

MAKING SOMALILAND
POPULAR CULTURE, IDENTITY AND NATIONAL
CONSCIOUSNESS

Dissertation

Zur Erlangung des Doktorgrades der Philosophie (Dr. phil.)

vorgelegt

der Philosophischen Fakultät der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-
Wittenberg

Philosophische Fakultät I – Sozialwissenschaften und Historische
Kulturwissenschaften

Fachbereich Ethnologie

von Herrn Joseph K. Serunkuma

geb. am 31.07.1983

Gutachter:
Prof. Dr. Olaf Zenker

Prof. Dr. Günther Schlee

Eingereicht am: 15 Dezember 2021
Tag der Verteidigung: 2 June 2022

DEDICATION

To my friend, Ramlah Ssimbwa Nkinzi,
and our friend, Hajjat Rahma Kiyimba,

We never stop to love those we once
loved loudly...

May the Almighty Allah grant you both
entry to the highest place in Jannah,
Allahuma ameen.

Deutsche Zusammenfassung

DARSTELLENDEN SOMALILAND VOLKSKULTUR, IDENTITÄT UND NATIONALES BEWUSSTSEIN

Anhand von handwerklichen und ästhetischen Aspekten der Populärkultur - Musik, Poesie, Gemälde, Denkmäler, Kaffeehäuser, Fahnen, Volkserzählungen, nationale Feiern, Kulturstätten, Buchmessen, Alltagspraktiken in Mode und Küche - sowie anhand von neueren ethnografischen Untersuchungen in Hargeysa, Literatur-, Text- und Diskursanalysen untersucht diese Studie die Art und Weise, wie der somaliländische Nationalismus (nationalistische Gefühle und Identität) nach dem Bürgerkrieg von 1991 im Rahmen des Projekts der Abspaltung von Somalia imaginiert und mobilisiert wird. Die Studie geht von der Erkenntnis aus, dass nationalistische Gefühle nicht geboren werden, sondern in Zeit und Raum mobilisiert werden (Williams, 1983; Anderson, 1983). Die Studie versucht, Fragen zu beantworten, die sich auf die Geschichte, die Identität, die nationalistischen Gefühle und Kampagne zur internationalen Anerkennung als von Somalia getrennter Staat beziehen, und kommt im Großen und Ganzen zu dem Schluss, dass Somaliland als Gegenstück zu Somalia konstruiert und dargestellt wird. Insbesondere erscheint Somaliland in seinen secessionistischen Vorstellungen als Vertreter (a) einer strengeren islamischen öffentlichen Identität, (b) der Opfer eines gescheiterten nationalistischen Projekts, das in Völkermord und Menschenrechtsverletzungen endete, und (c) eines "fortschrittlichen" Staates, d. h. demokratisch, frei und friedlich. Diese drei Aspekte der somaliländischen Identität werden diskursiv und institutionell so definiert, dass Südsomalia als ständiger Gegenpart und Bezugspunkt von Somaliland dargestellt wird, allerdings als etwas Negatives, das es zu vermeiden gilt. Südsomalia gilt als "kolonial" in dem Sinne, dass es den Norden ausbeutet und Verbrechen gegen ihn begangen hat. Da Somaliland versucht, sich von Somalia zu "befreien", wird es als das projiziert und mobilisiert, was Somalia nicht ist. Durch diesen Prozess wird Großbritannien - die eigentliche Kolonialmacht im Gebiet Somalilands - als Befreier angesehen. Die Studie stellt auch fest, dass es Gegenentwürfe oder abweichende Ausdrucksformen von

Identität und nationalistischem Empfinden gibt, die in inoffiziell geförderten populären kulturellen Ausdrucksformen und diasporischen Praktiken sichtbar werden. Obwohl diese Gegenartikulationen im Vergleich zu den (ansonsten hegemonialen) Mainstream-Artikulationen weitgehend marginal sind, verweisen sie auf die Vielschichtigkeit der Interessen, die Zeitlichkeit und die Fluidität dieser identitätsstiftenden Politik. Wie Schlee (2004) festgestellt hat, sind die gegenwärtigen Identitäten nur aufgrund der verfolgten politisch-ökonomischen Projekte und des Kontexts, in dem sie existieren, möglich.

Die Schlussfolgerungen dieser Studie nehmen Bezug sowohl auf die Wissensproduktion über Somaliland als auch auf die allgemeinen akademischen Arbeiten zu Nationalismus und secessionistischen Bewegungen. Hinsichtlich Somalilands stellt die Studie fest, dass, obwohl der Großteil der Wissenschaft den Frieden und die Stabilität in Somaliland hervorhebt (Abokor, 2005; Bradbury, 2008; Hansen und Bradbury, 2007; Henson, 2012; Walls, 2014; Richards, 2014), doch die Aufrechterhaltung der Bilder und Geschichten von Gewalt und Opferrolle in der öffentlichen Psyche und der institutionellen Symbolik des Landes darauf schließen lässt, dass es ein Land im Krieg geblieben ist - insbesondere in diesem zeitlichen Kontext des Versuchs, sich von Somalia zu lösen.

Die ständige Auseinandersetzung – auf kultureller und politischer Ebene – mit Somalia macht Somaliland anfällig für eine Geisteshaltung, die auf Krieg und Gewalt ausgerichtet ist. Sie ist Ausdruck des anhaltenden Ringens um Unabhängigkeit. Das bedeutet auch, dass sich Somaliland nach einer möglichen zukünftigen internationalen Anerkennung die nationale Identität neu gestalten müsste. An dieser Stelle sollte betont werden, dass Wissenschaftler, die sich mit der Politik Somalilands, mit Demokratie, Frieden und Postkonfliktstudien befassen, die Allgegenwart Südsomalias in dem neuen und friedlichen Leben Somalilands zwischen 1991 und heute würdigen sollten.

Zweitens definiert sich Somaliland im Wesentlichen mit internationalistischen/universalistischen Begriffen – als Opfer des Völkermords, demokratisch, gebildet, islamisch und offen für die Außenwelt usw. Somaliland, wie auch andere secessionistische Nationalismen, hat, gerade als noch nicht anerkannter Staat, den Freiraum, sich selbst zu definieren, muss aber gleichzeitig seine politisches

Selbstrepräsentation am internationalen Machtregime (insbesondere den Vereinten Nationen) ausrichten. Dies wiederum könnte im zeitlichen Sinne verstanden werden, was bedeutet, dass Somaliland zunächst vermeiden muss, in nationalistische oder identitätsbezogene Amnesie oder gar Gewalt zu verfallen, sondern jedes Mal, wenn sich die Definition der internationalistischen Begriffe, die von Natur aus sehr fließend sind, ändert, neue kulturelle Marker finden muss, um sich nach der Unabhängigkeit/Anerkennung zu definieren. In einem gewissem Sinne liegt das Wesen des secessionistischen Nationalismus sowohl in der Kampagne für die Abspaltung als auch in der ständigen Imagination angestrebten Zieles.

In dieser Arbeit arbeite ich auch heraus, dass der secessionistische Nationalismus, wie ich ihn in Somalilands Bestrebungen erkenne, sich vom klassischen antikolonialen Nationalismus in Afrika um die Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts unterscheidet. Der secessionistische Nationalismus stellt eine Abkehr vom antikolonialen Nationalismus dar, da er sich durch einen bewusst rückwärtsgewandten Ansatz neu erfindet. Speziell für den postkolonialen Kontext behaupte ich, dass diese Form des Nationalismus sich durch drei Punkte auszeichnet, die ihn vom antikolonialen Nationalismus (und vielleicht auch von dessen Cousin, der Dekolonisierung) unterscheiden. Zu diesen Punkten gehören (a) der nicht-rassistische Charakter der diskursiven Auseinandersetzungen, (b) die Identifizierung und Konstruktion eines permanenten feindlichen Gesprächspartners - real oder vermeintlich -, bei dem es sich häufig um das "Mutterland" handelt, dem man entfliehen will, und (c) die historische Rückgängigmachung der speziell identifizierten Schlüsselemente, um die sich die frühere Einheit (als Ziel des antikolonialen Nationalismus) gebildet hat. Hinsichtlich Punkt *a*, während der antikoloniale Nationalismus sowohl die internen als auch die externen Bezüge in Einklang zu bringen suchte, da er versuchte, gleichzeitig traditionell und modern zu sein (Chatterjee, 1986; Kapteijns, 1999), und davon besessen war, die kolonialen Etiketten von Minderwertigkeit und Barbarei herauszufordern, neigt der somaliländische secessionistische Nationalismus dazu, sich ausschließlich um "externe" kulturelle Marker zu drehen und ist in der Regel stolz darauf, nicht antirassistisch zu sein. Entweder wird dies im Zusammenhang mit dem politischen Projekt der Sezession als irrelevant betrachtet, oder es handelt sich einfach um eine bewusste Entscheidung, um gegenüber den Mächten, die die Unabhängigkeit garantieren könnten, neutral zu erscheinen (trotz ihres kolonialrassistischen

Charakters). In Verbindung mit Punkt *b* hat Südsomalia den Platz Großbritanniens als Kolonialmacht im Bewusstsein der Sezessionisten in Somaliland eingenommen. So nimmt der sezessionistische Nationalismus eine Sprache an und wählt internationalistische kulturelle Marker als verbindliche Einheiten für Identität und nationalistische Gefühle. Zu Punkt *c*: mit dem Bewusstsein, dass jeder Prozess des Imaginierens ein De-Imaginieren, ein Verstummen verwandter oder überschneidender Teile beinhaltet, unterstreicht meine Verwendung des Begriffs De-Imaginieren eine besondere, offene und gezieltere *Rückgängigmachung* eines früheren Prozesses mit überkulturellen politischen Markern. Speziell in ehemals kolonialisierten Gebieten und als Antwort auf die Herausforderungen des postkolonialen Staates (in Ländern wie Kamerun, Sansibar, Somaliland, Eritrea oder Südsudan) betrachtet der sezessionistische Nationalismus die frühere Einheit als einen Fehler, der revidiert und aufgelöst werden muss, und die *Rückgängigmachung/Demontage* wird zum Sprungbrett für ein neues National- und Identitätsbewusstsein. Im Bewusstsein der Kritik von Schlee (2004) spricht dies nicht für eine *vollständige Erfindung*, sondern eher für eine bewusste Ausblendung anderer Realitäten und die Bevorzugung der internationalistischen Orientierung. Die Gefahr dabei ist, dass die heutige Intelligenzia in Somaliland (Dichter, Intellektuelle, Kuratoren, Sänger, Künstler, Politiker, Maler usw.) zwar davon überzeugt ist, dass die Rückgängigmachung des Nationalismus der 1950er und 1960er Jahre (mit dem Ziel, die somalischen Menschen im Horn von Afrika auf der Grundlage von Religion, Kultur und Sprache zu vereinen) sie in das „gelobte Land“ (Somaliland) bringt, dass sie aber selbst in einen ähnlichen Prozess der Auswahl verschiedener kultureller Faktoren aus demselben „Korb“ verwickelt ist und dadurch auch der sezessionistische Nationalismus eben partiell bleiben muss und auch Widerstand hervorrufen wird (siehe z.B. Höhne 2015).

KAPITELGLIEDERUNG

Die vorliegende Dissertation besteht aus zehn Kapiteln.

Das ersten Kapitel: in der **Einleitung** werden die beiden Hauptthemen des Projekts vorgestellt: (1) das zentrale Problem meines Dissertationsprojekts, das darin besteht, die Art und Weise zu verstehen, in der nationalistische Gefühle in Somaliland in der

laufenden Kampagne zur Abspaltung von Somalia *mobilisiert* werden. Das bedeutet, dass die Fragen des Projekts, die sich bewusst auf diskursive Formationen und performative Praktiken, d.h. auf die Mobilisierung von Kultur/Bewusstsein, konzentrieren (nach Williams, 1983; Hall, 1981; Abu-Lughod, 2004; Billig, 1995, Askew, 2004; Zenker, 2013), präzisiert werden müssen. Die beiden spezifischen Fragen lauten: (a) Welche Gegenstände oder Requisiten und welche Geschichte und Zukunft - im Foucaultschen Sinne - werden bei der Schaffung einer somaliländischen nationalistischen Identität und eines entsprechenden Bewusstseins mobilisiert und imaginiert? (b) Was bedeutet es dann - in einem sentimental, bewusstseinsmäßigen Sinne - ein Somaliländer zu sein? (2) Der zweite Punkt in diesem Abschnitt sind die Debatten, in denen dieses Projekt verwurzelt ist und zu denen ich einen Beitrag leisten will. Dieses Projekt ist durchdrungen von Nationalismus und postkolonialen Studien, und ich untersuche das, was ich im Gramscianischen Sprachgebrauch als "Nationalismus nach dem postkolonialen *Unglauben*" bezeichne, das heißt nach einem morbiden Zusammenbruch der Träume und Institutionen, die den antikolonialen Kampf belebt haben. Zu diesem morbiden Zusammenbruch gehören zügellose Korruption, ein gescheiterter öffentlicher Dienst sowie Bürgerkriege und Gewalt in großem Ausmaß. Von einem spezifisch postkolonialen Standpunkt aus führe ich hier das ein, was ich als "sezessionistischen Nationalismus" (als eine besondere Phase oder ein besonderes Phänomen im Leben eines postkolonialen Staates) bezeichnet habe, und in Anlehnung an Benedict Anderson habe ich "de-imagined communities" als begrifflich-theoretischen Ausgangspunkt für das Nachdenken über und die Theorie von sezessionistischen Nationalismen geprägt.

In dieser Einleitung zeige ich, dass mein Begriff "de-imagined communities" mit der theoretischen Literatur über antikolonialen Nationalismus oder Nationalismus im Allgemeinen, wie er von Partha Chatterjee (1986, 1989), Benedict Anderson (1982) und Ahmed Aijaz (1992) theoretisiert wird, im Einklang steht, indem ich behaupte, dass "sezessionistischer Nationalismus" eine eigenständige Form des Nationalismus ist, die bei der Untersuchung des modernen Nationalstaates in Afrika und anderswo, wo Kampagnen zur Abspaltung eines neuen unabhängigen Nationalstaates von einer "Muttereinheit" zu beobachten sind.. Neuere Studien wie die von de Vries, Englebert und Schomerus eds. (2019) und Höhne (2015) liefern reichhaltiges Material zu den politischen Auseinandersetzungen, die hinter sezessionistischen Bewegungen stehen,

bieten aber keinen Mechanismus, um sie theoretisch als Verschiebungen in der Nationalismusforschung und den diskursiven Formationen und der Entwicklung des postkolonialen Staates zu betrachten. Diese Diskussion ist Teil des abschließenden Kapitels dieser Dissertation und stellt einen Versuch dar, die Fallstudie von Somaliland zu nutzen, um über secessionistische Nationalismen in anderen Ländern (insbesondere in postkolonialen Momenten und Begegnungen) nachzudenken.

Das zweite Kapitel: Feldarbeit und Forschungsmethoden: Dies ist eine detaillierte Darstellung des Feldes, die zeigt, wie der Forscher auf das Feld gestoßen ist und wie er mit ihm interagiert hat, und die Entscheidungen, die der Forscher im Laufe der Feldarbeit getroffen hat, und wie diese zur endgültigen Gestaltung der Dissertation beitragen. Ich stelle fest, dass das Projekt literarische und anthropologische Methoden bei der Sammlung und Darstellung der Daten sowie bei den weitergehenden Analysen und Schlussfolgerungen anwendet. Mit Hilfe der Malinowski'schen Ethnographie und der erweiterten Fallmethode (Burawoy, 1998), die zu detaillierten Aufzeichnungen darüber führt, "was die 'Eingeborenen' tatsächlich taten, mit Berichten über reale Ereignisse, Kämpfe und Dramen, die sich in Raum und Zeit abspielten" (ibid. 1998:5), und mit Hilfe von Fotografien mache ich die Welt dieses Projekts und meine eigene Position als Forscher In sichtbar und lesbar. Indem ich Anthropologie als Praxis betrachte, verkörpert das Projekt das, was oft als "deskriptive Analyse" bezeichnet wird, eine Praxis, durch die "Theorie und die konkrete Welt sowohl konstituiert als auch in eine diskursive Beziehung zueinander gebracht werden" (Comaroff, 2010: 530). In diesem Kapitel folgt (a) eine Beschreibung des Feldes selbst (insbesondere Somaliland und die Hauptstadt Hargeysa), des Forschers im Feld und der performativen Veranstaltungen, an denen er teilnahm, sowie der Orte, die er zur Datenerhebung aufsuchte (insbesondere Xarunta Dhaqanka ee Hargeysa [oder das Kulturzentrum von Hargeysa], Hargeysa International Bookfair; Cup of Art Italian Coffeeshouse, Hiddo Dhawr Tourist Village; Jamacada Hargeysa ; Academy for Peace and Development (APD), Mansour Hotel, Downtown Hargeysa, und einige andere). Am Ende dieses Kapitels können Sie den Forscher in Hargeysa sehen, wie er sich in der Praxis

zurechtfindet, sich engagiert und sich im Feld bewegt¹. Ich nahm an nationalen Veranstaltungen teil, unterrichtete einen MA-Kurs und half bei der Organisation von Poesiewettbewerben. (b) Das Kapitel erörtert auch die Art und Weise, wie empirische Daten gesammelt, analysiert und mit den sozialwissenschaftlichen Methoden der Bedeutungsgebung in Einklang gebracht werden. Ich berühre kurz die Debatten in der Populärkultur (Levine, 1988; Zemon Davis, 1992, Weeden, 2008; Okot, 1986; Nandwa und Bukenya, 1983, Strinati, 1995) und die Art und Weise, wie das Studium der Performance oder der performativen Ethnografie (Ranger, 1975; Fabian, 1990; Wedeen, 2008) es ermöglicht, zu realen Erfahrungen zu gelangen, mit einer ähnlichen Dynamik wie bei der erweiterten Fallmethode.

Das dritte und vierte Kapitel sind beide historisch orientierte Kapitel, wobei sich Kapitel drei auf Somalis als ethnische Gruppe, ihr Siedlungsgebiet und ihren Umgang mit dem Kolonialismus konzentriert. Kapitel vier hingegen befasst sich speziell mit den beiden großen historischen Ereignissen dieses Dissertationsprojekts, die in der Studie gegenübergestellt werden, nämlich die Wiedervereinigung (1960) und die Trennung (1991). Bei beiden Ereignissen ging es um die Mobilisierung eines nationalen Bewusstseins und einer nationalen Identität, und das Jahr 1960 bietet uns die notwendige Gegenüberstellung und das Sprungbrett, um uns auf 1991 zu konzentrieren.

Das dritte Kapitel: **Historischer Hintergrund: Somalia, das Volk, Kolonialismus und Widerstand.** Dieses Kapitel ist in drei Hauptabschnitte unterteilt. Im ersten Abschnitt geht es darum, wer das somalische Volk ist, seine Wurzeln sowie seine soziale, politische und wirtschaftliche Organisation. Der zweite Teil befasst sich mit dem Kolonialismus und damit, wie die Kolonialmächte die somalischen Gebiete aufteilten und verwalteten. Hier erfahren wir, dass die Kolonialmächte die von den Somaliern beherrschten Gebiete in fünf verschiedene Einheiten aufteilten, die die antikoloniale somalische Intelligenz im Zuge eines wachsenden kulturellen

¹ In einem viel zitierten Text forderte Bronislaw Malinowski (1922), dass der Forscher offen und detailliert über die Art und Weise, die Motivationen und die Voreingenommenheit, mit der er sein Material zusammengetragen hat, berichten sollte, um den Kontext für die wissenschaftlichen Schlussfolgerungen, zu denen er gelangt ist, zu liefern (1922: 12-13). Dieses Kapitel ist daher der Erfüllung dieser Forderung gewidmet.

Nationalismus zusammenführen wollte. Das letzte Unterkapitel befasst sich mit dem Widerstand durch das (umstrittene) Erbe von Mohamed Abdille Hassan, der berühmt und problematisch als "der verrückte Mullah" oder auch als "der Sayyid" bekannt ist.

Das übergeordnete Ziel dieses Vorhabens besteht darin, mein Projekt in seinem geografischen und zeitlichen Raum zu verorten. Das Kapitel zeigt das Horn von Afrika, wie es sich vor dem Kolonialismus konstituierte, und die Art und Weise, wie der Kolonialismus aufgenommen und bekämpft wurde, was zur Entstehung des somalischen Nationalismus führte. Ein Teil des Ziels besteht auch darin, den Hintergrund und den Kontext der Prozesse und Beweggründe für die Vereinigung des italienisch kolonisierten Somalias und des britischen Somalilands zu erläutern, die 1960 stattfand, nachdem diese beiden Länder von ihren Kolonialherren unabhängig geworden waren. Dies beleuchtet und kontrastiert dann einen eher diametralen Prozess der Abspaltung, der 1991 stattfand, als Somaliland seine Unabhängigkeit von Somalia erklärte - und der Gegenstand dieses Projekts ist.

Das vierte Kapitel trägt den Titel **Somalia und Somaliland: Vereinigung und Abtrennung**. Hier erörtere ich die Politik und die Beweggründe für die Vereinigung der beiden somalischen Territorien Britisch-Somaliland und Italienisch-Somalia. Anschließend gehe ich auf die diskursiven Knotenpunkte ein, um die herum die Vereinigung mobilisiert wurde, nämlich Sprache, Religion, Kultur und Lebensweise (nomadisches Hirtenleben) sowie die populärkulturellen Mittel, mit denen sie mobilisiert wurde, wie die Nationalflagge, Poesie, Musik usw. Anhand von Archivmaterial (insbesondere dem "Colonial Office Report on the Protectorate Constitutional Conference", der im Mai 1960 in London stattfand) zeige ich auf, wie die vereinigte somalische Republik gefordert und mobilisiert wurde. Es gibt auch Archivnotizen, die in einem kürzlich erschienenen Buch von Abdi Ismail Samatar (2016) enthalten sind und die das starke Gefühl für die Vereinigung, das auf beiden Seiten existierte [artikuliert von der Intelligenz im italienisch kolonisierten Somalia und im britisch kolonisierten Somaliland], festhalten. Auch die Poesie von Abdullahi Sultan Timacade, einem der wichtigsten Barden der 1950er- und 1960er-Jahre, dessen Poesie bei der Mobilisierung nationalistischer Gefühle eine zentrale Rolle spielte, wird hier herangezogen; er war der Barde am Unabhängigkeitstag (siehe auch Samatar, 2016; und Boobe Yusuf Ducale, 2012). In diesem Abschnitt wird auch die Bedeutung

des fruchtbaren Weidelands, des Haud, erörtert, das mit der Unabhängigkeit in Äthiopien enden würde. Das Haud wurde sowohl praktisch als auch symbolisch zu einem Sammelpunkt für den somalischen Nationalismus. Das Kapitel gibt dann einen kurzen Überblick über die Ereignisse, die zur Erklärung der Unabhängigkeit Somalilands führten. Insbesondere gehe ich auf den somalischen Bürgerkrieg gegen Mohamed Siyad Barre von 1983-1991 und die Gründung der somalischen Nationalbewegung (SNM) ein. Obwohl die SNM als nationale demokratische Bewegung für ganz Somalia gegründet wurde, entwickelte sie sich um 1991 zu einer separatistischen Bewegung, zumal sie in Somaliland ansässig war und sich hauptsächlich aus Mitgliedern des Isaaq-Clans, dem vorherrschenden Clan in Somaliland, zusammensetzte. Dieses Kapitel bietet einen historischen Kontext für die Gegenüberstellung der beiden Momente im national-politischen Leben dieser beiden ansonsten verschwisterten Gemeinschaften mit starken, sich überschneidenden kulturellen Bindungen.

Das fünfte Kapitel Populärkultur: Theorie und Historiographie. Da sich dieses Projekt die Populärkultur zunutze macht, um eine Geschichte der nationalistischen Gefühle im secessionistischen Somaliland zu schreiben, ist dieser Abschnitt der Erörterung der Populärkultur sowohl im Hinblick auf die Theorie als auch auf die historiografische Methode gewidmet. Der erste Teil ist eine Diskussion der Populärkultur und der verschiedenen Ansätze zu ihr. Es besteht die Tendenz, Populärkultur als oppositionelle Kultur zu betrachten - als Opposition zur Elitenkultur oder zur offiziellen Kultur -, die oft von unten kommt. Sie wird oft in Bezug auf meist informelle, ignorante und eskapistische Ausdrucksformen verwendet (Zemon-Davis, 1992; Barber, 1987, Levine, 1988) und wird problematischerweise als exklusiver Raum für die einfachen Leute, die Elenden oder Menschen am Rande der Gesellschaft (wie Arbeiter und Bauern, wenn man sie in marxistischen Begriffen fasst) angesehen. Diese Tendenz könnte auf politik- und sozialwissenschaftliche Studien zurückgeführt werden, die sich auf "Volksaufstände" und "Volkserhebungen" konzentrieren, die in der Regel Angelegenheiten der einfachen Leute und Formen des Widerstands sind. Bei der Durchsicht der Literatur zu diesem sehr weitläufigen Bereich - Populär- und öffentliche Kultur - hat mich Nadine Dolby (2006) überzeugt, die feststellt, dass "Populärkultur ein wichtiger Ort der öffentlichen Debatte und der individuellen und gemeinschaftlichen Handlungsfähigkeit ist" (2006: 33). Dolby beruft sich auf Stuart

Hall (1981), der die Populärkultur als "Arena der Zustimmung und des Widerstands" bezeichnete. Sie ist zum Teil der Ort, an dem Hegemonie entsteht und an dem sie gesichert wird (Hall, 1981: 239)". Als Arena der Zustimmung und des Widerstands, als Ort der öffentlichen Debatte, wird die Populärkultur zu einem offenen Raum für die Förderung der öffentlichen Debatte, der jedem und jeder Institution offensteht, unabhängig von Klasse, Herkunft, Standort usw. Tatsächlich sind bei genauer Betrachtung die Macht oder der Staat die größten Produzenten der Populärkultur. McLuhan (1964) nannte die Populärkultur sogar ein Vehikel, ein Medium. Das Geniale an der Populärkultur ist, wie Zemon-Davis (1992) sagt, dass sie leicht zu teilen, zu verbreiten, zu reproduzieren und in Umlauf zu bringen ist. Dies gilt insbesondere deshalb, weil sie oft ästhetisch gestaltet ist (Bukonya und Nandwa, 1983).

Vor diesem Hintergrund (Hall, 1981; Dolby, 2006; Zemon-Davis, 1992) habe ich zwei Kategorien geschaffen, in die ich mein Material einordne: die *offiziell gesponserte* und die *inoffiziell gesponserte* Populärkultur, wobei die Betonung auf "gesponsert" liegt, um die Schirmherrschaft zu bezeichnen, unter der bestimmte Gegenstände geschaffen wurden. Diese verschiedenen Kategorien treffen in der Arena von Stuart Hall aufeinander und "konkurrieren", "stimmen zu" oder "widersetzen sich" bei der Vorstellung und Schaffung eines Bewusstseins und einer Identität für Somaliland.

Im zweiten Teil dieses Kapitels werden allgemeine Überlegungen zu Geschichte und Geschichtsschreibung angestellt, wobei der Schwerpunkt auf den Quellen der Geschichtsschreibung liegt. In diesem letzten Teil geht es darum, einen Kontext für die Künste - die Populärkultur - als legitime Quellen der Geschichte zu schaffen. Aus der Sicht eines Historikers und mit Blick auf Foucaults (1975) Geschichte des Gefängnisses wird in diesem Abschnitt die Frage erörtert, ob die Künste ausreichende Quellen für historisches Material sind (Vansina, 1965, 1985; Chappell, 1970; Davidson, 1984; Mulira, 1979; L. White, 2002). Damit soll eine methodische Absicherung des in diesem Projekt verwendeten Kernmaterials geschaffen werden, das als kreatives bzw. fiktionales Werk eines einzelnen Geistes betrachtet (oder abgetan) werden kann.

Das sechste Kapitel: Die Mutter der somalischen Kunst: Kontext und Standort der Populärkultur in Hargeysa. Dieser Abschnitt ist stark ethnografisch ausgerichtet und

zeichnet das Terrain der Populärkultur in Hargeysa nach. Die treibende Kraft dieses Kapitels ist die Erörterung des Spannungsfelds zwischen der islamisch geprägten, vordefinierten öffentlichen Identität in Hargeysa und der liebevoll bewunderten Bezeichnung als "Mutter der somalischen Künste", die eigentlich diametral zu einer vordefinierten und strikt durchgesetzten öffentlichen Identität steht. Der theoretische Anker für dieses Kapitel ist die Arbeit von Michael Warner (2002) *Publics and Counterpublics*, in der er zwischen einer vordefinierten Öffentlichkeit und Texten/Kulturelementen unterscheidet, die ihre eigenen [Lese-]Öffentlichkeiten definieren. In diesem Kapitel werden also die Hinweise identifiziert und beschrieben, die versuchen, eine öffentliche Identität der BewohnerInnen Hargeysa s vorzugeben. Dazu gehören Plakate, auf denen die Vorlage von Heiratsurkunden für Paare in Hotels gefordert wird, das Vordach von Moscheen, Bilder von scheinbar unschuldigen Zeichen wie die Geschlechtertrennung im Waschraum (mit Frauen, die in spezifische, weite muslimische Stoffe gekleidet sind), der Umgang mit Musik an öffentlichen Orten, die Routine des täglichen Lebens in Hargeysa, die auf besondere/spezifische Muster hinweist, und die allgemeinen Räume der Populärkultur wie Theater und Kaffeehäuser. Ich widme den Räumen, der Komposition und der Verbreitung von Musik und Poesie mehr Zeit, da sie einen Kernbestandteil dieser Dissertation bilden, insbesondere in den folgenden Kapiteln. Der Leser muss die greifbaren Gegenstände sehen, die ich Populärkultur nenne (Bukonya und Nandwa, 1983), und die Art und Weise, wie diese mit der allgemeinen, eher hegemonialen Sensibilität der Gesellschaft interagieren.

Die nächsten beiden Kapitel werden in Gegenüberstellung zueinander genannt und untersucht. Im fünften Kapitel, in dem ich die Populärkultur und ihre Theorien erörterte, habe ich, nachdem ich die Position eingenommen hatte, dass die Populärkultur ein Vehikel ist, zwei funktionale Kategorien gebildet: die *offiziell geförderte* Populärkultur und die *inoffiziell geförderte* Populärkultur. Ich habe die von mir ausgewählten Materialien in diese Kategorien eingeteilt, wobei ich mich auf ihre Trägerschaft konzentrierte, d. h. ob sie individuell gefördert oder unter der Schirmherrschaft des Staates geschaffen wurden.

Das siebte Kapitel: Offizielles Somaliland: Macht, A Priori, und öffentliche Identität". Im siebten Kapitel wird die Populärkultur erörtert, die aus offiziellen Kanälen stammt (unterstützt, gesponsert oder unter der Schirmherrschaft von

offiziellen Stellen erzeugt wird). In diesem Kapitel werden zwei Dinge ausführlich beschrieben und diskutiert. Dazu gehören die Nationalflagge und die fünf großen Denkmäler in Hargeysa, darunter "*Taalada Xoriyadda iyo Dal Jirka Dahsoon*" oder die "Freiheitsstatue und das noch nicht entdeckte Land" auf dem Khayriya-Platz im Zentrum von Hargeysa ; Kaare, die Nachbildung eines Kampfpanzers in Togdheer in der Timacade Area; die Taube oder das Friedensdenkmal; das Denkmal Sanad Guuradii 23 oder die Hand, die die Karte von Somaliland hält (auch Denkmal der Einheit Somalilands genannt), und *Dhagaxtuur* (literarisch, Steine werfen), das Grabmal der gefallenen somalischen Helden vom 20. Februar 1982. Bevor ich diese Objekte analysiere, von denen ich behaupte, dass sie a priori ein Bild von Somaliland konstruieren wollen, erzähle ich die Geschichte hinter jedem dieser Objekte. Diese Gegenstände bilden die hegemoniale Sichtweise, die durch die individuell geförderte Populärkultur ständig verhandelt wird, was die Zeitlichkeit und Fluidität der Prozesse unterstreicht.

Das achte Kapitel: Das alltägliche Somaliland: Macht, Leistung und Gegenöffentlichkeiten steht in direktem Zusammenhang mit Kapitel sieben und stellt alternative Räume und Ausdrucks- und Artikulationsformen (Warner, 2002) in den Vordergrund, die sich Somaliland anders vorstellen als die offiziell geförderten Formen. Drei Hauptthemen (1) Musik, (2) Poesie und Dichter und (3) Malerei werden in diesem Kapitel eingehend untersucht. Ein Teil der Diskussion konzentriert sich auch auf die Profile von vier Hauptkünstlern, dem Dichter Mohammad Hadraawi, der Sängerin Sahra Halgan, dem Dichter Boobe Yusuf Ducale und Abdulmalik Coldon, deren persönliche Profile ich neben der Analyse ihrer poetischen Komposition auch als Texte gelesen habe. Diese Lektüre folgt den Debatten im klassischen tragischen Drama über Helden und Heldinnen (die heutigen Berühmtheiten), wenn diese zu Symbolen bestimmter Ideologien werden. Dort werden Schweigen, Modeformen, Reden und andere private Entscheidungen als Sprechakte lesbar, die ganze Wählerschaften repräsentieren. Generell stelle ich hier fest, dass die Gegenartikulation der offiziell geförderten öffentlichen Identität zwar vorhanden und stark ist, aber im Allgemeinen schwächer als die hegemoniale. Diese Gegenöffentlichkeit ist jedoch nicht zu ignorieren, da sie sich weiterhin in die offizielle und hegemoniale Identität einfügt. Ich möchte an dieser Stelle auch darauf hinweisen, dass die inoffiziell geförderte

Populärkultur nicht gänzlich eine gegenteilige Meinung vertritt, sondern oft versucht, die offiziell hegemoniale öffentliche Identität zu modifizieren und zu verkomplizieren.

Während die offiziell geförderte Populärkultur (Kapitel sieben) versucht, ein Somaliland als Opfer und Überlebende eines von Somalia-Mogadischu (Krieg von 1988) verübten Völkermords, als liberale, aber starke/reine Muslime, als Anti-Piraten, Anti-Terroristen und Demokraten zu konstruieren, ist die inoffiziell oder individuell geförderte Populärkultur (Kapitel acht), die ich als Gegenöffentlichkeit darstelle, in ihrem Ansatz vielfältiger. Während die meisten Äußerungen keine der in Kapitel sieben untersuchten Positionen anfechten [mit Ausnahme des aggressiven Dichters Abdulmalik Coldon, der offen antisezessionistisch ist, und des überragenden Dichters Mohammad Hadraawi, dessen Position als subtil antisezessionistisch gelesen werden könnte], versuchen sie, die Liste der Vorstellungen zu erweitern. Die Hargeysa International Bookfair und das Hargeysa Cultural Centre (HCC), die in Kapitel neun untersucht werden, versuchen, Literarität, Elitismus und Intellektualismus als Teil einer somaliländischen Gemeinschaft von Lesern einzubeziehen. Saha Halgan und ihr Hiddo Dhawr, Cup of Art Italian Coffeehouse und das HCC selbst stellen sich auf subtile Weise vor, dass die strenge Haltung der islamischen Identität gelockert wird, um Raum für den öffentlichen Genuss von Musik zu schaffen. Sara Hajj vom Cup of Art Italian Coffeehouse schlägt vor, den Islam eher als individuellen Ausdruck von Frömmigkeit zu behandeln und nicht als öffentliches Gut, das durchgesetzt und geschützt werden muss. Die inoffiziell geförderte Populärkultur ergänzt in hohem Maße die offiziellen Ideologien und versucht, sie zu diversifizieren.

Das neunte Kapitel: Die Qurbajoog: Die Diaspora und die öffentliche Identität Somalilands. In Somaliland gibt es eine mächtige und sichtbare Gruppe von Menschen, die *Qurbajoog* oder Diaspora-Rückkehrer. Dieses Kapitel ist dieser Gruppe gewidmet und erörtert die *diasporischen Praktiken* der Rückkehrer (Kleist und Hansen, 2005; P. Werbner, 2002) sowie die Art und Weise, in der sie die öffentliche Identität und das nationale Bewusstsein Somalilands beeinflussen und verkomplizieren. Ich eröffne dieses Kapitel mit den Auseinandersetzungen zwischen "Diaspora-Rückkehrern" und ihren einheimischen Landsleuten und wie diese in eine Hassliebe zueinander verstrickt sind. Ich nutze dies und versuche, die Rückkehrer als sozial-konzeptionelle Kategorie zu theoretisieren, die in Hargeysa sichtbar ist, aber

möglicherweise anderswo nicht sichtbar ist (und in den Diaspora-Studien als Kategorie oder Typologie theoretisiert werden sollte, insbesondere in den weniger untersuchten Rückkehrer-Erzählungen). Ausgehend von meiner Erzählung über diasporische Praktiken in Hargeysa behaupte ich, dass drei Faktoren, darunter (a) die Demografie, d. h. die Zahl der Rückkehrer im Verhältnis zur einheimischen Bevölkerung, (b) die "soziale Distanz" (Said's Begriff, 2003) zwischen der Heimat- und der Aufnahmegemeinschaft, wobei die Aufnahmegemeinschaften vor allem Europa und Nordamerika sind, was das soziale Leben des Einzelnen nach einem längeren Aufenthalt radikal verändert, und (c) die Zeit, die er in der Fremde verbracht hat, bevor die Bedingungen für die Rückkehr günstig werden, kommen zusammen und machen die Rückkehrer zu einer sichtbaren Kategorie im sozialen und politischen Milieu - bis hin zum Konflikt mit ihren Landsleuten aus der Heimat. Ich konzentriere mich auf ihre *nonverbalen performativen Praktiken* - in Mode, Küche, Sprache, Investitionen - und erzähle von unzähligen Momenten des Ausschlusses und der Inklusion (Schlee, 2004) im politisch-kulturellen Leben von Hargeysa und den Dilemmata der Suche nach authentischen Identitäten (Mursic, 2013). Ich lese ihre Praktiken als Texte und zeige auf, wie sie die hegemoniale öffentliche Identität ergänzen und gleichzeitig destabilisieren.

Das zehnte Kapitel: Entfantasierte Gemeinschaften: Auf dem Weg zu einer Theorie des sezessionistischen Nationalismus. Dieses abschließende Kapitel besteht aus drei Ebenen der Analyse: Die erste Ebene ist eine allgemeine Analyse meiner Ergebnisse, die auf die tatsächlich sichtbaren Identitäten und nationalistischen Gefühle hinweist, die sich insbesondere aus der offiziell geförderten Populärkultur ableiten lassen. Auf der zweiten Ebene werden die Implikationen dieser imaginierten nationalistischen Gefühle und Identitäten im Vergleich zur wissenschaftlichen Forschung über Somaliland nach 1991 diskutiert, die dazu tendiert, die Stabilität und die hybride politische Ordnung in Somaliland zu feiern (Abokor, et. al, 2006; Hansen und Bradbury, 2007; Wall, 2009; 2014, Jhazbhay, 2008). Die dritte Ebene eröffnet die Debattenebene, indem sie diese Ergebnisse in die Debatten über antikolonialen Nationalismus und sezessionistischen Nationalismus, imaginierte Gemeinschaften und de-imaginierte Gemeinschaften einbringt. Hier versuche ich, diese Schlussfolgerungen zu nutzen, um einen vorläufigen theoretischen Rahmen für sezessionistischen Nationalismus in spezifisch postkolonialen Studien anzubieten.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

At the end of this experience, I have learned that writing a PhD dissertation is a journey; a slow-moving and long journey. You surely cannot walk it alone. You walk it with many, many supportive and selfless friends. Let me start by extending my thanks to Prof. Dr. Olaf Zenker for supervising this dissertation to conclusion, alongside Prof. Dr. Günther Schlee. This has been a job well done, and I will be forever grateful. In this spirit, I want to thank my wonderful Somalist friend, Dr. Markus Höhne for opening many windows and promoting my labours. Aad iyo aad ayaad u mahasentahay, *walaal*. I also want to thank my teacher and bosom friend, Prof. Abasi Kiyimba for many, many things but specifically, standing with me in both personal and academic struggles, constantly reminding me of my literary roots, and also introducing me to the world of Okot p'Bitek. And my co-conspirator, teacher and friend, Dr James Ocita, the indefatigable revolutionary, you have been outstanding.

When I started this journey exactly ten years ago, my journalistic anxieties landed in the wonderful hands of Dr Sarah Namulondo (RIP), Prof. Mahmood Mamdani, Dr Adam Branch, Dr Antonio Tomas, Dr Giuliano Martiniello, Dr Pamela Khanakwa, Dr Julie MacArthur, Dr Stella Nyanzi, and Dr Anneeth Kaur Hundle who ably steadied me on course of scholarship. Gently but steadily, they taught me the craft of the trade. I also want to thank Dr Susan Kiguli, Prof. Dominica Dipio, Dr Danson Kahyana, and Mr Aloysius Kwitonda for setting the foundation upon which this endeavour rested.

My sojourns in Somali studies have benefited immensely from the very passionate and generous Prof. Lidwien Kapteijns of Wellesley College in Massachusetts who, in addition to sharing readings, meticulously guided my wandering thoughts into something concrete. You inspired this work in more ways than you could ever imagine, Lidwien. Thank you so much, my friend. I also want to thank Prof. Abdi Ismail Samatar who supported my first trip to Somalia in 2012, and also guided my fieldwork in Mogadishu. Along the way, benevolence led me to Prof. Faisal Devji, and Prof. Miles Larmer, both at Oxford University who encouraged and guided my thoughts on the project.

I have also been the lucky beneficiary of enormous kindness and support from Dr Herbert Muyinda, Dr. Sung-Joon Park, Vivi Barth, Ludwig Riedel, Viola Stanisch, Markus Niedobitek, Hassan Kochore, Sophie Nakueira, Ramlah Nakandi, Doreen Tazwaire, Irene Agogongu Mbawaki, Halimah Nabuuma, Lydia Khaweka, Lillian Nankinga, Julius Kiggundu, George Owor, Kenneth Yawe, Lillian Nabitosi, and Safina Nangobi. Thanks to all of you, my friends. Fellow loungers in the “Situation Room,” at MISR, Abdul Razzak Joseph Kasule, Yahya Sseremba, David Ngendo Tshimba, Laury Ocen, Akoko Aketch, Sheikh Sirajje Kifampa Nsambu and my junior friend, Ibrahim Bahati have been a great source of inspiration. And yes, the ‘p’ in PhD is not Philosophy, but Politics.

My friends Dr Melina Platas Izama, Abubakr Batte Lule Kirwana, Sulaiman Kakaire, Counsel Adam Ateenyi Kyomuhendo (*emundu emenye*, aka, the eternal fighter), I cannot thank you enough. You guys held me together. In the same spirit, I want to thank the editors at *The Observer* newspaper, Jeff Mbanga, Robert Spin Mukasa and Pius Mutekani Katunzi. Also are my friends at *Roape.net* Leo Zeilig and Dr Jörg Wiegatz who have been an immense source of support and inspiration.

I remain indebted to my friends in Somaliland who generously continue to extend their support to me every time I visit Somaliland. The Hargeysa Cultural Centre remains a warm intellectual home for me, and I want to thank Dr Jama Musse Jama, and his wife Ayan Mohamed for the wonderful work. I want to thank Rooble Mohamed, “Mr Mayor,” Adnan Hagoog, Hamdi Cali, and Nuur Al-Huda, Abdirashid Muse Abdilahi, Mustafe Baroud. You guys gave me a great deal of learning, support and friendship. The crew behind Cup of Art, Italian Coffeehouse, especially Sara Haji ‘Stone’, Fay Haji, Mustafe Haji, and Haji Senior. You are my Hargeysa n family, and we loved much.

In Mogadishu, I benefited immensely from the support and friendship of Prof. Hussein Iman, Hassan Sheikh, and Abdiwali Sheikh Mohamed Abdullahi all at Jamacada Mogadishu. And in my efforts to learn Somali language, I have benefited from the generosity of Shukri Ahmed Islow, Ismail Miad, Mustafe Barood and Mustafe Adam Suudi. Aad iyo aad ayaad u mahasentahay, asxaabta.

