related to the conference theme are being sought. Submission deadline is April 25, 1986. For more information, contact Denysis Watilo in the Center for International Education, California State University, Long Beach, 1250 Bellflower, Long Beach, CA 90840 (213) 494-8435.

The University of Nebraska at Omaha announces the *Ninth National Third World Studies Conference* to be held on October 16-18, 1986. The conference is concerned with: Western media and the Third World; Technology and Resources; Nationalism, Regionalism, and Internationalism; Violence, Terror and Human Rights; The World Economy, Nuclear Spread and the Third World; Food, Agriculture, and Appropriate Technology; Religion, Philosophy, and Ideology; Education and Teaching: Third World Refugees. The Conference Secretariat calls on deans, department chairpersons, and other supporters of the Conference to submit a one-page abstract of papers and a curriculum vitae to the Third World Studies Conference, The University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha, NE 68182 by April.

The 25th Anniversary of the African Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison will be marked by the annual meeting of the *African Studies Association*. The ASA meeting will be from Thursday, October 30 through Sunday, November 2, 1986, and will be held at the Concourse and Inn on the Park hotels (both located near the state capitol in downtown Madison).

Linda Hunter of the Dept. of African Languages and Literature will act as program coordinator, while Paul Beckett, Program Associate Director, will be local arrangements coordinator for the ASA meetings. For further information write: The African Studies Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1450 Van Hise Hall, 1220 Linden Drive, Madison, WI 53706 or call: 606-262-2380.

## Announcement

A new American research center has been established in Tunis by the *American Institute of Maghrebi Studies* (AIMS), which will serve as a site for coordination and research by American scholars in cooperation with North Africans throughout the region. For information write: Prof. Byron Cannon, Dept. of History, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT 84112.

## Books Received

Starred (\*) titles have been sent to reviewers. Others may be requested by qualified reviewers.

### Political Science

AFRICA AND THE WEST: *The Legacies of Empires*. Isaac James Mowoe and Richard Bjornson, eds. (Prepared under the auspices of the College of Humanities, The Ohio State University). (Greenwood Press, 1986) 274 pp. hardcover \$35.00.

AFRICAN CRISIS AREAS AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY. Gerald J. Bender, James S. Coleman, & Richard L. Sklar, eds. (University of California Press, 1985) 373 pp. n.p.

AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. Olatunde J.C.B. Ojo, D.K. Orwa, and C.B.M. Utete. (Longman Press Inc., 1985) 186 pp. Paper, \$12.95.

ARAB VERSUS EUROPEAN: *Diplomacy and War in Nineteenth-Century East Central Africa*. Bennett, Norman Robert. (Africana Publ. Co., 1986) 325 pp. n.p.

CAPITALISM AND APARTHEID. Merle Lipton. (Rowman & Allenheld, 1986) 448 pp. Cloth, \$19.95.

FEDERALISM IN NIGERIA. S. Egite Oyovbaire. (St. Martin's Press, 1985) 306 pp. Cloth, \$35.00.

INTERPRETING THE THIRD WORLD: *Politics, Economics, and Social Issues*. Jacqueline A. Braveboy-Wagner. (Praeger Press Inc. 1985) 356 pp. Cloth, \$39.95.

THE KENYA AFRICAN UNION. John Spencer. (Routledge & Kegan Paul, Inc., 1986) 296 pp. Cloth, \$45.50.

THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND: *A Profile*. Robert H. Davies, Dan O'Meara, Siph Dlamini. (Zed Press Ltd., 1986) 82 pp. Cloth, \$21.75; Paper, \$7.50.

LESOTHO: *Dilemmas of Dependence in Southern Africa*. John E. Bardill and James H. Cobbe. (Westview Press, 1986) 224 pp. Cloth, \$26.50.

MARKISM AND AFRICAN LITERATURE. George M. Gugelberger. (Africa World Press, 1986) 226 pp. Cloth, \$29.95; Paper, \$9.95.

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF CAMEROON. Michael G. Schatzberg and I. William Zartman. (Praeger Press, 1985) 283 pp. Cloth, \$36.95.

POLITICS, PARTICIPATION AND POVERTY. *Development Through Self-help in Kenya*. Barbara P. Thomas. (Westview Press, 1985) 227 pp. Paper, \$25.00.

