PEACE AND STABILITY IN SOMALIA: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS[1]

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The purpose of this article is to examine the root causes of the current civil strife in Somalia, and to suggest possible tentative socio-political reconstruction modes. By reconstruction, we mean the introduction of alternative socio-political models which are appropriate to the current linguistic and clan realities of the country. However, before any future reconstructions are attempted, it is very important that we understand the causes of the current crisis. This will also help future Somali leaders avoid repeating past mistakes. It must be noted, however, that the recommendations of the author are tentative and are intended to provide a basic guideline. These recommendations must nevertheless be seen as strong and realistic guidelines upon which future political formations can be based.

It is argued that the causes of the current civil strife and the resulting famine in Somalia are far deeper than "Warlordism."[2] It is in large measure attributed to the traditional mode of production of the society at large—that is both pastoralism and agropastoralism, governmental policies that have neglected rural Somalia over approximately the past 20 years, and a rising critical consciousness which at the same time resulted in heightened clan consciousness over the past 15 years.[3] It is suggested that since past forms of governments, national integration models such as detribalization, and the invention of Somali nationalism have all failed, the only option remaining for the people is to create a decentralized federal system of government based on semi "semi-regional autonomy."

Introduction

Scholarship in Somali studies, especially dealing with the culture of the people, has exaggerated the homogeneity of the country without extensive investigation of the cultural intricacies of the society. Thus, historians, anthropologists, and successive Somali governments alike failed to recognize the cultural, socioeconomic, and ecological differences among the people. Rather, they took Somali nationalism as a given and concentrated more on how the colonial powers divided the Somali nation into five different colonial zones.[4]

This portrayal of the Somali nation has painted a picture for uncritical students of Somali studies and Somali intellectuals in which the slightest hint of civil war remained inconceivable.[5] Yet Somalia is currently experiencing one of the worst civil wars in the modern history of the country. In a recent article, I. M. Lewis expresses this contradiction in the following manner: "The Somali case seemed at independence (in 1960) very different. Nationalism was already part of their heritage and their problem was not that of nation-building, but extending national statehood outside the frontiers of the Somali Republic (formed by the Union of the British and Italian Somaliland) to embrace the remaining portions of the nation in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya. Thus, at home, they seemed to possess an exemplary mono-cultural nationhood. . . ."[6] Lewis goes on to say, "Hindsight highlights the fact that although the Somalis had, prior to their colonial partition, a strong sense of cultural nationalism, they did not constitute a single political unit."[7] What Lewis may have observed in 1960 could have probably been a very well articulated Darood nationalism dressed as Somali nationalism, rather than a true Somali nationalism.

In reality, the mono-culture or nomadic culture which Lewis and those who supported his perspective speak about is mainly from the northern part of the country. This area is also the focus of Lewis's work, ***A Pastoral Democracy***, (published in 1961).[8] Most importantly, contrary to the well-publicized myth, the Somali people are divided in two distinctly different groups. These are the two Rewin agropastoralistic (Digil and Mirifle) groups on the one hand and the four nomadic groups (Hawiye, Dir, Darood, and Isaq) on the other. The first group speaks the Rewin language, while the later speaks the Northern Somali language. These two languages differ to the same extent as Spanish and Portuguese. Even within the nomadic group, the Hawiye, the largest clan within the nomadic is socioculturally different from the rest because of its settled tradition. There is also a large number of irrigation farmers along the Jubba and Shabelle rivers who are referred to as Africans. This classification makes one wonder what continent the Somalis belong to.