I want to acknowledge the generous support, both intellectual and financial that I have received from organisations including the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) of New York, Africa Humanities Programme (AHP) Erasmus Mundus, and Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD). I'm specifically indebted to the creativity and passionate support of the SSRC Next Generation Social Sciences in Africa, Director, Dr Tom Asher and then Programme Assistant, Natalie Reinhart, and Francesca Freeman. You were never the usual representatives of a funding organisation, you were family, friends, and colleagues, genuinely invested in the intellectual and emotional growth of your fellows. For me, it ceased being a fellowship the first day of our meeting, and became a friendship, a family affair. I will be forever grateful.

Finally, I cannot thank you enough, Dr Inka Mackenbrock, Dr Salim Ssajjabbi/Mulunda, and Dr Adam B. Kitungulu. You folks have been a wonderful source of love and inspiration. I also want to thank my man, Serugwa Yasin, brother Lutalo Mohammad aka "CBS FM," and Salha Hanan Nakanwagi for the love, support and friendship. We have had this job completed, and new frontiers of struggle have opened. We are not taking the foot off the gas pedal.

Note on Language and Spelling

I have used the anglicized spelling for most of the words I write in the Somali language, which is also true of most writers in Somali, with sometimes a tendency to use both spellings (anglicized and Somali orthography). Standardization is difficult to achieve since all spellings are often used both by the actors in reference to themselves or other authors cited in this work. But in some cases, I have adopted the Somali spelling, and the ways in which they are pronounced needs to be explained. The language explanation below is adopted from Höhne, 2015):

Double letters indicate long vowels, as in “*Soomalinimo*” and Maroodijeex. ‘c’ stands for the ‘voiced pharyngeal fricative’ known as ‘ayn in Arabic, a sound made at the far back of the throat. For non-Somali or non-Arabic speakers, it is unpronounceable. In names such as “Ducale,” “Burco,” or Jamac, the c is ayn. So Ducale could be pronounced like, Duáale, and Jamac could sound like, Jamaá. ‘x’ stands for the ‘voiceless pharyngeal fricative’, something like a heavy ‘h’-like sound made in the same part of the throat as ‘c’, e.g., in xeer. ‘q’ is the ‘voiced uvular plosive’ made at the back of the throat like a French ‘r’. ‘dh’ is a plosive similar to ‘d’ but made with the tongue at the back of the palate.

List of Maps, Images and Tables

Map I	Colonial Map of Somalia and Somaliland	2
Map II	Map of Somali-inhabited territories showing clans predominance	43
Map III	Map of the Horn of Africa showing the colonial divisions	55

Image I:	A picture of the map of Hargeysa showing the five districts of the city.	23
Image II:	Researcher moderates and panel discussion at HIBF 2015	27
Image III:	Posters announcing poetry nights at ‘Cup of Art: Italian Coffeehouse’	29
Image IV:	Pictures of patrons inside Cup of Art	31
Image V:	A Paintings Exhibition, and designed vehicle captured on Somaliland national celebration of 28 May 2015.	33
Image VI:	A picture of the monument of Mohammad Abdille Hassan in Mogadishu	73
Image VII:	Flag of independent Somalia	88
Image VIII:	The coffee-board menu at Cup of Art Italian coffeehouse	127
Image IX:	A signpost in pointing to a women’s restroom showing women public appearances	132
Image X:	A picture of Rules and Regulations at Rays Hotel	133
Image XI:	Narrative paintings outside a restaurant, and a painter works on one of the walls of a shop	138
Image XII:	Narrative paintings outside a restaurant	139
Image XIII:	Flags of Somaliland and Somalia side by side	158
Image XIV:	An aerial side view Taalada Xoriyadda iyo Dal Jirka Dahsoon” or the “Statue of Liberty, and Country Not Yet Discovered” in Khayriya Square in central Hargeysa	172
Image XV:	A book cover, and a wall painting emphasising the wide circularity of the monument, Taalada Xoriyadda iyo Dal Jirka Dahsoon.”	172
Image XVI:	Close-up shots of the different sides of “Statue of Liberty” or Taalada Xoriyadda iyo Dal Jirka Dahsoon”	174
Image XVII:	Monument, Sanad Guuradii 23	177
Image XVIII:	Monument, Dhagaxtuur	179
Image XIX:	Monument, Kaare	180
Image XX:	Advertisement (flier) for the recognition of Somaliland	186
Image XXI:	Sarah Halgan: the fighter	194
Image XXII:	A monument of the map of Somaliland at Hiddo Dhawr Tourist Village	198
Image XXIII:	Pictures of the inside of the newly opened hall at Hiddo Dhawr.	199
Image XXIV:	Images of the books about Poet Hadraawi as statement of his illustrious profile, and representativeness of the community	208
Image XXV:	Arts exhibition in Maan Soor Hotel, August 2014	216
Image XXVI:	Paintings from the arts exhibition in Maan Soor Hotel, 2014	217
Image XXVII:	Paintings from the arts exhibition in Maan Soor Hotel, 2014	219
Image XXVIII:	Paintings from the arts exhibition in Maan Soor Hotel, 2014	220
Image XXIX:	A montage of selected of diaspora returnee fashions styles	226

Tables

Table I	Table of fieldwork materials and their summarized analyses as covered in Chapters Six, Seven, Eight, and Nine.	251
---------	--	-----

Table of Contents

Deutsche Zusammenfassung _____	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENT _____	xix
Note on Language and Spelling _____	xxii
List of Maps, Images and Tables _____	xxiii
Chapter One: GENERAL INTRODUCTION _____	4
Introducing the project _____	4
Between anticolonial, and secessionist nationalism _____	7
On sources and methods _____	9
Fieldwork _____	12
Project Questions _____	13
Chapter Breakdown _____	14
Chapter Two: FIELDWORK AND RESEARCH METHODS _____	23
Introduction _____	23
East Africa-Horn of Africa Connection _____	24
Hargeysa, Fieldwork Sites and Activities _____	25
Doing Fieldwork _____	29
Other places of fieldwork _____	35
Mode of Ethnography _____	38
Mode of Data Interpretation _____	40
Copyright and Ethical Issues _____	41
Conclusion _____	41
Chapter Three: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: THE PEOPLE, COLONIALISM, RESISTANCE _____	43
The People _____	44
Political Organisation _____	46
Language _____	48
Economic Background _____	50
A Poetic Tradition _____	52
Colonising the Somali Territories _____	56
Colonising Somaliland _____	59
The Haud _____	63
Italian administration of Somalia _____	67
The Italian Empire in East Africa _____	70
Resisting Colonialism _____	74
Mohammad Abdille Hassan _____	74
The Resistance _____	79
Chapter Four: SOMALILAND AND SOMALIA: UNIFICATION AND SEPARATION _____	85
The 1960 Unification _____	85
Somaliland Secedes _____	97

Chapter Five: POPULAR CULTURE: THEORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY	101
Approaches to Popular Culture	102
The “official” and “unofficially” <i>sponsored</i> categories	110
Items of popular culture	113
Popular Culture as History	116
Chapter Six: THE MOTHER OF SOMALI ARTS: CONTEXT AND LOCATION OF POPULAR CULTURE IN HARGEYSA	124
Hargeysa ’s predefined public identity	128
Islam in Hargeysa’s Public Space	133
Oral-Visual Hargeysa	139
Music and Poetry in Hargeysa	142
Conclusion	152
Chapter Seven: OFFICIAL SOMALILAND: POWER, A <i>PRIORI</i>, AND PUBLIC IDENTITY	154
A Regime of Truth	156
The Somaliland Flag	158
Tales about the Somaliland National Flag	162
The Monuments of Hargeysa	171
Taalada Xoriyadda iyo Dal Jirka Dahsoon (Statue of Liberty)	172
Sanad Guuradii 23	179
Dhagaxtuur and Kaare	180
Music of Independence	182
Fliers of Recognition	186
Conclusion	188
Chapter Eight: EVERYDAY SOMALILAND: POWER, PERFORMANCE AND COUNTERPUBLICS	191
Music, Poetry, and the Artists	191
Halgan: The Fighter	192
Poet Mohammad Hadraawi	203
Boobe Yuusuf Ducale	207
Acbdimalik Musse Coldon	212
Hargeysa ’s Paintings	215
Conclusion	222
Chapter Nine: THE QURBAJOOG: DIASPORAS AND SOMALILAND PUBLIC IDENTITY	226
Diasporic Practices	230
Becoming a Somali Diaspora: A Historical Overview	233
Diasporization	235
Returning	239
Xarunta Dhaqanka ee Hargeysa	240
Conclusion: Aftermaths, Time, Socio Distance, Numbers	246
Chapter Ten: DE-IMAGINED COMMUNITIES: TOWARDS A THEORY OF SECESSIONIST NATIONALISM	249
The unity of chapters six, seven, eight and nine	252

Somaliland's politics, peace, stability _____	254
Colonial Somalia, Benevolent Britain _____	256
Towards a Theory of Secessionist Nationalism _____	258
Three knots of secessionist nationalism _____	262
Examples from Eritrea, South Sudan _____	265
Conclusion _____	267
BIBLIOGRAPHY _____	269
APPENDIX _____	296

Chapter One

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The attempt is deeply contradictory: It is both imitative and hostile to the models it imitates... It is imitative in that it accepts the value standards set by the alien culture. But it also involves a rejection: in fact, two rejections, both of them ambivalent: rejection of the alien intruder and a dominator who is nevertheless to be imitated and surpassed by his own standards, and rejection of ancestral ways which are seen as obstacles to progress and yet also cherished as marks of identity. This contradictory process is therefore deeply disturbing as well... Partha Chatterjee, 1986.

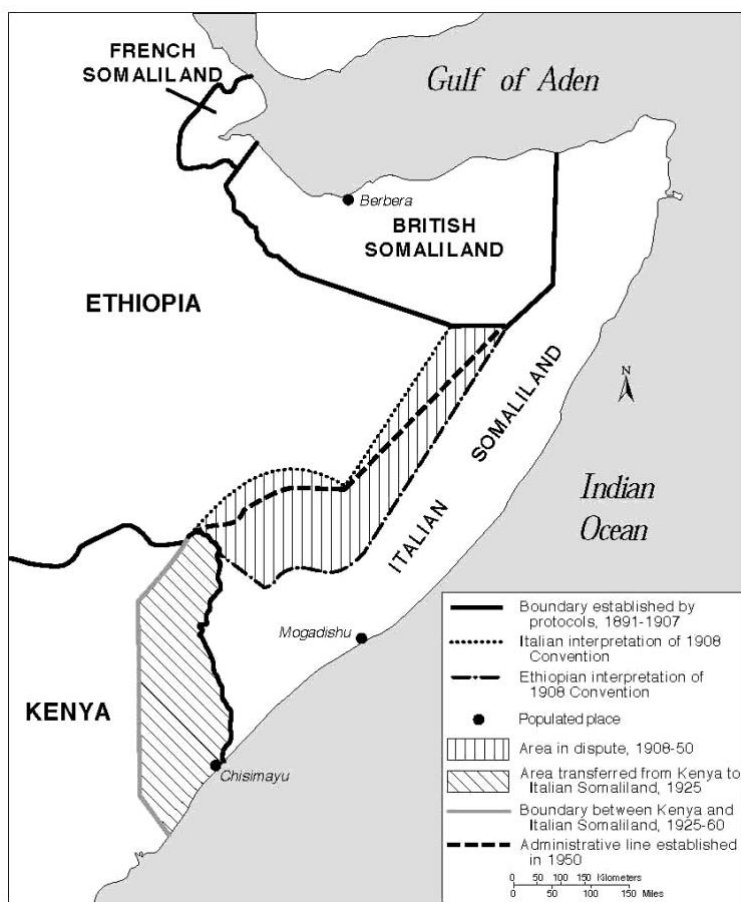
Introducing the project

This study concerns itself with the crafting and mobilisation of nationalist sentiments/consciousness and identities in Somaliland after the 1991 civil war and declaration of independence from Somalia – in a secessionist context. Using popular culture as space of articulation, it focuses on the ways in which the people in Somaliland continue to define themselves – in historical and aspirational terms – as different from Somalia, and thus a legitimate separate nation and state. The study springs from the events of 1960 where British-colonised Somaliland sought union with Italian-colonised Somalia and formed the Republic of Somalia. The explanation for the union was that the Somalis—as a cultural community—who occupied the Horn of Africa were a homogenous people that colonialism had thrown asunder (Lewis, 1963; 1988; A. I. Samatar, 1988; Touval, 1963). Aspiring for a complete cultural identity and community, the intelligentsia in Somalia and Somaliland, under their newly formed political parties such as the Somali Youth League (SYL) in Mogadishu, and the Somali National League (SNL) in Hargeysa, argued that they were one people who spoke one language, belonged to one culture, and all practiced *Sunni* Islam. Somali unity, “*Soomalinimo*” was top priority in the independence agenda of both colonial countries.²

² It is important to stress here that nationalism or the process of mobilizing nationalist sentiments and discourses is often a project of the intelligentsia or the political elite of the time who often organise their compatriots and equip them with new discourse. Across history, these have tended to be fellow peasants in peasant societies, politicians, popular historians, painters, poets and dramatists and other artistes (Neogy, 1970; Feierman, 1990; p’Bitek, 1986).

This imagined cultural community and identity provided the bedrock for the united Republic that was formed on 1 July 1960 (comprising of Somaliland and Somalia) with the ambition of bringing all other Somali dominated territories in other countries (Ethiopia's Ogaadeen region; the Northern Frontier District of Kenya and French colonised Djibouti) into one single fold, Greater Somalia.

Map I: Colonial Map of Somalia and Somaliland



(Credit: Internet photo)

Like other formerly colonised places in Africa, the dreams of independence quickly turned into terrible nightmares. Greater Somalia would be caught up in bad governance with the dictatorship of Mohammed Siyad Barre (1969-1991), which was characterised by violence, clannism, corruption, and extrajudicial executions (Issa-Salwe, 1996; Adam, 2008). Soon, the country would be mired in civil war and violence which got intense in early 1980s, and full-scale war soon became more manifest in different parts of the country. The highlight of this violence included the 1988 carpet government

bombardment of Hargeysa, which has been termed as genocide by the Somali political elite, some of whom were rebels then (Simmons, 1989; Ingiriis, 2016). Full scale violence in the 1990-91 erupted in Mogadishu, and historian Lidwien Kapteijns (2013) has termed it as ‘ethnic cleansing.’ To this day, Somalia-Mogadishu is struggling for stability and peace and is often cited as the world’s foremost example of a failed state.

Following the collapse of the regime of Mohammed Siyad Barre in 1991, in May the same year, during a meeting in Burco that came to be called, “The Grand Conference of Northern Peoples” the Somali National Movement (SNM), a rebel outfit that had been based in the north-western part of Somalia (Somaliland) fighting the regime of Mohammed Siyad Barre (1969-1991), was overwhelmed by public opinion, and declared independence from Somalia (Bradbury, 2008). In effect, this was the beginning of the continuing effort to completely undo the dreams, decisions and aspirations of the 1960 independence and unionist intelligentsia. This declaration started the journey towards the imagining of a new nation state in Somaliland.³

This study juxtaposes these two moments in Somali history: of unification (1960) on the one hand, and separation or secessionism (1991), on the other. These two events are moments of nationalist imagining and identity making in the history of the modern nation state in Somalia after colonialism – but speak to different encounters and contexts in post-colonialism, and studies of nationalism. While one was in a context of anti-colonialist struggle, the other is in post-colonial state-building – and for what it is, I have called “secessionist nationalism.” In the concluding chapter of this dissertation, against the theoretical literature on anti-colonial nationalism or nationalism more

³ I need to note here that 1991 is a contentious periodization of the realisation of the feasibility of Somaliland as independent nation state. Indeed, the idea was not visible in 1991, and not all clans in Somaliland were in agreement with secession. Dominik Balthasar (2012) has contentiously argued that war made it possible to see the dream of a possible Somaliland nation state and locates this moment in 1996 when President Egal’s war projects ended. Höhne (2009) has noted that Somaliland only becomes feasible much later in 1997 during the time of President Mohammed Ibrahim Egal who became president in 1993 and would be re-elected in 1997. During this time, tangible items of nationhood such as the currency, newspaper, and erection of war monuments were introduced. Before, there had been sentiments towards unification with Somalia and a strong Somaliland would simply be in a better negotiating position on the new terms of union. These positions notwithstanding, the seeds independent Somaliland were sowed in May in Burco on 1991 – and the details of the process that followed including Egal’s war projects should not blind us from this moment. At the same time, pro-secessionist respondents in Hargeysa have tended to locate their movement to this date.

generally as theorised by Partha Chatterjee (1986, 1989); Benedict Anderson (1982); Ahmed Aijaz (1992), I suggest theoretical interventions into “secessionist nationalism” as a distinct form of nationalism that is conceptually helpful in the study of the modern nation state in Africa and elsewhere where campaigns of breaking away to create new independent nation state from a “mother unit” are manifest. Recent studies such as de Vries, Englebert and Schomerus eds. (2018) and Höhne (2015) provide rich material on the political contestations behind secessionist movements, but do not provide a mechanism of thinking about them theoretically as shifts in studies of nationalism and the discursive formations in the evolution of the postcolonial state.

Between anticolonial, and secessionist nationalism

While the anti-colonial *struggle* meant fighting to end colonial domination and control, anti-colonial *nationalism* meant mobilising national identities and national consciousness within the borders that colonialism had established. Thus, the anti-colonial intelligentsia had a duo-mandate: fighting to end colonial control but also mobilising a nationalist consciousness within the (arbitrary) borders in which the new countries had been confined. In Somaliland, the anti-colonial intelligentsia sought to dismantle borders and create a culturally imagined nation and community. Discussing the difference between cultural and political identities, Mamdani (2001) has noted that, “more than anything else, a common cultural community signifies a common past, a common historical inheritance. In contrast, a political community testifies to the existence of a common project for the future” (2001: 23). While the anti-colonial struggle was largely a political project, it also often took the form of a cultural project. This is what I have called a duo mandate – fight colonialism, as well as mobilise a nationalist consciousness and actually build a state. On the part of the colonial intelligentsia of the time, this duo-mandate tended to complicate their work. With most of these intellectuals being colonial trained/educated or associated, the ideas of the nation they were to build was inspired by their colonial learning, which at the same time, they were fighting – for eroding their cultural identity and community. This presented them with a challenge: to be traditional and modern at the same time (Fanon, 1961; Chatterjee, 1986; Cesaire, 1957; Kapteijns, 2009).

Partha Chatterjee (1986) has written that in the course of anti-colonial nationalism, nationalist thought was often cast through the dichotomous contest of tradition against

western-colonial modernity, with special reference to the epistemological foundations in which the (cultural) critic of colonialism was made (Chatterjee, 1986: 17). Here, nationalism seemed to have been caught up in its critic of colonialism in the sense that the language in which the critic was made was conscripted to the episteme of a colonial paradigm. Succinctly, Chatterjee has noted that nationalist texts (and discourses):

[Were] addressed both to ‘the people’ who were said to constitute the nation and the colonial masters whose claim to rule nationalism questioned. To both, nationalism sought to demonstrate the falsity of the colonial claim that the backward peoples were culturally incapable of ruling themselves in the conditions of the modern world...it also asserted that the backward nation could ‘modernize’ itself while retaining its cultural identity. It thus produced a discourse in which, even as it challenged the colonial claim to political domination, it also accepted the very intellectual premises of ‘modernity’ on which colonial domination was based” (1986: 30).

Forming the central questions of anti-colonial nationalism were concerns over the autonomy and rationality of the colonised people and their ability to move outside colonialism—say constructing a cultural community—but at the same time, constructing modern nation states. This actually explains the development of the Somali Republic in the 1960s, which sought to assert its cultural unity with language, cultural customs and religion as key uniting features but at the same time, build a modern state. While they sought to build a cultural community wound around a cultural identity (Mamdani, 2001, Kapteijns, 2010) they also had the aspiration for modernity at the same time (Ahmed, 1995; Kapteijns, 2010; Samatar, 2016). Following the dilemmas that French-tutored, Toussaint Louverture faced after the Saint Domingo revolution in the 1700s, David Scott (2004) has actually extended the cultural-modernist dilemmas of building understanding as encompassing ordinary folks who tended to look up to their intelligentsia: if the leadership attempted to build an exclusively cultural community, they would be criticized by the ordinary compatriots for only taking them backwards to the Stone Age period; if they sought to build an exclusively modern state, they would still be criticised for cultural corruption. This then meant a delicate balancing act for the intelligentsia as they built and mobilised nationalist sentiments. But they somehow managed in the years after independence, a struggle that continues to this day, which decolonisation still raging, but also modernising (after former colonisers) being a major concern.

As the dreams that animated the formation of the post-colonial state quickly turned into nightmares in the post-colony, there have been questions about whether the anti-colonial intelligentsia got it right or wrong when they imagined the postcolonial nation states the way they did right after the end of colonialism. Some of the reactions to these nightmares of the postcolonial state has been the quest for secession, which is *undoing* the postcolonial state. That there are several secessionist movements across Africa (Lotje de Vries, et al, 2019) or most formerly colonised places speaks to the rethinking of the foundations upon which the modern postcolonial state rests. I contend that the current intelligentsia revisiting and radically seeking to undo the foundations set in place by the anti-colonial nationalists ought to be seen as a major shift in the ways in which we think about and study nationalism. This project thus uses the example of Somaliland to (a) think about the scholarship of Somaliland as post-conflict context (b) examine the ways in which nationalist sentiments and identities are mobilised in Somaliland and (c) use all the above to reflect on secessionist nationalism more historically, performatively and theoretically—in the context of nationalism studies.

On sources and methods

This project was inspired by the work of anthropologist Kelly Askew (2002) *Performing the Nation: Swahili Music and the Cultural Politics in Tanzania*, which studied national culture and identities as constructed in national events and music performances. More inspiration was received from the Somalist historian, Lidwien Kapteijns' work on popular culture and music in Somalia's political cultural negotiations. Kapteijns' (2009) "Discourse of moral womanhood in Somali popular songs, 1960-1990" grapples with the construction of public identity at the birth of independence focusing on the discursive push-and-pull between modernity and tradition. Somali society often sought to see their "authentic identity" through women, and so popular song was the discursive site for this negotiation. Reading songs as texts and mediations to answer questions about "big" political projects/questions started here for me. In "Making memories of Mogadishu in Somali Poetry" after the civil war, Kapteijns (2010) again, discusses selected songs as texts used as mediations of violence and reconstruction of relations in a post-conflict environment. Both Kapteijns and Askew vividly demonstrate that popular culture mediations [songs, poetry, cultural sites, monuments, paintings, celebrity persons] is effective speech (see also, Fabian,

1990, 1996; p'Bitek 1986) with the power to mobilise constituencies and thus examinable for far-reaching scholarly analyses and conclusions.

This project is, in a small way, part of the long debate on sources in African historiography (or historiography in general) especially whether the arts are legitimate sources of history (Vansina, 1965, 1985; Chappell, 1970; Davidson, 1984; Mulira, 1979; L. White, 2002; Schlee and Shongolo, 1996; 2007) and how they then could they be used (extended discussion in Chapter Five). The written sources such as archive, archaeological artefacts, oral sources such as interviews, and pronouncements of the elite, were the main sources of historiographical material. Over the years, however, folklore, everyday narratives, fables, rumour and gossip and other hitherto ignorable items such as graffiti, cartoons and fictional writing became legitimate sources as well. The focus shifted then to questions that the researcher sought to ask and how different sources are utilised to speak to each other without privileging one over the other. Presently, there is no doubt whether the arts can be used as sources of history as a great deal of work attests to this fact (see for example, Fabian, 1996; Street, 1997; Askew, 2002; Kapteijns, 2010).

Building on this debate, my project combines performative ethnography (Fabian, 1990; Wedeen, 2010), and extended case method (Burawoy, 1998) where texts are vividly developed and made visible through thick descriptions; textual analysis to both collect data, and also explain it. I thus do discourse and textual/literary analysis (context, text and intertextuality). In literary and cultural studies, texts are read against others – often more technically termed as intertextuality. This means there are often assemblies of meaning established by the author from both their ground ethnography and working with sources (Mailloux, 1982). In the texts, mediations, repeated patterns (otherwise called themes or concerns) are established and constructed into a narrative by the researcher/reader. Barthes observed that every reading of texts is a misreading, which thus opens the space for multiple readings and interpretations. To this end, Roland Barthes (1977) in a seminal essay, “The Death of the Author,” declares the death of the author and the birth of the reader. Texts come to life with every reading and are eternally written *here and now* (1997: 145, emphasis in original). Whilst the author (painter, sculptor, composer, etcetera) is thought to nourish the book, which is to say he exists before it, thinks, suffers and lives for it, it is in the same way relation of

antecedence to his work as a father to his child” (ibid). Once the child is born, they make their own lives, and are not conditioned to the lives of their parents. So are texts as are constantly assigned meaning with every reading. Here, the reader (researcher) of texts assembles meaning building on established context, often through ethnography and other secondary sources.

There are two conclusions I want to draw from here: First, the popular culture materials in this project are read as texts (often vividly described to develop them into visible texts), and the conclusions made thereof are the author’s own made against the historic and ethnographic material (see also, Fabian, 1990). To this end, after Barthes, I do not investigate the historical motivations/ambitions the author of any particular item sought to represent, but rather the significance (and publics mobilised) by the items in the context of the present. Secondly, the analyses follow Foucault that “one of the most productive ways of thinking about discourse [that is, making meaning], is not studying items, “as a group of signs or a stretch of text, but as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak” (cited in Mills, 1997: 17). In other words, items are studied not for their representativeness – that is, a stretch of texts speaking a singular language – but for the claims they distinctly seek to make and signify.

The scholarship on popular culture is wide and varied. There has never been an agreed-upon position on what constitutes popular culture (and I explore these debates in Chapter Five). But certain characteristics such as the communicative and expressive power of popular culture cut through the different positions on the subject. After Natalie Zemon-Davis (1992), Askew (2002) and p’Bitek (1986), I use popular culture as *a vehicle or media*. In deploying popular culture (poetry, music, monuments, paintings, everyday narratives, cultural sites, book fairs and coffeehouses) as source material for this study, emphasis is on its *communicative power* (McLuhan, 1965; Nye, 1971)—to appeal, mobilise, be disseminated through easy travel and reproduction.⁴

⁴ This is diametrically as opposed to *the* popular culture as a way of contesting official/mainstream formations as is often used in traditional political science discourse when “popular protests” or “popular uprisings” are studied. In these cases, the *popular* often denotes subaltern groups rising up against official power. My usage also sidesteps classification of popular culture into categories such as traditional, elite, unofficial, modern, high or low or even syncretic forms.

These specific popular cultural items studied were selected following ethnographic explorations of their “popular cultural power.” They are threaded together as items that were “widely accessible and widely accessed; widely disseminated, and widely viewed, heard or read” (Zemon-Davis, 1992: 1411) and some were repeated practices that were repeated and learned.⁵ These items exhibited power to mobilise a public on their own or were crafted (by a hegemonic power, the state) to mobilise and enforce a pre-defined public identity (Warner, 2002). The study also makes visible the unofficially sponsored popular cultural items, which not only represented a counterpublic, but modified or simply augmented the officially sponsored popular cultural items.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork for this study was carried out in Hargeysa between March and October 2015.⁶ [Extended discussion of fieldwork in Chapter Two]. Hargeysa being the cultural, political and commercial capital of the country, this study treats it as the centre of the secessionist project in all of Somaliland, and therefore uses it to make general claims about Somaliland.⁷ Somaliland is estimated to have 3.5 million people. Out of these, 1.5 million are estimated to be resident in Hargeysa. It is important to note that by 2015, Somaliland had never held a population census. Population figures in Somaliland are only estimates. Sometimes, the population of Hargeysa has been estimated at 1.5 million and other times, 750,000 people.⁸ For being the most populated region of Somaliland, most political and cultural production takes place in this town making it most suitable place for fieldwork for a project of this nature.

⁵ It is important to note that for any items to enjoy this sort of travel power, they have to aesthetically and ingeniously composed (Bukonya and Nandwa, 1983; p’Bitek, 1986). In other cases, these items are everyday practices; “actions and deeds that are repeated over time, learned, reproduced” (Wedeen, 2008: 15), whose importance does not lie in their meanings, but “in the ways in which they constitute the self through his or her performance as an explicitly national person” (ibid).

⁶ This researcher also held several conversations with Somaliland students studying at Makerere University, Somaliland families, refugees and economic migrants Kampala’s Kisenyi suburb. This researcher also benefited from archival, and secondary materials from Somalist academics in the UK under the Nairobi-based organization Rift Valley Institute (RVI); from Boston in the United States, and Halle (Saale) in Germany.

⁷ Despite Berbera being the port of entry, most economic and cultural production happens in Hargeysa especially since it is the seat of government and the most densely populated part of the country. Renowned poets Mohammed Ibrahim Hadrawi, and youngster, Abdulmaliq Coldon, who are closely studied in this project, both live in Burco. But they trade their craft in Hargeysa and spread to the rest of the country and outside of it.

⁸ Department of Planning and Development, Hargeysa Municipality Statistical Handbook, Dec. 2011, which estimated the number at 750,000, while the 2014 Handbook had them at 1.5 million. That this number doubles in a period of three years makes it suspicious.

The obvious limitation for this is that some regions in Somaliland such as Laascaanood, Buuhoodle, and Taleex (Khatumo state) have remained hesitant—sometimes, openly opposed—to embracing the idea of secession from Somalia (Höhne, 2009: 264; 2015: 78). However, the broader sentiment (often manifest through official channels, studied through ethnography of Hargeysa and *officially sponsored* popular culture in this work) favours or has been successfully mobilised to favour a separate Somaliland. I argue later that this sentiment (favouring secession from Somalia) is rather hegemonic, with institutions to enforce it. Also, worth noting is that if Hargeysa managed to successfully have Somaliland recognised by the international community, the border claims – colonial borders – will include areas that are still lukewarm about the secessionist project.

Project Questions

The modern nation state is an artificial construct often mobilised through a series of processes (Williams, 1983, Hall, 1981; Ahmed, 1995, Mitchell, 1991; Abu-Lughod, 2004; Billig, 1995, Zenker, 2013, Schlee, 2004). The idea of *mobilising* is at the core of nationalism and may take different forms (print capitalism in Anderson’s (1983) sense or an internal realm such as language in Chatterjee’s (1986) sense, and different articulations. Raymond William (1983) summed up this idea of nation states being mobilised artificially as thus:

‘Nation’, as a term, is radically connected with ‘native’. We are born relationships which are typically settled in place... Yet the jump from that to anything like the modern nation state is entirely artificial. What begins as a significant and necessary way of saying “we” and “our” (as so much more than ‘I’ and ‘mine’) slides by teaching or habit into bland or obscuring generalities of identity (1983: 180).

This project grapples with the slide of “teaching and habit into bland or obscuring generalities of identity” which signifies a deliberate act of mobilisation (that is, crafting, moulding, grafting, cobbling, manipulating, changing, concocting, inventing, etc.), to critically appreciate the imagining of a new nation state in Somaliland. Indeed, in the process of mobilisation, certain discourses are articulated and others are silenced (Schlee, 2004). David Scott’s (1999, 2004) idea of “refashioning futures,” laid the

ground work for this project. In a Foucauldian fashion, Scott noted from at a certain point in history, “a certain past is reconstructed in the service of imagining the direction in which an alternative future could be sought (2004: 10).⁹ Thus, the questions this project sought to answer rotated around refashioning futures in Somaliland and their claimed new beginnings. Three broad questions drove this project, two were specific to Somaliland, and one was theoretical:

- 1) In popular culture [official and unofficial expressions] after the 1980-91 civil war, and after the declaration of independence in 1991, what histories are mobilized in the campaign of secession from Somalia?
- 2) What presents and futures are imagined in this process? What are the recurrent nationalist sentiments in the formation of a new Somaliland political identity? What do they help teach us about new Somaliland, its acclaimed peace, stability and hybrid democracy projects?
- 3) How do the recurrent motifs in Somaliland secessionist consciousness and identity-making help us think about *secessionist nationalism* more generally but as a temporal political project? How does the articulations [the recurrent and privileged ‘cultural markers’] of nationalist sentiment and identity-making in Somaliland help us formulate a theory of secessionist nationalism in post-colonial contexts?

The answers to these questions are developed, explored and spelled out in ten chapters.

Chapter Breakdown

Chapter One: Introduction spells out three core items of the project: (a) the central puzzle/concern of my PhD project, which is understanding the ways in which Somaliland nationalism is *mobilised* in the ongoing campaign to secede from Somalia (b) the questions of the project, which are deliberately focused on discursive formations, i.e., cultural/consciousness mobilisation, and not any political-legal process

⁹ This project never sought to challenge or establish a more accurate record of history in Somaliland. Instead, it focused on the record (power-laden) produced in everyday discourse. At the same time, the project did not question the motivation of these otherwise “contestable” historical accounts – from the official or individual channels – but rather it focused on the world that these histories of the present make visible and seek to mobilise.

as they may fascinate political scientists and historians. The two specific questions are [there is a third] what does it mean—in a sentimental, conscientized sense — to be a Somalilander? and what items/props, and in a Foucauldian sense, what histories and futures are mobilised and imagined in crafting a Somaliland nationalist identity and consciousness? (d) this section then spells out debates in which this project is rooted, and to which I seek to make an intervention/contribution. Here, from a specifically postcolonial vantage point, I introduce what I have called, “secessionist nationalism” (as a peculiar stage or phenomena in the life of a postcolonial state), and after Benedict Anderson, I coin “de-imagined communities,” as the conceptual-theoretical starting point for thinking about and theorising secessionist nationalisms.

Chapter Two: Fieldwork and Research Methods: This is a detailed narrative of the field, showing how the researcher encountered and interacted with it, and the decisions that the researcher made in the course of fieldwork, and how these contribute to the final forming of the dissertation. I note that his project utilised literary and anthropological methodologies in narrating its data, making its broader analyses and conclusions. (a) Through mostly Malinowskian ethnography, and extended case method (Burawoy, 1998 – although the ethnography is mostly performative, not dialogic), which gives rise to detailed notes narrating what “natives” actually were doing with accounts of real events, struggles and dramas that took place over space and time” (1998:5), (b) and through photography, and thick descriptions of texts (popular cultural materials), I make the world of this project, and my own as a researcher, visible and readable. Taking anthropology as praxis, the project embodies what is often termed as ‘descriptive analysis,’ a practice by which ‘theory and the concrete world are both constituted and brought into discursive relationship with one another’ (Comaroff, 2010: 530). What follows in this chapter is (a) a description of the field itself (specifically Somaliland and Hargeysa capital city), the researcher in the field, and the places which he patronized gathering data (most notably, Xarunta Dhaqanka ee Hargeysa [or the Hargeysa Cultural Center], Hargeysa International Bookfair; Cup of Art Italian Coffeehouse, Hiddo Dhawr Tourist Village; Jamacada Hargeysa; Academy for Peace and Development (APD), Mansour Hotel, downtown Hargeysa, and several others). These places are not simply sites where I met my interlocutors, but as popular cultural texts, as mediations that are studied for analyses.

I attended national events, taught an MA class, and helped in organizing poetry competitions. (b) the chapter also discusses the ways in which empirical data is collected, analyzed and made sense of as is consistent with social sciences methodologies of meaning making. Important to note here is that the research sites above are actually texts themselves or to use Kapteijns (2010) term, mediations, that are described and made to speak to the broader questions of the project. So focused less on meeting my interlocutors in these spaces, these spaces themselves form the popular cultural materials that are vividly described as texts and analyzed for discourse. To make this more succinct I touch on debates in popular culture (Levine, 1988; Zemon Davis, 1992, Weeden, 2008; p'Bitek, 1986; Nandwa and Bukonya, 1983, Strinati, 1995), and the ways in which studying texts, and performances enable the scholar to arrive at real experiences – over and beyond responses from interlocutors.

Chapters Three and Four are both historical chapters, with chapter three focusing on the people called the Somalis, their area of inhabitancy, and how they dealt with colonialism. Chapter four on the other hand deals specifically with the two major historical events of this PhD project—that are juxtaposed in the study—that is, unification (1960) and separation (1991) Both events have involved mobilising a national consciousness and identity, and 1960 offers us the requisite juxtaposition, and springboard to focus 1991.

Chapter Three: Historical Background: Somalia, the People, Colonialism and Resistance. This chapter is divided into three main subsections. The first is a discussion of the Somali people, their roots, social, political and economic organisation. The second sub-section discusses colonialism, and how the colonial powers divided and administered the Somali territories. It is here that we learn that the colonial powers divided the Somali dominated territories into five different entities, which the Somali anti-colonial intelligentsia sought to bring together in a feat of growing cultural nationalism. The final subsection discusses resistance going through the (contested) legacy of Mohamed Abdille Hassan, famously and problematically known as the Mad Mullah, or the Sayyid.

The overall ambition of this ambition is to locate my project in its geographical and temporal space. The chapter exposes the Horn of Africa as was constituted before

colonialism, and the ways in which colonialism was received and resisted giving rise to the birth of Somali nationalism. Part of the ambition is also to give background and context to the processes and motivations of the union of Italian colonised Somalia and British Somaliland that took place 1960 after these two received independence from their colonisers. This then illuminates and contrasts a rather diametric process—of secession—that happened in 1991 where Somaliland declared independence from Somalia – which is the subject of this project.

Chapter Four is titled “Somalia and Somaliland: Unification and Separation.” Here, I discuss the politics and motivation for unification of the two Somali territories of British Somaliland and Italian Somalia. I then move on to the discursive knots around which unification was mobilised, which were language, religion, culture, and modes of subsistence (nomadic pastoralism) and the popular culture ways in which it was mobilised, such the national flag, poetry, music etcetera. Using archival material (specifically, the “Colonial Office Report on the Protectorate Constitutional Conference.” Held in London in May 1960), archival notes contained in a recently published book by Abdi Ismail Samatar (2016) captures the strong feeling on unification that existed on both sides. Also utilised here is the poetry of Abdullahi Sultan Timacade, one of the major bards of the 1950 and 1960s whose poetry was central in mobilising nationalist sentiments, and was the bard on Independence Day (also discussed in Samatar, 2016; and Boobe Yuusuf Ducale, 2012). The section also discusses the relevance of the fertile grazing land, the Haud, which would end in Ethiopia upon independence. The Haud, both practically and symbolically became a rallying point for Somali nationalism. The chapter then narrates a brief history of the events leading to the declaration of Somaliland independence. Specifically, I discuss the Somali civil war against Mohamed Siyad Barre of 1983-1991, and the formation of the Somali National Movement (SNM). Although started as a national democratic movement for *all* of Somalia, SNM would go on to become a separatist movement after 1991 – especially since it was based in Somaliland, and was composed of mostly members of the Isaaq clan, the predominant clan in Somaliland. this is the group that declared independence from Somalia in 1991 bringing an end to the marriage that had been entered in 1960. This chapter provides a historical context for juxtaposing the two moments in the national-political life of these two otherwise sister communities.

Chapter five Popular Culture: Theory and Historiography. Since this project exploits popular culture to write a history of nationalist sentiments in secessionist Somaliland, this section is divided into two parts discussing popular culture on the one hand, and historiography on the other. The first part is a discussion of popular culture and the different approaches to it.

There is tendency to see popular culture as oppositional culture—opposition to elite culture or officialdom—often emerging from below. Often used in reference to mostly informal, ignorable, and escapist forms of expression (Zemon-Davis, 1992; Barber, 1987, Levine, 1990), it has, problematically, come to be seen as an exclusive space for ordinary folks, people on the margins (such as workers, and peasants if framed in Marxist terms, or Fanon’s wretched of the earth). This tendency could be attributed to political and social science studies when focused on “popular revolts” and “popular uprisings,” which tend to be affairs of the everyday people, and forms of resistance. Going through the literature on the this very expansive field of popular culture, I am persuaded by Nadine Dolby (2006) who notes that “popular culture forms an important locus of public debate and of individual and community agency” (2006: 33). Dolby springs from Stuart Hall (1981) who termed popular culture as the “arena of consent and resistance. It is partly where hegemony arises, and where is secured (Hall, 1981: 239).” Taken as an arena—of both consent and resistance—a locus of public debate, popular culture then becomes that open space for the advancement of public debate—open to everybody and every institution irrespective of class, breeding, location, etcetera. In fact, studied closely, power or the state tend to be the biggest producers of popular culture. McLuhan (1964) actually called popular culture as a simple vehicle, a media. The genius of popular culture here, as Zemon-Davis (1992) would tell us, is that it is easily shared, easily disseminated, and easily reproduced and circulated. This is especially so, because it is often aesthetically created (Bukonya and Nandwa, 1983) making it memorable, sharable and oftentimes entertainingly infectious.

It is against this framing (Hall, 1981; Dolby, 2006; Zemon-Davis, 1992) that I created two categories in which I place my material, *officially sponsored* and *unofficially sponsored* popular culture. These different categories meet in Stuart Hall’s arena and “compete,” “consent” or “resist” in the imagining and making of a consciousness and

identity for new Somaliland. These are functional categories of mine meant only in service of this project.

The second part of this chapter makes general reflections on history and historiography focusing on sources of writing history. The intention in this final part is to provide context for the arts – popular culture – as legitimate sources of history. From a historian point of view, with Foucault's (1975) history of the prison in mind, this section reviews the question on whether the arts are sufficient sources of historical material (Vansina, 1965, 1985; Chappell, 1970; Davidson, 1984; Mulira, 1979; L. White, 2002). The intention is to create scholarly backup for the core materials used in this project, which could be considered (or dismissed) as the creative/fictional work of a single mind.

Chapter Six: The Mother of Somali Arts: Context and Location of Popular Culture in Hargeysa. This section maps the terrain for popular culture in Hargeysa. The driving force of this chapter is a discussion of the push and pull between the Islamic-inspired pre-defined public identity in Hargeysa and the fondly admired label as “the mother of the Somali arts,” which is actually diametric to a pre-determined and tightly enforced public identity. The theoretical anchor for this chapter is the work of Michael Warner (2002) *Publics and Counterpublics*, where he differentiates a pre-defined public, and where texts/cultural items define their own [reading] publics. Thus, this chapter identifies and narrates those pointers that seek to pre-determine a Hargeysa n public identity. Some of these include posters demanding show of marriage certificates for couples at hotels, the canopy of mosques; images of seemingly innocent signages such washroom indicators of gender; treatment of music in public places; routine of daily life in Hargeysa pointing to peculiar/specific patterns, and the general spaces of popular culture such as theatres and coffeehouses. I spend a bit more time on spaces, composition and circulation of music and poetry as they form a core part of this dissertation, especially in the chapters ahead. The reader has to see the tangible items I call popular culture (Bukonya and Nandwa, 1983), and the ways in which these interact with the general, more hegemonic sensibility of the society.

The next two chapters are named and studied in juxtaposition to each other. In Chapter Four where I discussed popular culture and its theories, after taking the position to read popular culture is a vehicle, I created two functional categories, *officially sponsored*

popular culture, and *unofficially sponsored* popular culture. These categories provide the base for the subsections that follow.

Chapter Seven: Official Somaliland: Power, *A Priori*, and Public Identity. This chapter discusses the popular culture that springs (supported, sponsored or engaged under the auspices) from official channels. There are two items focused in this chapter. These include the national flag, and the five major monuments in Hargeysa. The monuments include “*Taalada Xoriyadda iyo Dal Jirka Dahsoon*” or the “Statue of Liberty and Country Not Yet Discovered” in Khayriya Square in central Hargeysa; *Kaare*, a replica of a fighter tank in Togdheer in Timacade Area; the dove or the peace monument; *Sanad Guuradii 23* monument, or the hand holding the map of Somaliland (also called the monument of Somaliland unity), and *Dhagaxtuur* (literary, throwing stones) the tomb of Somali fallen heroes of 20 February 1982. Before analysing these pieces of art, which I argue aspire to construct *a priori* about Somaliland, I narrate the histories behind each of them and describe them in addition to displaying their photographs. These items form what I argue is the hegemonic view. It is upon this chapter, that the main arguments in the concluding chapter are based.

