THE BORAN OF NORTHERN KENYA: ORIGIN, MIGRATIONS AND SETTLEMENTS IN THE 19TH CENTURY.

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the B.A. degree of the University of Nairobi.
ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to reconstruct certain aspects of the Boran past through the use of oral traditions. It is the story of Boran society from the beginning of the 19th century down to the dawn of this century. In order to give an intelligible account of the period, it was found necessary to preface it with a rather long introduction dealing with certain important aspects of Boran environment, economy, social structure and origins. In a sense, this was an attempt to understand the internal developments of that society.

Certain conclusions are reached. It is suggested that the Boran expansion was the cause of warday Galla movement out of Ethiopia into the Jubaland region of Somalia. It is also suggested that the development of shegat (client) relationship with the Somali groups of Gurreh and Ajuran was the outcome of this expansion. It is observed that the effects of Amhara annexation of Boran country was to accelerate Boran expansion as far south as Marsabit, and that this expansion was also dependent on a prior movement of the Samburu and Rendille in that direction. The spate of Somali expansion from the east at the end of the 19th century altered the traditional dynamics of ethnic migrations and led
This dissertation is an attempt at a reconstruction of the history of the Pastoral Boran of Northern Kenya. Although largely devoted to the Boran, the paper also mentions at some length other pastoral groups such as the Samburu and Rendille people and the course of Boran history. In this regard, the Somali and in particular the Qurrah (Carra) and Ajuran Sub-tribes of the expressly the warfare against the Samburu and Rendille people's enembled to survive of the Boran against the Somali threats and possibly that of the Samburu and Rendille from the dangers posed to them by Boran expansion to the south.

For Boran life and their social and political organization remained and still remain centred on the plains of Dime and Liban in Southern Ethiopia. Was it possible to construct the subject to the 19th century only. Admittedly, it would appear that the 19th Century, and especially the second half of that period, represents a time of high interaction with other pastoral groups. Finally, it is suggested that the imposition of British rule over this region and the policy of restricting tribal migrations ensured the survival of the Boran against the Somali threats and possibly that of the Samburu and Rendille from the dangers posed to them by Boran expansion to the south.