Despite the popular assumption that the Somali people were a nation before the arrival of the colonial powers, Somali society consisted of several distinct kin, language and economic communities. It can even be postulated that at one time, the ancestors of the six major clan families occupied discrete territories within which much of their history and sense of identity evolved. Somali clan politics in the past also indicate a clear segmentation of political authority whereby each clan had its own tribal leader. Even though some or all of these clan leaders have expanded beyond their lineage area, it is doubtful that they

have controlled more than one or two clans.[9] Even the indigenous government after the independence (in 1960), despite its legitimate authority and strong nationalistic will, was never able to reach its subjects across the land except through the clan chiefs. An even more perplexing situation is how the society and its socioeconomic culture was characterized, especially in relation to the distinction between nomadism and agriculture. For example, the Rewin (Digil and Mirifle), who are largely portrayed as agriculturalists, are no less nomadic than the rest of the country. The lower Shabelle, and the Upper and Lower Jubba regions where the predominant population are of these two clans, can be considered half nomadic and half settled. For instance, the Bay region, considered to have the greatest potential in Somalia for intensification and expansion of agriculture, holds at the same time the highest number of livestock of any region in the country.[10] On the other hand, the assumption that northern parts of Somalia are the center of the Somali pastoral economy is no longer true for two main reasons. First, due to desertification and other ecological problems in the north, the number of livestock that the land can hold is decreasing, while the number of livestock is multiplying faster in the southern regions. Second, over the past 15-20 years, the number of nomadic immigrants to the urban areas of the south has doubled, creating what Said Samatar referred to as the "urban nomad."[11] Third, the majority of the Hawiye clan can be categorized more accurately as agropastoralists rather than pure nomads. The northern region has only served as a trading post for livestock exportations from all parts of the country. Furthermore, the results of the 1957 census indicated that the population of the Rewin and Hawiye were far greater than the rest of the population.[12] Other sources indicate also that the southern regions hold the largest number of livestock in the country. This may lead one to question the population size of the so-called northern nomadic groups, the size of livestock in that area, and the relevance of the nomadic culture as the national culture of the nation.

The Rewin Speakers

The Rewin clan families (Digil and Mirifle) comprise roughly 40% of the population and are two of the six major Somali clan families. These two clans are socio-culturally and linguistically different from the other four groups. Socio-culturally, they practice agro-pastoralism—a mixture of nomadism and dry-land farming. Geographically, they occupy the land south of the Shabelle River. Linguistically, they speak the *May* language as opposed to *Maxatire*.[13] Unlike their northern

brothers, except the southern Hawiye clans including the Abgal and others like the Biimal, they are settled communities and depend on their labor for survival. In fact, along with the so-called Bantu groups and the above mentioned Southern Hawiye clans, they have created the bread basket of the country. Nevertheless, they have been extremely subordinated over the past 30-40 years both politically and culturally. Their language and culture have been suppressed. The international communities were given the impression that Somalia, unlike any other country in Africa, is virtually homogenous, with almost all the people speaking the same language. However, in truth 40% of the people are linguistically and socio-culturally distinct from the rest. To give a general idea about the differences in language, let me quote one of the foremost anthropologists on the Horn of Africa: "The widest dialect difference is between the speech of the northern pastoralists and the Digil and Rahanwayn agriculturalists. These differ much to the same extent as Portuguese and Spanish, yet since many of its speakers are also familiar with the standard Somali, the extent of this distinct southern dialect does not alter the fact that from Jibouti Republic to Garissa on the Tana River in Kenya standard Somali provides a single channel of communication"[14] This statement correctly points out the extent of differences between the two languages. Yet it fails to recognize that the majority of the Rewin speakers live in the rural areas and therefore can not speak the central language. In fact, when a government official goes to the south for official visit, he or she must hire a translator.

The Barre regime (1969-1990) further subordinated this group both politically and culturally. In 1990, Barre's troops fleeing from Mogadishu destroyed the southern cities including Baidoa and Bardheere. They also indiscriminately wiped out rural villages, confiscating people's property and killing men between the ages of 15 and 30. Later , General Aideed's militia/clan finished off everything left by Siyyad Barre, to a point where the people could no longer sustain themselves. As late as September 13, 1992, the number of deaths was estimated to be more than 50 a day. The main reasons for this tragedy are that Aideed's clan, who controlled the highways leading to the southern cities, refused to allow food to pass through to the Rewin clans because of their cultural and linguistic differences and that Aideed wanted to starve them so that he could acquire their land. Moreover, Aideed has refused to allow any foreign intervention mainly for political reasons. Aideed feared that once foreign troops arrived he would lose control over the area; this appears to have happened following United States intervention.