Chapter Eight: “Everyday Somaliland: Power, Performance and Counterpublics” is in direct conversation with Chapter Seven and foregrounds alternative spaces of expression and articulation (Warner, 2002) which appear to imagine being Somalilander differently from officially sponsored forms. Three main items (1) music, (2) poetry and poets, and (3) paintings are extensively examined in this chapter. Part of the discussion also focuses on the artistic profiles and the place of three main artistes, poet Mohammad Hadraawi, singer Sahra Halgan, and poet Boobe Yusuf Ducale, and Abdulmalik Coldon, who in addition to analysing their poetic composition, I also read their personal profiles as texts. This reading follows debates in classic tragic drama about heroes and heroines (today’s celebrities) when they become symbols of specific ideations. Their silences, speech and private decisions become readable as significant representations. Generally, I note here that although the counter-articulation of officially sponsored public identity is present and strong, it is generally weaker than the hegemonic one. However, this counterpublic is not ignorable as it continues to carve into the official and hegemonic identity. I also note here that unofficially sponsored

popular culture not entirely posit an opposite view but oftentimes, supplements, seeks to modify and complicate the officially hegemonic public identity.

While officially sponsored popular culture (Chapter Seven) seeks to construct a Somaliland as victims and survivors of a genocide perpetrated by Somalia-Mogadishu (1988 war); liberal but strong/pure Muslims, anti-piracy, anti-terrorism, democratic; the unofficially or individually sponsored popular culture (Chapter Eight) on the other hand, which I present as a counterpublic is more diverse in its approach. While majority expressions do not contest any of the positions examined chapter seven above, [except abrasive poet Abdulmalik Coldon, who is openly anti-secessionist, and towering poetry figure Mohammad Hadraawi whose position is subtly anti-secessionist], they seek to extend the list of imaginaries. Hargeysa International Bookfair, and Hargeysa Cultural Centre (HCC) studied under Chapter Nine below seek to include literati-ism, elitism, intellectualism as Somaliland belonging to a community of readers, Sahra Halgan and her Hiddo Dhawr, Cup of Art Italian Coffeehouse, and HCC itself subtly imagine the strict stance of the Islamic identity be relaxed to create space for public enjoyment of music. Sara Hajj of Cup of Art Italian Coffeehouse suggests Islam to be treated more as individual expressions of piety rather than a public good to be enforced and protected. To a great degree, unofficially sponsored popular culture both complement and seek to diversify official ideations.

Chapter Nine: The Qurbajoog: Diasporas and Somaliland Public Identity. There is a powerful and visible constituency of people in Somaliland called the *Qurbajoog* or the diaspora returnees. This chapter is devoted to this group discusses *diasporic practices* of the returnees (Kleist and Hansen, 2005; P. Werbner, 2002), and the ways in which they impact and complicate the Somaliland public identity and national consciousness. I open this chapter with contestations between “diaspora returnees” and their homebred compatriots and how these are caught up in a love-hate relationship with each other. I use this and attempt to theorise returnees as social-conceptual category that is visible in Hargeysa, and may not be visible elsewhere (and should be theorised in diaspora studies as a category or typology especially in the less studied return narratives). From my narrative of diasporic practices in Hargeysa, I argue that three factors, including (a) demography, that is, the number of returnees against the home population, (b) the ‘social distance’ (Said’s term, 2003) between home and host community, with the host

communities being especially Europe and North America which radically alters social lives of individuals after a longer stay, and (c) time spent away before the conditions of return become favourable, combine and make the returnees a visible category in the social and political milieu – to the point of conflict with their homebred compatriots. Focused on their non-verbal *performative practices* – in fashion, cuisine, language, investments – I narrate myriad moments of exclusion and inclusion in the political-cultural life of Hargeysa, and the dilemmas of the quest for authentic identities (Muršič, 2013). I read their practices as texts, pointing to the ways in which they supplement but at the same time destabilise the hegemonic public identity.

Chapter Ten: De-imagined Communities: Towards a theory of Secessionist Nationalism. This concluding chapter has three layers of analysis: The first layer is a general analysis of my findings pointing to the actually visible identities and nationalist sentiment that could be gleaned from especially the officially sponsored popular culture. The second layer is a discussion of the implication of these imagined nationalist sentiments and identities against the scholarship on Somaliland after 1991, which has tended to celebrate the stability as a product of a hybrid political order and democratic aspirations and investments in Somaliland (Abokor, et. al, 2006; Hansen and Bradbury, 2007; Wall, 2009; 2014, Jhazbhay, 2008). While this analysis holds true, I argue that it has tended to ignore the omnipresence of southern Somalia as the glue that stitches the different fragmented units together. A sort of collective fear, in a constructed enemy who is hovering over Somaliland waiting for an opportunity to pounce on the country, often forces actors to defer their grievances for the collective good. This collective good then finds manifestation in long-standing peace and stability, pursuit of democracy, etc. The third opens the debate that juxtaposes and creates differences between anti-colonial nationalism and secessionist nationalism, imagined communities, and de-imagined communities, and here I attempt using these conclusions to offer tentative theoretical frames, knots around which secessionist nationalism in specifically post-colonial studies can be studied and understood.

Chapter Two

FIELDWORK AND RESEARCH METHODS

“Performance” seemed to be a more adequate description both of the ways people realise their culture and the method by which an ethnographer produces knowledge about that culture” – Johannes Fabian, 1990.

“One of the most productive ways of thinking about discourse is not studying items, “as a group of signs or a stretch of text, but as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak” – Michel Foucault, cited in Sarah Mills, 1997.

Introduction

This project utilised literary and anthropological methodologies in collecting and narrating its data, which also informs the broader analyses and specific conclusions. Through ethnography’s prized thick description of location and text, and through photography, I make the world of this project, and my own as a researcher, visible and readable. Taking anthropology as praxis, the project embodies what is often termed as ‘descriptive analysis,’ a practice by which ‘theory and the concrete world are both constituted and brought into discursive relationship with one another’ (Comaroff, 2010: 530). What follows in this chapter is (a) a description of the process through which the material in this project were gathered and assembled. In a highly cited text, Bronislaw Malinowski (1922) urged that the researcher ought to be candid and detailed about the ways in which, and the motivations and biases by which they gathered their materials so as to provide context for the scientific conclusions they reached (1922: 12-13). Thus, this chapter is dedicated to fulfilling this requirement. (b) the chapter also seeks to demonstrate the ways in which empirical data is analyzed and made sense of as is consistent with social sciences methodologies of meaning making. As a Ugandan-East African scholar, I will begin with a brief on how I ended up in the Horn.

East Africa-Horn of Africa Connection

On 11 July 2010, two bomb blasts in Kampala killed 74 people and left 71 injured. The blasts in different entertainment venues, Lugogo Rugby Grounds, and Ethiopian Village in Kabalagala took place on the day of the World Cup final in South Africa. The terrorist Somali based group, Al-Shabab claimed to have committed the attacks. The entire region was in panic mood after the attack, and the search for the perpetrators of this violence, and answers on why Al-Shabab would attack Uganda began immediately. The search for answers in Kampala sought to explain the attacks through the lens of culture: Islam, and for the most seemingly sophisticated ones, the clans of the Somalis. To this end, quite unfortunately, Muslims in Uganda were expected to explain the crimes of Muslims [or Islamic terrorism] from a Muslim-majority country. I vividly recall an incident aboard a matatu taxi going from Kampala to a suburb where a young man wearing the traditional Islamic turban was ferociously taunted by fellow passengers for being Muslim in the face of the tragedy *his* religion had brought to the country. His pleas that even fellow Muslims had been victims of the attacks fell on deaf ears. He disembarked before reaching his destination.

With a journalistic background, I actively participated in the post-attack conversation in different fora – and became an “expert” on Somalia.¹⁰ In truth, I was no expert, but at best, an educated sceptic of the reasons that were being advanced. When I joined graduate school in 2012, I quickly took the decision to study Somalia with the sole intention of understanding the conflict better, which around this time, ceased being perceived as solely a Somali civil war, but a challenge for the entire region. I wanted to understand the cultures of the Somalis, nature of Islam, which allegedly legitimated mass murder. The questions that inspired my decision have so far changed, but as this dissertation attests, the spirit has remained the same.

¹⁰ My article, “Culture talk, Al-Shabaab and political Islam,” *The Independent*, 2 August 2010 was widely read and I received more invitations to speak about terrorism and Al-Shabaab thereafter. Essay is available at: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201008040997.html>. (Last accessed, 25 October 2017).

Hargeysa, Fieldwork Sites and Activities

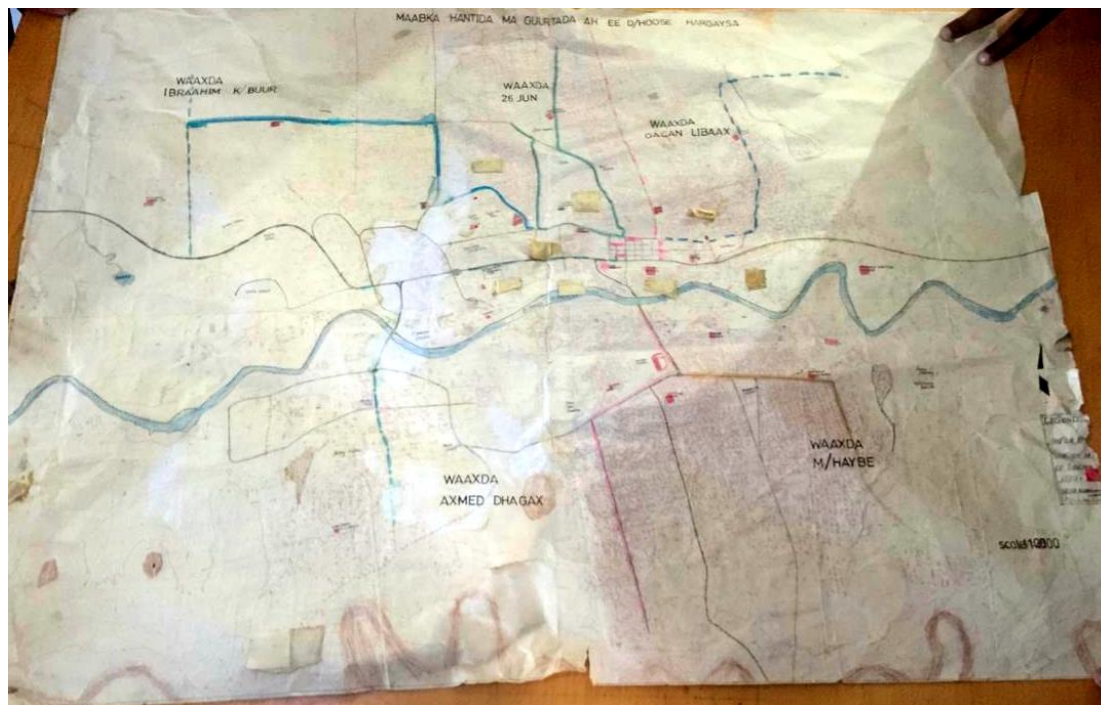
I did most of my fieldwork in Hargeysa, the capital city of Somaliland between March-October 2015. I had been visiting Hargeysa for one-month stays every year for the last two years, and had cultivated networks. Hargeysa, which is the centre of cultural-political production is generally a small town of an estimated 725,000 people.¹¹ The joke goes that everybody in this town knows everyone by name. Hargeysa is also closely knit around kinship as residence in particular parts of the city is by clan affiliation. Before the Somali civil war that ended in 1991, the city was divided into five districts¹² with each having a predominant clan: District 26 June [“Twenty six June” is the name] is in the north (includes key features such Academy for Peace and Development (APD) and the National Hospital, and the Presidential Palace). This district, 26 June, is the biggest district of Hargeysa, and is predominantly Habar Awal, Sacad Musa clan affiliated. Gacan Libaxa, in the east of Hargeysa is mostly Habar Yunis, Issa Musa and Gabooye clans. Key features include in this district include Masjid Jamac (the biggest mosque in the country) and the National Theatre, which is still under construction having been destroyed by the 1988 war. The famous New Hargeysa area, with the road to Berbera Port runs through Gacan Libaxa District. The other district is Mohammad Haybe and is located southeast of Hargeysa. It is predominantly Garxajis; Cidha-Gale and Habar Yunis clans. Key installations in this area include Seylada, the cattle market, Egal international airport and Ambassador Hotel, the second biggest hotel in town after Maan Soor Hotel. The other district is Ahmed Dagaxa, and is south of Hargeysa. It is predominantly Carab clan (Carab, with C here being read as ξ (ayn), in Arabic). Key installations here include the National stadium, Edna Adan Hospital and University of Hargeysa. Ibrahim Kodbur district is west of Hargeysa and is also predominantly Sacad Musa. It includes the suburb of as Jig-jig yar, which is the most affluent suburb of Hargeysa. Maan Soor Hotel, which is the biggest and most popular hotel in the country is also found here. Across Hargeysa, Somalilanders are wont to residing in their clan-affiliations. The exception is the Habar

¹¹ Somaliland in Figures: National Development Plan, Ministry of National Planning and Development (MONP&D) Department of Statistics, p. 3.

¹² Around 2010, three more districts were created, these included Sheikh Nuur, Mohamed Moogeh. I have worked with the five new ones for despite the creation of these new districts, a map detailing the boundaries more clearly is yet to be produced.

Jaro clan who are not predominant in any area but are settled everywhere – although they predominate in the areas around Jiga-jiga yar.

Image I: A picture of the map of Hargeysa showing the five districts of the city.



Photographed from the Hargeysa Local Department of Archives.

In the course of my research in Hargeysa, for different reasons – such as cost of rent, accessibility to research area, closeness to friends and guides, and experience – I stayed in several places. These included Bilal Inn and SHAAM Hotel both located in downtown New Hargeysa. These two hotels are located in the centre of business activity, with especially SHAAM hotel standing beside the biggest mosque in Hargeysa, Jamac Mosque, and the biggest market just a few meters away. The mosque attracts the greatest number of people especially those who do business in the market. I used to pray in this mosque. I also stayed in Badhacas Area, in the western side of the city, and later in Shacab or Shacabka at a co-rented residence with Kenyan expatriates. This is one of the most affluent side of Hargeysa, with the main town here known as *Jig-jig Yar*, that is, “small Jig-Jiga,” with Jig-Jiga being the capital of the Somali dominated region of Ogaadeen in Ethiopia. Jig-Jiga Yar directly translates as “Jig-jiga small,” which is “small Jig-jiga,” with *Yar* being the Somali word for “small.” This place picked its name from the Somali-Ethiopian civil war of 1977, when Somalis

escaping violence in Ogaadeen were settled in this area and thus the name, a smaller version of the big town, thus Jig-jig Yar.

Fieldwork Sites

As a participant observer/ethnographer, the research site is described as an expanse of territory, not necessarily a specific area. I lived in Somaliland and learned the routine of town as possibly could. As Malinowski would conclude about his fieldwork among the “natives” of New Guinea, I also ‘had constantly, the daily life of the natives before my eyes, while accidental, dramatic occurrences, deaths, quarrels, village brawls, public and ceremonial events could not escape my notice’ (1922: 6). My life had acquired a ‘natural course very much in harmony with the surroundings’ (1922: 15). Most of the conclusions in the text are therefore, not derived from an “ethnography of appointment,” but rather, series of conversations. In the words of Johannes Fabian (1990), I was a *performative* ethnographer. I learned from the public daily performances of life. But since I was also an archivist, I focused on collecting material of a popular cultural nature in the form of videos, song and poetry lyrics, and images of monuments, which thereby took me to specific places. For those items where pictures were taken, they are thickly described and their histories narrated capturing details such as when and who constructed/created/authored them are gathered. I also collected histories of the popular cultural materials. The choice of these materials is selective in the sense that it focused on those materials involved in the nationalist imaginary of independence/secession from Somalia. Among the different sites visited included the Academy for Peace and Development (APD), *Xarunta Dhaqanka ee Hargeysa* (The Hargeysa Culture Centre, HCC), University of Hargeysa, Ministry of National Planning and Development (Department of Statistics), Hiddo Dhawr Tourism Village, and several cafes including, Cup of Italian Coffeehouse, Summertime Restaurant, Royal Lounge, Kings Café and 4 Seasons. Others included Maan Soor Hotel, which is the main Hotel in Hargeysa where most cultural/political activities such as art exhibitions, trade fairs, and seminars are organised. For the performativity and aesthetic craft about these sites, I treated them as texts/mediations which are examined for what they represent.

Other non-specific places of fieldwork included several visits to *Suuqa*, (the biggest market in the city), *Kheyriya* (open square in central Hargeysa), suburbs, mosques,

makhaayads (ordinary eateries), and *mefrishes* (Qat chew kiosks). I attended weddings, and also participated in music video shoots working with the Black East Band. In these encounters, I took notes and photographs.

I witnessed and participated in three key annual events that form major part of this study: The May 18 celebrations of independence, the Hargeysa International Book Fair, 2015, and the annual mass movement of diaspora returnees back to Somaliland during summer in Europe and North America. These events form the core of the Hargeysa cultural calendar – and are highly anticipated in the course of the year. The May 18 celebrations used to be held in the independence grounds behind Oriental Hotel (the oldest in the country), but are now held along the Hargeysa main highway, with dignitaries sitting in front of the Presidential Palace, with Parliament on the other side of the road. The Hargeysa International Book Fair has been held in Guleid Hotel in Badhacas for the last three occasions. As the numbers of attendees increased, a more spacious venue was sought and Guleid Hotel has the biggest hall in Hargeysa. The third event, the Diaspora Welcome Party happens during every summer period in Europe and North America, which runs for about three months. It has several implications for Hargeysa as diasporas return home for extended period and in the process actually influence the imaginaries of Hargeysa – especially the predefined Islamic-inspired public identity (Chapter Six), and their otherwise “un-Somali” and “non-Islamic” cultural diasporic practices.¹³

¹³ Chapter Nine is a detailed ethnography of the implications of the return of the diaspora. Indeed, since favorable conditions of return were realised, an increasing number of returnees is realised, and by the end of every season, Hargeysa is completely changed. The presence of the diaspora as a distinct and visible social category has become an issue in the identity and political reconfiguration of Somaliland. Here, I provide a theoretical and empirical discussion on the diaspora as a conceptual-analytical category in Somaliland.

Doing Fieldwork

At HCC

Throughout 2015 – and for the times I have returned to Hargeysa in 2016 and 2017 – the Hargeysa Cultural Centre is always my main address. Here, mostly in the Centre’s library, I examined locally published materials including government reports, statistics books on country and the capital, Hargeysa, pamphlets, newspapers, fliers and books. A lot of material is published in English including newspapers and government reports. At HCC, I participated in the centre’s activities including the weekly Thursday and Saturday seminars many times as participant, contributor,¹⁴ and discussant.¹⁵ There were occasional music and movie nights at the centre. The movies were sometimes of other secessionist movements in Africa such as Western Sahara in Morocco, and sometimes, historical ones, such as the Somaliland Camel Corps (a Somali militia established by the British as the security wing as the colonisers were unwilling to send men to police their protectorate). There were private music and movie nights as well, which would be picked for this project. Projected in the Centre’s theatre hall, a select audience—for which I was a part of—often watched Hollywood productions. I would soon learn that an open invitation to movies and music were undesirable to the religious sensibilities of the dominant Hargeysa n public. (Later in this dissertation, I discuss the idea of pre-defined Islamic-inspired public identity in Hargeysa).

Being the country’s imminent cultural centre, local cultural entrepreneurs such as artistes, writers and academics often visited the centre for different engagements. It was here that I met daily with painters, musicians and educationists, and we, often informally, shared and also spoke about their works.¹⁶ The Centre has a regular supply

¹⁴ In late March 2015, I participated in the creation of the Somali language classes, where the centre, experimented offering classes to foreigners working in the country. Exploiting Dr Martin Orwin’s presence in the country, who is a teacher of Somali language at SOAS in the UK, I encouraged one of the librarians at the centre, who had earlier started giving me language classes, to take Somali teaching guidance from Dr Orwin. We had three sessions with Dr Orwin. By the end of the year, the class was still continuing and had attracted more foreigner students

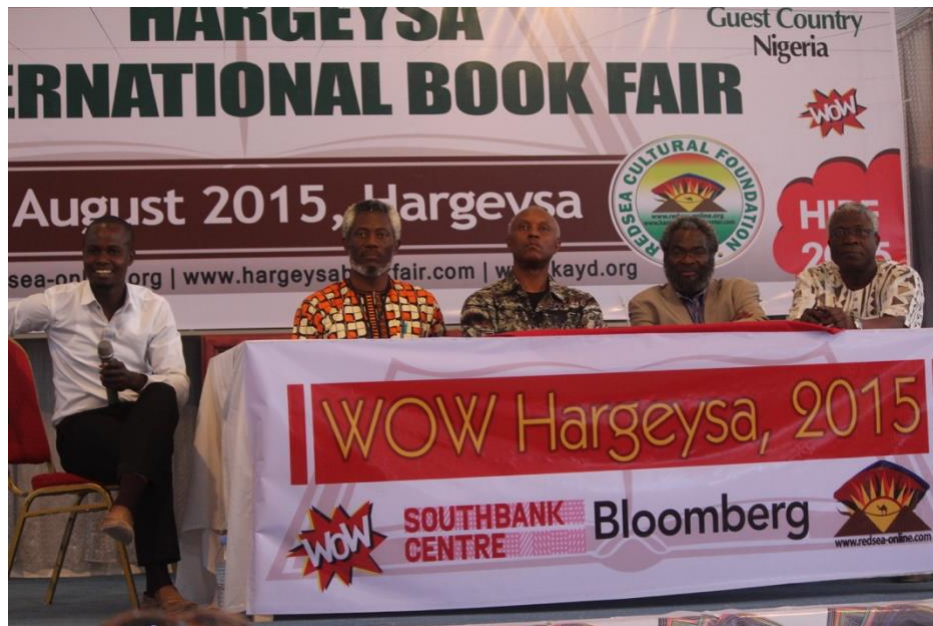
¹⁵ Most notable was on 1 October 2015, where I was discussant of a paper, “Somaliland: Peace without the Monopoly of Violence,” by Dr Sarah Philips from the University of Sydney.

¹⁶ International visitors especially scholars such as Dr Michael Walls of the University College London, and Dr Martin Orwin of School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) visited the center often. These two became special field mentors often pointing to areas where material could be found. This research greatly benefitted from language lessons, data gathering strategies especially during our formal meeting with Dr Orwin. (The first formal meeting was on 25 March 2015 at the center).

of newspapers and a small newspaper archive. I photocopied sections of the English papers especially, the weekly, *The Republican*, which is the sister version to the *Jammuhuriya*, which is in Af-Somali, and is the main newspaper in Somaliland having started in 1991 right after independence. The English sister newspaper, *The Republican*, coming in 1997. Such encounters and the growing popularity of the centre, enabled me to see the centre as a popular cultural item — later as a mediation itself.

The Hargeysa Cultural centre also organises the Hargeysa International Book Fair. In the fair of 2015, I contributed to the editing of the book fair magazine, *Dhaxalreeb Xagaaga 2015*, which is both in English and Somali. The magazine also carried my article, ‘Space and Representation: On Authentic Identities and the Façade of Total Liberation,’ where I spell out some of the complications of sculpting an identity while at the same time asking questions of authenticity. I also moderating a panel on “Knowledge Production and Somali Studies” which had sprung from the “white studies” debate that had rocked Somali studies earlier in April 2015.

Image II: Researcher Moderates a panel discussion at HIBF, 2015



This researcher (left) moderating the panel discussing Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* in memory of Achebe’s outstanding contribution to literature on the African continent during the Hargeysa International Book Fair, 4 August 2015. LR: authors, Chuma Nwokolo, Okey Ndibe, Mpalive Msisika and Niyi Osundare.

Academy for Peace and Development (APD).

As a research centre, APD was established in 1998 and is registered under the Ministry of Planning and Development. It does mostly policy research on peacebuilding and security, and development. Introduced to the centre's management by my guide Mustafe Baroud in 2014, I returned to the centre's library in September 2015 for extensive fieldwork. Here, in a small room with shelves holding several files and books, mostly photocopies and spiral bound materials, I spent three weeks here reading and taking selected materials to the photocopiers. I found both colonial materials including Colonial Office Report on the Somaliland Protectorate Constitutional Conference, held in London May 1960; a 1996 Government document, "Submission for Statehood and Recognition of Republic of Somaliland, June 1996, Hargeysa," which both, together with other secondary literature, helped in constructing the narrative on nationalist thought in 1960 and 1991 respectively. There were other unpublished research reports including Boobe Yuusuf Ducale's 2002 report, "The Role of Media in Political Reconstruction." In addition to my ethnographic work, I use Yusuf Ducale's document to construct a narrative on the shape and location of popular culture in Hargeysa. Other documents included reports on Human Development, Peace Initiatives, Illegal immigration, remittances, and the diaspora. I also found several copies of *the Journal of Anglo-Somali Society*, of which I made several photocopies. Some of this material does not fit into the scope of this dissertation but are crucial for subsequent scholarly work.

Coffeeshouses

For most of 2015, I was involved in activities at Cup of Art Italian Coffeeshouse. This was a newly established coffeeshouse, and was more than a place for tea and talk, but also one of great artistic-cultural production. In my diary entry on 4 March 2015, I noted:

[After] getting in touch with Adnan, we start driving to my guesthouse. However, a new Italian Coffee shop has just opened in town, we spot it open and pull over. We would like to taste "Italian coffee." The proprietors, Sara and her brother Kamal are diaspora returnees. Born to a Somali mother and a Somali-Turkish father, they have been raised in the United Kingdom and have returned home to get involved in the country, in what they see as their parents' home. Sara has a marketing background and she seems quite good at it.

All the biographical material about Sara Hajji above I learned during that first meeting as we thought to understand her and the new café she had just opened. We were the first customers that day, and had chance to taste her coffees *de gratis* and also talk. This entry about this café is important later on the discussion on diasporaness and the ways in which diasporaness and diasporic practices informed the returnees' place in Somaliland public identity (Werbner: 2002; Kleist and Hansen, 2005). Opened in February 2015, Cup of Art Italian Coffeehouse had an ambitious coffee and cultural agenda. Several others like it, included Summer Time, Obama (presently, Beef and Steak), and 4 Seasons, had opened earlier and served equally good and 'modern' cuisine. But Cup of Art's cultural agenda made it uniquely positioned to the point of attracting positive coverage by international media,¹⁷ but also bitter criticism at home. This mismatch of response (from internal-external subjectivities) informs major parts of this dissertation, and I return to this café plenty of times in the dissertation. Among other things, the café organised Arabic, Somali, and English poetry nights, quiz and fashion nights, etcetera. I participated in organising these activities alongside the proprietors.

¹⁷ See for example, Star TV, English, "Returning to Somaliland with Entrepreneurial Spirit," 5 December 2015, accessed on 4 April 2016 at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TeASiFjeiQ4&feature=youtu.be>: See also, "In Pictures: Women of Hargeysa," BBC, 22 May 2015 accessed on 4 April 2016 at <http://www.bbc.com/news/in-pictures-32792587>.

Image III: Posters announcing poetry nights at Cup of Art



Announcing itself to clients via its online Instagram handle, Cup of Art targeted mostly diaspora returnees and expatriates. As explored later in the dissertation, these ads represented an unusual shift in public identity since Hargeysa sought to a pre-defined Islamic inspired public identity. Some of the writings in this specific advert—such as claiming to support Freedom of Speech, clan-less society and African integration—were revolutionary in the context of Somaliland.

The above posters announce a fashion and poetry night were posted on Cup of Art Instagram page in July. Earlier events had not been advertised this way. This researcher had chance to see them before they were posted.

On the 23 April 2015, when our first English poetry night was held, a good number of poets graced the occasion. However, over the period, poetry nights proved unsustainable because there were fewer poets and would be soon abandoned. This point informs part of the discussion on the place of poetry in present Hargeysa. Cup of Art also organised music events for groups such as Black East Band, giving me exposure to the world of performance and music in Hargeysa. Here I met respondents including rapper Adam Konvict, producer and artiste, Hersi Abdirazak, and photographer, director and graphic designer Mustafe Saed. I was involved as an extra in shooting the music video for the *Dhulka Hooyo*, which focuses on *Tahrib* (illegal immigration). Through series of long conversations with Hersi Abdirazak and Adam Konvict, I learned how music, movie and music production in Hargeysa operated. They also gave me access to their music videos, and the diaspora-local relational drama, “*Dhaqanka*

iyoo Ciyaal Xafadka Maxaakal Haysta,” (which is, “Culture and the Young Men of the Village”). This video was later published on YouTube.

For its uniqueness, Cup of Art Italian Coffeehouse attracted several diaspora returnees. I was able to see the performance of diasporaness and how these interact with the homeland.¹⁸ The images in Chapter Nine, illustrating the fashion styles of the diaspora returnees in Hargeysa were granted at this venue. On the days while there were no major activities, Cup of Art was a place for *shaa iyo sheeko* (tea and talk) as there were groups of people chatting about one thing or another, and anyone was welcome to join any group. This is a reproduction of a phenomenon common across Hargeysa as market and roadside teashops, the *makhayaads* have groups of people at different tables engage in tea and talk sessions in the evening. Topics ranged from relationships, development, culture, illegal immigration, Somaliland quest for international recognition, Islam, culture, music and history of Somaliland. These conversations were held in both Somali and English, and I participated in many. Sara Haji and Kamal Haji were often on hand to translate in case the Somali was too intense. However, I had improved my competence in Af-Soomaali and would slowly participate.

¹⁸ On the sidelines of 2015 HIBF, I had several conversations with novelist Nadifa Mohamed on these and related topics. See also, Nadifa Mohamed, “Somalis Returning to Motherland are Finding their Foreign Ways out of Favour.” *The Guardian*, 11 September 2015. Accessed on 5 April 2016 at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/sep/11/diaspora-somaliland-Hargeysa>

Image IV: images of researcher and patrons inside Cup of Art



The researcher working at Cup of Art Italian Coffeehouse. Note the artistic impression above the researcher, these come to bear on the study later on. Credit: Sara Haji, 21 May 2015.



Conversation time at Cup of Art: Italian coffeehouse. The place was often packed either by diaspora returnees or local clients chatting away. Conversation gathering like this are very common in the evening across Hargeysa and form a large part of evening gatherings. In the course of the dissertation, I write about these as semi-structured interviews.

Although the picture on the left was taken during the day, the lights inside the café are on because this is the time for the lunch-break, and Zuhr (noon) prayers. It is custom that around this time, all shops had to close their doors. I often asked the proprietor of this café to let me continue working here through this time. Members of staff including janitors and others would spend this lunch-break cleaning the place in preparation for the evening shift. This moment is important in explaining the routine of Hargeysa, which is built around prayer times, speaking to a pre-defined Islamic public identity explored more succinctly in Chapter Five.

Other places of fieldwork

In the period 7-23 April 2015, I delivered a three-weeks sandwich class to MA students in International Relations, at University of Hargeysa. My seminar class was titled “The Muslim World and the Rest.” This class, among other things, enabled me to meet respondents including Khadar Mohamed Akulle who worked at Radio Hargeysa and helped me access video recordings of earlier May 18 Independence Celebrations—specifically of 2013 and 2014. Apart from my class, I was also offered to supervise three MA students [who were not taking the class I offered]. These I successfully

supervised between Hargeysa and Kampala and was able to see them defend their dissertations later in the year. In addition to supervision, I was member of different panels of MA dissertation defences between 4-15 October 2015. These enabled me insight into different projects most of them reflecting on international recognition, the viability of Somaliland statehood, and democracy in Somaliland.

The other places where research was carried out included Hiddo Dhawr Tourist Village located in Bibsi Area. This gave me access to singer and cultural entrepreneur Sahra Halgan, who also owns Hiddo Dhawr. During these sessions, I was able to appreciate what her personality stood for. On two big occasions, that is May 18 (Independence Day from Somalia), and during the HIBF 2015, Hiddo Dhawr was special place, with several talks and cultural music performances. Later in this dissertation, I describe Hiddo Dhawr and its proprietor, and the place's symbolisms in Somaliland's identity and secessionist agenda. I read Sarah Halgan, her place and music, in a tragedian sense, as a popular cultural item representative of a constituency in the identity politics and nationalist sentiment for Somaliland. Other places included Maan Soor Hotel in Jig-jiga Yar, which is the biggest and major hotel in Hargeysa and hosts some of the major events of both political and cultural nature.

Image V: A Paintings Exhibition, and vehicle captured on Somaliland national celebration, 28 May 2015



Researcher (left in jacket) at Maan Soor Hotel during the Afrikanation Art Exhibition, 20 August 2014. With friend, Adnan Hagoog (right in jacket) listening to art curator Ebony Imaan Dallas explain her work.



A vehicle with a rear window writing “British Somaliland Business Alliance.” As a form of free mobile media, mobilises the region’s colonial history. As I show later, this turns tables on southern Somalia being the more threatening coloniser.

As part of fieldwork, I participated in national celebrations of 18 May 2015, marking independence from Somalia. During this occasion I witnessed the performance of Somaliland both in the build-up and the events on May 18 (Just the way Askew (2004) witnesses the performance of cultural identity in Tanzania, and Wedeen (2008) witnessing Qat chew debates on television in Yemen. The narrative for this event is compared with video recordings from earlier events picked from Radio Hargeysa and Somaliland National Television (SLNTV). Earlier, on 8 May 2015, with photographer Nur-Al-Huda, we had driven around Hargeysa and photographed all the monuments in the city, including the *kaarre* (the tank), *Uffo* (the Hurricane monument), *Diyarada* (the MiG), and *Gacanta* (the hand) and the wall art around *Beerta Xorriyadda* (Freedom Park). The events and monument form the narrative in Chapter Seven.

Being Muslim proved immensely helpful as I attended prayer at different mosques in the city, which also proved helpful for my ethnographic knowledge. The mosques opposite Safari Hotel in Badhacas, and in Shacab formed part of my ethnographic work. I often attended Maghrib prayer at the mosque in Shacab. Together with my guides including Nur Al-Huda or Xamdi Ali Jinow, I often went downtown for my groceries. I also played football with several teams in flashlights powered playgrounds in Boqolo

iyo Konton, and Shacab. These different events and items properly turned me into an insider observer in Hargeysa.

Mode of Ethnography

In a Malinowskian fashion highlighted earlier, I lived in Hargeysa and the routine of Hargeysa ns became my own. I stopped being a visitor anymore but a member of the community. As earlier on described, I learned the routine of Hargeysa and started participating in the daily life of the Hargeysa ns. Reflecting on the different modes of ethnography, Johannes Fabian (1990), notes that it was important to move beyond informative ethnography to performative ethnography. Fabian noted that there have always existed two ways of doing ethnography, “the ‘ethnography of speaking’ (and its theoretical cousin, ethno-methodology), which strives for more sophisticated account of what is involved in mostly verbal communication” (1990: 5). This form of ethnography – ethnography of speaking – in other words, was dialogic in the sense that the researcher made meaning of his field through asking his interlocutors *for* the meanings of things. The other form – performative ethnography – Fabian noted grew out of linguistics and literary criticism and entails “a tendency to explore the fact that ethnography not only entails communication with members of the cultures but also communication of *our* findings mostly through writing” (1990: 5). This approach allows the ethnographer to read the text outside what is communicated verbally, and can also interpret through his own discovery as related to the questions at hand. Fabian then extends his argument noting that this was not sufficient either. Critiquing informative (dialogic and communicative ethnography), Fabian notes that the idea that “an ethnographer sets out to gather information from whoever has it borders on the trivial (1990: 6). The ‘native’, he argues will, of course, know the basic information to give say about the names of their villages, their birth dates, and how they move from one place to another. But besides this, they are limited in their understanding when it comes to complex questions of a discursive nature (ibid), which often spring from the researcher’s own questions. Even when anthropologists have made a great deal of progress, and “have thought about reference versus connotation, instrumental versus expressive behaviour, material versus symbolic aspects of society and culture” (ibid), they still fall short in their approach – without the embrace of performative ethnography.

What has not been given sufficient consideration is that about large and important aspects of culture, no one, not even the native, has information that can be simply called up and expressed in discursive statements. This sort of knowledge can be presented—made present—only through action, enactment, or performance. In fact, once one sees matters in this light, the answers we get to our ethnographic questions can be interpreted as so many cultural performances. Cultural knowledge is always mediated by acting. (1990: 6)

Focusing on questions of a discursive nature, Fabian brings three considerations in ethnographic research to my project: First the supremacy of making meaning in cultural signification is in the hands of the ethnographer, who has the discursive questions with him. The ethnographer has to make the field speak by making sense, not only of what is said, but also of the ways in which life is enacted, and lived. The challenge is for the researcher to insert himself into daily performances of the lives expressed or claimed in speech. This of course demands of the ethnographer to fully understand *philologically* the context, and write like one on the inside of the cultural community being studied (Said, 2003).¹⁹ This actually destabilises hierarchies such as researcher and researched and the ethnographer tries not to be like a spy but one of them (see also, Fabian, 1982). Secondly, Fabian points to the actually existing difference between given information and enacted/performed phenomena. To arrive at the *real* experiences of people, it is not what is said but what is done. This often enacted and thus gleaned through performance (see also, Ranger, 1975; Wedeen, 2008). In short, the “ethnographer role then, is no longer that of a questioner; he or she is the provider of occasions, a catalyst in the weakest sense, and a producer (in analogy to a theatrical producer) in the strongest” (1990:7). The idea of “provider of occasions” (for speaking) suggests the existence of the researcher’s questions that are often, for most part, *indirectly spoken* to by the different enactments of real experiences.

Aware of Fabian’s limitations, including a rather arrogant-colonialist mind-set that the native cannot engage discursively,²⁰ he provided me with the approach to read and participate in the field. Fabian enabled me to broaden the ways in which we use sources

¹⁹ Writing on philology, Edward Said noted that, it “involved a profound humanistic spirit deployed with generosity and, if I may use the word, hospitality. Thus, the interpreter's mind actively makes a place in it for a foreign Other. And this creative making of a place for works that are otherwise alien and distant is the most important facet of the interpreter's philological mission” (2003: vi). Exactly, the interpreter attempts to shade off their history and write from inside the spirit being studied, not like an investigator.

²⁰ Online conversations with Lidwien Kapteijns, 26 August 2016.

of historical record one that enables writing while picking voice of the individual interlocutors through direct questions, but understanding the power of expressive acts through their performance (see also, Askew, 2004; Wedeen, 2008: 16-17). But over and above Fabian, immersed in the field for extended periods enables me insights of extended case method, which enabled me to appreciate the extralocal forces, and historical contexts as they interacted with each other inside and beyond the boundaries (Burawoy, 1998).

Mode of Data Interpretation

In Chapter Four, I provide a detailed discussion on popular culture, the different schools of approach to popular culture, and the criteria upon which the material selected for this project merited selection. However, for purposes of this section, I need to note that the popular cultural items in this study were selected on two grounds: First, following text-audience observational analyses, an item was deemed “popular culture” in the sense that it was (a) vehicle of expression (McLuhan, 1964), and widely accessed, widely viewed, disseminated and read (Levine, 1988; Zemon Davis, 1992), and (b) performative practices, which were repeated, reproduced, and learned, in the sense that they made visible a persona or a nationalist sentiment (Wedeen, 2008). Secondly, all the items studied were *expressive acts*, that is, they involve a specific aesthetic craft, and structure (p’Bitek, 1986; Nandwa and Bukenya, 1983, Strinati, 1995): Music, poetry, national celebrations, monuments, paintings, fliers, everyday practices such as vehicle tinting, coffeehouses, and cultural and religious sites and events. By meeting the above two requirements, it meant the audience/public they mobilised or sought to mobilise and imagine related with their everyday realities. Against this, plain people’s speech, say gathered through interviews, was not studied or examined for it does not constitute an expressive act. However, people’s speech helped a great deal in describing places and location, which formed the general background to the analysis. Once an expressive act was selected, it is vividly described, and the context in which Somaliland is being read—against a new national imaginary—formed the main context for the analysis. Thus, literary modes of analysis/discourse analysis where items are studied as texts, mobilizing techniques of inter-textuality drive the data interpretation. Mostly, these items are interrogated for themes: narratives (histories, identities, aspirations) they make visible, and silence in a context of a secessionist nationalist imaginary.

Copyright and Ethical Issues

The names I produce in the dissertation are of people who are, (a) in the public domain in the sense that they are either famous persons such as Mohammad Hadraawi and Sahra Halgan, Acbdimalik Coldon and Amran Ahmed or their names appear on their works, such as the painters. (b) The other category of names includes persons whose permission I've been able to secure to print their names. Considering the political environment described above, writing agreements would have made moments seem rather weird and unfriendly for field. In some cases, where I intend to produce an idea with evidence, I anonymise the source as "field notes," then write a date and place from which the material was picked. The music and poetry translated is available in the public domain especially on YouTube, thereby does not attract any copyright issues for publication in an academic work. The translations are by Mustafe Suudi, Mustafe Baroud, and Shukri Ahmed Islow, and Sara Hajji, with the author as the editor. Most of the pictures in the dissertation are the author's work taken with the aid of phone camera (especially independence celebrations, and wall art and several pictures in the popular cultural spaces). Other pictures are also claimed as author's own, although were practically taken by Nur-Al-Huda whom I asked for a hand while I directed the shooting of the pictures (especially monuments and other wall art). Where these pictures were got from other sources, especially online sources, they are duly credited, as "Internet Photo."

Conclusion

This chapter is unusually long. As I note at the beginning, the explanation is that I intended to narrate the field in this much detail so as to provide background to many claims I make later in the dissertation. At the same time, narrating the field underscores items that do provide background knowledge but are outside the scope of the questions this project sought to answer despite their absolute relevance in the general understanding of my work.

In the narrative above, I sought to achieve three things: (a) make the field visible with myself inserted in it as researcher and scholar. (b) provide an understanding of my approach to the field, especially the disciplinary and political-project-specific decisions

that I took. This then entails doing certain things and not others. For example, although there are voices in my field, they are not the central pillars upon which fieldwork was done, neither are they the pillars upon which the data analysis thrives. Although the project commands an interdisciplinary appeal, it has a bias in popular culture and literary modes of analysis. (c) This third point speaks to my subjectivity as a Ugandan researcher/scholar studying the Horn. For years, the Horn of Africa has earned itself the terrible reputation of uninhabitable, violent and disorganised, at least among most East Africans. The absence of a strong government in Mogadishu, bomb explosions, piracy and continuing refugee crises continue to portray the Horn as a difficult place to be in. In this chapter, I sought to paint a picture of a place where despite these renowned features, a scholar can still do fieldwork uninterrupted by violence or any insecurities. Besides, Somaliland, where this project is based, which has continued to seek secession from Somalia, which is also the subject of this project, is as peaceful and secure as any other country in East Africa.

Chapter Three

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: THE PEOPLE, COLONIALISM, RESISTANCE

The overall ambition of this chapter is to locate my project in its geographical and temporal space. The chapter exposes the Horn of Africa as was constituted before the advent of colonialism, and the ways in which colonialism was received and resisted giving rise to the birth of Somali nationalism. Part of the ambition is also to give background and context to the processes and motivations of the union of Italian Somalia and British Somaliland that took place 1960 after these two received independence from their colonisers. This then illuminates and contrasts a rather diametric process—of secession—that happened in 1991 where Somaliland declared independence from Somalia – which is the subject of this project.

This chapter is divided into three main parts: (a) the people of Somalia, the inhabitants of the Horn of Africa, their roots and culture, political and economic organisation before colonialism. This question is specifically important since the claim for union in 1960 was inspired mainly by claims of homogenous cultural (internal) identity that colonialism had thrown asunder. (b) a historical discussion on the ways in which different colonial powers divided and governed the Somali inhabited territories examining how the actions of the colonialists contributed to the growth of Somali nationalist fervour. (c) the final section is a discussion of the resistance of colonialism with the struggle of Mohammad Abdille Hassan in the context of the nationalism question.²¹

²¹ I do not follow a distinct periodization, but I follow the pattern: Before colonialism (the people and their modes of organization); During colonialism (modes of colonial administration, Mohammad Abdille Hassan in context [1899-1920]. In the chapter that follows, I deal with the policies and mobilisation/politics of unification [1945-60]; independence and union [1960-1991] and later secessionism [1991-2015].