REVIVAL AND REBELLION IN COLONIAL CENTRAL AFRICA. Karen E. Fields. (Princeton University Press, 1985) 708 pp. n.p.

### History

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF AFRICA. Vol. 6. 1870-1905. J.D. Fage & Ronald Oliver. (Cambridge University Press, 1985) 956 pp. Cloth, \$89.50.

DAL AL-KUTI AND THE LAST YEARS OF THE TRANS-SAHARAN SLAVE TRADE. Dennis D. Cordell. (The Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1985) 283 pp. Cloth, \$35.00.

SHAKA ZULU: *A Biography of the founder of the Zulu Nation*. E.A. Ritter. (Penguin, 1985) 411 pp. Paper \$4.95.

### Economics and Development

AFRICA'S AGRARIAN CRISIS: *The Roots of Famine*. Stephen Commins, Michael Lofchie and Rhys Payne. (Lynne Rienner Publ. Inc., 1986) 237 pp. Cloth, \$23.00.

AFRICA MIGRATION AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. Beverly Lindsay, ed. (The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1986) 180 pp. Cloth, \$22.50.

ANTHROPOLOGY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN WEST AFRICA (IDA Monographs in Development Anthropology Series). Michael M. Horowitz and Thomas M. Painter, eds. Foreword by Michael M. Cernea. (Westview Press, 1986) 323 pp. Paper, \$19.85.

ECONOMIC CRISIS IN AFRICA: *African Perspectives On Development Problems and Potentials*. Adedeji Adebayo & Timothy Shaw, eds. (Lynne Rienner Publ. Inc., 1985) 290 pp. Cloth, \$27.50.

EXTERNAL DEBT MANAGEMENT. Hassanali Mehran, ed. (International Monetary Fund, 1985) 322 pp. n.p.

THE FUTURE OF REGIONALISM IN AFRICA. R.I. Onwuksa and A. Sesay (St. Martin's Press, 1985) 272 pp. Cloth, \$29.95.

MODERNISATION IN THE SUDAN: *Essays in Honor of Richard Hill*. M.W. Daly, ed. (Lillian Barber Press Inc., 1985) 177 pp. Cloth, \$29.50.

POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN AFRICA. John I. Clarke, Mustafa Khogali and Leszek A. Kosinski, eds. (Cambridge University Press, 1985) 329 pp. Cloth, \$49.50.

UNION LIST OF AFRICAN CENSUSES, DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND STATISTICAL ABSTRACTS. Victoria K. Evalds, Compiler. (Hans Zell Publ., 1985) 232 pp. n.p.

WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT: *A CREATIVE ROLE DENIED?* Marja-Liisa Swantz. (St. Martin's Press, 1986) 272 pp. Cloth, \$27.50; Paper, \$11.95.

### Literature

FRANTZ FANON, SOWETO AND AMERICAN BLACK THOUGHT. Lou Turner & John Alan. (News and Letters, 1986) 90 pp. n.p.

THE HERITAGE OF AFRICAN POETRY. Isadore Okpewho, ed. (Longman Press Inc. 1985) 279 pp. Paper, \$8.95.

IN TOWNSHIP TONIGHT: *South Africa's Black City Music and Theatre*. David Coplan. (Longman Press Inc., 1986) 278 pp. Paper, \$12.50.

LITERATURE AND SOCIETY IN SOUTH AFRICA. Landeg White and Tim Couzens, eds. (Longman Press Inc., 1984) 220 pp. Paper, \$14.95.

MARKISM AND AFRICAN LITERATURE. George M. Gugelberger, ed. (Africa World Press, 1986) 226 pp. Hardback, \$29.95; Paper, \$9.95.

\* TORTOISE THE TRICKSTER AND OTHER FOLKTALES FROM CAMEROON. Loreto Todd. (Routledge & Kegan Paul, Inc., 1985) 121 pp. Paper, \$4.95.

## Sociology and Education

**DIVERSIFIED SECONDARY EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT:** Evidence from Colombia and Tanzania. George Psacharopoulos and William Loxley. (Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1986) 243 pp. Cloth, \$27.50.

**WIDOWS IN AFRICAN SOCIETIES: Choices and Constraints.** Betty Potash, ed. (Stanford University Press, 1986) 308 pp. Cloth, \$35.00.

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