Socioeconomic Dependency

The socioeconomic mode of production in Somalia can be generally divided into pastoralism in the north and agropastoralism in the south, small pockets of fishing along the coastal areas, and irrigation farming along the Jubba and Shabelle rivers. Traditionally, both pastoralism and agropastoralism have not been well-organized, productive activities, partly due to a lack of modern technology, and the constant migrant nature of pastoralism that did not allow any organized development. In the plains south of the Shabelle river, where agropatoralism has been the dominant mode of production, both pastoralism and dry-land farming remain part-time occupations. People constantly shift between dry-land farming and pastoralism depending on the season and the rainfall in the area, thereby complicating any kind of organized, sustained, long-term development. State development policies do not help either. Since 1960, development strategists have shifted their focus several times from draft animals to agricultural intensification through extension activities back to the introduction of draft animals. An even bigger problem is the incorrect ways in which local producers have been characterized as either pure farmers or pure nomads.[15] As a result, there has never been any integrated and appropriate development that considered the constant shift of the people between dry-land farming and pastoralism.

Pure pastoralism is even less conducive to modern development. Its productive sphere does not include the concept of productivity as a measurement of active physical work. As Rabi pointed out, "The nomad lives with his herds. These are born, grow up, and reproduce all alone. The task of the shepherd is basically limited to watching over them and occasionally giving them some supplementary care."[16] Furthermore, due to the harsh climatic situation of the country, the nomad spends most of his time not in productive activity but on pure survival, thus making him unable to accumulate materials for future consumption and investment. It is also said that the nomadic groups despise anything related to physical work, including farming, metal working, and so forth. This twin dilemma of not appreciating and even despising the concept of productive work and the punishing unpredictable environment that does not allow the nomad to progress often force him to invent ingenious ways—some of them illegal—to ensure security and survival. As Deriye pointed out, "The traditional looting of stock which used to underlie most tribal conflicts can be cited

as a resort to this form of extra-legality just as misappropriation of public funds is another, more refined manifestation of the same phenomenon in modern times."[17] The result has been an overwhelming number of people receiving incomes either illegally or through outright donations from fortunate clan members or the state without necessarily contributing any labor in exchange. This problem was further exacerbated by the meager resources available to Somali individuals. Consequently, the majority of the Somali population were drawn to the state because, even in diminished circumstances, it remained a major source of spoils and the only available channel for getting what little there was to get. Furthermore, the past 30 years of independence did not alter the socio-economic dependency of the society. Thus, virtually every single clan has constantly been engaged in state politics by seeking to influence the distribution of development resources in their favor. The result has been an increase in the number of people who chose dependency on the state over productive labor with a well-elaborated culture that despises productive work.

Ironically, though, this concept of seeking profit without contributing any productive labor was carried over to the public sector. Both higher and lower level public officials alike spent most of their time planning ways in which they could misappropriate public funds to a point where any official who did not misappropriate public funds was considered incompetent. Moreover, an unholy alliance between public officials and large business owners was established based on kinship ties, further eroding the business ethics of the market. A study conducted by the Somali Institute of Development, Administration, and Management reported that those with political connections had an easier time importing goods and obtaining hard currency. Those without political ties faced difficulties importing goods and obtaining hard currency. This illegal collaboration between government officials and the so-called "connected" is demonstrated by the following practices at Somali ports of entry: the elimination of much of what is owed in taxes through incomplete invoices, the reduction of the cost of items which resulted in lower customs, the declaration of lesser quantities, and concealing items in unlabeled packages.[18] As a result of these activities, four large social groups emerged: 1) a large number of (tribally-connected) public officials who acquired their income by misappropriating public funds, 2) a large number of (tribally-connected) business owners who because of their clan relationship with public officials became wealthy, and 3) a large number of people who, because of their clan relationship with government, were put illegally onto the government's pay roll without necessarily contributing any productive labor, and 4) a disproportionately large number of deprived masses.

The result has been a stratification based on clan and its relation to the state.