The People

The claim for homogeneity of the Somalis as an ethnic community or nation is common in the literature (Lewis, 1961; 1965; Touval, 1966; I. Samatar, 1994; S. Samatar and Laitin, 1987; A. Samatar, 1989, Ahmed ed. 1995). This relates especially to the land, the historical roots and the culture of the people, and their modes of subsistence. What follows here is a discussion of the people called the Somalis (social, economic and political organisation, and language) as this forms part of the basis for the discussion on nationalism both in 1960 and 1991. The Somali peninsula is a space of three hundred fifty thousand to four hundred thousand square miles of contiguous territory. It was occupied by people called Somalis who are of Cushitic descent. This group, the Cushites consists of other people in the region, and Ethiopia including the Afar, Saho, the Galla, the Oromo, Konso, Haddiya Tasmal, Rendille, Dasenech, Bayso, Elmore, and the Berja. Abdalla Omar Mansur (1995) has noted that all the people occupying the Horn speak an Eastern-Cushitic language (Ahmed ed. 1995: 120). Like those other ethnic communities in the Horn, Hersi (1997) has noted that Somalis are indigenous to the Horn. If there were any movements, they were rather contained in the region.

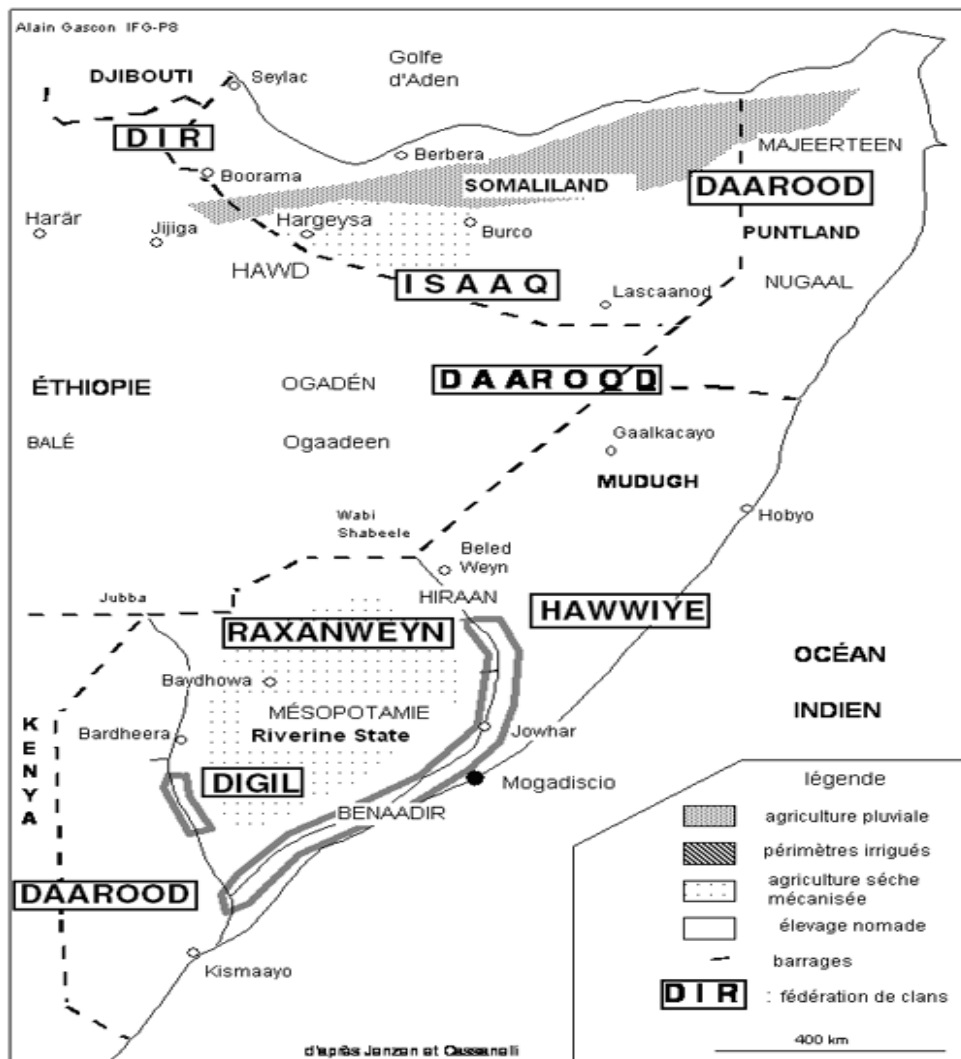
The Somalis are divided into six main clans (elsewhere referred to as clan-families). These include, Darood, Dir, Hawiye, Isaaq, Digil and Rahanwayn (sometimes, Reewin). As the map below shows, these clans are believed to occupy (or more accurately predominate) specific regions.²² These clan-families then have several subgroupings/ sub-clan families, which also divide into other small sub-clans to the smallest unit, the family. Mansur (1995) notes that “all Somalis descend from a common founding father, the mythical *Hiil* (father of *Sab* and *Saamale*) to whom the Somalis trace their mythical origin” (Ahmed, ed. 1995: 117). This mythical origin claims to have Arabian roots straight to the line of the Prophet (Pbuh). Since most of the clans in Somalia are believed to have been founded by Sheikhs from Arabia, the claim that Somalis are Arabs is widespread (Cassanelli 1982, Touval, 1963; Hersi, 1977; Ahmed, ed. 1995; Lewis 1961). However, this claim has been widely refuted as being simply a fabrication, which springs from the strength of Islamic and Arab

²² As I will show later in this dissertation, it has been claimed that the bombing that took place in north-western Somalia (Somaliland) by the regime of Mohammed Siyad Barre targeted a specific clan, the Isaaq, who predominate in the area. Secondly, I will also show that because the Isaaq predominate in this area, the campaign for independence in Somaliland is often ridiculed as a clan project by the Isaaq.

influence among the Somalis (Ahmed, ed. 1995; Hersi, 1977; Bulhan, 2013). In fact, Schlee (1989) has demonstrated that even the lines of ancestors named by different interlocutors as linking the present Somali clans to their claimed Arab ancestors tend to be contradictory and never try to harmonise mutually exclusive genealogical claims (1989: 214). Schlee concludes that some of these claims are simply sociological and ideological as opposed to being historical (ibid).

Map II: Map of Somali-inhabited territories showing clans predominance

La Somalie : clans, éleveurs, agriculteurs et divisions territoriales



Credit: Allain Gascon. *EchoGéo*. Accessed on 10 February 2018 from <http://journals.openedition.org/echogeo/4484?lang=en>.

Political Organisation

For being predominantly pastoralists, a great deal of the political organisation of the Somalis was built around their modes of subsistence. Clans, which provided the largest and strongest unit of organisation had specific clans were associated vaguely with particular pasturage areas. Although the Somalis had a strong sense of cultural identity, they never had a single political unit (Lewis, 2008: 27), and each clan exercised power in its own right independent of the other. Most of the literature attests to the absence of centralised authority but affirms the presence of a moral commonwealth (Lewis, 1963, 1965; S. Samatar, 1982; Gesheker, 1985; Mohamed, 2002, Ahmed, 1995). This moral commonwealth is what is termed as *Heer*. Writing about *Heer*, Lewis (1961) noted that:

heer means customary procedure founded upon contractual agreement...denotes a body of explicitly formulated obligations rights and duties. It binds people on the same treaty, heer, together in relation to internal delicts and defines their collective responsibility in external relations with other groups (1961: 162).

However, *Heer*, does not signal towards a central authority but the idea that the Somalis are generally an egalitarian people. Heer, therefore is an arrangement where one clan community is responsible for another community either in moments of trouble or trade where due diligence and respect is expected for fair treatment and or compensation. In terms of leadership, the clan is often headed by a Sultan. But the designation Sultan did not indicate any absolute power over other members of the clan. Other elders in the same clan have almost the same amount of power like the Sultan, sometimes more power than the Sultan (Hersi, 1977). Discussing the place of power, Lewis (1965) has noted that decision-making among the Somalis was “democratic almost to the point of anarchy” (1965: 10). That is, decision-making was not enshrined in any singular authority. To this, Hersi noted that all elder members of the clan had almost the same amount of power (1977: 13). This power would be exhibited on almost every single matter in the community.

Political allegiance is determined by descent in the male line, which also serves as an indication of place and status in the Somali society. In the male line, one learns to recite his genealogy tracing the line of their fathers, grandfathers and great grandparents

to the point of the founder of the clans (as earlier noted, sometimes ending to the line of the Prophet [P.b.u.h]).

Calling these lineage associations, “clans families,” Lewis (1961), has been challenged for reading these identities as changeless, but also attributing to them a monopoly of organising power.²³ Cassanelli has instead called Somalis “a segmentary society,” that is, “made up of several structurally similar groups capable of combining or dividing at various levels” (1982: 17). Thus, expanding this idea of segmentary society as a form of social-political organisation, Kapteijns (2011) notes that the idea of combining and dividing at different levels is *performance* of identities. Here, these “segmentary structures” achieved their significance as they were performed in their different contexts (2011: 4). Kapteijns has showed us that there existed other forms of socio-political and collective identity arrangements other than clan. She notes that before colonialism, Somalis lived in collectives and communities organized under different arrangements, and not necessarily the ones structured around kinship or clan (ibid). These included “Islamic city-states in the north and south, and on the coast as well as inland, belonging was structured in terms of citizenship, differentiated by gender, class, and descent, and not just in terms of clanship” (ibid, see also, Ahmed Samatar, 1994: 109-111). Kapteijns continues that there were also “regional political alliances across ecological niches, as in the case of the *Ajuuraan* polity” (ibid). These organized communities around farming, grazing and animal watering lands. There were also “religious agricultural communities called *jaamaacad*, where clan identity was subordinated to other aspects of belonging, including religious identity and residence” (ibid, see also Hersi, 1977: 16; A. Samatar—on religious communities that were bound together by “a moral commonwealth” 1994: 111).

Again, despite these sophisticated socio-political structures, it is difficult to say, Somalis had any centralised authority as a single unit. Cassanelli (1982) has pointed

²³In Somali studies, clan has remained the main category through with Somali socio-political organisation is studied despite the powerful critiques that have been made. It is also worth noting that over time, clan has emerged to monopolise socio-political organisation in the Somali territories in the present time, and other forms have been systematically silenced (field-notes, March-October 2015). Besteman (1996) and Kapteijns (2011) have noted that during the civil war of 1991, many politicians found it easy to mobilise through clan (although clan remained a rather fluid category determined by different interests in different times).

out that this society should be regarded as a product of interaction between small groups of herdsmen and farmers, sheikhs and townspeople whose sense of national identity is a product of shared historical processes and not primordial sentiment. The first time we see a united force sweeping through large expanses of Somali territory and undermining most other parochial forms of political and social organisation is the time of Muhammad Abdille Hassan and his dervish warriors (S. Samatar, 1982). But this force, as will be seen later, was rejected in several other places of Somalia. In some places, it was actually resisted say in Somaliland, but there have been efforts to “manufacture” Muhammad Abdille Hassan by the southern Somalis as the hero of Somali nationalism across the peninsula (Ahmed, 1995: 138), something Ahmed has called this the “dervishization of the Somali state” (ibid). [I will return to this conversation in the discussion on colonial resistance]

Language

At the level of language, all Somalis are claimed to speak one language, *Af-Soomaali*, with different dialects. Cassanelli points to two main dialects (Cassanelli, 1982: 23), while Touval (1963) points to three. According to Touval, these dialects are grouped according to location and occupation. He has noted that nomads speak one dialect, while the agriculturalists speak another. The Somalis living in the coastal towns also speak another dialect (1963: 21). Lewis and Andrzejewski (1961) who deeply engaged the Somali language through the study of poetry in the Somali peninsula also point to three dialects, which they define as “common”, by nomads and most widely spoken; “central,” spoken mostly by the cultivators, and the coastal Somali, by the coastal and townspeople (37-8).²⁴ In conversation with Hussein Shaykh Ahmed of the Somali Academy of Arts and Sciences in the 1980s, Cassanelli noted that there were at least seventeen sub-dialects (Cassanelli, 23). Although Touval, and Lewis and Andrzejewski point to the existence of marked differences between the three main dialects at the level of pronunciation and vocabulary, they also agree to the fact that all Somalis are mutually intelligible even when they live many miles apart. Noting that the homogenous Somali community united by language is a myth, Ali Jimale Ahmed

²⁴ We need to mention here that the coastal towns existed in the Somali peninsula even before the arrival of Arabs who spread Islam in the region. This is because of the trade in incense, aromatic woods and ivory that was very popular in the Horn of Africa (Cassanelli, 1982: 25; Hersi, 1977).

(1995) has identified some distinctive “languages” spoken in the Somali peninsula. He writes:

We forget there is unity in diversity; that the Reewin (in the riverine area) with their Maay language are as Somali as those who speak Maxaatiri (the official language of the state); that persons speaking in Chimbalaza or Chizigula are also authentic Somalis (Ahmed ed. 1995: 142).

That Ahmed calls them “languages” and not dialectics is somewhat problematic as we have learned earlier that all Somalis are mutually intelligible despite the geographical distances of their locations.²⁵ However, Ahmed himself notes that this myth – of mutual intelligibility – was simply useful for the anti-colonial agenda (ibid). Indeed, as this discussion will show later, in the campaign for unification, language was one of the binding issues, which was fronted for independence and later unification of Somaliland with Somalia. Thus, my project builds on the position that Somalis speak one language (staying outside the dialects/ different language debate), because homogeneity was the claim of nationalist imaginary in the 1950s. As part of their anti-colonial political project, the prominent Somali intelligentsia of that time sought to portray the peninsula as occupied by people united by a singular language. This claim of linguistic homogeneity was claimed as the basis upon which Somalis cultivated a strong poetic heritage, which became a major form of expressions across the Somali territories, and a rallying cry for nationalist consciousness.

²⁵ In truth, it empirically plausible to argue that there were several languages in the Soomaali category, which have either become extinct or reduced to dialects of one Af-Soomaali (Ahmed, 1995; Schlee, 2008, 2008b; Ehret, 1995). Christopher Ehret (1995) who uses language and archeological sources to study the people of the Horn of Africa before colonialism has noted that Eastern Omo-Tana people who inhabited the far south-east edges of the Ethiopian highlands spoke a language called the proto-Omo-Tana language, which was also called the proto-Soomaali language. Ehret notes that from the Eastern Omo-Tana or the proto-Soomaali gave rise to several modern language including Bayso, Jiidu, Rendille, Tunni, Maay and Maxay Soomaali, which all were considered to form the extended subgroup of the South-Lowland East Cushitic languages (Ehret, 1995; 235-6). Continuing the position of different languages, Schlee (2008; 2008b) has nuanced this more arguing that mutual intelligibility was achieved through bilingualism and code switching and not homogeneity, which meant, those other independent languages spoken in the peninsula being reduced to dialects. That notwithstanding, it remains a valid position that the Somali intelligentsia ignored these linguistic realities—perhaps for the larger good of the anti-colonial struggle—and problematically cultivated a sensibility that the entire peninsula spoke one language with different dialects. Indeed, that truth remains in the popular performativity of Somaliness and also in the literature. Indeed, in my fieldwork on the secessionist project in Somaliland, I learned that linguistic homogeneity remained an unquestioned fact on either side of the isle—for both pro-secessionist voices, and some that continue to claim a oneness of all Somali territories.

Understanding the social and political organisation of the Somalis before colonialism is incomplete without a more detailed engagement with the Arab factor. Before the arrival of the European colonialists, the Arabs from Egypt and the Middle East countries such as Yemen and Arabia had arrived into the Horn of Africa years earlier especially in the 7th and 8th centuries (Hersi, 1977). It is believed these were either traders or political refugees (ibid). Many of the Arabs settled around the coast establishing cities such as Mogadishu, Brava, Zeila and Baraawe, and Merca. These did not only introduce Islam in the peninsula but also strongly influenced the ways in which Somalis lived including influencing their cuisine, fashion and general lifestyle. In fact, Islam remains a major component in the social political cultural milieu of Somalia having been introduced by the Arabs (Touval, 1963; Lewis, 1988; Cassanelli, 1982; Bulhan, 2013). As mentioned earlier, for this influence, many of the Somali clans claim their descent from the Arab sheikhs back to the lineage of the Prophet Mohammed [p.b.u.h].

Economic Background

In terms of everyday survival, although sizeable populations of the Somalis were cultivators, especially those living in Lower Shabelle and Juba area, the Somali are largely a pastoral people—and part of the moral code that united Somalis was inspired, in part, by this mode of subsistence, which is pastoralism (I. Samatar, 1989; Lewis, 1965; Cassanelli, 1982). This is especially because the Somali terrain is arid and the rains are very minimal giving rise to nomadic pastoralism as a method of survival. With a long pastoral tradition, almost every Somali owned livestock including especially camels, sheep, goats and in some cases, cattle (Hersi, 1977; A. Samatar, 1986: 16; Lewis, 1965: 8). Touval (1963) has noted that by the 1960s, it was estimated that 80 per cent of the Somalis were nomadic pastoralists who migrated depending on the season (see also, I. Samatar, 1989). The nomads, from season to season moved from pasturage to pasturage; one water point to another with their flocks. These animals were reared for milk, meat and transport—especially the camels.

In Somali pastoral life, the camel remains the most prized possession of a homestead. Said Samatar (1982) has called the camel the “mother of men” noting that to Somalis, the camel is what cattle are to the Masai of Kenya, and the Nuer of Sudan (1982: 12).

The camel is considered not just a giver of life, but also the reason for one to lose their lives (ibid). Samatar is poetic about the place and functions of the camel:

Come rain or drought, the camel's generosity to man is crucial to his survival. The she-camel's milk is delicious, refreshing and thirst-quenching; her meat is tasty and tender like veal; her skin is utilised as draperies for the nomadic hut which shelters the Somalis... The burden-bearing he-camel is the main transport vehicle and carries the children, the aged, the sick and the nomads' belongings for hundreds of miles every year (S. Samatar, 1982: 13).

The camel got endeared more to the Somalis because of her endurance of the climatic conditions of their environment especially the long dry spells. As opposed to goats and cattle, the camels can go for long without watering, which enables it to withstand the conditions of environment sustaining livelihoods through difficult times. For its importance, the camel became the space/site for a great deal of cultural-political-economic negotiations. In addition to providing food, the camel also serves as bride-wealth in marriage and is also exchanged in the negotiation of disputes. It is by the number of camels that one possessed that their worth was measured, as camel provided the standard with which transactions were negotiated. Indeed, the camel (especially, the she-camel, *Mandeeq*) features quite prominently in Somali oral literature and poetry. Indeed, during independence in 1960, the camel, as imagery, featured in several poems on new nationhood as the belief was widespread that the camel was important in the lives of majority Somalis (Mansur, 1995).

The process of herding camels, which is a preserve for men could be read as assignment of gender roles in the community, but most importantly it was training for young men in virtues such as endurance, courage and hard work. While the women reared the goats and sheep or stayed behind in the new settled area to take care of aqaals (which are collapsible huts, mat-covered hemispherical tents). This sort of gendered roles making could be attributed to biological determinism since herding camels is a tougher job requiring great perseverance and movement which would also mean demanding more manly prowess.

Besides their pastoral lives, the Somalis involved in a great deal of foreign trade with both the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. Fox (2015) has written that "the northern

Somali coastline appears on maps of ancient spice trade routes and silk routes...Frankincense, myrrh, cinnamon and other commodities were regularly from transported from the central and northern interior to now defunct northern ports” (see also, Hersi, 1977; Reece, 1944; Fox, 2015). Effectively, this shows the Somalis as having been open to the outside world before colonialism and not simply pastoralists but also involved in business and trade including gathering scents and exchange.

A Poetic Tradition

Also common in the literature on Somalia and the Somalis is the reference to the Somali poetic tradition. Since this project is conceived with a bias on popular culture, I will spend more time on the Somali poetic tradition as this provides background and context to the popular culture explored throughout this dissertation. The renowned colonial explorer Richard Burton—from whom most writing about the Somali poetic tradition often begins—reaching Somalia in 1850s, was struck by the poetic tradition of the Somali people and described the country as one that “teems with poets, poetasters, poetitos, and poetaccios” (1894: 82). In words that have come to be immortalised in the hearts of many Somalis (S. Samatar, 1982: 55), Burton wrote:

Every man has his recognised position in literature as accurately defined as though he had been reviewed in a century of magazines—the fine ear of his people causing them to take the greatest pleasure in harmonious sounds of poetical expressions, whereas a false quantity of prosaic phrase excites their violent indignation (Burton, *ibid*).

Two things are made visible in Burton’s quote above: (a) the enormity of poetic composition in Somali society (see also, Barnes and Carmichael, 2006), and (b) the yearning for high quality poetic expression that does not have the sloppiness of prose. Also evident is the position poets enjoyed in Somali society. Andrzejewski (2011)²⁶ who devoted his life to studying and appraising Somali poetry has observed:

Somalis often say that a good poet can sow peace and also hatred: he can win friendship by praise and appreciation, deepen an existing feud, or lead to a new one. In the pastoral interior, poets often act as spokesmen for their clans

²⁶ This article was first published in 1963 and republished in the *Journal of African Cultural Studies* in 2011. Full citation in bibliography.

in disputes, and one can even find inter-clan treaties in poetic form; it is not unusual for a poet to rise to the rank of a clan leader, if he is not one already (2011: 5).

With a tradition that is rigorously cultivated early in life, one's success at poetry became a gateway to achievement to the point that they could rise to the level of a Sultan—heading a clan and being the chief mediator of social and political disputes, which, of course, comes with plenty of privilege. For the renowned power of poetry, chiefs kept poets (Burton, *ibid*). Poetic speech enabled their messages to powerfully reach and touch the hearts of those it was intended for. Kapteijns has called it *effective speech*; “it is created to move its audience in powerful and purposeful ways” (2010: 31). Poetry, Kapteijns noted,

[Pressed] into the formal constraints of alliteration, metre, rhythm and melody; sharpened in meaning by poetic virtuosity and creativity; emotionally charged by the use of metaphors, memories and ethical impulses that are often intensely inter-textual and inter-discursive...poems and songs are intended to persuade and change the minds of their audience (*ibid*).

These sensual qualities of poetry and song enabled them to travel wide distances, and were shared widely thus mobilising audiences into certain pursuits. As I will be demonstrating later, one of the essential qualities of popular culture is its power to travel far and wide, which is often enabled by high quality aesthetic craft. Andrzejewski has noted about this quality in Somali poetry that,

What is particularly striking is that it [poetry or a poem] does not function in isolation in separate villages, settlements or clans, but spreads with astonishing rapidity over vast areas. In fact, its swift movements across the plains of the Horn of Africa have led some Somalis to believe that poems are carried by a mystic wind, or by djinns, or even by God Himself (2011: 6).

This distinctive quality of “spreads with astonishing rapidity” makes poetry a powerful tool of mobilisation. As noted earlier, the great anti-colonial hero among the Somali, Mohammad Abdille Hassan had poetry as one of this main tool, which he so deftly utilised in mobilising his base, and attacking his enemies. Indeed, this special craft of

popular culture (that is, poetry), remains a central part of Somali public and private life to-date. It was not only a site through which anti-colonial sentiments were mobilised but also one Somali nationalism was negotiated (Andrzejewski and Lewis 1964; S. Samatar, 1982; Ahmed, 1995; Ducale, 2012).

A quick survey of the literature on Somali poetry suggests that poetry is the lifeblood, with which Somali society has been wound together. Said Samatar observed that, “poetry is the central integrating principle without which harmonious relationships in society would be unthinkable (1982: 55).” Andrzejewski and Lewis had earlier noted, making a similar argument that:

...[Poetry] occupies a large important place in Somali culture, interest in it is universal, and skill in it is something, which everyone covets and many possess. The Somali poetic heritage is a living force intimately connected with the vicissitudes of everyday life (Andrzejewski and Lewis, 1964: 3).

Kapteijns (1999, 2010) has also confirmed this showing us that it was used not only as a media through which Somali women, for example, claimed their space, but was also a media through which the debate on an ideal Somali (especially woman) who was expected to be modern and traditional at the same time was held. In Somali society, the art of poetry (and poetic speech), are not just art but also a comprehensive enterprise meant “to enlarge the imagination and to inspire men towards the lyrical and the beautiful” (Samatar, 1982: 55), as ways of mobilising a community through beautifully crafted verse. Said Samatar noted:

Poetry has the force of ritual among the Somalis and it is resorted to in the formalisation and execution of almost every public act of importance: a man explains his behaviour towards others in poetic oration; marriages are contracted and terminated through the use of verse; verse is chanted to fight wars and perpetuate feuds as well as to put an end to wars and feuds; and blame and praise are spread most rapidly through this medium. In short, poetry for the pastoral Somalis is a principal vehicle of political power (1982: 56).

As Samatar tells us above, poetry is a site for negotiation for the vicissitudes of life. Children are introduced to the tradition of poetry — mostly poetry and dance — early in life.²⁷ Andrzejewski (2011) has written:

young men of the clans who are beginning to feel their way in the adult world of public affairs must absorb a great deal of useful knowledge in an easily remembered form; they must also be influenced by the many philosophical observations scattered throughout all Somali verse, as well as by the emphasis on the moral values of prudence, courage, and loyalty (2011: 6).

Keeping with the theme of instruction, Adnan (1989) has noted that in the Somali community, in addition to the poet giving pleasure to the mind, he is “the critic of despotic chiefs...the agitator and he is the newscaster who informs his listeners what is going on in the outside” (cf. Ducale, 2002: 15). The idea of news-casting and agitation signals the power of poetry to spread information within a broad community—a major component of popular culture (Levine, 1988; Z. Davis, 1992).

Somali historiography is filled with references to social and political contest in poetry with poetry described not just as an aesthetic piece, but “a running commentary on the latest news, lobbying device for social and political debates. It is a record of historical events” (Ducale, *ibid*). The poet is tasked with a great deal of demands including “defending their rights in clan disputes, to defend their honour and prestige against the attacks of rival poets, to immortalise their fame and to act on the whole as a spokesman for them (S. Samatar, 56).” Poetry then ceases being just entertainment or just a record of history (Barnes, 2006: 108). It becomes an active ingredient in social and political negotiation, with the power to give or end life, bring about peace or war (Barnes, *ibid*).

To conclude thus far: We have seen that with slight variations, despite the absence of a united political unit, the Somalis in their different clans, were united through a moral

²⁷ Ahmed Samatar, “Reconstructing the Somali Love Song at the Birth of the Nation” Interview with *Hip Deep’s* Banning Eyre, available at: <http://www.afropop.org/17557/ahmed-samatar-somali-songs/> accessed on 10 January 2016. I also want to emphasize here that claims of an existing distinct Somali poetic tradition (say in the form of genre) are difficult to sustain (see for example, Orwin, 2003), but the presence of *rigor* in instilling poetry is unique to the Somali people. Indeed, one could argue that for being an oral pastoral society, the Somalis crafted poetry as the technology through which they could not only keep their history, but also instruct their youngsters in values such as “prudence, courage and loyalty.”

commonwealth referred to as *Heer*. We have also noted that the Somalis are indigenous to the Horn but have a great deal of influence from the Arabs who have influenced both their religious sensibilities and ancestral claims. Indeed, by the 14th century, *all* Somalis are reported to have converted to Islam [although retained some non-Islamic tradition, which they often domesticated into Islam] and this religion became one of the major pillars around which social relations were built. Secondly, a huge part of the Somali peninsula is arid, and majority of the Somalis adopted nomadism as a mode of survival (as we will see later, this geographical terrain influenced the ways in which the British colonised the territory). The Somalis kept animals especially the camel and a great deal of socio-political life was built around the camel. In terms of language, the entire Somali peninsula, despite variance in dialects, Somalis were mutually intelligible. Finally, we have also seen that the Somalis have a strong poetic tradition, which is a major tool of mobilisation and social negotiation.

Colonising the Somali Territories

Throughout their history, the Somalis – different parts not whole – have been under the influence of five major powers. These include the Zanzibar Sultans, Ethiopia, Britain, Italy and France. Before the arrival of the European powers, the Sultans of Zanzibar influenced and had control over large parts of Somalia. Most of the Sultans of Zanzibar were Yemen and Egyptian Arabs, and Persian families that had moved into the Indian coastline over a generation earlier (Hersi, 1977; Lewis, 1965). They had occupied areas including Zanzibar, Mombasa, Lamu, Mogadishu, Brava and Merca, and several others. Some sources have suggested that the Sultans of Zanzibar actually founded the coastal towns of Somalia (Hersi, 1966: 75-105). In addition to spreading Islam, these Arab families also involved themselves in a great deal of trade in the area. In the process, they influenced the life of the local communities they found in these areas in terms of fashion, cuisine, language and religion. It is believed that by the fourteenth century, all Somalis had become Muslim (Hersi, 1977).

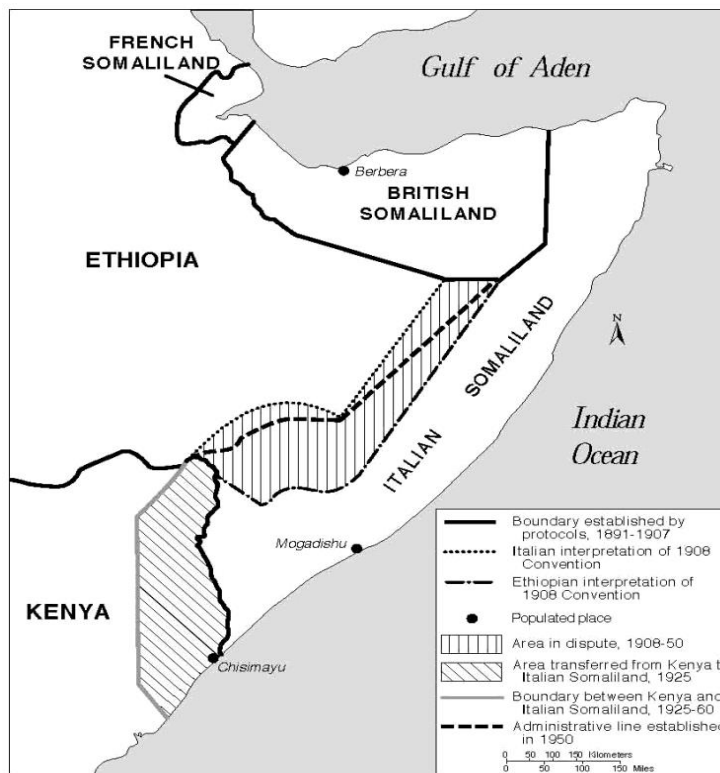
The Ethiopians had an on-and-off control over the Somalis especially through raids of their animals. The Ethiopian imperial ambitions often sought control over the Somali territories to access the sea. Indeed, often Ethiopians violently raided Somali animals

especially camels and goats. Later, with the British, the Ethiopians carved off Somali lands in the Haud and the Ogaadeen, a concern that hurts Somalis to this day.²⁸ These form the second power with major interests in Somalia, and have continued to this day. In fact, some respondents have argued that the current crisis in Somalia has Ethiopian roots, and different regimes of power in Ethiopia have only exacerbated it over the years.

When the Europeans reached the Horn after the Berlin Conference of Nov. 1884- Feb. 1885, they divided the Somali territory amongst themselves: Djibouti went to the French and thus became French Somaliland; Xamar/Somalia, the southern region from Puntland in the extreme Horn, Mogadishu and Kismayo came under the control of the Italians, and the north-eastern part of the peninsular, which came to be called British Somaliland, came under the control of the British (see colonial map below). Further south, part of the Somali dominated territory remained under British control as their East African possession of Kenya, and would be called the Northern Frontier District (NFD). The place called Ogaadeen, which is now part of eastern Ethiopia but populated by the ethnic Somalis has been a bone of contention for generations. To this day, this region remains the living testimony of Ethiopia's colonisation of Somalia, which the British only concretised.

²⁸ Ethiopian influence remains powerful across Somalia to the point that even today, popular opinion believes Ethiopia is still calling the shots in both Somalia and Somaliland. Field-notes, March-October 2015.

Map III: Map of the Horn of Africa showing the colonial divisions



Credit: Allain Gascon. *EchoGéo*. Accessed on 10 February 2018 from <http://journals.openedition.org/echogeo/4484?lang=en>.

The section below focuses two enclaves of colonial control, Italian Somalia and British Somaliland and seeks to show the ways in which the colonisers governed these areas. It focuses on the radical changes—institutional and cultural-political—that the colonialist introduced. The point is to illuminate the drive towards independence and unification of these territories as happened in 1960. From the very beginning, the British were lukewarm in their colonisation of Somaliland, which they ruled as a protectorate, and not a colony. The Italians on the other hand ruled Somalia as a settler colony making land an issue of colonial interest. They would also introduce several reforms in the areas of education, infrastructural development, religion, education, and agriculture. British reforms in Somaliland were but fleeting to the point that even Somalilanders learning about developments in the South complained about the lack of the same in their territories (Hess, 1966; Gesheker, 1985).²⁹

²⁹ Writing in 1985, Gesheker records Somalis complaining about the British colonialism of the protectorate as saying "for seventy-five years you have been in this land and there is not a chimney or a rail to show for it...The British really did nothing for our country...except to give portions of it away" (1985: 19). This was in comparison with other places where British colonialism had reached. Kakwenzire (1986) has noted that by 1940, Somaliland was, "the only British dependency which did not have any

Colonising Somaliland

Located at the intersection between the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, with these two big water bodies providing a major sea route for European vessels trading with the Asian continent, the Somali peninsula attracted a great deal of imperial interest. This happened especially after 1869 when the Suez Canal was opened (Touval, 1963; Lewis, 1965). The canal brought in a major change in fortunes of the region since the route became vital for global trade and transport—especially in the area that came to be called British Somaliland.

Saadia Touval (1963) narrates that with the rise of trade between the Middle East, India and Zanzibar, at a time when marine technology was still weak, there were plenty of shipwrecks on the sea. When the survivors docked at the Somali coastline in the north, the Somali people often mistreated them in ways that included looting their merchandise (see also, Hess, 1966: 10). This attracted the concern of the British, who were deeply involved in trade in India. In 1827, the British signed treaties with the Somali tribes where they agreed to offer security to cargo and crew in the event of shipwrecks. In 1839, the British occupied Aden on the Yemen side of the Red Sea. Interest in the opposite side of the sea increased, they started sending missions to inspect the Somali peninsula for their strategic and trade interests. The northern side of the Somali peninsula was found to be a reliable source for the supply of meat for the garrison at Aden (A. Samatar, 1989: 17).

Between 1877-85, Somali tribes in northern Somalia were under Egyptian control and Egyptian control was recognised by the British who closely watched the area. The Turkish were also interested in the area, but with their interest failing to gain momentum, and Egypt intending to withdraw its control over the area (following the Mahdist revolts

form of Western education, social services, modern industrial activity, middle entrepreneur class, organized labour, cash crops, large-scale commercial farming or any other attributes of a developed or developing society. The territory's efforts to develop an export trade in hides and skins achieved temporary success and then came to a grinding halt when America and Egypt, the major consumers of those commodities, declared a ban on all Somali- originating animal products on account of the rampant animal diseases in the country. The territory's communication system, based on murrum roads, was in terrible shape; the only modern road that the Protectorate could boast of in 1939 was the Berbera-Jigjiga Road which was built by the Italians in 1937 as part of Mussolini's African dream" (659). As I show later in this section, the British were both lukewarm to invest, but even the little they often proposed was met by stiff resistance.

in Sudan), after a series of treaties, the northern half of the Somali peninsula (which came to be called Somaliland) came under complete British control by 1886.

When the British took over full control of Somaliland, their policies were very much half-hearted and lukewarm since Somaliland appeared unviable economically (Gesheker, 1985; Kakwenzire, 1986; A. Samatar, 1989: 31; Lewis, 1965: 47). The British would take over full and active responsibility for the administration of the Somaliland Protectorate in 1898. Lt. Col. Hayes Sadler was the first Consul-General. Somalis were also lukewarm towards welcoming the new power that had come over them, although they also believed perhaps the colonial masters could be more hospitable or at least, protect them from the Ethiopians. The British were very concerned about how much the Somali territory would yield, and never really thought about investing till much later on. Specifically, they had been interested in maintaining an uninterrupted meat supply, which could be ensured by a simple administration of the coast (Samatar, 1986).

In the first half of British protectorate over Somaliland—the period before the second World War—they did not do anything significant in terms of governing the country and introducing any radical reforms, say the way their counterparts in Italian Somalia were doing. This was for two reasons: The first was the British reluctance about colonising this otherwise barren land, and second, the tenacious resistance of their projects by the Somalis. Gesheker (1985) has written that,

It was the nature of capitalist colonialism to absorb non-capitalist systems into the international market economy and in the process to modify the "penetrated" systems by gradually removing control over the means of production from most members of the colonized society. The diversity of pre-capitalist social formations, organizations of production, and environments obliged colonial powers to try various methods of accomplishing this incorporation. In British Somaliland, however, there was little experimentation. *The scorched plains, erratic rainfall, and general desiccation of the region precluded the population density needed for the production of export cash crops as the basis for tax collections, customs revenues, or capital accumulation. Somaliland was barren of mineral wealth. Its commercial value lay in the production of livestock and their by-products* (1985: 20)

Being driven by a capitalist mind-set of primitive accumulation alongside accumulation by dispossession, the lands in Somaliland were lacking in anything that the British sought to exploit. Starved of minerals and semi-arid, it was the least attractive and investment in it would be unfeasible. The same sentiment has been echoed by Kakwenzire (1986) noting that the British were only interested in entering British Somaliland to protect their interest in the Red Sea, and had no direct economic interest in the interior. This was because,

“[The] territory was totally lacking in economic opportunities. Having failed to discover any exploitable resources and having failed to tax the Somali, Britain turned her back on her Somaliland Protectorate, keeping it solely for the purpose of defending her strategic interests in the Red Sea (1986: 661).

Indeed, Kakwenzire continues that British statesman, “Winston Churchill and other British statesmen had advocated its complete abandonment on account of its unproductivity, climatic inhospitability, and the hostility of its inhabitants” (1986: 664). Although his suggestion was rejected, it reflected a great deal on the way the territory came to be viewed and governed. Indeed, it meant being far less aggressive in colonising/exploiting and thus investing in the country. With the exception of signing treaties and keeping a small garrison at the port of Berbera, the British did not enter deep into the interior except when the meat supply seemed threatened by the rebel activities of Mohamed Abdille Hassan (also endearingly known as the Sayyid), who was fierce against possible Christian penetration of Somalia and the introduction of taxation (I will return to this story of resistance later on this chapter).

Fortunes would change slightly after World War I and the defeat of the Dervish warriors under Sayyid Mohammed Abdullah Hassan in 1920. After this period, the British government sought to provide services in the fields of medical, education and road construction in British Somaliland (Kakwenzire, 1980: 154). The British introduced reforms in education, animal husbandry, and also twice handed over the Haud, an essential grazing land to the Somalis – but later secretly gave it to the Ethiopians before independence. Let me examine these policies briefly:

Education

The field of education was considered most important as the British believed, “it was through Western Education that Britain hoped to plant new values and attitudes among the Somali, especially among those who had followed Sayyid or sympathised with his cause” (ibid). In 1928, there were strong proposals to bring western education into British Somaliland. Even on this one, which they viewed as good for keeping the peace in the territory, the British dismally performed. After a little negotiation, about how education policy could be rolled out, the British decided to improve the available three Quran schools in Berbera by asking them to add a little “diversity” to the curricular and also accept closer supervision from the Government Inspector of Schools. Kakwenzire has noted, if the Somalis consented to these reforms,

Kittermaster [the colonial Governor] was prepared to increase their subsidy and give them any other assistance they might require. The amount of subsidy he proposed to allocate would depend on the standard of education and number of pupils in each of the schools. Schools with twenty to thirty pupils would qualify for an annual grant of £9 each; those with thirty-one to forty pupils would receive £18 annually each; and those with forty-one and above would receive £27. The subsidized schools would, in addition to the subsidy, receive free supplies of books, visual aids and other educational equipment (1980: 157).

Instead of starting own school—as would be suggested later—the British, in their lukewarm approach towards this territory, had opted for helping the already existing Quran schools as a way of cutting their costs. I am not in position to tell whether these monies were sufficient for the intended benefits. In their proposal, however, they offered that if this first stage had been passed, then matters would continue to the second stage, which entailed expanding “the curriculum to include History, Hygiene, Geography, English Physical Education and Social Services. The most brilliant boys would proceed from there to Khartoum or Aden for further education (ibid). When these suggestions were presented to the Somalis, they were out-rightly rejected (see also, Lewis, 2008: 30). Like had happened to the proposals to tax the Somalis to provide revenue for the protectorate that had been rejected, the programme for education would also be rejected, and was thereby shelved.

When the colonial government revisited the education project in 1936 and proposed to build the first Government schools in Hargeysa, the project was met with initial resistance, which only delayed it to the time after the second World War.³⁰ At this point, we can note that with the exception of declaring a protectorate over British Somaliland, there was little to show for the British in terms of their governance and development say as happened in the Sudan after the defeat of the Mahdi (see also, Lewis, 2008).

However, there were some developments in the area of livestock and animal husbandry. It should be recalled that since the British had been interested in ensuring the supply of cattle to their strongholds in Aden. In the area of livestock, they were more forthcoming. They pursued “the animal husbandry improvement program” to boost the livestock industry. They thus introduced several interventions, which included:

The launching of compulsory inoculation program, the establishment of cattle dips, the establishment of an organized system of marketing various animal products, the digging of permanent wells, and the opening of new markets overseas for the Somali animal products (Kakwenzire, 1986: 673).

With these interventions introduced by the Governor of the Protectorate, Harold Kittermaster, the British colonial office was impressed. Kakwenzire notes that the Colonial Development Advisory Committee, “recommended a grant of 16,000 pounds from the Colonial Development Fund in March 1930 for boosting both the water-boring program and the livestock industry” (ibid). This would come a long way in bringing some administrative presence into Somaliland.

The Haud

We need to beware of the presence of an alternatively reading of this historiography of Britain in Somaliland, as part of the explanation for their policies. This alternative

³⁰ The work of itinerant religious teachers, Sheikh Abdullahi Adan and Sheikh Abdullahi Gaileh, was central in the opposition to the new proposal. The bone of contention this time was the proposal to use Somali as the language of instruction in this school [which was believed to be a disguised missionary school], which meant writing the Somali language. The idea of writing the Somali language was believed to be a poisoned chalice. In July 1936, these scholars preached in Hargeysa where they underlined the “the dangers pertaining to the introduction of written Somali. So far as these two Wadads were concerned, it was not only Islam which was at stake but the whole status and future of the Somali race (1980: 160). Their sermon was widely followed and a movement opposed to western education grew.

reading connects Britain's policies in Somaliland to their interests in Sudan. Historians including Drysdale (1964) and Mohamad (2002) have written that British occupation and policies in the Horn were not solely prompted by their interests in Aden, but their interests in Sudan and Egypt. This prompted their rather reckless treatment of the Somali interests such as over the grazing lands in the Haud. Following the 1884 Egyptian withdrawal from Berbera, Zeyla, Bulhar, Harar and the Sudan, there was contest over these places as all the European powers wanted to have them. John Drysdale (1964) has called it the "second scramble" for territory in Africa. Great Britain, France and Ethiopia wanted to control these regions, with Emperor Menelik II threatening that he "will re-establish the ancient frontiers of Ethiopia up to Khartoum, and as far as Lake Nyanza with all the Gallas" (Drysdale, 1964: 27). However, by 1885, the British had won the race over Somali and had "signed various treaties with Somali elders in which they agreed 'never to cede, sell, mortgage, or otherwise give for occupation—save to the British Government—any portion of the territory presently inhabited by them, or being under their control'" (Mohamed, 2002: 1176).

Both the French and British wanted to have Sudan. However, although the British had an upper hand, both France and Britain needed the support of Emperor Menelik II of Ethiopia who had become such a power after defeating the Italians in the battle of Adowa in 1896. His side on this war would determine the winner. Both the British and French made several demands of alliance with the emperor. While "the French demanded direct assistance in the invasion of the Sudan in terms of soldiers and other logistical support. The British, in contrast, required only Ethiopian neutrality. The British thus had a more attractive bid (ibid). In the 1897 treaty signed between the British and Ethiopians, while the Ethiopians agreed not to let ammunitions move through their territory to support the Mahdi, they British ceded the Haud to the Ethiopians. As Mohamed explains, the Haud was very important to the Somali population, and thus putting under Ethiopian control was very painful to Somali interests:

There were four ecological zones in the country: the 'Guban' (coastal area), the Golis range (mountain escarpment), the Oogo (plateau), and the Haud (southern forests and plains). The two most important zones were the interior plateau and the Haud. During the rainy seasons, the pastoralists moved their livestock to the

Haud because of the abundance of pastures and temporary water (rain) reservoir. During the dry seasons, the pastoralists moved their livestock to the plateau because it had, unlike the Haud, permanent water. The ‘pulsatory movement’ of the pastoralists protected the country from overgrazing, soil erosion and ecological degradation (2002: 1181).

Underscoring the absolute importance of the Haud to Somali pastoralists, Lewis (1961) had written, although the Haud “lacks permanent water, this region is perhaps the most important pastureland of the north, and its rich grasses provide excellent fodder for camels” (1961: 35). Putting the Haud under the control of the Ethiopians, the traditional enemies of the Somalis who had done enough in looting their animals over the centuries was a betrayal of the Somalis. Because of the British awareness of this betrayal, the treaty remained secret to the Somalis until much later in 1930, which when it became known, sparked demonstrations across Somalia. We can note here that British interests in Somaliland were elsewhere, mostly seeking to “gain the support of Ethiopia for the race to Fashoda rather than to ‘protect’ the interests of the Somalis (ibid, see also, Drysdale, 1964). We can conclude here that British interests in Sudan boxed them into mellowing to the Ethiopians, which actually influenced their lukewarm and sometimes, insensitive policies to the Somalis – such as ceding the Haud over to the Ethiopians.

The significance of this incident—ceding the Haud to Ethiopia—needs to be properly contextualised in the narrative of Somali nationalism. After the British had abused their 1887 Agreement with the Somalis, which had indicated that no Somali lands would ever be ceded, sold or mortgaged to another power, there were countrywide protests across the Somali territories (Mohamad, 2002: 1184).³¹ The Haud was significant to all Somalis especially since most of them were pastoralists. This incident started galvanizing a united Somali sentiment—*Somalinimo*—as this was believed would provide a united front in the campaign to retain the Haud. The rise and growth of

³¹ When the Italians effectively invaded Ethiopia in 1935, and later British Somaliland in the thrills of the World War II, the Somali-dominated territories came under one leadership of the Italians. This calmed tensions since the Ethiopians would not stop all Somalis from grazing in the Haud. However, after the defeat of Italy in World War II, Ethiopian sovereignty would be restored but not over areas dominated by Somalis. But we need to note that after World War II Great Britain had been left exhausted. The United States had emerged as the main power broker in the world. And once Ethiopians had cultivated enough political friendship with the Americans, in 1954, they forced the British to sign the Haud to the Ethiopians. This event, as we will be seeing later contributed immensely to the growth of Somali nationalism.

National United Front for Retaining Reserve Area and Haud (NUFRAH) in the period after the loss of the Haud attests to this reality. Started in 1955 by western educated politician, Michael Mariano, NUFRAH dominated the political scene because of its ambition embedded in its name – retaining the reserve area and the Haud. Mohamed (2002) has written that, “the NUF focused completely on the recovery of the lost territories. Since this issue concerned all Somalis (in Somaliland, Somalia and Ethiopia), the N.U.F received popular as well as elite support, and so dominated the politics of the country from 1955 to 1958” (2002: 1184-5). This support extended all the way to Italian Somalia in the South. The picture that emerges is that the Haud was a major unifying force in the nationalist question in the Somali territories. However, the Haud helps us to view a different form of nationalist imaginary, which is, to a good degree outside the discursive units of culture, language and religion. The Haud instead suggests a nationalist consciousness built around a mode of subsistence (nomadism), and resistance of Ethiopian expansionism. It signals less to a cultural/traditional identity but a functional /utilitarian identity – an economic identity if you like.

The Southern-Italian Connection

It is difficult to complete the story of the colonial administration of British Somaliland without making concrete reference to Italian colonisation of Southern Somalia. This is especially because, not only did Italians move and colonise the entire Somali territory and Ethiopia (1935-40), the British also had chance to govern Southern Somalia after World War II before returning the territory to Italy under UN trusteeship. Therefore, governance policies of the Somali peninsular often crisscrossed with policies in one colonial boundary often influencing policies in the other and vice versa. As it becomes evident later on, the Italian administration of all Somalia inspired the first sense of nationalist unity for all Somalis especially since the British had rendered Somali interests in the Haud in peril. Italians had managed to put the Ethiopian threat to the Somalis ways of sustenance at bay, while the British simply restored it when the Italians suffered defeat in World War II.

I now move this conversation to Italian colonised Somalia starting by introducing Italian colonialism, how the territory was acquired and administered. What stands out in the narrative below is that despite coming as a late coloniser, Italy was very straight

forward in its interests, i.e., economic, and also proved more aggressive in introducing reforms than their counterparts that were in charge of British Somaliland.

Italian administration of Somalia

There was a great deal of anti-colonial sentiment in Italy especially before the Italian Unification. However, with the rise of Italian nationalism especially after unification, and also in order not to be left behind by the other European powers, Italy started seeking expansion and territory abroad (Tripodi, 1999; Hess, 1966; Cassanelli, 1982). Italy would start with Eritrea and then Somalia as its territories of influence.³² As opposed to the British and Germans who disguised their exploitative mission under “civilising” the Africans, the Italians did not have any grandstanding about their intentions. Instead, they pursued colonialism for economic interests in the sense that economies would enable them improve the economic condition at home (Hess, 1966; Tripodi, 1999). This is why their narrative was wound around easily appreciable concerns over raw material for industries and resettling the surplus population.³³ They

³² The Somali coastline was attractive enough and Italy but had been under the control of the Sultan of Zanzibar, with the British more likely to occupy them and not the Italians. The major competitors were the Germans, who fortunately, despite being the most powerful colonial power in the area, were disliked by the Sultan of Zanzibar. Because Britain’s William Mackinnon was friends with the Zanzibar sultan, the Sultan was willing to offer the Somali coastline to the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC). However, the British were afraid of their (financial) ability to control that entire expanse of territory. But at the same time, they were also unwilling to surrender it their imperial rival, the Germans. They then sought corporation with Italy. For a period, these two countries sought a middle ground to work together. It was not forthcoming. It was in December 1888, that Italy’s opportunity to occupy Somalia came through. After a little misunderstanding between the Sultan, Yusuf Ali and the British over a small village, the sultan of Obbia—north-eastern Somalia—sought protection from the Italians. The Italians had waited long for this opportunity. With an immediate naval mission, and additional negotiations, and declaration of a protectorate, Italy became the effective occupant of Obbia with an agreement being signed in April 1889. In late 1889, the Italian colonist businessman Filonardi met with Mackinnon in London and agreements were reached with Italians being recognised as having a sphere of influence in the area. With these agreements and the subsequent ones, Italy had secured territory between two British territories—British Somaliland in the North and Kenya in the south.

³³ Hess has noted that during this time, Italian industry was insufficiently developed to absorb the vast numbers of unemployed workers. The country lacked raw materials necessary for an industrial civilisation and there was little chance for improvement. By 1870 emigration had become a permanent feature of the national life, and publicists deplored the drain upon the national stock and the government’s inertia about finding overseas colonies in which to settle surplus population under the Italian flag (Hess, 1966: 2) Despite initial opposition to colonialism, the tide started changing with pamphlets in favour of colonialism flooding libraries and teashops. Although their seemed concerns over the ways in which colonialism should be approached, the ground and enthusiasm for expansionism had been generated. With initial interest focused on Libya and Algeria, Italian interest later focused on the Red Sea with the Horn of Africa providing major inspiration. It was in 1885 that Italians first made imperial presence with East Africa.

were straightforward and clinical in their ambitions, which thus explained their policies/reforms in agriculture, education and religion, and general governance.

Firstly, in the area of agriculture, the Italians eyed the fertile soils of the Juba River and River Shabelle in the south. As the Italian government sought to mitigate the economic crises being experienced around this time, they targeted farmland in Somalia where they were to encourage Italians to move, and “open concessions and build farms” (Lewis, 1965: 92). In the process the Italians introduced forced—but remunerated labour—to meet the labour challenges as most Somalis were unwilling to work the farms voluntarily. The Italians would go ahead and build an agronomic research station in Somalia at Genale, along the Shabelle River. This centre championed immense agricultural research in Somalia. Indeed, with the creation of the Società Agricola Italo-Somalia (SAIS) in 1920, Somalia became a highly efficient agricultural country, producing cotton, bananas, oil and soap (Lewis, 1965: 93). With more land acquired from the tribes, and outgrowers schemes introduced, with a vast irrigation plant at Genale for large scale plantation farming, the country even became more productive. Writing in 1941, James Meenan noted that

The country has been irrigated and fertilised to such an extent that it is self-supporting in corn – no small achievement for that part of Africa. In 1940 it had not begun to repay the money invested in it, but it was considerably nearer to doing so than Eritrea (1941: 379)

To support their activities, the Italians built estates for farming communities, and encouraged much banana growing, which became a major export. They also built the salt extraction plant at Ras Hafun. By 1933, the plant produced 260,000 tons of high-grade salt annually, which was exported. A small railway line was built from Afgooye to Mogadishu to ease transport of agricultural produce. In 1923, fascist policies such as forced labour and an annual hut tax were introduced to the interior. Other taxes such as export tax and personal income tax meant for people on the coastline—Italians, Arabs and Somali townspeople—were also introduced. Revenue from these taxes were used to invest in other projects in the country including infrastructure, education and general administration (A. I. Samatar, 1988).

One can conclude here that as opposed to the British in Somaliland the Italians invested in the transformation of their area of influence. Historians including Meenan, Lewis, Cassanelli, and Hess have noted that Italians built dispensaries, schools in Merca, Brava, Afgooye, Kismayu and several other places. The Italians also built roads, and by 1928, 6000 kilometres of earthen gravel roads had been built (USA Country Study, 1982: 21). For the Italians, making the colony as profitable as possibly was key central to their colonialism.

In the field of education for example, the Italians built schools for the now sedentary Somalis who were tilling their land and working on the Italian farms. There were elementary and junior schools in Mogadishu instructing Somalis and Italian children in both Arabic and Italian. The only down side of the education was in the 1930s when the government at home sought to pursue a rather racist approach instilling a master-subject relationship in school-going children. Hitherto, Italian and Somali children had studied in the same elementary schools, but with the rise of fascism in Italy, the new Governor, the first of the fascist regime in Italy, Cesare Maria de Vecchi believed this was not proper as Italian kids had to be trained to govern the Somali labourers/subjects. But these policies in different aspects of Somalis administration and life failed.³⁴

In terms of administration, the Italians ran a centralised system of administration under a Governor with assistants both with offices in Mogadishu. In the district and provinces, residents (or District Commissioners) governed with the assistance of salaried chiefs and elders. The Italians would go ahead and introduce Christianity into Somalia. With western education expanding, alongside services such as medical clinics and orphanages, the Italians spread Christianity. Lewis has reported that it did not take too long to have “enough Christian Somalis to attend regular masses in the Italian settlers, and eventually even a Catholic cathedral” (Lewis, 2008: 31). The picture that emerges

³⁴Fascist Italy was having a toll on the colonies: In the 1930s, the fascist regime also tried to introduce racial legislation for the Italians, who numbered about 8000 hierarchizing them over the native Somalis. So, many times, Somali judges stuffed the lower courts to administer Islamic law. However, these racially-inspired legislations failed as settler Italians often bent the legislations for a non-racist approach (USA Country Study, 1982: 21). At the same time, many native Somalis simply preferred to work within the Islamic and traditional courts as they never understood the working of secularized laws.

here is that unlike their British counterparts in the North, the Italians had full presence in the life of the people they colonised. They had reforms in the fields of education, agriculture, administration, governance and religion. These reforms would even become more visible when the Italians established “an empire” in the region building up to the second world war where they controlled Ethiopia, Eritrea and all the Somali territories.

The Italian Empire in East Africa

Following the rise of fascism in Italy, the Italians became more confident and aggressive in dealing with their Indian Ocean possession. After the collapse of the Dervish resistance, the Somalis began to fall back into clannish disputes over water and pasture (I. Samatar, 1988: 49). It was around this time in 1923 that the Italians began to pursue more forceful integration of the territory into the new order, which involved among other things, the cause of colonialist expansion. To begin off the process, old police corps were purged and replaced by young ones including Arabs and Eritreans (I. Samatar, 1988: 49). Ahmed Ismail Samatar has written that during this period:

Barracks were built, and tactical schools and Italian language programmes were established—all this for the purpose of subduing those restless Somalis who might stand in the way of fascist expansion in the Horn. Outright military action was complemented by an old imperialist tactic—divide and rule—with the enlistment of Somali collaborationists... The fascist colonial state now aimed to turn clan leaders into creatures of colonialism; to expropriate land and distribute it among colonials—in the process forcing Somali peasants to become cheap labour and to deface and devalue Somali culture (ibid).

More land was appropriated to the point that concessions rose from 4 in 1920 to 115 in 1933. Dissident chiefs were not only publicly humiliated, but also their stipends could be suspended. In other cases, their authority would also be suspended (see also, Hess, 1966). The combined effect of these developments was that the Italian grew more confident and mounted a campaign towards expanding into Ethiopia. Indeed, in 1935, the Italians overran Addis Ababa and Somaliland. These developments were in part inspired by their successes in Somalia. They would only be held back by the defeats in the World War II, which saw Great Britain take back British Somaliland, and overrun Somalia. The Italians also lost their possession in Ethiopia. Italy would be returning to

Somalia under trusteeship, in 1949, as the country looked forward to self-rule in the next ten years.

During the five-year spell as rulers of an East African empire, the Italians put in place major reforms. The first was detaching the Ogaadeen and the Haud from Ethiopian control and simply included it in the new enlarged province of Ethiopia. All the people under the Italian empire were free to move. In the case of the Somalis, they were free to graze their animals wherever they wanted. The Somalis were pleased as they were free to graze in the Haud without fear of Ethiopians stealing their animals. In this effort, a USA Country Study of Somalia done in 1982 reported that nearly 40,000 Somalis had been mobilised to join in the service of the war with Ethiopia (1982: 24), which they did with open arms considering their hatred for Ethiopian expansionism and cattle rustling.

I want to argue mildly here that prompted by the advances of Italy in 1935 into Ethiopia, bringing together hitherto “Ethiopian Somalis” under one territory, the Italian Empire in East Africa sowed the seeds of Somali nationalism and the longing for Greater Somalia. For five years, three Somali regions, Somaliland, Somalia, and Ogaadeen were a part of one singular administration enabling easy mobility through the empire. Indeed, even when after Italy had been defeated in 1941, Britain sustained their governance of the three Somali territories under one authority – adding Kenya, especially the northern frontier districts. The British had also been inspired by the Italians. The USA Country Study reported that following the post-World War II period, the post-Italian Empire period, Britain changed policy and became more progressive especially in Somaliland:

London’s reversal of pre-war policy requiring that British Somaliland be self-supporting allowed additional funds to be made available for development. The protectorate capital was moved from Berbera to Hargeysa, a religious and trading centre for the nomadic herders in the interior... Although the civil service remained inadequate in numbers, efforts were undertaken to improve agricultural and health services and to influence Somali opinion in favour of development. The military administration succeeded in opening a number of secular schools where they had only been subsidized Quran schools before 1939. The local court was also reorganised, and local advisory and planning committees were established in the towns. In 1946, the Protectorate Advisory Council was created in which districts were represented by Somali appointees

of both modern and traditional orientation. In Somalia, the military administration ensured better pay and working conditions for the agricultural labour force. By 1947, the number of pupils in the elementary schools had increased to twice the pre-war figure and a centre for training elementary school teachers was opened. The British also provided the opportunity for Somalis to qualify as junior officials in the civil service and the gendarmerie. In addition, the first chance for Somali political activity opened up as Italian-appointed clan chiefs were gradually displaced by elected advisory assemblies at the clan level. District and provincial councils were also created to advise the military administration (1982: 26).

As is detailed in the quote above, all the three Somali territories under British rule *collectively* saw major reforms in the post-war period, which in turn strengthened the journey towards independence. The opening of political space, for example, created an ample environment for the Somali intelligentsia to start jostling for space and politicking for independence, as will be shown in the story of unification. The other point I want to draw in this quote above is the fact that colonial activities provided the foundation for the birth of a strong feeling of Somalimimo: Italian colonisation of all Somali territories (except French Somaliland) and the subsequent control of the British after the defeat of the Italians inspired ground for unity as Somalis across the Horn had the opportunity to live under one administration. [This is a point often ignored in the literature on Somali nationalism as attention is often paid to religion culture and language].

The effects of the Italian colonialism continued even after World War II when Somalia was returned to Italy under UN Trusteeship. Lewis (1963) has pointed out that the work of Società Agricola Italo-Somalia (SAIS), which was essentially meant to promote agriculture had the unintended effect of the growth of social and political attitudes. Farming gave people a sense of community and started thinking about independence and building their country on their own terms. In addition to western schooling, the environment for collective societal development and a sense of belonging started to emerge. The Italian-introduced western school bred a new community of Somali elite seen especially through the emergency of the Somali Youth Club and Somali Youth League (SYL) in the 1940s in Mogadishu. These started holding meetings to discuss the future of an independent Somalia [these discussions did not concern itself with

resisting imperialism, since independence had been promised by the United Nations when Somalia returned to Italy as a trustee territory].

By UN agreement, Italy had been tasked to “foster the development of free political institutions and to promote the development of the inhabitants of the territory towards independence (Lewis, 1963: 139).” Seemingly intended to humiliate Italy further after the war defeat, with committees and UN offices established in Mogadishu to monitor the implementation of the UN agreements for trusteeship, the inhabitants of the territory benefited immensely especially in the field of education, commerce and public administration. In the field of education, for example, the trusteeship outdid itself: Identified as key factor in developing the county, Italy committed itself (or was forced?) to preparing the country for self-government through a comprehensive education involving both tertiary and vocational training, in addition to providing adult education (Hess, 192). Lewis narrates:

New state schools providing free education replaced mission schools upon which the Italians had relied in the past; and by 1957 some 31,000 children and adults of both sexes were enrolled in primary schools, 246 in junior secondary schools, 336 in technical institutes, and a few hundred more in higher educational institutions. This represented a notable advance on the situation in 1950 when little more than two thousand students were receiving education. It also testified to the news and widespread public appetite amongst the old and young alike for Western education (1963: 140-41).

In 1950 the Italian administration opened the School of Politics and Administration. In 1954, it opened an institute of Law and Economics. With demand moving from trained public servant to personnel with technical and vocational training, the school of politics was transformed into a technical institute in 1957. The institute of Law became University College of Somalia, and provided Rome University diploma courses (Lewis, 141). There were similar but comparatively less aggressive developments in other areas such as health, construction and communication. There was more money going into agriculture with the extension of irrigation farming taking a central position especially along the Shebelle River. With structural adjustments not yet in the picture, a farmers’ bank was created, Credito Somale with the intention of providing farmers with loans

and facilitation to farmers. At the same time, watering and drinking wells were continuously dug for nomads and herders.

Although the British upped their investment in Somaliland after the war, developments taking place in Somalia under the trusteeship were still incomparable. Lewis (1965) has noted that with ten years of trusteeship, a sense of urgency was impacted on the side of the Italians to prepare the country for self-rule (1965: 148). Contrasting developments in Somalia against Somaliland, Lewis noted that with the exception of developments in education in Somaliland “there was less to report in other sphere of development (Lewis, 1965: 149; see also, Touval, 1963: 101-2; Abdi Samatar, 1989, Kakwenzire, 1980).

However, for merchants and traders in Hargeysa, Berbera and Burco, business had increased more under Italian control as roads were constructed easing movement and trade. They also then began to organise political association, which gave birth to Somaliland National Society (SNS). It is worth noting that developments in Somalia during this time played into Somaliland’s interest in uniting with Somalia, in addition to their economic disagreement with Britain over the grazing lands in the Haud. I now turn to the resistance of Mohammed Abdille Hassan, who is also believed to have inspired the feeling of *Somalinimo* to the point of being considered the father of Somalia.

Resisting Colonialism

Mohammad Abdille Hassan

The story of colonial resistance in Somalia is often told through the story of Mohammed Abdille Hassan and his dervish warriors. With his dervishes, Mohammed Abdille Hassan fought colonialism—British and Ethiopian—between 1899 and 1920. He was defeated in the end. The British nicknamed him, the “Mad Mullah,” to suggest (quite erroneously) that he was a deranged monster.³⁵ In the post-independence period, several

³⁵ Said Samatar (1979) makes an interesting clarification about the nuanced meaning about the “mad” in the “Mad Mullah.” He suggests that a great deal of meaning was lost in translation as it were the Somalis themselves, not the British that first called the Mohamed Abdille Hassan “mad.” The first

Somali historians have come to call him the “Sayyid” or the “Mahdi” endearingly referring to his bravery, in ways that somewhat, according to Said Samatar (1979) problematically embellish the historical record in his favour. The reference to him as the Sayyid seeks to portray him as the father of Somali nationalism, which is itself a problematic proposition. There is a long-running debate in the historiography on the position of the Mohammad Abdille Hassan in Somali nationalist history. Although a great deal of scholarship is favourable for the Mullah, there has been equal amount of critical writing about the man and his politics. In an essay, which is tellingly sub-titled, “In Search for the Real Mullah,” Said S. Samatar points to a deliberate effort by the first Somali governments of making a national hero out of the Mohammed Abdille Hassan. Samatar notes that this started by replacing “Mullah” with the Mahdi or the Sayyid to the point that post-independence historians who referred to him as the “Mullah” risked being “charged with historiographical infidelity” (1979: 61).

On one end of the spectrum of nationalist literature are the works of such Somali writers as Axmad Cabdallah Riiraash and Sheikh Jaamac Cumar Ciise, whose accounts of the sayyid and the dervishes tend to border on panegyrics. They view the sayyid as a founding father and compare him to the Prophet Muhammad. They point to the “three things” which the sayyid shared with the prophet: the name, the age at which they began their respective ministries, and their propensity to wage jihād or “holy war.” (1979: 62).

The glorification of Mohammad Abdille Hassan as the father of Somali nationalism did not stop in the literature. In the 1970s, a monument was elected for him in central Mogadishu uplifting him to the father figure of the country. Ali Jimale Ahmed (1995) has also noted that the historiography that promotes Muhammed Abdullah Hassan as

observation is about the history of the name and Samatar says the name mad came from Somalis in Berbera who belonged to a different brand of Islam, and had disagreements with Mohammad Abdille Hassan. Samatar has written that “Members of the Qadiriya, an order who lived in Berbera, labelled him the Wadaad Waal or Mad Mullah.” The sayyid, who represented the new and more puritanical Salihya sect, spent two years (1895-97) in a disastrous theological dispute with Qadiriya notables; they gave him the enduring epithet and drove him out of town in a less than honorable fashion (1989: 61). The second clarification relates to what could have been meant by the reference mad in the Mad Mullah. Samatar noted that, “What the Somalis meant by “mad” had no relation to what the British thought it implied. When Somalis classify someone mad (waalan), they may be expressing a variety of concepts beginning with the recklessness characteristic of the “mad brave” (geesi waalan)” [1979: 61]. This characteristic, Samatar notes was admired in a leader as it signals to a peculiar braveness and makes for a daring and intrepid leader.

the sole representative of the anti-colonial project is misleading. It denies the recognition of other freedom fighters who were involved in the fight, not against the colonial regime, but also against Abdille Hassan himself such as the people of the Isaaq clans of northern Somalia. Ahmed claims that Mohammad Abdille Hassan can never be the founding father of modern Somalia for many other people fought the anticolonial struggle, especially from the Hawiye and Reewin clans. Lewis (1965) actually pointed to several other clans that were openly hostile to Abdille Hassan and his Dervishes especially since his brand of religious orientation undermined business with the British to which many were involved (1965: 70-75). Indeed, upon his initial defeat in 1920, and retreat to Ogaadeen, it was a Sultan of the Habari Younis, a sub-clan of the Isaaq clan that received ammunition from the British and travelled to Ogaadeen to finish him off (A. I. Samatar, 1988). Because his movement was crushed early (1920) and independence would come 40 years later, it is difficult to claim that Mohammad Abdille Hassan's resistance led to the birth of the Somali nation. But it contributed in significant ways.

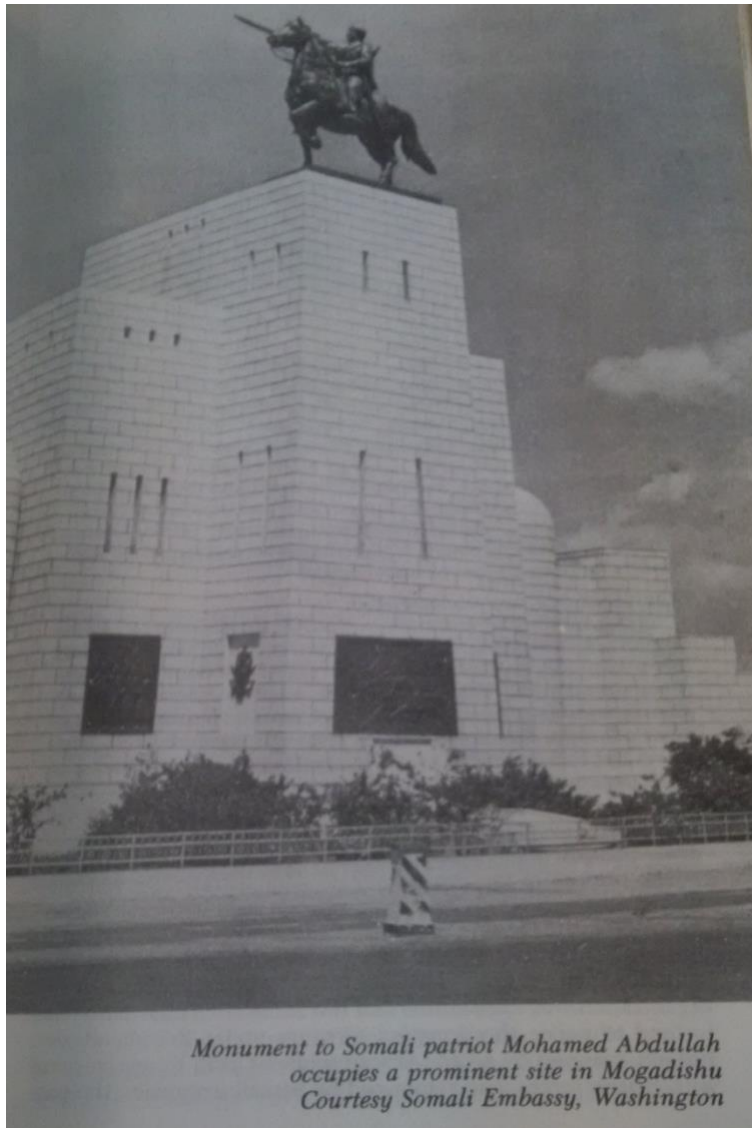


Image VI: A picture of the monument of Mohammad Abdille Hassan in Mogadishu. (from: *Somalia: A Country Study*. 1982: p. 23).

The scholarship of the anti-colonial resistance in Somali studies is still weak (see Tripodi, 1999), and the Sayyid has remained a dominant figure in this history. Other records of anti-colonial resistance often focus on elite power brokering in Hargeysa and Mogadishu as groups including the Somali Youth League and Somali National League are given prominence (Gesheker, 1985; Samatar, 2016). Violent resistance is limited to Mohammad Abdille Hassan. Aware of this limitation, this section reads (armed) anti-colonial struggle through its most renowned protagonist Muhammad Abdille Hassan, who as a matter of credit, (a) laid the stepping stones for Somali nationalism, ably mobilising a religious identity for the Somalis and suppressing any clannist leaning

(b) attracted more British interest into the interior of Somaliland—as he had started destructing the flow of cattle and other supplies to the coastline.

The story of Sayyid Mohammed's birth and learning has been told in several works.³⁶ Here, I intend to follow the motivations of his struggle and how he fought to the time he was defeated. We begin from the point that Mohamed Abdille Hassan organised his anti-imperial struggle around religion. Even when the target was not a response to religious imperialism – but cattle raids by Ethiopia expansionist ambitions – Islam provided the justification and language in which the resistance was mobilised. For Muhammad Abdille Hassan, the genesis of this struggle was a response to the advent of Christian infidels in Somalia who were believed to be eating into the fabric of the Somali community (Lewis, 1965: 67; Hess, 1963: 130; S. Samatar, 1982: 93). Thereby the struggle against colonialism assumed a religious ideology/discourse, symbolism and props. As the colonisers were called “infidels” and in other cases, “non-believers,” the warriors would be called, “Dervishes,” that is, adherents of the Saalihiya order—which was a militant, puritanical and reformist version of Islam, and to which the Sayyid belonged and preached (A. I. Samatar, 1988: 25-26). Two powerful forces in the Sayyid's possession are believed to have propelled his resistance. The brand of Islam he had embraced, and his poetic eloquence. These two survived on the fact that the Somalis were both Muslim and had a strong poetic tradition. Said S. Samatar (1979) has noted that:

Religion provided the legitimacy for leadership, and poetic talent gave him the practical tool to exercise that leadership. The pastoral Somalis employ poetic genres to express their deepest philosophical and political feelings. A politician endowed with poetic talents and a proper set of spiritual credentials is thus in a strong position to excite imagination and to capture hearts and minds. Sayyid Maxamad Cabdille Xasan's gift for public speaking, the persuasiveness with which he presented an argument, and his ability to fuse argument with feeling are proverbial among the Somalis. As a poet he had few peers, and his poems, which are still commonly quoted throughout the Somali peninsula, provoked

³⁶ Numerous journal and media articles, book chapters, and book lengths works have been written about Mohammed Abdille Hassan's resistance. Many books written about Somalia often include a chapter on the Sayyid for what he represented, which was the only militant resistance against colonialism in Somalia. The details of his birth, Islamic learning and poetic prowess are often extensively discussed. For some book-lengths works, see for example, S. Samatar, 1982; Sheikh-Abdi, 1993.

strong emotions. They continue to be a source of inspiration for many (1979: 63).

We noted earlier about the position of poetry in Somali society to the point that for almost every leader, their poetic credentials were central to their success. Without going into a discussion of the Sayyid's poetic eloquence (for this extended discussion see, for example, Ahmed Samatar, 1982 and Said S. Samatar, 1979), I need to stress here that poetry provided a major stepping stone for his movement. Mohammad Abdille Hassan's mastery of pastoral poetry and ease with which he responded to issues in verse made his appeal even more powerful to an already poetry-infused people.³⁷

Embracing the more puritanical and aggressive version of Islam also enabled the Sayyid to not only organise but also overcome clannist affiliations. The Sayyid was the head of the Saalihiya order of religious devotion that he had joined upon return from Mecca. Since the Saalihiya order was more reformist and puritanical, it easily displaced the Qadiriya order. Among other things, the Saalihiya hated clannism and managed to unite Somalis outside the banner of their clans but rather inside religion.

The Resistance

In 1898, Mohammad Abdille Hassan met with Somali children emerging from a French mission school that had been established near Berbera. When he asked them about their clan affiliations, he learned that these children had acquired non-Muslim names, and also claimed to belong to the clan of the catholic fathers (S. Samatar, 1982: 107; Lewis, 1965: 67). The Sayyid was infuriated. He then started mobilising against fighting the infidels who were polluting the land. Having settled in Berbera:

The Sayyid was particularly incensed by two phenomena. The first was the arrogant manner in which the small white community at Berbera carried themselves, going as far as to proselytize in the Christian tradition, in utter disregard of Muslim sensitivities. The second was the French Catholic Mission

³⁷ My work in Somaliland has showed me that Somalia does not still have the claim to this poetic tradition the way it did before or during the period of colonisation. As I demonstrate later in this dissertation, years of civil wars and (natural and political) famines have rendered the tradition difficult to sustain. Although a couple of living poets such as Mohamad Hadrawi have kept their poetic fire burning bright, the decline is immense.

which was busy converting Somali boys and girls to Christianity, thereby undermining Somali cultural and social foundations (Kakwenzire, 1985: 662).

Converting Muslim children into Christianity was an issue the head of the Saalihiya brotherhood was unwilling to sit back and watch. This was an issue upon which Jihad was declarable and he indeed declared one.

Besides his anger with the Christian infidels, the Sayyid's other concern was the economic exploitation the Somalis were undergoing. The story goes that while he returned from his travels one time, he was asked to pay customs, which he refused. Instead, he asked the customs officials: "did you pay the customs duties when you landed here? Who gave you permission to enter our country?" (Kakwenzire 1985, *ibid*). It is reported that thereafter, he left Berbera for the interior and started mobilizing his dervish forces to resist. The Sayyid therefore would be fighting a religious and political (anti-colonial) war: fighting for the position of his religion but also fighting for the economic-political independence of his country. Gesheker (1985) has written that the Sayyid movement had emerged and embraced a duo affront: fighting Ethiopian expansionism and the endless bloody cattle raids (1985: 17) and taking on the British and Italians especially for their "religious corruption" of the Somalis.

Mohamed Abdille Hassan's movement spread like a wildfire, and despite starting in northern Somaliland (where the reception was lukewarm), he found allies in South who especially sold him rifles (Hess, 1966: 134-5). Thriving on his eloquence and poetic abilities which were often tinged in religious reverence "appealing to Somalis as Muslims irrespective of their clan and lineage allegiance (Lewis, 1966: 76, 84)," Abdille Hassan preached against the ways of life that were being introduced by the colonial order. These included among others, drinking alcohol, smoking, and excessive indulgence in luxury (especially the Isaaq clans who had become prominent merchants with the British and made a great deal of earning) and encouraged his people to return to the Muslim path of religious devotion. He also preached against chewing the leafy stimulant, Qat – which remains common among Somali societies.

In 1899, to officially launch his campaign against the British, the Sayyid sent a letter to the British declaring a holy war against a combined force of all the colonisers. In the

letter, he accused “the British of oppressing Islam and denouncing those who obeyed or co-operated with the Administration as liars and slanderers” (Lewis, 1966: 70). The reference to “oppressing Islam” ought to be read through the time, which was marked by Islamic revivalism where Muslims and Christians conflicted. Said Samatar (1982) has noted that especially the year 1885 was characterised by a great deal of European antipathy across Somalia. Word coming from Mecca indicated the British had killed many Muslims during the Mahdist revolution in Sudan (1982: 95). Being a time of rising Pan-Islamic sentiment, the British were to be resisted at any available opportunity in any Muslim lands (ibid). The Sayyid having only returned from Mecca, represented this anti-infidel sentiment in its rawest.

It is also worth noting that during this time, the sheikhs held a great deal of sway among their followers. S. Samatar (1982) has summed this up more poetically, that in the eyes of the followers, the sheikh had “the mandate to bind and free on earth (1982: 98).” In fact, their influence on their followers was estimated to have been stronger than their clan elders such as the sultans (1982: 99). In the period that followed his declaration of war, especially between 1901-5, through his eloquence and spirited religious preaching, the Sayyid was able to grow his following into a strong force of close to five thousand men. These would be involved in fighting both Somali “compradors” and the colonialist going on to win major victories such as the one on 17 April 1903 where they killed 9 British soldiers and 189 men. This was a major victory that declared his intentions well known to the British.³⁸

However, the Sayyid’s fight was not smooth sailing the entire time. In 1905, although not defeated, he was weakened and forced into a peace treaty with the British, which forced him out of British Somaliland. He was allowed to form a small theocratic state sandwiched between the powerful northern and Southern Mijjertein in the Italian-controlled territory (Lewis, 1966: 73). This was in the Nugaal Valley. This peace did not last for long though. It only gave the Sayyid time to recuperate and revitalise his movement. In 1908, he was back to the battlefield launching attacks through proxies

³⁸ These victories notwithstanding, Mohammad Abdille Hassan was beginning to register major losses. For the entire after treaty of 1905, Abdullah Hassan operated outside of British Somaliland. However, in 1908, having entered alliance with the Warsangali tribesmen in British Somaliland, which had been armed by the British. They brought the war to the doorsteps of the Sayyid causing major injuries.

and later going out into full raids and attacks. The war was proving costly to the British yet they believed the cause was not worth the money. Kakwenzire has noted that by 1906, the British had spent £2,494,000 of British taxpayer's money (1985: 664). This was after four unsuccessful expeditions against the Sayyid.

The British started looking for local allies to counter the mullah's advances, and quickly sought his former ally Haji Abdallah Sheheri who had been the Sayyid's agent at Aden. His mission was to expose Abdullah Hassan's as a violator of Islamic law and would be punished if he did not mend his ways. There was a great deal of truth to this as many of his insider friends had been bitter about his excesses especially with women and outright high-handedness including claiming to have visions like the Prophet [Pbuh] (Said Samatar, 1979). Although this was not very successfully it was a well-calculated move crafted on the understanding that confronted through religion, perhaps the Sayyid would lose, not only his saintly lustre, but also a number of followers who would find him unfit to profess and lead them under the banner of Islam. This specific move did not work, but mobilising other clans, which were already bitter with him, would pay off later. They actually joined the British and hunted down the Sayyid.

In southern Somalia, Cassanelli (1982) has noted that resistance against colonialism came from the Biimaal clans (1904 and 1905) who viewed Somali merchants trading with the colonial regime as betrayers. These had aligned with the Sayyid. Attacking and blockading the road to Merca and Mogadishu, the Biimaal resisted the growing numbers of foreigners into their country. This motivation for resist was more vivid during the 1907 attacks at Turunley along the coast in Merca. Using firearms and covering larger expanses of territory than usual numbers, the Somalis expressed their resistance to increasing Italian penetration into their interior. That said, however, it is difficult to point to an organised unit of resistance because most of the Somalis did not have any centralised authority—with, for example, some of members of the Geledi community being pro-Italians and some others being against (Cassanelli, 1982: 229). However, it is important to appreciate that most of the diffuse fighting groups were expressing protest of the presence of infidels on their land. As was evident after the Sayyid settled in the Nugaal valley, many of these groups joined hands with him.

There was not much activity recorded with the outbreak of the First World War. But the Sayyid was able to recuperate and become even stronger. In 1914, the Sayyid's base in the hinterland became even stronger that he would launch attacks as far as Berbera. But this did not last long. Ahmed Ismail Samatar has written that towards the end of the first World War, the British returned more determined than ever to end the Sayyid scourge.

Towards the end of the First World War, the British, with tacit assistance from Ethiopia and Italy, mounted a counter-attack with by the end of 1920, had land, sea and aerial fronts... British planes made several bombing forays on the Dervish fortifications. With many casualties sustained, the Sayyid and what was left of his troops left their forts and retreated to his old Ogaden territory (1988: 33).

Abdi Samatar continues that the British never followed the Sayyid when he retreated to Ogaadeen, but instead their local allies did and hunted him to his final defeat. Samatar has narrated that “the Sultan of the Habar Yoonis lineage-segment...took 3000 men armed by the British to hunt down the movement and finish the job of pacification” (ibid). With this came the defeat of the Sayyid and he would later die of natural causes in December 1920. With his defeat and death, with the exception of scattered episodes of violence and insurgence coming in 1921 (Hess, 1966: 152-57), there was no other *major* resistance movement against colonialism, in both Somalia and Somaliland. Instead, the steadier Italian colonial regime was often decisive in dealing with dissent through 1920s till their defeat in the Second World War.

As noted earlier, making Mohammad Abdille Hassan as the father of Somali nationalism remains subject of much contention and historical scrutiny. The Sultan of the Habaar Yoonis, a major sub-clan of the Isaaq Clan in present day Somaliland joining with the British to fight the brave Mullah tells a lot about the opposition the Mullah faced from amongst the Somalis. His attack on Somali businessmen who worked with the imperialists and calling them infidels did not win him many allies in northern Somalia. But enemies who often joined hands with the British to fight him. Indeed, as Ahmed (1995) has narrated, in 1991, while the government of Mohamed Siyad Barre fell, the Sayyid's monument in Mogadishu was among the first things to be knocked down by forces opposed to the “dervishization” (Ahmed's term) of Somali

nationalism. The government of Siyyad Barre had played a major role in creating the Sayyid as the father figure of the country (see also, Said S. Samatar, 1979).

To conclude: It is clear that despite the variations, and despite the absence of centralised authority, the Somalis had a homogenous identity, and the moral commonwealth *Heer*, gave meaning to this identity – and through different phases, colonialism gave it coherence. We can locate the growth of national consciousness among the Somalis as being rooted in three modes of expressions: cultural identity (*Heer*, culture, language, religion) economic identity (the Haud and Ethiopian cattle raids), the resistance of Mohammed Abdille Hassan (which also took a cultural discourse), and modes of Italian colonial governmentality—especially in the fields of education, agriculture and infrastructure development which, in conjunction with the other factors above began the process of fostering a sense of unity and raising union consciousness. What remains fascinating in this historiography is that cultural nationalism occupies a more central position than all other forms. I now turn to the process of unification at the end of colonialism, which intimately juxtaposes with the 1991 process of separation, which is the central concern of this project.

Chapter Four

SOMALILAND AND SOMALIA: UNIFICATION AND SEPARATION

This chapter focuses on the political dimensions of the 1960 unification of the Italian-colonised Somali and British-colonised Somaliland. The ambition of this chapter is to put in perspective a rather diametric process of secession/separation that was declared by Somaliland in 1991, and Somaliland has campaigned for international recognition ever since. Picking from the foregoing chapter on the ways in which the Horn was colonised, and the struggle for – or more accurately, the road to – Independence, this chapter provides the finer details of how the two colonial enclaves went about unioning. To this end, it sets ground for asking the main questions of this project, which focus on the language – histories mobilised, aspirations imagined, identities crafted – in which separation or secession is mobilised. This chapter builds mostly on secondary sources, popular narratives, and archival research.

The 1960 Unification

ON 1 July 1960, Somalia and Somaliland united and formed the Somali Republic. Five days earlier, 25 June 1960, Somaliland had received her independence from Great Britain and gladly waited for Somalia to receive hers from Somalia before a government would be formed. How this union was mobilized, narrated and represented – say in the flag and other representative performative symbols, official discourse including speeches of the intelligentsia and political class, and informally by poets and artistes – forms a major concern of this chapter.

Starting 1930, political parties composed of the elite and merchants had been formed across the Somali territories. In Somaliland especially, these parties remained largely silent considering that the British were not deeply involved in colonizing their region. The parties in Italian Somaliland were more active engaging the Italians in resistance politics but also preparing for independence especially after World War II and placement under UN Trusteeship. I.M. Lewis' work (1958-1965) is very important in understanding the formation of political parties in Somalia and Somaliland. Writing in

1958, Lewis classifies the political parties that jostled for political space in Somali and Somaliland into three categories: There were clan parties (such as Mahliya Party, Ishaaqiya Party and Hawiye Party); regional parties (such as Benadir Party, Afgoi-Audugle Party) and nationalist parties (such as the Somali National League (SNL) and the Somali Youth League (SYL), Somali Democratic Party, Somali Républicaine, and several others). As the clan parties pursued a local agenda of promoting the interests of their clans, the regional parties sought to promote the interests of their regions, while the nationalist parties had broader nationalist and Pan-Africanist agendas (Lewis, 1958; 1963). There was also the National United Front for the Restauration of the Haud and Reserved Area (mostly abbreviated as NUF), which dominated the political scene upon learning that the British had mortgaged the Haud back to Ethiopia after the Italians had grabbed it back in 1935 empire. NUF was started in 1955 upon learning that the Haud had been returned to the Ethiopians in 1954. I want to focus more time on the nationalist parties as these were central in the articulation of the cause for unioning.

Formed in 1935 in Somaliland, the Somali National League (SNL) came to full life in 1951. On top of its programmes was the agenda for unification. Noted in Lewis (1963), SNL's ambitions included (a) To work for the unification of the Somali people and territories, (b) To work for the advancement of the Somalis by abolishing clan fanaticism and encouraging brotherly relations among Somalis (c) To encourage the spread of education and political and economic development of the country, and (d) To co-operate with the British Government or any other local body whose aims are the welfare of the inhabitants of the country (1963: 149). There was also, the Somali Youth League (SYL) which was founded as a youth club in 1943 would become a fully-fledged party in 1947. Its ambitions included seeking to unite all Somalis especially the youth; educating the youth "in modern civilisation by means of schools and by cultural and propaganda circles," (ibid) and trying to work on "eliminating by constitutional and legal means any existing or future situations which might be prejudicial to the interests of the Somalis (ibid). They also aspired to develop a Somali language with an orthography.