Clanism and Social Stratification

Despite the general assumption that the Somali society is egalitarian and thus classless, clan stratification has been part of the Somali society at least since independence. Class or social stratification in the Marxist sense means a category of people of roughly equivalent status in an unequal society. The members of the higher class enjoy greater access to the society's wealth and other resources. Similarly, clanism in Somalia is a system of stratification whereby the members of the clan in power assume the role of the bourgeois class and thus avail themselves of a greater share of the resources. The class of an individual in Somalia is determined by his or her membership and/or affiliation to the clan that is in power at any particular time. The only difference between social stratification in the west and in Somali society is that, whereas in the west, the higher social class groups are more established and thus more stable, the Somali clan stratification is not stable. Again, whereas in the west, social stratification is determined by the economic condition and the educational levels of the group—racial/ethnic stratification notwithstanding—the Somali stratification is based on the group's relation to the state which is usually achieved by force. Thus, because this status is achieved through force, a new bourgeois class appears approximately every ten or so years. For example, between 1960-69, the Majerteen (Darood clan) dominated both the economic and the political scenes of the country. The Hawiye and especially the Rewin were alienated. The Marehan (again Darood) military government of 1969 tried to subdue clanism and replace it with a united Somalia under the name of *Hantiwadaga Cilmiga Ku Dhisan* (Scientific Socialism). Nevertheless this regime employed clanism as a way of solidifying its power while at the same time claiming to adhere to the principles of one nation under scientific socialism. This cover-up seemed to work for the first few years mainly because the people were dissatisfied with earlier regimes and had no choice but to support any political change. By 1975, however, the Barre regime was not able to distance itself from the deeply-rooted clanism and tribalism which together created and maintained the Somali political organization for several hundred years. By the end of the war with Ethiopia, Somalia once again fell into the blanket of clanism. Several tribal groups started their guerrilla movement sponsored by the Mengistu regime of Addis Ababa. As a result, Barre began to ally himself more and more with people from his clan, from the clan of his mother, and the clan of his

son-in-law, thus finding himself in the center a Marehan-Ogaden-Dulbahante clan-based coalition known as (MOD).[19] Such coalitions work, however, only as long as Somalis perceive an external enemy. Once this enemy ceased to exist, long suppressed internal conflicts resurfaced, creating internal conflicts. Thus the idea of nationhood did not and does not exist. What we have is a group of corrupt tribal leaders who mobilize their tribal members in order to compete for the top position. The clan that looses at any given time regroups and mounts a challenge once more by establishing armed guerrilla factions. If this group takes power, they usually eliminate the previous clan by imprisonment, torture, killing, and forced migration or by the destruction of the their regional base. This process, which I refer to as "the lose, regroup, and attack scenario," repeats itself once every seven to ten years. For example, the Majerteen dominated the political arena from 1960-1969. They were challenged during the election of 1968 and especially in 1969, when the prime minister was killed, at which time the military took advantage of the resulting confusion between the different clans struggling for power. From 1969-1990 the Marehan dominated the state. By 1975, again the Majerteen challenged the Marehan government, but they were subdued and forced into migration. The 1985 Isaq challenge eventually resulted in the destruction of Hargiesa in 1988. Finally, the Hawiye challenged in 1990, and with the help of the Rewin, forced Siyyad Barre to leave the country. However, at this time there was no single clan powerful enough to subdue the rest, and the result is the current picture in which every clan controls one portion of the country. Therefore, whichever clan takes over now will face another challenge by the year 2000, unless some fundamental restructuring is introduced to the current socio-political structure in Somalia.