The Somali National League had its headquarters in Burco but had branches almost across the country including Berbera and Hargeysa. The League was predominantly Muslim. Lewis has noted that membership into the league was by payment and also

had a monthly subscription fee. This party was in contact with Muslim organizations in Egypt and Yemen, and through these connections, it sent students on scholarships in Egypt. As these parties concerned themselves with an anti-clannist agenda, and union with Somalia, they sought to bring Somalis together under one banner. Indeed, when the SYL visited Somalia in 1948, union was stated as its foremost agenda:

The union of Italian Somaliland with the other Somalilands was their primary objective, for which they were prepared to sacrifice any other demand standing in the way of the achievement of Greater Somalia (Lewis: 1963: 149).

Lewis notes that this aim of “amalgamation of all the Somali territories, translating cultural nationalism into political nationalism,” was a major yearning of all political parties. In Mogadishu, realising the urgency of the unioning and need for more activism, The Pan-Somali Movement was founded and had representatives from major nationalist parties in Somaliland, Ethiopia Ogaadeen and French Somaliland, Djibouti. Lewis (1963) notes that the first Prime Minister of Somali government, Mr Abdullahi Ise, the government which was in charge of only internal affairs before independence, often stressed the need for union—in the language of cultural homogeneity, and location. Abdullahi Ise, while addressing the Assembly in 1956 noted, that:

The Somali... *‘form a single race, practise the same religion and speak a single language. They inhabit a vast territory which, in its turn, constitutes a well-defined geographic unit.* All must know that the Government of Somalia will strive its utmost with the legal and peaceful means which are its democratic prerogative to attain this end: the union of Somalis, until all Somali form a single Great Somalia (1963: 150. Emphasis added).

The picture that emerges here is that union was crafted in the language of cultural identity, with a little tinge of geography and modes of subsistence. We will still find the same articulations of union even after independence. The first Prime Minister of independent Somalia (Somalia and Somaliland Republic), Dr Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke, while agitating for union with their other neighbours into the Greater Somalia project noted:

...Our neighbours are our Somali kinsmen whose citizenship [i.e., Djibouti, Ethiopia-Ogaadeen, Northern Frontier District in Kenya] has been falsified by indiscriminate boundary 'arrangements.' They have to move across artificial frontiers to their pasturelands. *They occupy the same terrain and pursue the same pastoral economy as ourselves. We speak the same language. We share the same creed, the same culture and the same traditions.* How can we regard our brothers as foreigners?... (From Lewis, 1963: 151, emphasis added).

Again, we notice here that despite speaking the language of cultural identity, the Prime Minister blends it with reference to the political economy as he mentions their pasturelands and a pastoral economy. Again, we learn here that the language of unioning foregrounded cultural homogeneity over everything else. It is also possible that to achieve political economic growth, but the intelligentsia of the time, viewed cultural unity as the starting point.

In Somaliland, the colonial records indicate that until 1957, executive and legislative powers in Somaliland remained solely in the hands of the Governor.³⁹ This is in spite of the fact that in July 1947, the Protectorate Advisory Council composed of chiefs, tribal, religious community representatives and representatives of Arab and Indian populations had been formed. However, although the Advisory Council had remained powerless, it marked the first steps to the formation of government institutions in Somaliland which would be in the hands of the Somalis. In 1957, Executive and Legislative Councils were formed and contained of unofficial members who had been nominated by the Governor. Their first assignment was to find ways of turning unofficial members into official ones. The commission, which headed the assignment, produced a constitution in January 1959. With the introduction of a new constitution, elections were held in February 1960 under universal adult male suffrage. Out of 33 seats, the Somali National League got 20, Somali United Party 12, and Somali United Front one. The two parties with the majority seats formed a coalition government, and Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal, who was leader of SNL, became Minister of Local Government and head of Government Business. Governor appointed 4 Ministers and 1

³⁹ "Colonial Office Report on the Protectorate Constitutional Conference." Held in London in May 1960. Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Colonies by Command of Her Majesty, May 1960, pp. 3-4.

Assistant Minister. These went on the spearhead the independence agenda, which, for the most part was driven by the desire to join with Somalia.

During a ten-day conference at the Colonial Office in London, which started on 2 May 1960 going up to May 12, the Somaliland delegation, which included Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal, [Other delegates included Ahmed Haji Dualeh, Ali Gerad Jama and Haji Ibrahim Nur] who had just become Minister of Local Government and had become Head of Government Business in the Somaliland Legislature, “confirmed Somaliland’s desire *to achieve independence and unite with Somalia* when the country becomes independent on 1st July.⁴⁰ During the talks, they “emphasised that the policy commanded enthusiastic support of the people of the Protectorate” (ibid). For the reason of uniting with Somalia whose date for independence the UN General Assembly had scheduled and the UK had voted in support, granting independence to Somaliland had to be sped up.⁴¹ No date for Somaliland independence had been set. Indeed, during the conference, after paying tribute to the successive governments in the Protectorate, the Somaliland delegates “acknowledged that there were many legal, constitutional and practical problems to be resolved if independence were to be achieved in a short time *but felt none of them were insuperable*” (ibid, emphasis added).

Indeed, the colonial government was aware of the “deep feelings behind the motion” (ibid, 15). These feelings were indeed strong to the extent that they made other considerations (such as treaties of protection that the British colonial government had signed with specific tribes in Berbera in 1884 and 1886 for protection; continued public service to the Protectorate; and trans-frontier grazing rights over the Haud) look small. The Somaliland delegates were so interested in a quicker independence agenda to the point that they postponed all these other issues to an unspecified later date (ibid, 5).

⁴⁰ Colonial Office Report, ibid. p. 4.

⁴¹ In December 1959, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a resolution that Somalia, under Italian Trusteeship, should become independent on 1st July 1960. The U.K. voted for this resolution. The protectorate’s Legislative Council met on 6th April, 1960 and with the unanimous support of all the elected members, passed the following resolution: — “THAT it is the opinion of this House that practical steps should be taken forthwith for the immediate unification of the protectorate and Somalia, THAT prompt action is essential to achieve this most cherished aim, and can be full justified by the special importance which popular feelings in the country attaches to its early achievement, THAT a bold and definite action be taken, and THAT the date for Independence and unification with Somalia must be 1st July 1960, the date when Somalia would attain its full freedom.” This ended in the 2-12 May 1960 conference in London.

There was no way these issues, in all their absolute importance, were going to stand between independence and union with Somalia. Making sense of this “popular feeling,” for independence and unification with Somalia, Touval (1967) has noted that this could have been prompted by the traditional resentment to the actions of the colonial government that often interfered with traditional lifestyles.

The very notion of international boundaries ran counter to the requirements of the Somalis’ nomadic existence. True, Somalis, continuing their seasonal migrations after the fashion of their forefathers, paid (and still pay) little attention to the existence of frontiers (1967: 62).

Although this could come across as orientalist, Touval highlights the nomadic nature of the Somali cultural behaviour (see also, Samatar, 2016: 79). Elsewhere, Touval continues “that nomadic tribes had been influenced by the British or Italians only to a very limited extent, the nomadic population had remained culturally homogenous” (1967: 109). We could conclude here that the first explanation for this “deep feeling” for a unified Somalia is in cultural homogeneity. According to I. M. Lewis (1965) and Abdi Ismail Samatar (1989), we can add that the idea of homogeneity also thrived on religious and linguistic unity. The alien government, Touval has noted “represented Christian infidel rule” (1967, 62), which the Somalis resisted and they would do so by uniting as Muslims (see also, Bradbury, 1997).

Abdi Ismail Samatar has noted that Somalis from the British protectorate were the strongest supporters of union. In a letter from “Somali elders to the secretary of colonies” written 17 August 1946, community leaders from the protectorate articulated their longing for unification in the following terms:

We unanimously and strongly desire the amalgamation of the following four Somali territories, *the inhabitants of which speak the same language, belong to the same religion, and are similar in their general outlook, mode of living and customs*: Ogaden territory; the territory presently known as Somalia; the territory presently known as Somaliland protectorate; all that part of Ethiopia in which the majority of the inhabitants are and have, from time immemorial, been Somalis (cf. Samatar, 2016: 78, emphasis added).

Again, language, religion and customs are central in the pursuit of “Somali ha noolato.” Even in the popular culture of the time, this was the language through which the artistic intelligentsia mobilized for the united Somali Republic. In a renowned epic poem of independence in Somaliland, poet Abdullahi Sultan Timacade (reproduced in its entirety in the appendix), refers to religion, culture and language as the glue that binds the five different territories into which colonialism had split the Somalis. In this poem, Timacade is in full praise of the flag, which speaks to *Somalinimo* or Somali nationalism. Indeed, the poem is titled, in reference to the flag, “Kaana siib, kanna saar,” which is, “Lower the Union Jack, and hoist ours.” In another translation, Boobe Yusuf Ducale (2012) noted that it was “Lower down theirs, and rise up ours,” explaining the use of “kaa,” which is “that,” and “kan,” which is “this” had power in itself: “**That** stood for the hated British flag; **This**, for the beloved Somali flag (Ducale, 2012: 53). According to Ducale, the power of this poem was more vivid in performance.⁴²

Allah the omnipresent
 Who pronounced everything in the Quran,
 The creator who differentiated Saciira from Naciima
 When the last call is made
 And all creation is resurrected
 And you (Allah) segregate the good from evil
 God forgive our misdeeds
 (*Translation from Samatar, 2016: 89*)

We note from this opening stanza that this is thanksgiving and praise to the Almighty God for having enabled the people of Somalia to be liberated. By opening with a supplication to Allah, the poet highlights the bonds that unite Somalis, namely, their religion, which is Islam. In another stanza below, Timacade is more straightforward with his appraisal of the flag and the Muslim identity of the Somali peoples.

The one flag that Islam’s holy men saw in secrecy
 The flag that has been foretold
 The religious saints and the sheikhs,
 The children and women,

⁴² Interview, Boobe Yuusuf Ducale, 14 November, 2013, Hargeysa.

Who recite Quran on Fridays,
The one presented to us only by the Almighty God,
And not by other creatures or subjects.

(Translation by Boobe Yuusuf Ducale, 2012: 55)

The poem quickly moves to speaking the language of unity of customs, and brotherhood. The flag stands to signify peace and a cool breeze:

The one that evicted clannism and its vices
The one that settled conflicts and disputes
The one that made us brothers unifying our goals.

(Translation by Boobe Yuusuf Ducale, 2012: 55)

We note at this moment that articulation for unification even in popular literature and culture spoke the language of culture, religion and language. The national flag of the Somali republic symbolically represented the coming together of five colonially split Somali-lands.

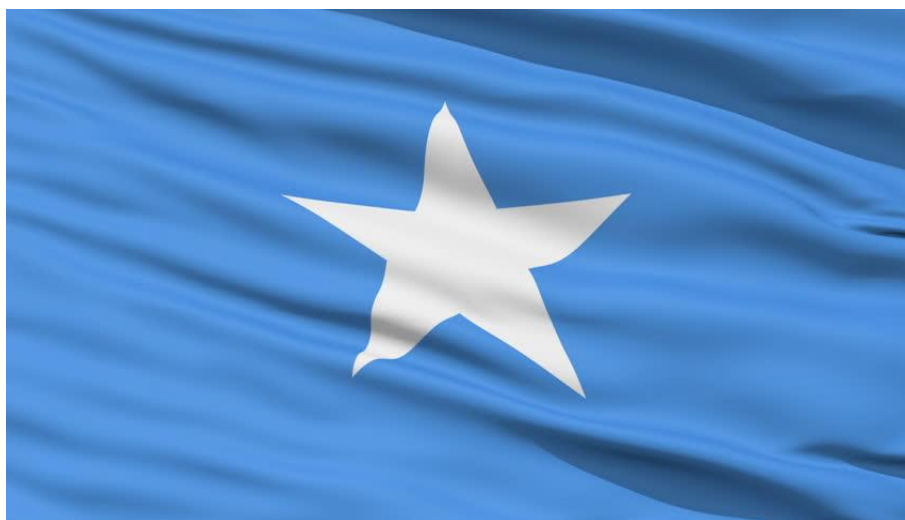


Image VII: Flag of independent and united Somalia. The five white stars symbolise the different territories in which different colonial powers had split the Somali peninsula: Somalia, Somaliland, Northern Frontier districts of Kenya, Ogaadeen Ethiopia, and Djibouti.

It is also worth noting that while unioning around culture and religion, Somalis wanted to build a modern nation state, inspired by western ideas of modernity. In Timacade's epic poem, he is quick to take a swipe at the colonialists, highlighting the privileges that they enjoyed at the expense of the colonised:

The ones that deceived us,
The ones that have divided us into portions,
The ones that have been eating our flesh
While the belt was falling from our waist
Who have exploited our wealth,
whose thighs exude the loot revealed by their tight-fitting shorts
Who had splendid villas,
With fabulous beds to sleep and rest,
and closets loaded with stuff
With a servant to care for and wash their cars
With nine cooks and a boy to serve
With a babysitter to mind their kids,
With other servants to rear their horses
These are the ones now obligated to pack and leave.
*(Translation by Boobe Yuusuf Ducale, 2012: 57)*⁴³

The poem highlights the several privileges that were enjoyed by the colonisers. In chastising the colonisers, there is an implicit longing to own these privileges. Indeed, these could be read as the new mediations of modernity of the moment where, by uniting, the Somali people would benefit themselves from the privileges of modernity. This could also be found in some earlier stanzas which emphasised development and prosperity.

Through several sections of the colonial documents of the May 1960 meeting, ideas of drafting the Somaliland constitution, defining citizenships, and international diplomacy were debated indicating a longing to develop a modern nation state. But like several other post-colonial regimes, there was a longing to have the modern state bed-rocked in culture and historical experience (Mamdani, 2001). In the course of these deliberations, despite pursuing a union on cultural and historical precedents, it is interesting to note that Somaliland nationalism also had modernist tendencies derived from a colonial epistemology (Chatterjee, 1986). Take for example, concerned about the financial conditions in independent Somaliland soon unioning with Somalia, the Somaliland delegation explained.

⁴³ Lines with asterisks were picked from Samatar's translation. The translation was more powerful than Boobe Yuusuf Ducale's.

If union with Somalia took place, it was intended that there should be one Treasury, and, as early as predictable, one budget... The Somaliland delegation gave assurance that the existing level of services and of development in Somaliland would be maintained, and that the pattern of administration should remain to such extent that the services now available to the people of Somaliland would be maintained.⁴⁴

As the intelligentsia was destroying the colonial borders and uniting under the banner of culture, they were debating building a modern financial system after the colonial model. The language and lenses through which development was discussed is undoubtedly after a colonial epistemology. Tellingly, as colonial borders were being rejected, the delegates were accepting a £1.5M in aid to be given to the country in the first year of independence. In this gesture and several others of this nature, Somaliland was being connected to the western capitalist economic models as the national anti-colonial intelligentsia cheered on, yet at the same time pursued an anticolonial model that embraced a traditionalist vision. Chatterjee (1986) has spoken about the “liberal-rationalist dilemma in talking about nationalist thought” where nationalism rejected colonial epistemologies of modernity by arguing for the sustenance of cultural traditions, but also sought to be modern at the same time. Indeed, Touval noted that being united by a common ancestry presented the growth of national thought in Somalia with several challenges. Somali nationalists “with modernist tendencies are greatly troubled by the tribal nature of their political system. They are opposed to tribalism because it hinders a rational approach to economic and social problems (1967: 85),” Touval noted making reference to the dilemma of the anti-colonial intelligentsia faced juggling traditionalist sentiments in a rather modern colonial inspired state. Writing about Somalia-Mogadishu, Lidwien Kapteijns makes this dilemma even more visible in her 2009 essay, “Discourse on Moral Womanhood in Somali Popular Songs, 1960-1990.” Focused on women’s rights in the new Somali nationalist worldview, Kapteijns notes that nationalist movements had challenges with the requirement to remain authentically culturally identifiable – and modern at the same time:

Thus, discourses about women’s rights and emancipation in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century Middle East and elsewhere in the Islamic world were both enabled and circumscribed by the anti-colonial, nationalist movements for

⁴⁴ “Colonial Office Report on the Protectorate Constitutional Conference.” Held in London in May 1960.

independence of which they were a crucial part. *Both movements – nationalism and women’s emancipation – were characterized by their will to be modern while ‘preserving’ their notions of cultural authenticity and authentic morality, and by their goal of ending Western colonial rule while emulating aspects of liberal Western philosophies and institutions (2009: 101-102, emphasis added).*

Touval’s position about nationalists, “with modernist tendencies are greatly troubled by the tribal nature of their political system” is in tandem with Kapteijns’ observation of the challenges of ‘preserving’ their notions of cultural authenticity and authentic morality, and by their goal of ending Western colonial rule while emulating aspects of liberal Western philosophies and institutions,” in the decolonisation project. Writing in 1997, Mark Bradbury emphasising the position of tradition in the imagining of Somalia in 1960:

At independence, Somalia was considered a unique state in Africa, being founded on a single ethnic group—the Somali—whose ethnicity was defined by a common language (af-Somali) a pastoral economy, an adherence to Islam (sunni), and a clan-based political system (1997: 2)

It becomes clearer that specific notions of tradition played a key part in the imagining of Somaliland, understandable as specifically culture, Islam and a clan based political system [However, as earlier observed, opposition to clan-based political systems, and clannist tendencies was one of the pillars driving the first nationalist political parties across the Somali territories]. As Chatterjee pointed out, the liberal-rationalist dilemma remained resilient (1986: 30) in all anti-colonial projects and the intelligentsia had to play a delicate balancing act—decolonise and modernise, that is, modernise, but remain “authentically” culturally identifiable. It is insightful that as the country disintegrated during the military rule of Mohamed Siyad Barre, the world was “puzzled” as to why just 30 years later, “an apparently homogenous society should be wrecked by such internal strife” (ibid). However, as Schlee (2008) has pointed out, this should have been no surprise as homogeneity does not translate directly into peaceful existence. Indeed, this period brings to light scholarship and activism deconstructing Somali nationalism and the narratives of homogeneity upon which it was claimed to be wound. As discussed in the previous chapter, plenty of scholarship has questioned the notion of a homogenous Somali identity calling it one of those myths, while at the same time, somewhat inexplicably, the homogeneity claim remains popular in public domain as an unproblematic talking point.

The yearning to deconstruct the notion of a “homogenous Somali”, signals to the existence of a “certain” view of tradition during the imagining of Somali republic—which in the above context, a problematically homogenised Somaliness. But also, it points to the challenges of the building of a culturally sensitive national consciousness in a decolonising moment against the desires to be modern. Ahmed makes it clear that diverse sensibilities of Somaliness were silenced as European notions of modernity influenced the process of imagining Somalia. Ahmed’s sense of foreboding is premised on the understanding that “19th-century European view of the nation-state—same race/ethnic language, religion etc.” (Ahmed ed. 1995: 142) formed the ways in which Somali nation-state came to be understood, imagined and thus narrativized.⁴⁵

Thrown into five different borders during colonialism, the Somali people across the Horn sought unification on the understanding that they had a homogenous heritage, which, as earlier discussed, came to be a dominant way of narrating and agitating for union encompassing all the other factors which contributed to this sensibility (economic issues around the Haud, Italian colonialism, and the resistance of the Sayyid Mohammad Abdille Hassan). Having achieved this cherished idea of unioning, and after going through the interregnum of failed dreams that included a deleterious civil war (Issa-Salwe, 1996), a clan cleansing campaign (Kapteijns, 2013) and several other afflictions, the intelligentsia in Somaliland has come to revisit the 1960 moment of unification—which they now see as a mistake and a rushed decision. Interestingly, one of the brains behind the unification in 1960, Haji Ibrahim Egal went on to become the second President of independent Somaliland in 1993.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ This is would seem like an exception since colonial boundaries never considered ethnic boundaries and many times cut through singular communities. However, one quickly realises that after the boundaries had been set what followed was a process of panel beating these myriad ethnic communities bound together into a nation beginning from the advocacy of a secular state and secular state institutions.

⁴⁶ It is important to note though that in much of the writing on Somaliland independence on 1991, the intelligentsia is believed to have played a peripheral role in the decision to secede. It is claimed that secession was forced onto the intelligentsia by the masses and the elders (see for example, Bradbury, 2008; Bryden, 1994).

Somaliland Secedes

With the collapse of the Mohammed Siyad Barre regime in 1991, Somaliland has been involved in a slow-moving campaign at home and abroad to craft an identity and engineer a new beginning.⁴⁷ During the civil war, there were several armed movements fighting the government of Mohammed Siyad Barre from different corners of the country.⁴⁸ In north-western Somalia, in Somaliland, this group was called the Somali National Movement (SNM), and it is this movement that is credited for the secession of Somaliland from Somalia. Founded in April 1981 in London by mostly members of the Isaaq clan – who form the majority clan in former British Somaliland – this movement is one of the many that stretched the government of Siyad Barre bringing about its collapse in 1991. By forming the SNM, members of the Isaaq community from Riyadh and London went ahead and declared war on the government of Mohamad Siyad Barre. Initially based in London, they moved to Ethiopia just a year later, and the Ethiopians who had just defeated Mohammad Siyad Barre in the Ogaadeen war of 1977 were more willing to support any rebel organisation antagonising Siyad Barre even more. The original intention of the SNM was not of secession but of bringing order and democracy to *all* Somalia. However, there was one radical demand of the SNM: the demanded for inclusion of clan system in the general administration/politics of the country noting that tradition hallmarked stability. Bradbury has written:

What was radical about the manifesto was the way it acknowledged that the clan system lay at the root of political stability, social cohesion and economic activity, and argued that the government in Somalia should blend traditional Somali egalitarianism and requirements of good central government... This challenged the political orthodoxy in Somali which, since before independence, had viewed clannism as divisive and antithetical to unity and progress and advocated its elimination (2008: 63).

⁴⁷ In areas including Laascaanood, Buuhoodle and Taleex who formed the Khatumo state have remained opposed to idea of secession with Somaliland (Höhne, 2015: 78). For example, a renowned academic from the Somaliland region of Gebileh, Professor Ahmed Ismail Samatar participated in the 2012 presidential elections in Somalia-Mogadishu in full display of his support for the united republic, and has been vocal in his denunciation of secession until more recently when he appeared to have changed his mind. But as I will show later in this dissertation, there is a sizeable constituency of people opposed to secession from within Somaliland territory but this group has remained on the margins of the mainstream discourse, which is pro-secession.

⁴⁸ These included the Somali Salvation Front (SSF) formed by Col. Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed and former High Court Judge Osman Nuur Ali Qonof. Other included the south Somalia-based Somali Patriotic Front (SPF) headed by Col. Ahmed Omar Jeas. There was also the United Somali Congress (USC) headed by former Information Minister Ali Wardhigley. This was soon joined by General Mohammad Farah Aydiid.

Indeed, after declaring secession, Somaliland has been credited for being able to build stable systems by blending traditional values such as Heer into the general administration. The institution of the *Guurti* (House of Elders), where clan elders sit and have more power over the elected representatives in Parliament has been hailed for helping the country keep the peace and unite the country. Indeed, the picture that emerges here is that we start to see a revision of the dreams that inspired the anti-colonial movement: While almost all the modern nationalist political movements in both Italian Somalia and British Somaliland powerfully preached against clannism, the SNM espoused integrating clans into the political formation of Somalia, which in effect turns the entire anti-colonial dream on its head. But the point I want to emphasise here is that in suggesting to integrate clans into general administration, the SNM was not seeking to apply this to only Somaliland, this was a suggestion for the entire country—Somalia. Thus, in its formation, the SNM stood for a reformed administration, not in Hargeysa (where there was no government), but Mogadishu, which was the capital of the united Republic.

In 1983, SNM made its first attack raiding Mandera Prison and Adaadle Armoury in Berbera area. At the prison, many (political) prisoners were released, and also weapons were stolen at the armoury. However, despite this attack and several others that followed, the SNM remained largely merely an irritant to the regime than a serious rebel movement (Bradbury, 2008: 61). It was until 1988, when the SNM launched an attack on Burco and Hargeysa that the government in Mogadishu chose to change tactics and take it the movement more seriously.

Following the meeting between Mohammad Siyad Barre and Mengistu Haile Mariam of Ethiopia in Djibouti in 1986, both governments, Ethiopia and Somalia agreed to stop supporting rebel groups on either side. Somalia had supported the Western Somaliland Liberation Front (WSLF), which was fighting for the liberation of Ogaadeen from Ethiopia. Once the agreement was reached, the SNM, had to be dismissed from Ethiopian territory and had its radio, Radio Halgan closed (Issa-Salwe, 1996: 99). Upon learning this development, and before they could be rounded up and arrested, the SNM decided to enter Somali territory and fight from within. They thus launched an attack on Somalia and carved off territory for a full-fledged guerrilla war. On 27 and 31 May

1988, the SNM launched attacks on government installations in Burco and Hargeysa respectively. Just fresh from defeat in 1977 in the Ethiopia-Somali war over Ogaadeen, and tired of fighting at several fronts since so many rebel groups were fighting his government, Siyad Barre sought to teach SNM a lesson they will never forget. In a rather savage response to the May 1988 SNM attack, Siyad Barre's carpet bombardment had Hargeysa left in ruins. Hussein Adam (2008) has narrated that

Siyad's army, turned its firepower including its air force and artillery, against the civilian population, causing predictably high casualties. Even in those towns spared of SNM attacks, the army engaged in looting on a massive scale; women were raped as hundreds of people were shot and their homes and businesses ransacked" (2008: 91).

With fighter jets setting off from the Hargeysa airport, which is about 10 kilometres away from the city, they bombed the town to ground. Estimates have showed that over 50,000 people were killed and 400,000 displaced. Against a city of less than a million people, Hargeysa and Burco were reduced to rubble (Issa-Salwe, 1996; Adam, 2008). Around this period, the centre could not hold anymore. Siyad Barre's government was close to collapsing and fighting intensified from different corners of the country.⁴⁹ In January 1991, after intense fighting in Mogadishu, Mohammad Siyad Barre fled the country leaving behind a power vacuum, which is yet to be filled to this day.

On the side of Somaliland, in May 1991, during a meeting in Burco, that came to be called, "The Grand Conference of Northern Peoples", the SNM was overwhelmed by public opinion, which agitated for independence from Somalia. Bradbury has written that secession had not been on the agenda but the main agenda item had been cessation of hostilities among conflicting tribes (2008: 80-81). Bradbury continues that a number of factors could have contributed to the change of heart and demand cessation from the

⁴⁹ After calls for negotiation from different corners—internal and external, from the Manifesto Group and Egypt and Italy respectively failed, with USC/Aydiid pursuing military victory, more fighting was witnessed in the capital Mogadishu. Short of calling it genocide, Lidwien Kapteijns (2013) narrates how a dictatorial regime, using clan as a technology of power, turned one clan against another inspiring cataclysmic levels of violence unseen before (see also, Besteman, 1996). Kapteijns tells the stories of how "political entrepreneurs," obsessed with power "encouraged, enabled, and allowed ordinary Somali people to humiliate, rob, rape, maim, kill and expel other Somalis now constructed as the clan enemy" (2013: 3). In Mogadishu, during this period of fighting, it is estimated that over a million people died in the period between 1989-1991.

public. These included the amount of devastation that Hargeysa had seen, the mending of relations with Ethiopia after it had hosted many refugees fleeing fire in Somalia, and the speed with which Farah Aydiid's movement (one of the rebel movements that had fought intensely against Siyad Barre in the south and was now in Mogadishu) quickly formed a government without any consultations with the SNM (ibid). All these made the Somalilanders fearful and sceptical about a possible repeat of marginalisation and mistreatment from Mogadishu governments. Despite all these writings on the wall, the SNM central executive was still considering joining forces with Mogadishu before events took another turn. Mark Bradbury (2008) whose book, *Becoming Somaliland* remains the most authoritative historical account of the secession of Somaliland from Somalia has written on how the SNM succumbed to public pressure to declare independence from Mogadishu:

On 15 May, an agitated crowd, including SNM fighters, surrounded the building where the SNM congress was meeting after hearing on Radio Mogadishu that the SNM had agreed to hold negotiations with southern political leaders in Cairo. Witness describes how with chants of 'no more Mogadishu' they demanded the SNM central committee to declare the 1960 Act of Union null and void...With some reluctance, the SNM central committee acceded to popular demand and included in the conference conclusions a resolution establishing the Republic of Somaliland (2008: 81-82).

On 18 May 1991, after three months of deliberations, Somaliland declared independence from Somalia-Mogadishu. Since then, Somaliland has been involved in a process of mobilising for international recognition as an independent state, but also mobilising national consciousness as Somaliland different from Somalia. This process has involved several other processes, which form the central questions of this dissertation.

Chapter Five

POPULAR CULTURE: THEORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

As earlier noted, this project uses popular culture not only as source materials but also as mediations (Kapteijns, 2010) of history and aspirations in Hargeysa. Memories, aspirations, histories, and futures are packaged, presented, negotiated and mobilised through the vehicle of popular culture. The main purpose of this chapter is to explain and offer context to popular culture (a) as a tool of mobilisation, but also as useful in the study of sentiments, (b) as deployed in this project of mine, and as a method of historiography. I have divided this chapter into three sub-sections: The first section discusses the different approaches and major debates in the study of popular culture. This discussion enables my deployment of popular culture to emerge, as I focus on the communicative power of popular culture – focusing in production, reproduction, dissemination, and aesthetics (McLuhan, 1965; Levine, 1988; Zemon Davis, 1992; Barber, 1987). Concluding this subsection, I create two *functional* categories under which I group and interrogate the popular cultural items and practices gathered in the field. These categories are “officially sponsored popular culture,” and “unofficially sponsored popular culture.” In these categories, emphasis is on “sponsored” to underscore, not necessarily the creative hands behind a specific item or practice but rather the entire infrastructure – creative, political and financial – upon which these items and practices thrive. Persuaded by popular culture’s expressive power; as a vehicle of communication and a playground for contending views, the idea of “sponsorship” underscores a power relation, where the sponsor (the state, individual, or group of individuals) has absolute power to determine what is spoken or silenced. To this end, the category officially sponsored culture is composed of items that come into being under the auspices of the state. Unofficially sponsored popular culture on the other hand, constitutes items created and supported by individuals in their private capacities. It is urgent to note here that these two categories are not necessarily dichotomies despite appearing in opposition of each other. Indeed, as the analyses and conclusions reveal unofficially sponsored popular culture, for example, does not embody a singular sentiment: while some pieces complement the ideations espoused by the officially sponsored items; others have modified, and in other cases, openly opposed officialdom espousing a diametric position altogether.

In the second section, I define and elaborate on the items that constitute popular culture in the discursive and tangible form. This section thus describes the characteristic features of the items of popular culture selected and discussed in this dissertation: These were (a) aesthetic craft and performativity in the sense that they “exhibit to an appreciable degree the artistic characteristics of accurate observation, vivid imagination and ingenious expression” (Bukonya and Nandwa, 1986). Also included are practices that are learned and repeated over a period as items of popular culture (Wedeen, 2008). (b) These items were also widely circulated and easily seen and viewed (Levine, 1988; Zemon Davis, 1992), which then enabled them communicative and expressive power. Also included is a discussion on how this wide circularity and viewership is established.

Since this project is partly an exercise in writing history, in the third section of this chapter, I engage the debates on sources of history and historiography. The ambition is not to offer a new argument to the debate whether the arts are reliable sources of historical material, but to provide context and background to my decision to use popular culture as *the* sources for writing a (political-social) history of secessionist nationalism and identity formation in post-1991 Somaliland. Let me start with a discussion on the major debates and approaches to popular culture and how the functional categories of mine (official and unofficial) emerge.

Approaches to Popular Culture

The scholarship on what constitutes, and how we should think about popular culture is huge and varied. Interestingly, there has never been consensus, neither on the definition nor the analytical-conceptual frames of popular culture. But there are several insightful pointers into the field. The approaches to popular culture often touch origin, location, consumption, target audience, function, and modes of production of popular culture. These approaches sometimes embody all or some of the attributes above while other times, scholars have tended to focus only on one attribute making it the most definitive feature of popular culture. In some general terms, there is belief that popular culture started after the age of the industrial revolution (or more specifically the rise of capitalism in the English countryside in the 1600s) where societies became divided along class lines (Strinati, 1995; Storey 2001; Macdonald, 1960, Nye, 1971, Parker,

2011). The lower classes started producing and utilizing popular culture for comfort but also for protest. This indeed claims popular culture as having first emerged in the United Kingdom and other European societies that industrialized in the same time. The underside of this belief is the implied claim that peasant societies in places such as Africa, Asia or the Caribbean did not have popular culture. This is a problematic proposition as plenty of scholarship has showed the presence of popular culture in peasant societies in Africa and elsewhere (Barber, 1987; Fabian, 1973, Bukenya and Nandwa, 1986, Parker, 2011). There is another belief that popular culture is simply a vehicle of communication, a site of contending views and thus irrespective of its location, and function or producers, it has been available to humans across history to use in their pursuit of different agendas (McLuhan, 1965; Levine, 1988; Zemon Davis, 1992; Barber, 1987). This belief is persuasive as it acknowledges the presence of popular culture across different communities in different forms. The idea of passing on messages and convincing wide or only the intended audiences is core to human interaction, and popular culture is then viewed as an enabler of persuasive communication – with its aesthetic appeals. How these beliefs emerge is at the core of the discussion that follows.

Karin Barber's exploratory essay on the assertive presence and influence of popular arts and cultures in Africa appeared in September 1987. Okot p' Bitek's theoretical-historicist essay "Artiste the Ruler" proclaiming the supremacy of the artistes in political and social negotiation had appeared earlier in 1986.⁵⁰ This time marked the growing interests in folklore and oral literature (see Finnegan, 1970; Bukenya and Nandwa, 1986), and not necessarily the popular arts although these two – oral literature-folklore and popular culture – share plenty of features in common especially the aesthetic craft and composition. In their works, both Barber and p'Bitek offered insightful thoughts on the presence and status of popular cultures and arts in Africa – and how the arts were redefining the field of politico-social mobilization and influencing consciousness, and scholarship at the same time. The 1990s were really an explosion in interest of popular culture. More writing appeared on popular culture

⁵⁰ It must have appeared even earlier because the book, *Artiste the Ruler: Essay on Art, Culture and Values*, in which the essay is contained was published posthumously in 1986. Okot p'Bitek had died in 1982.

(music, song, poetry, cartoons, paintings, advertisement) in Africa including Pieterse (1995), Burke (1996), Mloma (1991) Furniss (1996) Dolby (2001). More ambitiously, anthropologist Johannes Fabian's (1996) published a popular history of Zaire (now Democratic Republic of Congo) through the paintings of a single painter, Tshibumba Matulu – in *Remembering the Present*. In these works, the field of popular culture in Africa opened more widely showing how popular culture was a powerful force enabling the negotiation of social and other issues is succinctly made. But while these works demonstrated the presence of popular arts in cultures in Africa, few did little to theorize the genre more concretely – say as material culture, in terms that would differentiate it from folklore or oral literature.

With the world becoming more connected through capitalism and the opposition to it, and categories such as first, second and third world becoming obsolete (Aijaz, 1992), popular culture emerged as more powerfully as a vehicle for protest and as also a place where anti-capitalism [and more recently pro-capitalism] messages could be persuasively and widely articulated and disseminated. Two seminal texts which also appeared the 1990s in the western world offer theoretical starting points on the definition of popular culture. These are John Storey's (1993) *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture, An Introduction* and Dominic Strinati's (1995) *An Introduction to the Theories of Popular Culture*. Strinati, builds from the Frankfurt school of postmodernism and cuts through the different ways in which scholars often approached the subject of popular culture. Driven mostly by Marxist thought, Strinati leans towards the critic of capital and its excesses in defining popular culture. The conversation focuses on an ongoing contest between labour, capital and consumption: mass culture, mass production, industrial culture, feminism, and the façade of the Enlightenment (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1944). John Storey (1993) on the other his part was driven by notions of culture and acculturation; learning and unlearning. Inspired by the work of Raymond Williams on capital, cultures and mobilization of nationhood in Great Britain, Storey leans towards notions relating to the construction, mobilizing or manufacturing a worldview; a tradition or a common sense. These two works (Strinati and Storey) hand in hand theoretically define the commonest ways in which popular culture is often thought about both in the political science and humanities. While discussing the different approaches to popular culture, it becomes clear that items or practices considered as popular culture tend to embody multiple worldviews (as

discussed below) and the scholar is challenged to choose an approach to foreground over the others, but not that all the others are meaningless. There is visible fluidity in the features that tend to define popular culture as they move and modify, and also constantly get repackaged.

Dominic Strinati (1995), has summarized popular culture into three thematic categories as definitive of the field. The first theme concerns questions about *what or who determines* popular culture (1995: 2). Questions here relate to “Where does popular culture come from?... Does popular culture rise up from the people ‘below’, or does it sink down from elites ‘on high’, or is it rather a question of an interaction between the two?” (1995: 2-3). Notions of control are visible in this way of thinking about popular culture. The idea is that if a tradition came from above, the people at the bottom shall be conditioned to conform. At the same time, this question also speaks to the well-known categories and distinctions such as “high” against “mass” culture. This brings in the question of who is producing the art pieces. Is it the creative mind of a single individual, is it industries producing and forced their items onto the people? For example, in the areas of fashion, hygiene or beauty (see for example, Wolf, 1990; Burke, 1996). To this end, the question of “cultural capital” becomes visible (Parker, 2011): How much cultural capital is involved in producing elite culture on the one hand and popular culture on the other? As will be made clear in a while, the claim that popular culture is what remains after high culture has been consumed (Storey, 2001, Parker 2011) follows from the understanding that generally, popular culture is a vulgarized form of elite or high culture. It takes little effort and smarts to produce, and the consumers are easily manipulable.

Strinati’s (1995) second thematic category is the influence of commercialization and industrialization of popular culture. With the rise of the quest for profits, Strinati points to mass production as capitalism is obsessed with accumulating more and more profits. This does not speak to quality, but simply mass production. Does “profitability and marketability take precedence over quality, artistry, integrity and intellectual challenge?” Or if quality were considered, does it mean popularity of a cultural item is related to its being of high quality? Strinati continues “does the increasingly universal market for popular culture ensure that it is truly popular because people are availed with and cultured into consuming commodities that they actually want? What wins when

popular culture is manufactured industrially and sold according to the criteria of marketability and profitability: commerce or quality? (1995: 4). Here, you are struck by the implied impression that what constitutes popular is the lucrative; the commercially profitable – as it is produced for large groups and widely marketed irrespective of quality and people needs. In other words, the power to bring in good returns is a crucial yardstick for judging a popular cultural item. Evident here is that the market starts to occupy a special place in our reading and thinking about popular culture as Strinati juxtaposes the market against art. But it is worth noting that markets are never free as they are claimed to be determined by the forces of demand and supply. Markets often suffer political and regulatory interference from the regimes of power at the time. This could mean, otherwise important items of popular culture could be denied chance to flourish because of the challenges in the market and instead inferior items could flourish because of favorable policies from market regulators.

Strinati's third thematic categorization concerns the ideological role of popular culture: "Is popular culture there to indoctrinate the people, to get them to accept and adhere to ideas and values which ensure the continued dominance of those in more privileged positions who thus exercise power over them?" (1995:4). This is closely related to the first thematic category although it does not focus on high or low, simply the idea of influencing thought and worldview. Could it be that popular culture "is about rebellion and opposition to the prevailing social order" as is common in political science discourses? "Does it express, in however an imperceptible, subtle and rudimentary manner, resistance to those in power, and the subversion of dominant ways of thinking and acting? (ibid). The picture emergent in these questions is the idea that popular culture could be open to either side of the aisle, the exploiter and the exploited. It could be used in control of communities by those with power, or for protesting the shackles of power and control. These questions appear inspired the debate on "mass culture" which involves manipulation of the public by the producers of popular culture especially those in power or the cultural industry (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1944). Strinati's question here is important later in this discussion as all sections of society (including rulers and the ruled, elite and non-elite, capitalists and laborers) have the opportunity and are constantly utilizing popular culture for myriad ends.

On his part, inspired by the work of Russel Nye (1971), Storey (2001 – first published in 1993) approaches popular culture in six different ways – not necessarily different from Strinati but focused on acculturation and learning. [Nye also offered six definitions relating to location, production, sophistication and nature of consumers which Storey builds on for his thesis]. We'll examine them here. In his first definition, Storey harps towards numbers where popular culture is “simply culture that is widely favored or well-liked by many people” (2001: 5). Storey considers circulation, presence and performativity as definitive features of popular culture.

We could examine sales of books, sales of CDs and DVDs. We could also examine attendance records at concerts, sporting events, and festivals. We could also scrutinize market research figures on audience preferences for different television programmes (ibid).

This definition bears the fruits of ethnography where the scholar has to appreciate an item as popular culture only in action. That is, it is considered popular culture if it can mobilize a big audience or travel widely. Storey himself makes suggestion about how we can tell that a piece of popular culture is favored by many people gleaned from say CD and Video sales if it were carried in those formats or gleaned from size of audiences present during a festival. In this definition too, we need to appreciate the dilemma of choice; many people can favor an item either out of own choosing or audiences could be coerced to attend or choose a particular item, say, by the government or other capitalist processes of mobilizing common tests say through aggressive advertising (Burke, 1996). And this deserves close examination as question about that which is “popular” often point towards some form of quantification, and we would be wondering whether numbers determine the cultural-political life of popular cultural items.

Storey's second way of thinking about popular culture foregrounds a classification and hierarchization. He notes that popular culture is what is left behind after high culture. He calls it “a residual category, there to accommodate texts and practices that fail to meet the required standards to qualify as high culture...popular culture as inferior culture” (ibid). As earlier noted with Strinati, there is a value judgement and a juxtaposition as “popular culture” is cast against another form of culture, the so-called “high culture,” which is assumed to be superior. The idea is that there exists a

sophisticated, complex and better version of culture, supposedly consumed by a sophisticated and elite category of people. Its production is deemed as equally sophisticated, and requiring of great smarts. Whatever else fails to make it in the bracket of high culture, then is popular culture. As earlier discussed, this definition often thrives on the understanding that “popular culture is mass-produced commercial culture, whereas high culture is the result of an individual act of great genius (2001: 6). Parker (2011) speaks to this definition noting that mass-production often embeds within it claims of industrial production or group manufacture rendering the final product at the end of the day of poor quality. Interestingly however, since the consumers of popular culture are assumed to care less about quality, they gobble this fluff (popular culture) without question (2001: 8). To this end, the audiences for popular culture as assumed as “a mass of non-discriminating consumers. The culture itself is formulaic, manipulative... It is a culture that is consumed with brain numbed and brain-numbing passivity” (ibid). These consumers categorized as *the mass* are not only nameless and invisible, but they only consume that which is given to them without discrimination. Strinati (1995) has written that under the mass culture (mass society theory), is embedded the “attempt to understand the rise of mass propaganda, the potential for elites to use the mass media to more systematically and pervasively cajole, persuade, manipulate and exploit the people than had previously been possible” (1995: 8). Storey has also pointed out that mass culture, may not be necessarily exploitative and manipulative but “as forms of public fantasy...is understood as a collective dream world...provides ‘escapism that is not an escape from or to anywhere, but an escape of our utopian selves” (2001: 9). In its proper context, the idea of “public fantasy”, “collective dream world” and “escapism” means the people/public who consume “mass culture” have dreams, which they can only realize through their association with mass culture. However, neither of this elevates their status as sober-brained and sophisticated people.⁵¹

Storey’s third definition makes reference to origin, with a vague category, “the people” as the source of popular culture. Storey writes, “the term should only be used to indicate

⁵¹ The problem with the value judgment and juxtaposition is that it assumes categories are fixed in time and place, yet as Levine (1988) has demonstrated in 1700s and 1800 America, Shakespeare was popular culture read by bus and truck drivers. It is nowadays considered more sophisticated high and not popular culture.

an 'authentic' culture of 'the people'. (2001: 9). Drawing allusions to folklore, this form of reading popular culture considers it as a form of folk culture: "a culture of the people for the people" (ibid). This definition, in addition to problematically claiming authenticity of cultures of the people (and by extension, the existence of inauthentic cultures), it also presupposes popular culture as a response of the ordinary people to the excess of power and capital. This definition is akin to the ways in which political scientist define and talk about "popular revolts" or "popular uprisings" as revolts of the people bent on challenging power and capital. The problem here is with defining "the people." Karin Barber (1987) speaks to the dilemmas of defining "the people," noting that it is a heavily politicized phrase, often shielded from scrutiny and close examination (1987: 4). Because the people could be used to myriad ends, this difficulty in defining it makes popular culture or the people itself as one of the most open-ended terms in humanities research.