In the past, this clan stratification has been tolerated by the majority of the Somali people especially the Hawiye and Rewin clans in the name of Somali nationalism. The appeal to this nationalism was theoretically intended to suppress primordial ties. In reality it legitimized even more stratification, which led to a societal pyramid-like structure with the Darood at the top.[20] It is also supposed that the Darood clan had a vested interest extending the concept of greater Somalia beyond the Somali Republic because it was assumed that the majority of the Somali people in the Ethiopian and Kenyan regions were of the Darood clan. An even more important reason for the tolerance of this stratification was due to the lack of critical consciousness on the part of some of the clans. For example, the vast majority of the Hawiye and the Rewin population were less educated, mainly because both the Italian and the British colonists gave preferential treatment to the Darood

by providing more of the civil jobs with more members from the SYL party, which was mainly dominated Darood members.[21] At the present time, the situation is clearly different. The number of educated Rewin or especially Hawiye individuals has increased. Most importantly, this critical consciousness has resulted in a heightened clan consciousness among the Somali people at large to a point where each clan wants to either single-handedly control the rest or take secessionist stands. Such examples can be found among the Isaq or the recent Darood claim of separate entity within the Northeastern region.

Clanism and National Integration

A very important but almost neglected cause of the current civil strife in Somalia is failed models of national integration. According to Coleman and Roseberg, "national integration is regarded as a broad subsuming process, whose two major dimensions are 1) *political integration* , which refers to the progressive bridging of the elite-mass gap on the vertical plane in the course of developing an integrated political process and a participant political community, and 2) *territorial integration,* which refers to the progressive reduction of cultural and regional tensions and discontinuities on the horizontal plane in the process of creating a homogeneous territorial political community.[22] The problem with this and other interpretations of national integration is that they focus on the racial, cultural, religious, and linguistic differences among groups within nations. Such interpretation ignores other divisive elements, such as *tribalism/clanism,* which can be equally or even more destructive to the process of national integration. Somalia is a good example in this case. The Somali people were traditionally divided into several major clans based on kinship ties and the need for local support systems. The relationship between different clans was based on mutual understanding and the sharing of proximate resources. The political sphere of each clan was local in nature. However, modern clanism, even though still based on kinship, is propelled by the explicit drive of some clans to both politically and economically dominate the other clans. Examples of such situations can be found between the Isaq and the Darood, the Hawiye and the Darood, and the Rewin against all. As Samatar explains, "Kinship denotes a central relationship buttressed by both blood ties and deeply revered tradition and custom (*xeer*)—one which mediates individuals and groups. Clanism on the other hand, is the transformation of kinship by detaching blood ties from tradition and custom."[23] Samatar further suggests that these blood ties are currently replaced by the forces of modern capitalist economic systems. Whether

the current relationship between clan families is generated by the introduction of the capitalist system or the desire to dominate, modern Somalia is for all intents and purposes as divided as any other African country.

In addition to the apparent sociocultural differences, Somalia is plagued by tribalism/clanism which, if unchecked with some form of equal representation, has the capability to destroy the fabric of the nation. As Lewis explains,"These divisive and constricting forces are identified as 'Tribalism' and equated with similar particularistic attachments in other African countries. If, however, the effects of these forces are much the same, the institutions that produce them differ. The linguistically and culturally distinct divisions that threaten the fragile cohesion of most African states are here replaced by kinship ties which, although they lack the trappings of cultural uniqueness, are arguably even more deeply entrenched and paralyzing in their effects." It should be noted that Lewis's statement gives the impression that Somalia is divided only along clan lines, but in reality this clan division is a manifestation of deep sociocultural differences that have been suppressed for a long time through Somali nationalism.

Given these conditions and results, how do we go about reconstructing the country both politically and socioeconomically? As we are all aware, Somali nationalism, national integration, detribalization, and strong central governments have all failed. Thus we have only one option, that is the need of decentralizing authority and promoting popular participation based on voluntary association, not forced national integration. Civil societies cannot be achieved without the full participation of the people, nor the economic condition of the people improved without thier unrestricted participation and contribution to the welfare of the nation. After all, it is to the people that the very benefits of development should and must accrue.

In Somalia, the option to this end is to create a federal system of government based on semi "regional autonomy".[24] Considering the population distribution and the political/clan realities of the country, four autonomous regions must be created. These could be divided into: 1) Northwestern, 2) Northeastern, 3) Central, and 4) South. These four regions coincide with the geographical locations of the four largest clans in the country. These are the Isaq in the Northwest, the Darood in the Northeast, the Hawiye in the Central, and the Rewin (Digil/Mirifle) in the South. However, due to the fact that the migration patterns of the past 20-30 years have changed the population and clan distribution patterns of the country, and because other smaller clans are settled in each of the four mentioned regions, several districts must be created within each of the four regions. These districts must be specifically

created for the smaller clans of each region for the purpose of electing their own representatives to the regional parliaments and to the national parliament. For example, in the Northwest, several districts to accommodate the Issa, Gadabursi, Dir, and Dulbahante must be created. Similar situations must be applied to each of the other regions. As Samatar pointed out, "The federal government must be based on a two-house parliamentary system, consisting of a house of elders and a house of representatives. The house of the elders must be given greater authority at least in the first ten or so years. Once the political situation of the country matures greater power must be given to the house of representatives."[25] Similar political structures must be established in each region.

Some may dismiss this concept as an attempt to divide the country. However, that attitude fails to grasp the political reality of the country today. In fact, that the country is already divided beyond repair. For example, the northeastern region (or the ex-British Somaliland) has already claimed separate identity. Since 1940, the southern region insisted on federalism but was consistently dismissed by the Darood government. Also, popular opinion indicates that the central region favors regional autonomy. Most importantly, the general reconciliation conference held in Jibouti from July 15-21, 1991, which was attended by six different clan groups (with the observation of several international heads of states and international organizations) has unanimously agreed to the introduction of regional autonomy as an article in the future constitution of the country. This indicates that the great majority of the Somali people accept the reality of some form of a federal system of government.[26] The only questions that remain are how many regions should be created, and how to adopt the system itself? Considering the economic and population/clan distribution of the country, the creation of four regions is most suitable, other suggestions notwithstanding. The assumption behind this line of argument is the belief that economic and social developments in Somalia can *only* be reached after a just political solution is achieved. Another question could be how to strategically adopt this form of regional autonomy. It must be noted, however, that this system should not inhibit the right of individual Somalis to settle where they wish, but rather to affirm the need for the majority in each region to rule. In order to accomplish this strategy, several steps must be followed:

1) A group of Somali elders, professionals, and scholars must be assembled to determine the most appropriate regional boundary lines. Specifically, these individuals must be selected equally from either side of the would-be boundary lines. For example, along the Shabelle river

boundary line, individuals must be selected from the Hawiye and the Digil/Mirifle. Along the northwest/northeast line, individuals must be selected from such clans as the Isaq and the Darood. This process must be observed by the United nations.
2) A national and regional census coordinated and supervised by the United Nations, the international community, and independent organizations such as the Carter Center must be undertaken. This part is the most serious part because some clans may decide to transfer their clan members to other regions in order to sway the census outcome to their advantage. Thus an appropriate means of controlling such fraud must be established prior to the census. This could be achieved by asking individuals to provide testimony to their claim of residing in that region where they are trying to vote.

3) A national and regional referendum must be held within one year after the results of the above two projects are received. The referendum on regional autonomy could be conducted on a YES or NO basis. If a particular region approves the regional autonomy while the others do not, that region must be given regional autonomy. Again the international community must coordinate and observe this undertaking.

4) All the current "warlords" must be removed from the future political reconstruction of the country. This does not mean that they should be removed by force, but rather that the masses should be provided with a politically secure environment within which they can express their opinions and vote for the candidate of their choice. If this is achieved, there is no doubt that the people will vote against the current warlords. The rationale behind this suggestion is the fact that the current support of the people to any individual leader is achieved through force. Once this force is removed, the current warlords will step aside automatically.

5) Finally, what ever type of government results from this process must be considered transitional for the next 12 years. This government must hold national elections every four years. After these transitional years, a second national referendum must be carried to decide whether the country should continue with the federal system of government, or whether it should create a centralized democratic parliamentary system based on the 1960 constitution. The assumption behind this argument is that with time, the current tension between the clans may subside and pave a way for a more integrated civil society. This, however, depends on how the transitional government behaves itself. If it tries to sway the political development of the country towards solidifying power, hijacking the government, and imposing military or some other form of autocratic regime, it will be planting the seeds of the next civil war.