The fourth definition declares popular culture as an open space available to any interests. It proclaims popular culture as a vehicle. This definition sidesteps all dichotomies and classist categorizations setting a rather neutral playground for contending interests. Here, Storey draws much from Antonio Gramsci, and his development and deployment of the concept of hegemony. Storey notes that Gramsci uses the term hegemony to refer to a situation where "dominant groups in society, through a process of 'intellectual and moral leadership, seek to win the consent of subordinate groups in society" (2001: 10). But it is not simply an imposition on the subordinate group, but rather a site of struggle and contest:

Those using this approach see popular culture as a site of struggle between the 'resistance' of subordinate groups and the forces of 'incorporation' operating in the interests of dominant groups. Popular culture in this usage is not the imposed culture of the mass culture theorists, nor is it an emerging from below, spontaneously oppositional culture of 'the people' – it is a terrain of exchange and negotiation between the two: a terrain, as already stated, marked by resistance and incorporation.

From the excerpt above, one gets the sense of the assumption of two contending groups using the space that popular culture provides. Those in power on the one hand, and the ordinary people on the other are seen as engaging in contest with popular culture as vehicle. But they could be more players and not necessarily those opposed to each

other. Indeed, Storey notes that the key concept in this hegemony theory is the idea of articulation where neither owns the space, but “both to express and to make a temporary connection” (2001: 11). It is not surprising that in a later definition, Storey insists that “postmodern culture is a culture that no longer recognizes the distinction between high and popular culture” (2001: 12). This signals us to infinite openness.⁵²

The “official” and “unofficially” *sponsored* categories

Storey (1993) and Strinati (1995) provide comprehensive analyses of the commonest approaches to popular culture that resonate with a great deal of old and recent scholarship (Barber, 1987, Fabian, 1977; Levine, 1988; Zemon-Davis, 1992, Askew, 2004). Hinds, Motz and Nelson’s (2006) edited book, *Popular Culture Theory and Methodology: A Basic Introduction* also offers insightful readings into the field of popular with texts ranging from Marxist thinkers to traditional historians where popular culture could be simply a record of facts, or a means of protest, and in some cases simply a vehicle. An essay by Russel Nye in the Hinds et. al. (2006) drew my attention to the book by Marshall McLuhan (1964) *Understanding Media: The Extension of Man*. McLuhan, and Nye are both radical on the ways in which we think about medias of information flow – especially over which of the two, between the media and the message, should be privileged over the other. In a section tellingly titled “The Media is the Message,” McLuhan through the imagery of the electric light, the railway line and airplane demonstrates how popular culture ought to privilege the media over the message. Thus, whatever way we look at popular culture, the difference is with the media.

An abstract painting represents direct manifestation of creative thought processes as they might appear in computer designs. What we are considering

⁵² But there is more to this in Storey’s reading. He notes about the disappearance of these distinctions is not only a merger of business and culture, but business seems to have finally trumped culture turning culture into an extension of business. To make his point more vivid, Storey gives the example of a growing situation where the artiste shows up in advert for a commercial product, and one is left wondering what is being sold; the artiste or the product. But the other side of this critique is that it ignores the fact that the artiste and the product could also supplement in promoting and selling each other. The fact the product can choose a specific artiste to sell its products is endorsement of the author’s quality and thus promotion of the artiste, and the artiste’s decision to promote a product is also acknowledgement of the goodness of the product as worthy associating with the artiste’s name thus working in a mutually benefiting relationship.

here, however, are the psychic and social consequences of the designs or patterns as they amplify or accelerate existing processes. For the "message" of any medium or technology is the change of scale or pace or pattern that it introduces into human affairs. The railway did not introduce movement or transportation or wheel or road into human society, but it accelerated and enlarged the scale of previous human functions, creating totally new kinds of cities and new kinds of work and leisure. This happened whether the railway functioned in a tropical or a northern environment, and is quite independent of the freight or content of the railway medium. The airplane, on the other hand, by accelerating the rate of transportation, tends to dissolve the railway form of city, politics, and association, quite independently of what the airplane is used for... [The] electric light. Whether the light is being used for brain surgery or night baseball is a matter of indifference. It could be argued that these activities are in some way the "content" of the electric light, since they could not exist without the electric light. *This fact merely underlines the point that "the medium is the message" because it is the medium that shapes and controls the scale and form of human association and action. The content or uses of such media are as diverse as they are ineffectual in shaping the form of human association* (1964: 7, emphasis added).

I am fascinated by the reference to the media as being supreme over content – although content becomes important at another level of the analysis. Equally fascinating is the fact that a lot can be done with the media (new and old things) but it is the discovery of the media that ought to be cherished – as it accelerates already existing processes. The medium is the message. This assertion fits seamlessly well into the fifth definition we considered where popular culture as a space, a medium for all categories of persons and different ends (see also, Levine, 1988). So, Natalie Zemon-Davis (1992) would define popular culture, after Lawrence Levine (1988) as “expressive culture” that is, “widely accessible and widely accessed; widely disseminated, and widely viewed or heard or read” (1992: 1411). In this approach, which emphasises communication and ability to travel makes visible a non-discriminative, non-hierarchical power of the popular culture. Hinds eds. (1996) would note that popular culture is “culture which is widely disseminated and consumed by large numbers of people (Hinds, et. al. eds., 1996). It is this approach that I bring to bear onto my deployment of popular culture.

To this end, popular culture is not a synergy of all other approaches, but is simply a non-judging open vehicle where everybody is welcome. Studying the emergency of the categories, highbrow, middlebrow and lowbrow in American culture against the

popularity and wide readership of Shakespeare's works across the United States from the 1700s through the nineteenth century (before being appropriated as high culture in the twentieth century), Levine (1988) signals to the difficulties and contradictions in defining these rigid categorisations in popular culture (1988: 30-31). Known for its [Shakespeare's texts] elite-ness in twentieth century, that is, as consumed by well-educated folks, the integration of Shakespeare into American popular entertainment, Levine writes, destabilises the "tendency to see culture on a vertical plane, neatly divided into a hierarchy of inclusive adjectival categories such as "high" "low," "pop," "mass," "folk" and the like" (1988: 30). Levine concludes that if relating with Shakespeare by ordinary people across America was not accidental, it helps "reveal a shared public culture" (ibid). In agreement, Karin Barber (1987) whose work came out a year earlier also noted that in the, "popular art forms, the overwhelming consensus of opinion, are not elite arts (though they borrow from them, among other sources) nor traditional ones (though they are grounded in them)" (1987: 13). Barber concludes that, "traditional, popular and elite must not be treated as empirical classes of cultural products; they represent expressive fields.... styles of expression at different levels of the social map, rather than hard-and-fast categories" (1987: 19). In short, it is not possible to talk about popular culture as inherently informed with yearning to contradict the mainstream, nor as only in the urban space, not new and not old, and all the other references we use to provincialize popular culture. I follow this approach in reading popular culture in Hargeysa.

Debating popular culture and public spaces, Nadine Dolby (2006) noted, in reference to the openness of the genre, that "popular culture forms an important locus of public debate and of individual and community agency" (2006: 33). The implication of this is that popular culture becomes a space within which debates about the direction of the community can be engaged – by everybody irrespective of their social/political designation in the community. Stuart Hall (1981) called it the "arena of consent and resistance. It is partly where hegemony arises, and where is secured (cf. Dolby, 2006: 33)." Stuart Hall's notion of "hegemony arises and is secured" puts the idea of mobilisation in perspective. Here, popular culture enables a process of manufacturing, mobilising, or campaigning for consent or resistance. In the course of this dissertation, I take the idea of "public space" both literally and figuratively to include popular cultural sites (or sites of performance) such as coffeehouses, theatres, and cultural

centres for their importance to public debate and socio-political formations. These are not given components of a community, but exist as part of a peculiar modernity and public identity.

With popular culture as a vehicle for contending views, I categorised the different popular cultural items within this dissertation into two: Officially sponsored (Chapter Seven) and unofficially sponsored popular culture (Chapter Eight). These categories are only *functional groupings* for the popular culture materials I gathered. My intention is to drive the analysis more schematically under the two frames. As earlier noted, these are not in opposition with each other. Indeed, as the conclusions show, they sometimes complement each other, modify one another as public identity and national consciousness is constantly negotiated in Hargeysa. These frames (official and unofficial) do *not* point to hierarchies in my conceptual treatment of popular culture. Instead, treating popular culture as space of contest, open to everybody, my frames are meant to define the players in this space; while some emerge in the name of government (official), others emerge in their individual capacities (unofficial). Indeed, plenty of emphasis is on the idea of *sponsorship*, thus “officially sponsored” popular culture, and unofficially sponsored popular culture. The idea is to underscore the auspices under which a particular item/performance came into being – which also helps in making of the object for which it speaks. Let me now turn to a consideration of the material and tangible items that qualify as popular culture.

Items of popular culture

The discussion on the items that constitute a popular culture often makes reference to practices, performances, items and events that are readable or visually decipherable and embedded with meaning. But then all items are readable and visible, and all tend to be embedded with meaning. In fact, against this, Parker (2011) noted that popular culture is like pornography, in the sense that we may have challenges defining it distinctively, but we know it when we see it noting that scholars of popular culture tend to take perverse pride in defining their field (2011: 148). Parker seems to suggest here that anything then can be popular culture as long as it is identifiable as such. In the crudeness and vagueness of this imagery, we are pointed to the infinite breadth of popular culture. Indeed, Strinati would spell out the tangible items of popular culture as “a set of generally available artefacts—films, records, clothes, TV programmes,

modes of transport, etc.” (Strinati, 1995: xiv; see also, Parker, 2011). This may seem like a problematic definition as it appears to include almost everything under the sun—including clothes (not patterns of fashion as would be more easily understood) and modes of transport. However, there is a thread running through these popular cultural items one that relates to the performative and creative expressions. This is a nuance we glean from Strinati’s use of the word “artefact.”

Items qualify as popular culture after they have been aesthetically crafted (Bukenya and Nandwa, 1986; p’Bitek, 1986). It is from this aesthetics and appeal that items get the power to attract audiences and thus becoming widely circulated and viewed and read (McLuhan, 1964; Zemon-Davis, 1992). So, Mintz (1983) would conclude that “the aesthetic quality of a work—or at least the nature of the aesthetic response it evokes—may be relevant to the work’s popularity, to its effectiveness as communication, and to its significance” (Hinds, eds. et al: 2006: 159). Relatedly, Johannes Fabian (1978) tells us that in Zaire, popular culture comprised “a complex of distinctive expressions of life experience” (1978:1). The notion of “distinctive expressions,” in Fabian’s reflection on popular culture in his fieldwork signals to the special craft—composition, structure, flair, panache and aesthetic appeals—that accord popular culture its expressive edge. Levine also signals to this special craft when he notes that an audience choosing to like a popular cultural item “is based on language and eloquence, the artistry and humour, the excitement and the action, the moral sense and worldview” (1988: 45). One of these or a combination of some of these make an item appealing in its time, and constitutes popular culture. Thus, items in the available scholarship have often included music and cultural/national performances (Barber, 1987; Ranger, 1986; Askew, 2002), paintings, dramas, poetry and cartoons (Fabian, 1987; Landau and Kaspin, 2002), popular literatures including novels, magazines, letters and pamphlets (Obiechina, 1973. Levine, 1988). Others have included movie productions such as cinema and documentaries, and infographics and other artefacts as Strinati (1995) noted above (see also, Mintz, 1983; Hinds, 1996). In this dissertation, following this pattern of aesthetic craft and appeal, I include coffeehouses, modes of fashion and book fairs as constituent parts of popular culture.

As the scholarship on popular culture and the constituent items has continued to expand, items such as everyday/daily practices have been included for study. These often

constitute practices that are simply learned and repeated especially when they methodically become the *routine* of a social group or community. The routine thus establishes an artistic pattern, and thus giving the practice a specific tangibility. This tangibility can be made visible through ethnography. Studying Qat chews in Yemen, Wedeen (2008) has argued that the everyday practices, when learned and repeated over a time, consciously or unconsciously, “the person’s desires, understanding and bodily comportment come to acquire a particular recognisable form” (2008: 15). When these practices constitute one’s self through performance, they produce an explicitly national person, even where a strong state is absent (ibid). Mukerji and Schudson (1986) make this point (of practices and beliefs) even more pointedly. They have noted:

Popular culture as it is discussed here includes both "folk" or "popular" *beliefs, practices*, and objects rooted in local traditions as well as "mass" *beliefs, practices*, and objects generated from political and commercial centres. Conventionally, objects taken to be part of popular culture are readable objects, written or visual materials for which there are available traditions of interpretation and criticism (Mukerji and Schudson, 1986: 48, emphasis added).

Here, I am interested not in the origins of these practices, nor the places where they are originated. But the idea that these are categorised as *practices* and *beliefs*. Like Wedeen, these practices are often repeated and thus enabled to acquire a particular recognisable texture and form. Mukerji and Schudson tell us that these practices also include “spatial arrangements, household objects, advertisements, television, food and drink, dress, and youth cultural styles (ibid).⁵³ These practices then become not only visible but also readable as texts.

Part of the discussion in this dissertation include celebrity personas that I read texts and mediations. Indeed, they are media or sites for the articulation of specific world views. This approach seeks to connect the persona of artistes to their works. My contention is that there is a point when an artist ceases being a mere producer of art, but a “piece of art” themselves imbedded with meaning that builds on but also transcends their individuality. This formulation picks from discourses on classic tragedian drama

⁵³ In an even more revolutionary way, discussing the trends that have happened in popular culture, Nye (1971) considered technological advancement as part of popular culture. In Nye’s philosophical rendering of our times, items such as the myriad social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube—not the material shuttled therein) could be considered popular culture.

(Sophocles, Aristophanes, and Shakespeare) where heroes were men and women of nobility or high social standing. These included kings, queens or princes and princesses, and military generals or men with other incredible talents (we can include poets, musicians, athletes, generals) as forming the subject of tragedy. They do not only speak in verse, but also represent large constituencies in that their fates were intrinsically connected with the fates of whole communities. So, a character in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* would say upon Caesar's death, "O, what a fall was there, my countrymen! Then I, and you, and all of us fell down." Celebrity personas, like tragic heroes, their decisions, actions (or inactions and silences) and speeches are readable as texts. Their voices and silences, intended or unintended, represent and mobilise larger constituencies. This is why, for a famous poet such as Mohamed Hadraawi (Chapter eight), his 'loud silence,' and cryptic responses on the question of secession are examinable as artistic speech acts. Indeed, I devote a great deal of time on his celebrity-popular cultural profile to illuminate the significance of his actions and inactions.

To conclude this section, I have discussed the different approaches to popular culture, and focused the approach that this dissertation espouses. I have also discussed the tangible items that constitute popular, and justified the seemingly unusual inclusions—everyday practices such as vehicle tinting, coffeehouses and celebrity personas—in this dissertation. I now move to a discussion on whether popular cultural material qualify as items of historical inquiry. I need to reiterate here that this project is concerned about the nationalist imaginaries and identities of Somaliland after the 1991 civil war in Somalia, which are studied through the vehicle of popular culture.

Popular Culture as History

This section is a discussion of sources of writing history. The ambition is not to invent any new theories but, through a review of some of the major debates in history and historiography, to provide context and background to my choice of popular culture as source material for writing a nationalist history of secessionist Somaliland. That the arts (popular culture, oral tradition, literature including poetry, songs etcetera) can be used as sources of history is a question that has animated scholarship for long (Vansina, 1965, 1985; Chappell, 1970; Davidson, 1984; Mulira, 1979; L. White, 2002).

Presently, there is no doubt whether the arts can be used as sources of history as a great deal of work attests to this fact (see for example, Fabian, 1996; Street, 1997; Askew, 2002; Kapteijns, 2010). What remains to be explained for every specific project deploying popular culture is (a) an explanation/justification for the choice (b) suitability to the questions being answered, and (c) the ways in which they are being deployed. I intend to discuss these questions in the context of Somaliland as a way of providing a methodological base for my project. But I will begin with a general mapping of the debates that have animated this field.

What is the basis for writing history through popular culture? The reason is twofold: Firstly, all sources of history have pitfalls irrespective of the questions being asked. There is no source of history that is fool-proof to the historical record (Ellis, 2002: 3). Echoing Foucault's thesis in about "a history of the present," Ellis (2002) has written,

No matter how well researched, such a work of history is fated to become obsolete as new events occur that tend to invalidate whatever combinations of facts appeared to have a sequential logic at the time of writing. This is true of all history-writing inasmuch as the historian is bound to see things from the standpoint of present time, but, views change with particular speed in regard to recent history (ibid).

The picture that emerges is that the struggle for historiography is to respond to specific question in the time of writing, and therefore making it incumbent for a historian to assemble of facts that suit the time. This thus makes no source supreme over the other. Indeed, although one source could have precedence in a particular historical project, it is difficult to write history without reference to other sources to cushion the principal source. Secondly, history has never been about accuracy and objectivity, but about power and politics as constructed in the service of the present (Foucault, 1975: 31; see also Mazrui, 2013).⁵⁴ This then means the focus of a historical investigation—especially its time, location and intent—is often more important than the sources. Following a Foucauldian schema of "a history of the present," it then follows that the agency of the present determines the sources, and nature of investigation.

⁵⁴ Writing about the invention of memory in the process of modern national identity making, and Pan-Africanism, after Ernest Renan, Mazrui notes that these are process of "invention of history is as old and common among modern nations as the role of mythology to ancient societies" (Mazrui, 2013: 14, 21).

As regards the popular arts as sources, one key feature that is often intriguing is that they are *creatively* constructed; they are fictional, and not factual. They are the creative production of *a single individual mind*, thereby powered by opinion and self-interest (Ellis, 2002: 23; Fabian, 1996: 190-91; Eagleton, 1983: 16). This critique often thrives on the understanding that in their “drunken stupor,” the poet, singer, painter or novelist, wake up to compose anything of their lonely or drunken mind. The production/composition thus speaks more about themselves, and less about their communities that they seek to speak about thus weakening their strength for historical evidence.

In *Remembering the Present*, Johannes Fabian seeks to understand how to construct a historical record on Zaire from the paintings of single Zairian painter, Tshibumba Matulu. Sandra Greene (2002) has noted that although remembering is an individual activity, memory is socially constructed (see also, Paul Connerton, 1989). After Connerton, Greene (2002) has noted that individual memory can be taken for collective memory (2002: 8):

But the framework of those individual memories is provided by the society to which one is a member. That is individuals situate what they recollect within the mental spaces provided by the group...to speak of collective memory is to refer to those sets of assumptions and experiences – whether conveyed through the written word, socializations, commemorative ceremonies, rituals or bodily practices – that encourage thinking about and remembering the past in common ways (ibid).

The contention goes that it is difficult for a painter or an artiste to reconstruct a history outside the community narratives. Greene makes the point of collective memory prominent here noting that the painter will be definitely inspired by the community in which he/she lives. Indeed, even in the study of *extremely* fictional works (such as detective fictions), it is unlikely that an artiste would *fictionalise* a world outside a world they have seen and lived. Their earlier associations tend to condition the reach of their imagination. Indeed, there is always a “shared symbolic universe,” from which we can argue that the artiste paints the world “on behalf” of the collective community (Greene, 9). Ellis (2002) has suggested:

The best historians and the best novelists use an *a priori* imagination, one which is not arbitrary but connects known facts (in the case of historians) or established points of their story (in the case of novelists). It is striking just how accurately African novelists have sometimes taken the temperature of their societies, well before social scientists or other observers based in academic disciplines have reached the same point of understanding (Ellis, 2002: 23).

Ellis sounds too upbeat about novelists acknowledging the fact that sometimes novelists are way ahead of historians and political scientists, and often carry a great deal of “accurate” historical material. Insistence on facts is rather problematic as facts in many cases, even in written sources often have challenges. But the point is well made that fiction often speak to the realities on the ground. Indeed, Bukenya and Nandwa (1983) would define *oral* literature as one that only makes itself visible through a process involving a deft and meticulous observation of the community.

...[As] those utterances, whether spoken, recited or sung whose composition and performance exhibit to an appreciable degree the artistic characteristics of *accurate observation*, vivid imagination and ingenious expression (emphasis added).

The idea of “accurate observation” follows that during composition, it does not have to be a group concerting and coming up with a common position. Rather, sole individuals, painters, artistes or novelists have always been bound, knowingly or unknowingly to reproduce contexts that are influenced by the lived experience of the entire group (see also, Ngugi, 1986: 15, p’Bitek, 1986). We can conclude here that the arts are reliable sources of historiography as they are often inspired, and potentially represent a vivid picture of the realities on the ground. We noted earlier, and Bukenya and Nandwa emphasise this point, that popular culture enjoys a special craft—ingenious expression—and is only powerful once an audience is attracted to choose to consume a particular item over another. It is thus worth noting that by choosing one expressive form over another—making it popular through wide dissemination—is an audience’s acknowledgement of the performer or composer’s competence to not only attract them aesthetically, but also speak to their realities. It signals to a “unidirectional process of communicative flow from performer to audience” (Askew, 2002: 127). This makes

visible the representativeness of popular culture within the place and time of its composition.

I have earlier on made reference to the second segment of contention about sources of history in historiography. This is the discussion on accuracy, objectivity and neutrality of a representation. Is history concerned about the truths and facts that should be neutral and thoroughly objective? Is it concerned about producing an accurate record of the past? This debate has fascinated scholarship for long (see for example, Foucault, 1975; Khaldun, 1967; White, 1973; Collingwood, 1946, Bala Usman, 2006). Michel Foucault would authoritatively proclaim:

I would like to write a history of this prison, with all the political investments in the body that it gathers together in its closed architecture. Why? Simply because I am interested in the past? No, if one means by that writing a history of the past in terms of the present. Yes, if one means writing a history of the present (1975: 30-31).

Foucault helps us illuminate two things: The first is that there is no history in the sense of absolute accuracy or fact or truth about a past, but history is written to serve a purpose in the present. The second thing is that history is progressive; it is constructed depending on the questions of the present. If the present is never static, then history is a moving narrative, one that changes with the time and context. Besides the progressive nature of the historical record, there are no sources that are fool-proof in a timeless manner. This is true right from the recording of events where narratives are often rendered only from the vantage point of the narrator and never the complete picture of the ways in which they unfolded. Transforming narratives into recorded material also often takes a life of its own. In his seminal work on history, *The Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun (1967) has suggested that accurate history is the function of divinity not humans. Humans do not have the power for comprehensive study and analysis of phenomena. Ibn Khaldun has suggested that for history to be sound, accurate, objective, comprehensive, the historian writing about any place and time *must*:

[Know] the principles of politics and the nature of things, and the differences among nations, places, and periods with regard to the way of life, character

qualities, customs, sects, schools and everything else. He further needs a comprehensive knowledge of present conditions in all these respects. He must compare similarities or differences between present and past conditions. He must know the causes of the similarities in certain cases, and of the difference in others. He must be aware of the differing origins and beginnings of dynasties and religious groups, as well as the reasons and incentives that brought them into being, and the circumstances and history of the people who supported them. His goal must be to have a complete knowledge of the reasons for every happening and to be acquainted with the origin of every event. Then he must check transmitted information with the basic principles he knows (1967: 24).

Clearly, it is difficult to find a historian or a historical source or sources that combines all the above to produce a historical record on any event. Self-reflexively, even Ibn Khaldun boldly acknowledged that the standard suggested above has been difficult to meet by historians including himself. Some of the major pitfalls of historians (noting that they are common with all human) have included using their time to judge the times they could be writing about (1967: 26), messing their goals with analogies, and also by imitating past historians (*ibid*). Other times, historians have failed to take note of the changes in time since conditions are always changing (1967: 30). It would be foolhardy to think that any historians in our time have been able to avoid these pitfalls.

This is not an attempt to annihilate the object and place of history. Rather an effort to appreciate the myriad challenges that come with an uncritical embrace, assumption and longing for accuracy, neutrality, objectivity and truthfulness in their absolute form on the part of history. Foucault would again remind us that knowledge (such as historical knowledge) and power are often one and the same (Foucault, 1975, 1978). Against this, historians are challenged to chasten themselves with the understanding that as far as serving the present (or power) is concerned, history will often find its import.

Many sources have been explored in the writing of (African) history, including the archive, oral tradition, newspaper and magazines, radio broadcasts, archaeological material, linguistic sources, popular culture and several others including tin-trucks. The question of fact, to indicate accuracy of record has often been at the centre of a lot of historiography. Historians working on different sources of history – oral tradition (Vansina, 1961, Ogot, 2001), the archive, (Thornton, 2005; Mbembe, 2002), texts and words (Louise White, 2000; Ellis, 2002) all contended with notions of accuracy and

truth at some point. Ellis (2002) offers an interesting window into questions on sources and the type of history. He starts by noting that history is about, “producing a more convincing explanation than is currently available on how things came to be the way they are” (Ellis, 2002: 1). In “Writing Histories of Contemporary Africa,” he does not use terms such as fact or truth, instead he uses “reliable,” “authoritative,” “viable,” and “legitimate” – to think and talk about the sources of historical information. In doing so, Ellis is cognisant of the fact that a great deal of historical writing has always sought sources that recorded accurately and factually and thus prompting scepticism over sources such as newspapers (2002: 16). However, the type of history being written, and the agency of the historian are key factors in determining reliability of a source. Further, the starting point is to acknowledge, in a Foucauldian sense, that *all* writing has agency—and never can there be a neutral historical record. So, historian Bethwell Ogot (2001) would advise, that “a much more fundamental question we should be discussing in this context is the nature of historical reality and its relation to historical method (2001: 31).” For questions of accuracy will often depend on the purpose of the history being written, and whose history it is (ibid).

In the same breath, Yusufu Bala Usman (2006) takes an even stronger position on questions of objective or neutral history in a discussion on the writing and teaching of Nigerian history. He has argued that, ““neutrality” is in fact only an illusion produced by certain social and historical circumstances” (2006: 63). In other words, there should be no claims to writing accurate, objective, neutral history in a context where both historian and subject being studied are historically constructed. Usman adds that, “one is teaching (or writing) history for some specific goal, otherwise, one is going to be left stuck with the concepts that have been created historically, but which one regards as eternal and absolute (ibid).” Usman makes visible the idea of goal, which underscores the political interest of the present undergirding any historical undertaking. There is always a goal, which drives the narrative making ideas of neutrality and accuracy not necessarily obsolete, but simply context specific. Like the rest of scholarship referenced in this section, it is evident that all sources have potential to provide reliable history for the project at hand.

This dissertation exploits the craft and aesthetics of popular culture (music, poetry, paintings, national symbols such as the flag, coffeehouses, national celebrations,

cultural sites and book fairs, and profiles of nationalist celebrity personas) as the sources from which a political history of secessionist Somaliland is written. The biggest attraction to these type of source materials against the project at hand (mobilising identity and national consciousness) is that popular cultures and arts as earlier discussed, travel widely, and are the only ways through which constituencies are mobilised into specific discourses. Indeed, as Williams (1983) Mitchel (1990), Chatterjee (1986) and Anderson (1983) have noted, nationalism is not born in place, it is mobilised in time and space through often performative and discursive practices.

Chapter Six

THE MOTHER OF SOMALI ARTS: CONTEXT AND LOCATION OF POPULAR CULTURE IN HARGEYSA

Sometime in April 2015, I met Barkhad Kaariye at *Xarunta Dhaqanka ee Hargeysa* (the Hargeysa Cultural Centre) also known as Redsea Cultural Foundation. Then located in Sha'ab area after Maroodijeex bridge (commonly referred to as the new bridge) the cultural centre was a popular place for people interested in media, books and the arts.⁵⁵ Kaariye was a local journalist stringing for several international outlets including BBC and Voice of America. While we interacted and introduced ourselves to each other, he learned I was interested in music and poetry. Upon this, he wondered whether I knew that Hargeysa was “the mother of Somali Arts.” During my visit to Somaliland a year earlier, my friends and guides Abdikadir Askari, Abdirashid Musse, and Mustafe Baroud had stressed the same thing about Hargeysa being “the mother of Somali arts.” Later the same year, while interviewing composer and cultural critic Yusuf Boobe Ducale, he too stressed the same.⁵⁶ Before our conversation would continue, Kaariye’s wife joined us and we started talking about other things. I learned later that in Kaariye asking me that question, he was working on a similar project for *The Guardian* newspaper of the UK, which he published under the headline, “The insider’s cultural guide to Hargeysa: the mother of Somali arts.”⁵⁷ Explaining the imagery of being the mother of Somali arts, Ducale noted:

If any singer, artiste, dramatist wants to be successful in their careers, they have to come to Hargeysa. Be it in Kenya, Ethiopia [Somali dominated areas] Djibouti, or even Mogadishu. Once you make it in Hargeysa then all the other regions are going to sing your praise. You are a successful artiste already.⁵⁸

⁵⁵The Hargeysa Cultural Centre has since moved to 26 June Street in the same area, Shacab, Hargeysa. There is an extended discussion of the Hargeysa Cultural Centre as a mediation of nationalist consciousness and identity later in this dissertation.

⁵⁶ Interview, Boobe Yusuf Ducale, 30 September 2015, Maan Soor Hotel, Hargeysa. I had several conversations with Boobe Yusuf Ducale starting 2014. Yusuf Ducale is also one of the artistes I focus on later in this dissertation. there is a detailed conversation.

⁵⁷ Barkhad Kaariye, “The insider’s guide to Hargeysa : the mother of Somali arts” *The Guardian*. 27 July 2015. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/jul/27/insider-cultural-guide-Hargeysa-somalia-arts-east-africa>. Accessed on 25 August 2016.

⁵⁸ Interview, Boobe Yusuf Ducale, 30 September 2015, Maan Soor Hotel, Hargeysa. The problem with this claim is that presently, after the civil war, music and poetry lost their economy upon which they relied. Ducale himself would tell me that to have his poetry quickly turned into song, he traveled to Djibouti. To this end, it is more plausible that this claim – being the mother of Somali arts – is conceivable

Following the imagery of Hargeysa being the mother of the Somali arts – as thus explained by Ducale – I set out to investigate the shape and status of the arts (music, poetry, performances, paintings,) or the popular culture more generally, in the everyday life of Hargeysa. As will be seen later in this chapter, part of this investigation sought to map the terrain of popular arts and cultures in Hargeysa identifying the materials that inform my study. However, while this investigation on the status of the arts unfolded, it struck me that there was a specific public identity imagined in Hargeysa which is Islamic-inspired and hegemonically enforced. It did not grow organically but was pre-defined (see next discussion on publics via Michael Warner, 2002). To this end, quite paradoxically, this hegemonic Islamic-inspired public identity often brushes roughshod with the claim of Hargeysa being “the mother of Somali arts” as the arts are considered inconsistent with Islamic values. Thus, this chapter demonstrates the processes of making a pre-defined public identity in Hargeysa, while at the same time, signalling to the push and pull between the arts and society.⁵⁹ But also quite successfully, the popular cultural terrain (shape, nature, composition, challenges and reach) is thereby spelled out.

To understand the nature, constitution and the making of the hegemonic Islamic-inspired public identity, and at the same time map the terrain and spaces of popular culture in Hargeysa, I describe the cultural materials and (performative and concrete routine) everyday behaviours and of Hargeysa, which are learned and repeated as individuals exercise [or are conditioned to exercise] their agency and claims of belonging (Wedeen, 2008). The chapter also shows the places, modes of production, and the different forms of popular culture in Hargeysa. The ambition is, first, to show the context and significance of the popular cultural items studied and analysed, and second, to show how the *pre-defined* public identity is made possible in Hargeysa ’s socio-political milieu. Let me start with a brief discussion on publics.

in history where the first recorded musical expressions, *balwo* and *heello*, were composed by truck drivers in the British territory in the 1940s (see Kapteijns, 1999).

⁵⁹Chapters eight and nine, on unofficially sponsored popular culture, and diasporas and diasporic practices respectively discuss this push and pull in more detail.

*Publics and Counterpublics*⁶⁰

Interested in how publics emerge in the real and textual world, Michael Warner noted that a text mobilises its own public instead of a public being pre-defined (2002: 68). Defining a public, which is a word in common usage often referring to people, Warner warned that “even in the blurred usage of the public sphere, a public is never just a congeries of people, never just the sum of persons who happen to exist (2002: 68). Instead, a public,

...must first of all have some way of organizing itself as a body and of being addressed in discourse. And not just any way of defining the totality will do. It must be organized by something other than the state. (ibid)

Warner seeks to point to the idea that publics are a function of *organising*, and there are two ways in which a public could be organised. A public could organise itself, say the way texts mobilise their audiences/readers, and can also lose them. Or a public could be organised by a professionalised body such as the church or the state. Warner argues that a public ought to be self-organised:

A public organizes itself independently of state institutions, laws, formal frameworks of citizenship, or preexisting institutions such as the church. If it were not possible to think of the public as organized independently of the state or other frameworks, the public could not be sovereign with respect to the state. So the modern sense of the public as the social totality in fact derives much of its character from the way we understand the partial publics of discourse... as self-organized. The way the public functions in the public sphere (as the people) is only possible because it is really a public of discourse. The peculiar character of a public is that it is a space of discourse organized by discourse (ibid)

Self-organisation is central to a genuine public – a public being a space of discourse only made possible by discourse. The implication of this proposition is that without a peculiar set of discourse, there is no public; a public cannot exist before discourse. This is because, the public ought to be *sovereign of the state* (or any other potential organising power such as the church or a professional organisation) in that it thus has power to ably influence state decisions – so the claim, “according to public opinion,”

⁶⁰ *Publics and Counterpublics* is the title of a book by Michael Warner published in 2002. It is here that I borrow concepts on pre-defined publics. Warner’s book also informs large parts of this dissertation, especially Chapter Eight, “Everyday Somaliland: Power, Performance and Counterpublics,” specifically the idea of a crafting alternative spaces of expression and articulation outside the hegemonically enforced public.

and then *the* public being born in the context of a project. Warner draws our attention to the dangers and powerlessness of a pre-defined public, which he considers authoritarian:

Imagine how powerless people would feel if their commonality and participation were simply defined by pre-given frameworks, by institutions and laws, as in other social contexts they are through kinship. What would the world look like if all ways of being public were more like applying for a driver's license or subscribing to a professional group – if, that is, formally organized mediations replaced the self-organized public as the image of belonging and common activity? Such is the image of totalitarianism: non-kin society organized by bureaucracy and law. Everyone's position, function, and capacity for action are specified for her by administration (2002: 69).

According to Warner, a pre-defined public is unhealthy. Publics ought to come into play as public organised as a space of discourse to discuss discourse. The narrative that follows in this chapter is influenced by Warner's reading of the public as either self-organised or pre-organised. This exploration seeks to make sense of the public that Hargeysa city, its symbolisms and everyday practices and routines – whether as a space of discourse identity is organised around discourse or the public is predefined and people have to conform. I demonstrate that although publics are ideally meant to be self-organised, the Hargeysa n public is pre-defined – it is like, to use the words of Warner, “applying for a driver's license or subscribing to a professional group.” One only has to conform.⁶¹

The chapter describes the everyday of the city focusing on events and practices that are repeated, reproduced and learned over time making the routine of Hargeysa (Askew, 2004; Wedeen, 2008). The chapter also includes examinations of landmark sites, architecture, and major popular culture/literature calendar events, and the implications

⁶¹ Let me note here that this is not to being blind to the fact that Warner's longing for a self-organised public, a public of discourse, is rather problematic if not just difficult. Most publics are pre-defined with the difference only appearing in the ways in which the pre-defined public is enforced and made visible. Under a capitalist dispensation (which Warner also acknowledges as having a predefined public [2002, 69]), the choices that people make to and not to belong are often pre-defined in subtle or fetishized ways. For a more explicit discussion on the predefined public under capitalism, the child of the Enlightenment, see for example, Adorno and Horkheimer 1944 on *The Dialectics of Enlightenment*. In another illustration of the making of a predefined public, consider, *Lifebuoy Men and Lux Women* where Burke (1996) shows how the market manufactures a discourse around cleanliness in Zimbabwe, which in the end predefines public sensibilities about cleanliness and hygiene. Naomi Wolf's (1990) *The Beauty Myth* has argued that beauty choices women make as pre-defined by the market.

of their form and existence – on the predefined public identity. In the later part of the chapter, I describe and examine the sites of popular culture production including teashops, coffeehouses, masjids, and cultural centres. I pay attention to composition, production, spaces of performance and the general shape of the popular culture industry as it exists in Hargeysa.

Hargeysa 's predefined public identity

The power and presence of a pre-defined public identity of Hargeysa was impressed upon me during an evening of music in Hargeysa in 2015. On 6 August 2015, we were at Cup of Art Italian Coffeehouse in Shacab in Hargeysa, when a rather joyous moment turned ugly. The arrival of the police officers was marked by some unusual and frightening moves. With their guns held tightly to their sides on the ready, they jumped off the back of their pickup double cabin before it could actually stop. Shocked at their unexpected and dramatic arrival, the crowd scampered as the officers sped in their direction shouting and shoving them away from the venue. “The music must stop,” one of the officers declared. Despite being mild in their intention to rough up anyone, the sense of urgency and energy with which they came suggested something was terribly wrong and had to be remedied immediately. One of the officers who had come to disperse the crowd shouted to the owner of the café who, in the middle of the scuffle and insisting on restraint, “do not come back next summer.” He had mistaken the owner of the coffeehouse for one of the many diaspora Somalilanders who annually visit the country during summer in Europe and America. The owner of the café was actually a ‘permanent returnee’ not a visitor, whose presence on the socio-cultural scene had taken the form of an atypical Hargeysa n café.⁶²

This particular action-packed scene was prompted by the presence of music in an open space, and the revellers who were acting in a manner that was deemed “anti-cultural” or “un-Somali.”⁶³ Black East Band was playing. This would be the second time it was performing at this particular space, and right from the first show held about three weeks

⁶² As will be explored in later, Cup of Art, Italian coffeehouse was an unusual type of café in the Hargeysa food and beverage world.

⁶³ Conversations with owner, Sara Haji, 7 August 2015, Hargeysa. Sara Haji only confirmed what this researcher had been witness to in different spaces within Hargeysa.

ago, “authorities” had not been impressed.⁶⁴ Opened in March 2015, Cup of Art was one of the few conspicuously “multi-cultural” hangouts in Hargeysa, which never close till late in the night.⁶⁵ It is multi-cultural in the sense that, as opposed to other places, it openly claimed diversity, right from its sub-name—“Italian coffeehouse” (ironically, in British Somaliland, which is campaigning to break-away from Italian Somalia).⁶⁶ On its four walls, this coffeehouse was fitted with paintings, poems, quotes and slogans depicting cultural and literary traditions from different places across the world: From quotes celebrating the sweetness of coffee, Sherlock Holmes, and Alexander Pope’s poetry, one’s eyes rolled to impressions of the British and Swedish flags, and an abstract painting of the Turkish whirling dervishes. At the same time, one does not miss a modest collection of notable romantic English fictions piled on a shelf for any interested reader. With most of the writings on the walls in English, and a menu serving a wide variety of teas and coffees brewed to the perfection of European [and regional] tastes, Cup of Art was conspicuously exotic in Hargeysa. This was augmented by its practice of openly playing background music (western pop and band music) for its patrons the entire time its doors were open. Not surprisingly, diaspora holidaymakers, *permanent* returnees, and the Hargeysa n “elite” formed the bulk of its clientele.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*

⁶⁵ There is even a pattern to their naming: Cup of Art Italian Coffeehouse, Summertime, 4 Seasons, Fish and Steak formerly Obamas, Royal Lounge. These English names alluding to European and North American landmarks set them apart from the other food and beverages spots. Their names depict a fondness with the world outside. Local teashops around town are named after individuals or villages: Guleid Hotel, Saba Restaurant, or in Somali vocabularies such as Maan Soor (lit. satiated).

⁶⁶ This name is actually radical in the sense that in declaring secession from Somalia in 1991, Somaliland has been involved in a bold process of negating all that associates them with the United Somali Republic that was formed in 1960. The use of “Italian” in this context mobilizes the history of Somalia which was colonized by Italy, and this has potential for “treasonable” charges as is often witnessed in Hargeysa (Field notes, 15 March - October 2015).



Images VIII: Above: The coffee-board menu at Cup of Art Italian coffeehouse. **Below:** The crowd outside the café on the night of 6 August 2015 before security service-people arrived to disperse the crowd and shut down the café.



On that eventful night, close to 150 young men and women had turned up for the Black East event.⁶⁷ The crowd was bigger than the one that turned up for their first show, which had been staged only inside the cafe. Being organised in the café's yard, a space of about 500 square feet before one touched the edges of the main road, they had caused

⁶⁷ Started in 2008, performing at Cup of Art was the second time Black East band had had an open venue only for itself. On other occasions, often once a year, the band has collaborated with other renowned artists in the industry at Crown Hotel (Conversations with artistes Adam Konvict and Hersi Abdirazak, August-October 2015. This researcher was part-time member of the group).

a bit of congestion for traffic flow. First, because the patrons' vehicles were parked on the roadsides in front of the coffeehouse, the place was jammed with both people and vehicles. This same day, 6 August 2015, the Hargeysa International Book Fair (HIBF 2015), which had been organised at Guleid Hotel, not too far away from Cup of Art, was closing. Coinciding with the final day of HIBF 2015, one that had been billed for a closing live music event by some of Somaliland's best artistes including Ali Masaxaf, Maxamed Said "BK" and Sahra Ilays, this side of town was in an unusual frenzy. Over 5000 people are estimated to have turned up for the closing day of the book fair.⁶⁸ There had been plenty of vehicles on the road, many of them driving from the book fair venue, which had just ended about an hour earlier. By 10.00PM, still the traffic had not subsided. This came with a great deal of anxiety.

As would be gauged from the revellers that day, Black East band was popular entertainment. Rapping in English and Somali to a largely diaspora young adult crowd, the patrons were singing along. The atmosphere was ecstatic. With the crowd continuing to grow as time passed, it seemed revellers were there for an uncharacteristically long night. At about 10.30PM, the assistant head of Somaliland police arrived, and called the café owner, and event organiser on the side. The officer explained that the crowd must disperse because of the traffic coming out of the book fair, and he was concerned about the security of the place and the people.⁶⁹ They agreed that the music must stop after one final song, which would be announced to the revellers as final to avoid undue anxiety and commotion.⁷⁰

Meanwhile, the assistant head of police stepped aside to make a phone call to his senior to report on the security situation. As soon as he ended this phone call, hell broke loose: He had been advised that a number of complaints had been filed at the police station about the anti-cultural nature of the café: its music, the anti-cultural diaspora, and the dressing of the patrons, female servants, etcetera.⁷¹ Against this communication, the mood changed from cordial to enforcement. "The music must stop," he announced; the crowd must disperse immediately and the café must close. He called for immediate

⁶⁸ The researcher participated in HIBF 2015. This figure is the organizers estimate. Field notes, 6 August 2015, Hargeysa.

⁶⁹ Conversation with Sara Haji, 7 August 2015, Hargeysa.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

backup and, in a moment, two pickup trucks pulled up. In characteristic police practice, they do not disperse crowds politely. They did so forcefully and the crowd scattered in different directions. In the pushing and shoving that ensued, and the voices of restraint from different corners, one of the officers angrily advises the café's owner, not to come back next summer. As for now, she must report to the police immediately. She is under arrest. However, before she could be arrested, the officer changed his mind and suggested that since it was Thursday and tomorrow was a weekend—and never wanted to mess their Friday with frantic calls from family—she could report by herself on Saturday.⁷² A few minutes later, after the crowd had been successfully dispersed, the café was also closed. It only reopened two days later after negotiations involving family and clan elders, and the state. This incident speaks to what is acceptable and not acceptable in the Somaliland social political domain.

With Islam providing a major building block for national identity and state-making after the civil war (Bradbury, 2008; Jhazbhay, 2008; Renders, 2007), Somaliland has developed Islamic-inspired practices of monitoring social interaction thus sanctioning a public identity that is pre-defined. Indeed, the incident above makes three things visible: First, a contest between an “un-Islamic” event and a *pre-defined* Islamic public identity. Second, the presence of discursive and institutional structures which monitor and enforce the pre-defined public identity and makes sure it is not destabilised. Thirdly, the presence of “alien Somali” amidst and “authentic Somalis,” where alien Somalis will have to be resisted or at best advised “not to come back next summer.” Indeed, the context in which the statement “do not come back next summer” was delivered makes visible the yearning for an *authentic identity*, which should not be corrupted by foreign inspired ways. [I pursue the debate on authentic and inauthentic identities elsewhere.]