The role of the United Nations, the United States, and other regional and international organizations must be geared towards providing relief help and creating a secure environment within which such political agenda can be carried out and in which the masses can express their discontent without any fear for their lives. I believe this is the most difficult part, and the most important at the same time. To this end, the level of intervention by the United States or the United Nations must be kept at the present level for at least the next two years, otherwise the situation will deteriorate to what it was before. This does not mean concentrating on political solutions and ignoring economic issues, but only that political considerations should be given priority. Also it is my belief that the economic bases of this crisis merit a separate analysis which I invite other scholars to look at. Nevertheless, in terms of short-term economic development, international agencies and governments must emphasize grass-roots or regionally-based development projects. These projects must be intended to help the people take charge of their lives and decide the directions they want to carry their development. The most important development strategy is to invest in agriculture. This is very important for the immediate future. If the people are provided with necessary incentives, then the country can stand on its feet again. However, in the long run some thought must be given to the ways within which pastoralism can be completely reorganized. Managed pastoralism may be preferable to leaving the nomads to use traditional methods. Fishing must also be given priority because the country has a large untapped reserve of fish.

Conclusion

The causes of the current civil strife in Somalia are far beyond "warlordism." It is in large measure attributable to the traditional socioeconomic modes of production of the Somali people at large (that is agropastoralism and pastoralism), the unforgiving harsh environment of the land, misguided development, failed national integration models, and most of all the modern clanism which took the shape of a modern class creating a pyramid-like stratification structure in which some clans sat at the top. Thus, these crisis can be in general attributed to resource competition based on clan/class social structure. This problem is further exacerbated by the meager resources available to the Somali individual. As a result, the majority of the Somali population are drawn to the state, because, even in diminished circumstances, it remains a major source of spoils, and the only available channel for getting what is there to get. Thus, virtually every single clan has constantly been engaged in state

politics by seeking to influence the distribution of development resources in its favor. Also, higher and lower public officials alike spend most of their time planning ways in which they can misappropriate public funds and enrich their clan members.

The purpose of this paper was to examine the deep socio-political elements behind the current civil strife in Somalia. We found that contrary to popular assumptions , Somalia is socioculturally divided into different groups with different interests. On the one hand, we have two socioculturally and linguistically different groups. These are the two *May* speaking groups of Digil and Mirifle, and the four *Maxatiri* speaking groups of Dir, Darood, Hawiye, and Isaq. More interesting is the fact that the overwhelming majority of the Hawiye—the largest clan within the *Maxatiri* speaking group—demonstrate more sociocultural similarities to the *May*-speaking group of Digil and Mirifle than, for example, to the Darood or the Isaq. In addition to these sociocultural differences, Somalia is plagued by tribalism which, if unchecked by some form of representation, can destroy the fabric of the society. This does not necessarily mean that the Somali crises cannot be resolved. If the suggestion of this author or other similar ones which emphasize equal representation among different groups is followed and implemented properly, Somalia can became a country once more.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1]The name Rewin is used in this article instead of Rahanwayn because that is what the people call themselves. This name embraces the Rewin-speaking clan families of Digil and Mirifle. Rewin is the language of Somalia spoken in the area south of the Shabelle River, as opposed to Northern which is spoken north of the Shabelle River.

[2]This is not to dismiss the destruction that some of the so-called Warlords have inflicted upon the country and the people but to also look at the deeper causes of the conflict.

[3]Critical consciousness is referred to as the objective awareness of the people'scommon plight, which resulted in clan consciousness, the extreme identification of the people with clans as a source of social support.

[4]These are former Italian, British, French Somalilands, Western Somaliland, currently an Ethiopian Province, and the former Northern Frontier District (now the North Eastern Province of Kenya).

[5]Abdi Kusow, "The Genesis of the Somali Civil War: A new Perspective." Paper presented to the Sixth Northeast African Studies Conference, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, April 23-25, 1992.

[6]I. M. Lewis, "Segmentary Nationalism and the Collapse of the Somali State." Unpublished paper given to me by the author in 1992, pp. 1-2.

[7]*Ibid.* p. 2.

[8]IM. Lewis, ***A pastoral Democracy: A study of Pastoralism and Politics Among the Northern Somali of the Horn*** (London: Oxford University Press, 1961). The exception to this are the works of Herbert Lewis, Lee cassanelli, Bernd Hiene, R Turton, and Abdirahman Hersi.

[9]Lee V. Cassanelli, ***The Shaping of Somali Society: Reconstructing the History of Pastoral People from 1800-1900*** (Philodelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984).

[10]Diana Puttman, "Agro-Pastoral Production Strategies and development in the Bay Region," in Thomas Labahn (ed.), ***Proceedings of the Second International Congress of Somali Studies***, Volume III (University of Hamburg, 1983), pp. 57-69.

[11]Said.Samatar, "Somalia: A Country in Tormoil," London: The Minority Rights Group, 1991. See also Said Farah Mohamoud, "The Need to Develop Somalia's Resources," in Annarita Puglielli (ed.), ***The Proceedings of the Third International Congress of Somali Studies*** (Rome: Italy, 1988). In this work, Said raises the question of whether Pastoralism as it is today can be conducive to modern development, and his answer is no.

[12]Mohamed Haji Mukhtar, "The Emergence and Role of Political Parties in the Inter-River Region of Somalia from 1947 to 1960 (Independence)," in ***UFAHAMU***, Vol. XVII, Number 2, 1989, pp. 75-95.

[13]May and Maxatiri are the local names by which the two main dialects are known. The first refers to the southern dialect, while the later refers to the northern dialect.

[14]I. M. Lewis, ***A Modern History of Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*** (London: Longman, 1980), p. 5.

[15]For a good description of Agro-Pastoral Systems in the South, see Diana Puttman, "Agro-Pastoral Production Strategies and development in the Bay Region," in Thomas Labahn (ed.), ***Proceedings of the Second International Congress of Somali Studies***, Volume III (University of Hamburg, 1983) pp. 57-69.

[16]Omar. Osman Rabi, "The Somali Nomad," in Thomas Labahn (ed.), ***Proceedings of the Second International Cogress of Somali Studies,*** Volume III (University of Hamburg, 1983), pp. 57-69

[17]H. AbdulkadirDeriye, "Economic Dependency: Its Cultural Origins and Its Consequences for Somalia's Development," in Thomas Labahn (ed.), ***Proceedings of the Second International Somali Studies***, Volume III (University of Hamburg, 1983), pp. 57-69

[18]For a good description of the market corruption in Somalia, see D.W. Henderson, "Entrepreneurial Considerations," in Thomas Labahn (ed.), ***Proceedings of the Second International Somali Studies***, Volume III (University of Hamburg, 1983), pp. 57-69.

[19]David Laitain and Said Samatar, Somalia: A Nation in Search of a State (Boulder: Westview press, 1987), pp. 92; 94-99.

[20]For a similar idea, see Hussien Adam, "Rethinking the Somali Political Experience."

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[21]A. A. Castagno, in James S. Coleman and Carl G. Roseberg eds.), ***Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa*** (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969).

[22]James S. Coleman and Carl G. Roseberg (eds.), ***Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa*** (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 8-9.

[23]A. I. Smatar, "Somali Studies: Towards an Alternative Epestemology," in ***Northeast African Studies***, Volume 11, Number 1, 1989, pp. 1, 2.

[24]Regional Autonomy in this study refers to the right of the above mentioned regions to direct both politically and economically the local affairs of their respective areas, while at the same time recognizing the sole authority of the federal constitution. These regions can not engage in international negotiation, neither can they engage war against any other region

[25]For the pupose of this paper, political maturity means the achievement of relatively fair and stable elections.

[26]Shirwayn aha Dib-U- Heshesiinta Shacbiga Somaliyeed oo Ay Ka Soo Qaybgaleen Jabhadaha SSDF-SPM-USC-SDM-SDA-USF. Jabuuti 15-21 Luulyo, 1991