The incident above enables us to construct a narrative that against this predefined public identity where everybody has to conform, even other items of social political negotiation are influenced by the same public identity, which has institutions and discourses and narratives, repeated practices that enforce but also normalise a specific form of public identity. Let me describe the items that make this pre-defined public

⁷² ibid

identity visible, and show how these combine to influence popular culture in Hargeysa – and provide context for the incident described above. How does this pre-defined public identity sit well with the claim of being “the mother of the Somali arts”?

Islam in Hargeysa’s Public Space

Hargeysa has historical significance in the sense that during the colonial period, it emerged after World War II (Berbera had been seriously damaged) not just as a centre of economic activity, but also a centre of most political activity in British Somaliland (Lewis, 1965: 132). As discussed in the chapter on the unification of the two Somalias, the main political parties of independence in Somaliland — Somali National Society (which later became the Somali National League), Somali Youth League, with inspiration from Somalia-Mogadishu (Somali Youth League), and National United Front (NUF) were all headquartered in Hargeysa amalgamating most political activity here. Presently, the city has retained this position as headquarter of political and economic activity, and serves as the seat of government for the new Somaliland.

Emerging from civil war, Hargeysa can be understood mainly through the context of the region’s recent history, especially the 1987-1996 civil war in Somalia, and the declaration of an independent Somaliland state in 1991. Although this is not the concern of this chapter, recent ethnographic-historical studies suggest that the post 1991 cultural-political landscape in Hargeysa is diametrically different from pre-1991 (see also, Bradbury, 2008; Renders, 2007). The rehabilitation and declaration of Somaliland independence in 1991 heralded a new nationalist imaginary. Among other things, post-1991 Hargeysa has adopted a stricter form of Islamic self-hood and practice. Bradbury and Renders have attributed this pervasive Islamic-inspired identity-making to have started in the period 1981-82 when the Saudi-based wing of exiles that identified as Islamist and separatist, headed the Somali National Movement (Bradbury, 2008: 64, 175; Renders, 2007: 24). Even when they left office, this identity-making proliferated and informs a general public identity (Bradbury, *ibid*). Below is an ethnographic narrative that touches the myriad symbolisms which combine and construct a specific Islamic ethic and appeal of the city.

The constitution of Somaliland spells out that Islamic Sharia is the foundation for jurisprudence in the country, and Sharia will be promoted by the state in addition to the prohibition of all other religions (Constitution of The Republic of Somaliland, 2001, Art. 5: 1-4). Upon these declarations, items such as fashion, work, celebration, music and dance are all legitimated at the nexus between Islam and recent history. On many occasions, a discussion of Somali culture (considering say identity, livelihood, everyday interaction) in today's Hargeysa is a story of the Islamic religion.

From the symbolism of the national flag, which has the first pillar of Islam—There is No God but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger—emblazoned at its centre in Arabic script (detailed analysis in Chapter Seven), Somaliland has several other representative features that suggest Islam as a central pillar in the national culture imagining of a new Somaliland: The Islamic calendar operates alongside the Gregorian calendar with Thursday and Friday being the weekend days, not Saturday and Sunday as happens in East Africa [where the researcher comes from] or even neighbouring Ethiopia. In addition to the two main Islamic public holidays—the two eids of *Aduha* and *El-fitri*, and the beginning of the New Year in the Islamic calendar—the first day of Muharram—are public holidays in Somaliland.

In other areas such as fashion, it is stricter for women (women have often been used as the discursive sight for national identity [Kapteijns, 2010]): The wearing of whole-body-covering capacious garments and veiling for women as a symbol of Islamic modesty is strictly observed: Airport security, for example, requires female visitors to Somaliland to be dressed in capacious garments with (at least, a symbolic) head covering. The demand is even stricter for physically identifiable Somali women, as opposed to say white women or non-Somali black women.⁷³ However, this is expected of all females living in the country especially when entering the public domain. A simple head covering, common with diaspora returnee females, which leaves the ears and neck region visible is also viewed with contempt.

⁷³ One female respondent noted during a semi-structured conversation that with a bit of guesswork, Somali security at Egal International Airport can identify a Somali through their physical features upon which they demand proper covering. I also often observed Somali identifying women adjust their head-scarfs to ensure proper covering as aircrafts neared landing.

On billboards and artistic paintings on walls, a woman is depicted in *proper* covering.⁷⁴ Not common are they expected to be covered in a burka (although this is also common is in the picture below) but full body covering entails being dressed in hijab, not in trousers, but in capacious garments with hair and neck regions covered.



Image IX: An illustration translating woman in Af-Somali for a signpost in pointing to a women's restroom. Photo credit: Samia Ahmed Jamac, April 2018.

In other spheres of social life, pre-marital sexual intercourse is strictly prohibited and the space closely monitored: At the reception desks of several hotels, and sometimes inside hotel rooms, there are notices pasted on walls asking clients to show evidence of marriage if they are to have visitors of the opposite sex into their rooms.⁷⁵ This is either in the form of a marriage certificate, or a respectable elder who has knowledge of the existence of a marriage between the two people of the opposite sex intending to stay together.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ In a semi-structured group discussion, one female respondent, to underscore this difference recalled challenging her mother over this new Hargeysa n public personhood, which demands strict full-body covering, and in capacious garments, after seeing her 1980s photographs. In most of the pictures, her mother was often dressed with minimal covering yet present Hargeysa demanded capacious covering. 5 April 2015, Summertime Restaurant, Hargeysa.

⁷⁵ *ibid.*

⁷⁶ Semi-structured conversation, 5 April 2015, Summertime Restaurant, Hargeysa.

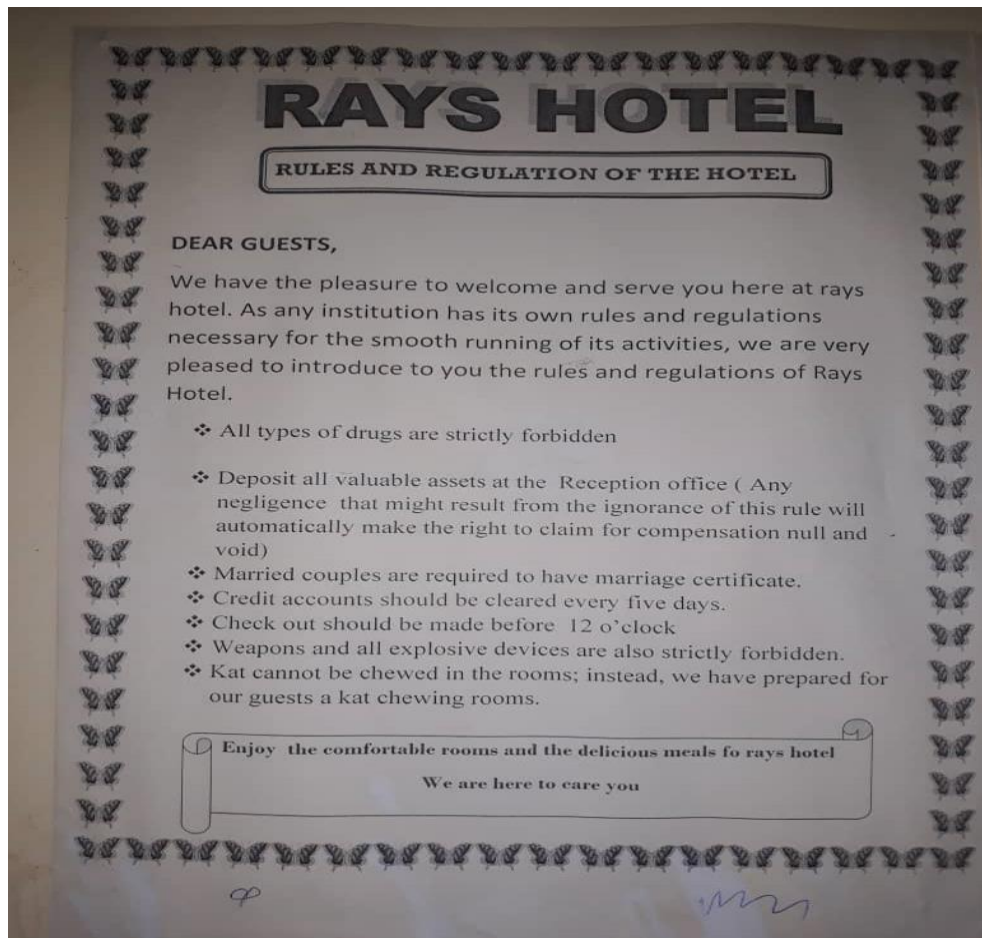


Image X: A picture of Rules and Regulations at Rays Hotel. Showing need for marriage certificate for opposite gender to be accommodated in same room Photo Credit: Author, Nov. 2017

The image above is of rules and regulations for guests coming to Rays Hotel, in Togdheer area. These rules handed over to guests upon registration at the hotel. One of these rules reads, “Married couples are required to have marriage certificate.” The idea is that if any two people of the opposite gender were to stay together in the same room, they are required to explain their relationship, and the only document allowing two people of different gender to stay in the same room is a marriage certificate. Failure to do so means they will have to take separate rooms. This regulation springs from the Islamic injunction against fornication and adultery (Arabic, *zinna*), which is extended to those who might, knowingly or unknowingly facilitate the breaking of this injunction – including hoteliers. A person who lets their hotel, guesthouses, inns or rental apartments to be rented for fornication or adultery would be judged harshly on Judgment Day as having committed the same crime as the person who actually participated in the act. To this end, any hotel known for letting people sin in its rooms is shunned by the general public as a source of promiscuity and moral corruption. Thus,

all hotel, inns and guesthouse owners have regulations against the act. One of the safeguards is only allowing married couples double occupancy. Indeed, at most of these hotels, there are security persons or hotel staff charged with watching for anyone to break this regulation.

It is worth noting that the regulation does not apply to Somalis and Muslims alone. It is non-discriminatory to all guests. An American expatriate friend of mine narrated a story where another American male colleague of hers entered her room for short period as he waited for his taxi. In less than two minutes, she noted, a hotel staffer had arrived demanding that he stepped out of her room. Pleas that they were colleagues and were consulting for a small period would not be accepted. There is also well-known story (was when during the time of fieldwork, 2015) of a brawl between involving a Somali diaspora returnee who had not read the regulation and had invited his girlfriend inside his room. When hotel staff came and demanded for a marriage certificate (which the two did not have) a brawl broke out as the returnee insisted that he had rented his room, and his religious/moral choices were his personal obligations. Both were physically dragged out of the room. The picture that emerges is a strong Islamic public identity that is vigorously enforced.

In relation to prayer, it is culture for all shops and restaurants to close doors as soon as the call for prayer is made. Even when those inside may not go out for prayer, in the spirit of respect for prayer or prayer time, doors close and are opened only after the completion of the prayer. This position is cemented by the annual growth in the number of mosques in the city. By 2010, Hargeysa city, had a total of 500 mosques, by 2011, they had risen to 550 marking a 10 per cent increase in one year.⁷⁷ If this trend of growth of mosques continued, it is possible that by the time of fieldwork in 2015, the 2010 figure had moved higher by another 150 mosques.⁷⁸ Since mosques wear a distinctive architectural impression and outlook, it makes the mosque easily distinguishable from other buildings. The large number of mosques actually constructs Hargeysa as a peculiarly “mosque city.” With the sound of Adhan [the call for prayer] being heard

⁷⁷ Somaliland in Figures (10th edition): National Development Plan (2012-2016); Ministry of National Planning and Development, Department of Statistics, 2014.

⁷⁸ Statistically, this would be the expected rise, but surely on the ground, a society can only have a certain number of mosques.

five times a day emanating from each mosque, the deadening sound of the different Adhans makes Hargeysa symbolically Islamic. Their numerical prowess in and around the city creates a motif suggesting a specific cultural and ideological form of the city, mobilising a particular public identity.

In addition to being a place for Quran studies, Arabic language learning and sites for congregational prayer (a must for all Muslim men),⁷⁹ the mosque serves as a space for several other functions including being a centre for general discussions on politics, festivals, provision of aid to those in need, and general Islamic learning such as questions that bother the believers. This means, assemblies in the mosque will attract large gatherings of people who come for both religious and social reasons.⁸⁰ Because people congregate in the mosques on five different occasions for the daily prayers, the mosque then becomes a special place for people's interaction and general association. Its symbolic significance (large groups of people visiting it five times a day) is complemented by the fact that the Imams of mosque are central pillars in society both historically and presently.⁸¹ Indeed, they are often issuing interventions on the issues of the time. For example, when Cup of Art Italian Coffee House had just opened in Hargeysa in 2015, for being 'non-conformist' to the pre-defined Islamic public identity,

⁷⁹ A friend of mine brought my attention to a condition where even non-prayer observant men in Hargeysa, afraid of being stigmatized as non-prayerful by their peers, have sometimes, behaved in a manner that makes them appear as if they actually perform prayer. For example, when prayer is called—the adhan—one moves to another seat to show that the new seat was assumed after returning from prayer. I observed this at Summertime restaurant and Cup of Art, Italian coffeehouse, March-October, 2015.

⁸⁰ Since Islam entered the Somali territories thousands of years ago (for an extensive discussion on Islam in Somalia, see for example, Lee Cassanelli, 1982; I. M. Lewis, 1998; Abdirahman Hersi, 1977), Somaliland has been entirely Muslim. This means, assemblies in the mosque will attract large gatherings of people who come for both religious and social reasons. Being prayer-performing Muslim myself, I attended prayer in several mosques around Hargeysa, and indeed, on all occasions, the numbers were huge.

⁸¹ Ducale (2002) has noted that the mosque commands a great deal of influence in the Somali community especially because as a religious place, people have "a widely held belief that only the truth can be told in the mosque (Ducale, 2002: 27)." Although most of the issues discussed in the mosque are concerned with religion, ethical and moral issues, concerns of a political nature, public culture and identity of Somaliness are increasingly being addressed in the mosque especially during the Friday sermons. This renewed spirit of the importance of Islam in the public domain has roots in the country's recent history where during the moments of conflict in Somaliland (1991-96), religious leaders were often invited to bless and sometimes mediate peace deliberations especially because of their perceived impartiality (Ducale, 2002: 27; Bradbury, 2008). Because religious leaders have often been the first to arrive at the scene of conflict and create the necessary conditions for reconciliation, their importance has continued (Ducale, *ibid*). Indeed, on many occasions, the religious leaders have often been at the forefront in fighting evils such as *Tahriib* (illegal emigration), clannism, and advocacy for proper ethical and cultural values of Somaliness and Islam.

the Imam of the neighbouring mosque preached against the café for bringing un-Somali and un-Islamic traditions into town forming part of the reasons for its closure in the incident narrated above.⁸² For this, the mosque, not necessarily as a place of worship but as a mediation in the public identity has symbolic significance in the Hargeysa cultural-political milieu.

From the above, one is able to see and appreciate Hargeysa Islamic-inspired pre-defined public identity. From the national flag, the daily routine of town and other performative practices including prayer, fashion, sexual norms and the annual calendar, an Islamic inspired public identity is made visible but enforced. Women walking the streets with simple head covering are accosted by strangers and reminded to dress properly. Sara Hajji, the proprietor of Cup of Art Italian Coffeehouse often received visitors telling her to stop playing foreign music and instead play the Quran. As we will see in a while, this pre-defined public identity does affect the shape of creative expression, the spaces of artistic expression and the general aura of popular culture in general. But let me start with Hargeysa 's receptiveness to performance and other artistic expressions as an oral and visual society.

Oral-Visual Hargeysa

As earlier noted, Hargeysa prides itself as the mother of Somali arts. There are two aspects of this phrase that this chapter considers. The first is what freedoms – political aspects – does art stand and circulate; and the second is the ways in which art is produced and shared. In other words, upon what infrastructures – cultural and economic – does art stand on? This subsection touches a small component of the visual and oral nature of Hargeysa (or Somali communities more generally) as a cultural infrastructure upon, which arts thrive. To put this in context, I start from the oral and visual legacies upon which poetic and expressive forms thrive. There are plenty of signals to suggest that the inhabitants of Hargeysa are largely an oral and visual people—suggesting a quintessentially performative environment. Compared to other communities in the Horn and East Africa, Somali communities are more oral and visual than literati. The explanation for this could be the nomadic lifestyle, but also a limited embrace of secular

⁸² Field notes, 8 May 2015, Hargeysa.

education, and the violence that has occupied the country for the last 27 years. Looking at advertisement as a way of announcing one's goods and services, adverts and other signposts in Hargeysa take a peculiarly oral and visual appeal suggesting a strong visual and oral nature of the community.⁸³ Photographer Philip Schutz who has done work on the visual impressions of Hargeysa, and its commercial painters narrates how the entire advertisement turns out like a film short, where painting is not just art, but is comprehensive photographic communication (Schutz, 2015: 74).⁸⁴ Indeed, like poetry, if ads are judged by their aesthetic appeal or “pulling power,” then, in Hargeysa, this means attraction through graphically elaborate paintings, not simply words. Some ads have no words written but just elaborate paintings. In a place selling cold drinks, for example, you will find a refrigerator in the advert, a blender and a jar. All these are simply announcing the availability of fresh juice.

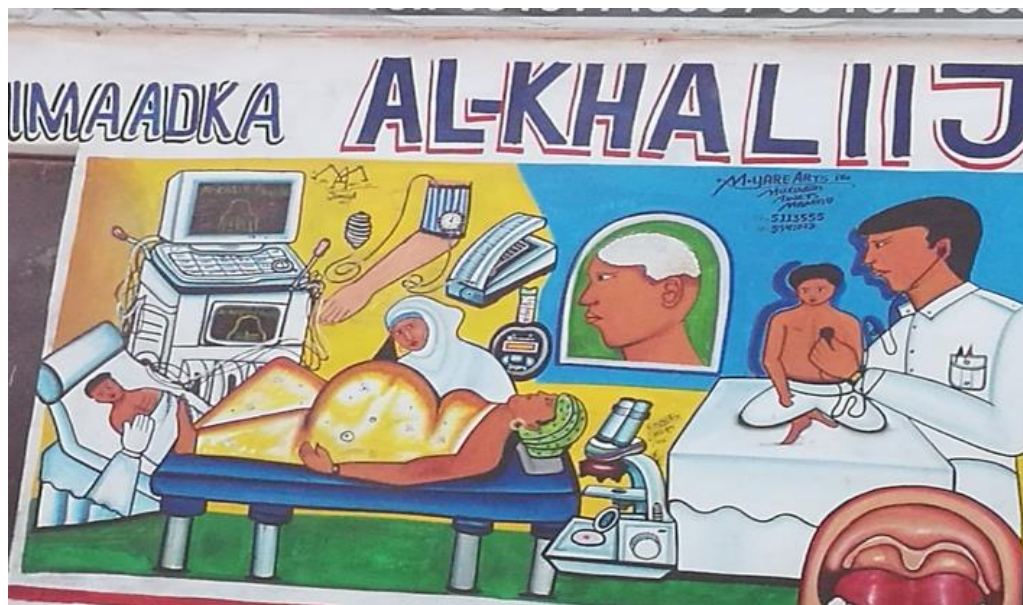


Image XI: Narrative paintings outside a restaurant. A painter works on one of the walls of a shop. Credit: Author and Philip Schutz, 2015.

⁸³ It is worth noting that Hargeysa ns are quintessentially businesspeople –as they were the first traders with the British. Somalis more generally traded with Egyptians and Persians in herbs and cents including myrrh and frankincense. Since they occupied an arid land, most of their livelihood is realised through barter and exchange. The Isaaq, the predominant ethnic community in Hargeysa is nicknamed *idoor*, which means, “exchange with me.” Most of the food consumed in Hargeysa, mainly rice, wheat flour and spaghetti, is imported either from India or Brazil coming in via the United Arab Emirates. Even the popular leafy stimulant Qat is not grown in Somalia, but Ethiopia. Trading in goats, sheep and camels forms a major part of the economy and city life. Hargeysa ns are also involved in trade dealing in foods and beverages, furniture, and construction and electronic equipment.

⁸⁴ Conversation with Philip Schutz and Adnan Ahmed (not real names; photographer and producer) 5 April 2015, Hargeysa.

With the exception of fresh juice, the other items in the painting including the refrigerator, the blender and milk jar, are not on sale, but are involved in the process of making fresh juice and the buyer must know. Like in poetry, the paintings strike powerful mental and memorable images to the audience. Several restaurant selling camel or goat meat have the entire animals drawn to as to easily communicate with their clients. Sometimes, even the kitchenware including pans, knives and stoves could be showed. Neither the full animals nor the kitchenware are on sale, but they tell the story more succinctly. For a furniture shop, the entire front of the building is painted with more than life-size images depicting a properly made house interior. A barber shop on the other hand does not only show specific haircuts, but all the equipment used in haircutting are displayed including the shaving machine, after-shave cream container, comb etcetera. The restaurant on the other hand will also show a jar and glass with juice, a banana, a sliced orange etcetera.



Images XII: Wall Paintings

Above: a detailed, almost explicit wall painting to a clinic in Mogadishu. Note that the woman in the painting is still showed with appropriate Muslim dress. **Below:** Golis Restaurant in Hargeysa selling cooked camel meat, and announcing it with a full live camel.



In the pictures above (wall painting) is on a clinic in Mogadishu. Please note how elaborate the painting which are an effort to capture succinctly what one expects to find at this clinic. The picture above (camel) is Golis Restaurant in Hargeysa selling camel meat. The point is sought to make in this subsection is that Hargeysa will respond more to performative practices, than say if were written text. This is partly a justification for the representativeness of the material I use throughout this discussion but also evidence of the nature and richness of popular culture in Hargeysa. Let me now turn to spaces of popular culture in Hargeysa.

Music and Poetry in Hargeysa

In this subsection, I combine both the political and cultural-economic infrastructures upon which the arts, especially music thrive. The power of Somali music was first impressed upon on me during an evening at Summer Time Restaurant in late 2015. Perhaps one of the swankiest eating joints then, this more than normal restaurant (especially in terms of size) was often packed with diners for the entire evening going as late as midnight. Named after the summer season in Europe and North America, a period where many diaspora Somalis return home *en masse* for holiday and reconnecting with family, majority of Summer Time's clients were evidently members from the diaspora. But there also plenty of local patrons. You sat either in a closed private room of four or two persons or sat in the open space depending on tastes and

class. Or sometimes depending on the spaces you found vacant. There was a section reserved for the much wealthier patrons: This was better decorated, more comfortable sitting (sofa sets) and the service there was faster and more elaborate. But also more expensive. During these gathering, peers talked and joked for extended hours. Somalis are baroque conversationist and tea is enjoyed with plenty of talk, so the expression, *shaa iyo sheeko*, which is, “tea and talk.” In some cases, you listened to music as engaged in conversation or both.

Just arrived for the second time for comprehensive fieldwork, I was seated in the wealthier section with a group of friends, mostly men who were listening to music from their phones connected to a portable loud speaker fixed in the middle of the table. The portable mini-loudspeaker belonged to one of the fellows seated around this table who must have brought it along with him. Music from the phones was playing via Bluetooth connectivity. I learned that this sort of improvisation was response to the condition that Summer Time could not erect mega speakers for music inside their restaurant since music was inconsistent with the Islamic values. While we chatted way, different forms of soft drinks were brought to the table and several varieties of coffees and teas. For the Islamic inspired identity explored earlier, liquor (beer and wine) is illegal in Somaliland although some is smuggled into the country mostly from Ethiopia. Sometimes, people privately bring liquor in their baggage returning from international travel. Evenings were enjoyed around coffees, teas and soft drinks. In this circle, while we drank and chatted, we were also listening to mostly Somali music. But all the entire circle was chilled like no one was listening to the music.

Then a song by Nuur Daalacay “Somaliland allow Dhawr,” which is “May Allah Protect Somaliland” streamed through the mini-loudspeaker. One of the revellers shot to his feet, started dancing at pointing at me (supposedly, a member of the international community) in English screamed out the words, “that is my song, my Somaliland. I love my country.” The others seated around the table joined in the shouting and started dancing in their seats while they punched the air. I was awestruck by this turn of events and ventured to find the song that animated what had been a rather tepid evening chillout. Among other things, I understood that the people around the table had nationalist sentiments for Somaliland independence, and found representation in this song. Nuur Daalacay’s song has five stanzas. Although I provide the song below, I am,

in this chapter not necessarily interested in the song itself, but the politics around it and the idea of music in Hargeysa that it helps makes visible in this context.

Somaliland dhalin iyo waayeel dhamaantood Siday udhisteen dhulkoodii Nabada u dhidbeen u dhidbeen U dhidbeen allow dhawr	All Somalilanders: youth and elders How they are building their country Strengthening their peace May Allah bless them
Wa dharaatii waa dharaartii La-taagee la-dhidbayee calankee Dhalaankiinuu nabad ku seexdee	Today is the day the flag went up! And our children are sleeping in peace
Xumaha dhaafaha wanaaga dhisaha Wixii dhacayaba dhankiisa hayaha Wadaniga dhabtaa allow dhawr Somaliland allow dhawr	They forgive wrongdoers; support the good And together build the country May Allah protect the patriots May Allah protect Somaliland
Somaliland dhabadii wanaagey dhaqaajeen Siday turxaanta u dhameeyeen Dhigoodii iyo qayrkood u dhaafeen U dhaafeen allow dhawr	Somaliland is on the right path In solving their challenges They are the champions of the horn May Allah protect the champions!
Somaliland dhaxalkii awoowgey ilaasheen Oo aabo tali dhagaysteen Dhagxumi iyo ceebay ka dhawrteen Oo dhiig sokeyey ka dhaarteen	Somalilanders protect their inheritance And they listen carefully to their elders They shun shameful behaviour They swore to keep away from violent conflict

This song spoke to different ideations of Somaliland independence that must have excited my fellow patrons. Indeed, it spoke to the youth and majority of them were. The song also spoke about the peace in Somaliland, and the idea of Somaliland is an independent country. But besides the thematic concerns of this song, one of which is Somaliland independence, I was mostly curious about the entire set up and position of music in the country – and the ways in which it was enjoyed in a space that is arguably ‘cosmopolitan’ and ‘diverse’ as Summer Time Restaurant. The fact that music could not be allowed in an open space, and the nature with which these young men and women improvised in a town acclaimed as the “mother of the Somali arts” were insightful juxtapositions. I was encouraged on to understand the larger terrain and status of music in the town.

If not chewing Qat during the three-hour lunch time break or late in the evening after work, Hargeysa ns will be seated in some place listening to Somali traditional music or

sometimes doing both – especially the love songs composed in the 1960s and 1980s. Contemporary singers such as Mohammad BK, Yurub Genyo, and Nuur Daalacay, and the entire Horn Stars group were slowly becoming a singing sensation. Sometimes, they could be listening to East African or western music genres such as hip-hop or rap. With the exception of nationalist music performed especially on national celebration events or socially sanctioned occasions such as weddings, the traditional-Islamic pre-defined public strictly abhors music in the public space.⁸⁵ Indeed, Sara Hajji of Cup of Art Italian Coffeehouse would tell me:

I have received many people come here and tell me not to play music in my shop. They tell me that I should play recordings of recitals of the Holy Quran...I am not ready to change. they say I am an embarrassment to my mother, my clan and my people...This is a restaurant not a mosque.⁸⁶

It is telling how she would be challenged not to play music but encouraged to play the Quran. In this single call alone is embedded the enforcement of a an Islamic public identity. Also curious is the dislike for music in the public sphere which exists in spite of the fact that one of the most popular TV shows in Hargeysa is Horn Cable TV's (HCTV) weekly *Faanka iyo Suugaanta* (Culture and Arts) where artists and musicians are interviewed and thereby recognised as an influential social constituency.⁸⁷ But this public treatment of music has been difficult to implement.

There is the example Hiddo Dhawr Tourist Village and Restaurant (discussed more extensively in Chapter Eight) which also brings the enforcement of the pre-defined public identity in proper focus. Hiddo Dhawr organises live music performances with a house band and the audience can participate in the singing and dancing. The owner of the place, Sahra Halgan who fought in the SNM war of liberation was an active member on the political scene. She belonged to Wadaani Party, one of the lead political parties in the country. However, for her music and Hiddo Dhawr, she was being used

⁸⁵ There are levels of restriction: not all forms of music face the same level of abhorrence in the public domain. At the same time, the reference of public in this context does not suggest a homogenous worldview, there are variations but within the superstructure pre-defined through various means. The public space is equally differentiated. One popular cultural producer noted, "*music is tolerated* because some music lovers took part in the liberation struggle from Somalia" (conversations at Hiddo Dhawr, 3 August, 2015). Talking about Somali/traditional genre, means with lyrics in Somali, and a particular normalised "Somali percussion."

⁸⁶ Interview with Noor Ali (not real names), 6 May 2015, Hargeysa.

⁸⁷ Field notes, March-October, 2015, Hargeysa

to politically reproach Wadaani Party for giving membership to someone who owned a “morally questionable” place.⁸⁸ Hiddo Dhawr was often pointed at as a centre or source of cultural and moral corruption. Forced between performance and politics, Halgan quit the party and is now just an ordinary member of the public. Indeed, one music critic noted that Halgan was “tolerated as a musician and performer because she took part in the liberation struggle.”⁸⁹

The National Theatre located in downtown Hargeysa was slow to be completed because stricter religious sections of the community were opposed to its existence.⁹⁰ Having been destroyed during the 1988 war, the national theatre had received enormous funding to have it completed. But the construction was slow and stalled many times because influential religious scholars were opposed to the idea.

In many cases, funds would be put elsewhere. Many sheikhs are opposed to it and say it would be a centre of cultural corruption. They do not want it to be completed because they believe our youth will be spoiled. But we are confident we will complete the construction.⁹¹

Places of this nature are often associated with un-Somaliland, western, corrupted, un-Islamic behaviours.⁹² This bitterness has not only affected the space for staging and performance, but also production and circulation of popular culture, which I turn to in that next section. Curiously, however, Hargeysa is still headlined as the mother of the Somali arts, and this push and pull in the arts and the imagined public identity continues.

Music Composition and Recording

For composition and recording, it is the television and radio where live recordings are carried out. In the last five years, there has been a rise of young men who have mastered the art of using the computer to generate beats for recording music. Self-taught, many

⁸⁸ Interview, Abdirahman Burale (not real names), Member of Parliament, author, art and music critique/enthusiast, 15 August, 2015, Hargeysa.

⁸⁹ Remarks by an elderly speaker at Hiddo Dhawr during the Hargeysa International Book Fair dinner. Guests for the Book Fair were entertained here during the evenings of 3 August 2015.

⁹⁰ *ibid.*

⁹¹ *ibid.*

⁹² *ibid.*

of these young recording artistes have turned their living rooms into makeshift studios.⁹³ Ducale would also tell me:

With the end of the era of cassette tapes and recording studios in the 1980s, the new producer exploits the most basic equipment, mostly laptops, or ordinary computer to get a piano's keyboard and a small microphone to record the music. Often, musicians find them in their makeshift studios and negotiate to produce or record a song on a small fee.⁹⁴

Sometimes, these young men have also managed to mobilise resources and acquired cameras for which they record their music videos, and small film skits, which they are quick to post on online media channels especially YouTube and Facebook before these videos are shared with television studios, and radio.⁹⁵ Many times, TV and radio stations have found these songs and videos on social media platforms from which they download and begin playing them for a general audience—often without the permission of the musicians or producer.⁹⁶

Staging

Partly for the same reasons of an Islamic inspired public identity, there is no music industry in the traditional sense—or as exists in communities across East Africa—where musicians lucratively earn from their trade, and are free to organise shows that are attended by huge numbers of fans and followers. The general status of the music industry was painted to me in an interview with members of the members of Amazing Technology Group (ATG) – a group of singers, producers and photographers:

We do these things out of passion. There is no money in music at the moment. Mohamad BK and Horn Stars earn when they sing at weddings, but we do not. But we are happy to represent our country and do what we want. The only time we shared a stage was in 2013 when a music group from Djibouti was performing at Crown Hotel to mostly diaspora people. And Crown Hotel has also been branded as being anti-cultural.⁹⁷

⁹³ Focused Group Discussion with singer and producer, Adam Konvict, artiste and photographer, Abdirazak Hirsi, and director, producer and photographer, Mustafe Saeed, 20 September 2015, Hargeysa. I had chance to visit producer and artiste Adam Konvict's "living-room studio" in Bokol iyo Konton.

⁹⁴ Interview with Boobe Yusuf Ducale, 30 September 2015, Maan Soor Hotel, Hargeysa..

⁹⁵ *ibid.*

⁹⁶ *ibid.* I should add here that needing further study is the Hargeysa film industry, which is seeing a steady rise, with members of Amazing Technology Group (ATG), some of them musicians, providing the lead.

⁹⁷ Focused Group Discussion with singer and producer, Adam Konvict, artiste and photographer, Abdirazak Hirsi, and director, producer and photographer, Mustafe Saeed, 20 September 2015, Hargeysa.

ATG had never staged a music show in Hargeysa since their formation in 2011. They came close to earning from their music in 2013 when they shared the stage with a group from Djibouti. The next time they would be staging a show was in 2015 at Cup of Art Italian Coffeehouse. After the first show at this venue, the second one was violently stopped by the securities for among other reasons being anti-cultural. This means, earning is terribly constrained. Like poets, musicians in Hargeysa rarely earn from music sales or from staging open shows. It is with the exception of a few big names such as Mohamed BK, Sara Illays, Yurub Genyo or generally the Horn Stars Group who often get invitations to sing at national celebrations or are privately hired for weddings and other in-house parties. Members of the Horn Stars have also had opportunity to perform to Somali communities in places such as Ethiopia's Jig-jiga, Djibouti, Mogadishu, Nairobi, Rome and London.⁹⁸

Because music is composed for performance, the entire notion of performance is difficult in Hargeysa. There are not many designated places for staging of shows, although they are emerging by the day. The major places include Crown Hotel, Hiddo Dhawr, and the Hargeysa Cultural Centre. For reasons of especially a cultural nature (and the pre-defined Hargeysa n public), these places too infrequently stage music shows. It is the wedding occasions that have provided the most frequent space for musicians, plus an appearance on shows on the television stations or Radio Hargeysa, and television for live shows.⁹⁹ It is however, interesting that despite these seemingly difficult spaces for performance and staging, music is highly respected and many continue to use it as source for social mobilisation.

Circulation

⁹⁸ Field notes, March-October, 2015, Hargeysa. I was often at the Hargeysa Cultural Centre and lucky to see and photograph members of the Horn Stars depart for London in 2015 for the Somali week festival. I also attended several wedding events at Green Plaza in Badhacas, where members of the Horn Stars were hired to perform.

⁹⁹ *ibid.* For anybody living in Hargeysa, the wedding provides a unique opportunity for the inversion of conventional rules. Organised especially at Green Plaza, and Guleid Hotel main hall in Badhacas, and Maan Soor Hotel in Jig-jig yar, weddings are spaces for not just open singing and dancing to live and recently composed music, but also women are free to turn up without or just a simple head covering. There is free dancing and mixing of genders, and men and women can hold hands as they dance away for extended hours into the night.

Notwithstanding the stigma around music in the public sphere, the limited space for recording, producing and staging, music readily circulates in Hargeysa. New media channels including YouTube and Facebook have eased circulation and storage of music. Small memory disks – the flash drives – and the easy acquisition of affordable Chinese-made smart phones have made sharing music one of the major aspects of social interaction.¹⁰⁰ Once a song is released online, it easily circulates through the city and all interested listeners will have it within a few days – *de gratis*. Once the lyrics are appreciated, they will be leaned by heart and the crowd will often sing along. At the same time, the artiste will be invited either on national television, and the only national radio, Radio Hargeysa for shows.¹⁰¹ As Abdirazak Hersi and Adam Konvict of the Black East Band (also members of ATG) explained, once the song makes it to a big audience, then there are opportunities for some money arise. The artistes would be invited to sing at weddings, national celebrations, or travel to other Somali dominated communities including Djibouti, Ogaadeen in Ethiopia, or Mogadishu and Nairobi. Making it to the big stage means it is not only of good quality, representative of sentiments, and will quickly circulate.¹⁰²

With the almost complete closure of kiosks that used to sell poetry and music cassette tapes in Hargeysa, the Hargeysa Cultural Centre located in Shacab Area has preserved some of the cassette tapes and CDs via which music and poetry used to be stored and circulated.¹⁰³ But these are nowadays more of museum pieces than circulating works. This, in turn, makes the cyberspace an even important repository of Somali music and poetry (Kapteijns, 2010: 26). As regards, these repositories of music, despite majority of them being managed abroad, their impact on the discourse in Somaliland is visible.

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Although people are free to open private television stations, there remains one radio station in the country, Radio Hargeysa (see also, Höhne, 2008: 98). I was told, this was not meant to control freedom of speech, but was a way of controlling information against a background of a fragile history. This is especially so because radio travels widest, which is difficult to sieve as opposed to television, which is an item of ostentation and is owned by a few. Semi-structured group discussion, 7 September 2015, Hargeysa.

¹⁰² Commenting about proceeds coming from the wide circulation of particular music, members of the Black East Band explained: This [wide circulation and making it to the big stage] will bring in a bit of money as these invites often improve your popularity earning you even more invites for wedding celebrations in and around Somalia. This is for especially those musicians doing the love songs. This might also bring you opportunities for invites to London for the Somali week festival, and other big cities around the world where the Somalis live. Focused Group Discussion, 20 September 2015, Hargeysa.

¹⁰³ By July and August 2015, this was the newest addition to Hargeysa Cultural Centre's archiving project. Field notes, March-October, 2015.

Music groups such as Black East Band (with members from Hargeysa and Djibouti), *Hidigaha Geeska*, exclusively publish their music on YouTube. Although do not make any sales from their music, its circulation is good, as long as the music is good and its lyrics are representative.¹⁰⁴

A note on new media in Hargeysa

New media in Hargeysa provides an important infrastructure for popular culture. Most of the studies done on access to new media in Somalia do not focus Hargeysa's new media access (see for example, Issa-Salwe, 2006; Dhaha and Igale, 2013). Internet usage in all Somali territory since 2013, has been at a paltry 1.8 per cent penetration rate (Dhaha and Igale, 300). Introduced in Hargeysa around 2000, the use of Internet has been on the rise with more people accessing online connection.¹⁰⁵ Conservatively estimated, over 35 per cent of Hargeysa ns have access to smart phones over which they can take pictures and share them via social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.¹⁰⁶

My interest, here is in how new media is exploited especially through sharing downloadable content via mobile phones and flash drives and other devices. Indeed, even people without access to Internet or a smart phone can actually access downloaded content. As noted earlier, music is published online where it is downloaded and broadcast on radio and TV. Sharing downloaded content via flash drives is a common thing in Hargeysa. With increasing speeds¹⁰⁷ and dropping fees for Internet subscription,¹⁰⁸ wireless and mobile telephone access is widely expanding to even small towns (see also Kapteijns, *ibid*). In Hargeysa, for example, more hotels and restaurants

¹⁰⁴ Op. cit.

¹⁰⁵ There has never been a comprehensive census on different aspects in Somaliland. Most of the figures are estimates. On Internet connectivity specifically, this researcher is yet to find a statistical book on Hargeysa.

¹⁰⁶ As earlier noted, there are no studies on the number of people accessing Internet connectivity in Hargeysa. This number is researcher's estimate after conversation with several respondents.

¹⁰⁷ See for example, Rebecca Wanjiku, "Somaliland gets high speed fiber cable," *PC Advisor*, 29 November 2012, accessed on 10 December 2016 at <http://www.pcadvisor.co.uk/feature/network-wifi/somaliland-gets-high-speed-fiber-optic-cable-3413848/>

¹⁰⁸ During fieldwork in 2015, it cost this researcher \$25 for monthly unlimited Internet connection in a house which was occupied by six people who connected to at least two gadgets each. At the same rate, an entire restaurant would be connected. Five years earlier, this had cost \$45-50. [USD is legal tender in Somaliland circulating alongside the Somaliland shilling]. However, some clients pay more to have faster speeds.

are guaranteeing Internet access to customers.¹⁰⁹ It is not surprising therefore that with no place for purchase of music, many young musicians and poets have found it easy circulating their art online.¹¹⁰ Kapteijns estimated that over 700 websites form the ‘Somali cyberspace’ and are dedicated to sharing Somali-related content (Kapteijns, *ibid*). It is therefore plausible to argue that new media has simplified the circulation of popular culture and literature among Hargeysa ns.

On Poetry

In terms of the political economies of music and poetry, these two genres face the same challenges emerging especially from the after-effects of war and violence. But poets remain somewhat more disadvantaged than the musician as it is more difficult to make a living off poetry.¹¹¹ Originally handed down by word of mouth, poetry entered a time of recording in the form of texts, such as books, or as recorded audio on cassette tapes or videos. Ducale (2002) noted that in the 1980s, the Somali National Academy of Arts, Culture and Science (NAACS) was at the forefront of printing collections of poetry (2002: 17) from which poets could earn some money. Ducale would tell me during an interview that there has been no consideration for helping artistes as was in the past.

The Somaliland government after declaring its intentions to secede from Somalia has not put in place a body to help the Somaliland poets. Not simply the poets, the arts more generally are at their worst in our history”¹¹²

Signalling this danger, one of the poets in Somaliland Yuusuf Xiito is quoted saying other media have taken the important role and place of poetry and the poet has gone without recognition (2002: 23). Since poetry circulates free of charge, the livelihood of the poet remains unattended to. Ducale has summed up this state of affairs noting that “competition with the mass media, lack of intellectual property protection, and absence of government support together threaten the existence of poetry as a profession” (2002: 24).

¹⁰⁹ Field notes, March-October 2015, Hargeysa.

¹¹⁰ Semi-structured group discussion with singer and producer, Adam Konvict and actor and photographer, Abdirazak Hirsi and director and photographer, Mustafe Saeed; 20 August 2015, Hargeysa

¹¹¹ Interview, Boobe Yuusuf Ducale, 30 September, 2015, Maan Soor Hotel, Hargeysa

¹¹² *ibid*.

Many poets have resorted to self-publishing books, and a couple of poetry collections are available on the market. But with the absence of a strong book publishing sector, and a young book buying and reading culture, the books published have remained few, and still less lucrative for the livelihood of the poet.¹¹³ With the exception of occasional spaces for poetry in the national newspapers, there are not many open spaces for poets to perform and publicise their poetry.¹¹⁴ Once in a while, they appear at national celebrations, national radio and BBC Somali service, and local TVs and occasions such as the Hargeysa International Book Fair and exhibit their craft.¹¹⁵ Neighbouring Somali dominated Djibouti has been an alternative space for Hargeysa n artistes to sell their art and make a living.¹¹⁶ That said, however, the poetic tradition continues to command a great deal of respect, and it is still involved in the national imaginary of new Somaliland.

Conclusion

The main concern of this section has been to contextualise and locate popular culture in Hargeysa. Heralded as the mother of Somali arts, Hargeysa is in a conflicted position as the arts are in an endless pull and push relationship with society. The descriptions above are more contemporary than historical especially the period after 2002 where at least a comprehensive document is available.¹¹⁷ From the exploration above, the following conclusions are possible: Firstly, presenting as an oral and visual community, Hargeysa presents an attractive case where popular cultural items as mediations which speak to the larger projects can thrive. Like the other places of Somalia, Hargeysa is a visual and oral town. Secondly, popular culture (spaces, production, circulation and performance) makes visible a pre-defined public identity, which in the end sets the conditioning limits, and reach of imagination for artistic and cultural production. Indeed, Hargeysa continues to identify in a rather hegemonic way as Islamic inspired public after the declaration of independence. Both the Islamic identity, and the aftermaths of war continues to pre-set the limits and reach of popular culture. It is important to note, however, this Islamic-predefined public is constantly contested

¹¹³ Interview with Boobe Ducale. Also, in several conversations with Jama Musse Jama, director of the Hargeysa Cultural Centre confirmed this detail. August 2015.

¹¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹¹⁵ field notes, March-October 2015.

¹¹⁶ Interview with Boobe.

¹¹⁷ This is Boobe Yuusuf Ducale's "Role of Media in Political Reconstruction in Somaliland."

through different subtle and overt mediations from contact with other traditions – especially through the diaspora returnees – as will be discussed ahead. Thirdly, the popular culture world, despite its absolute visibility and rich heritage, it is still reeling from the challenges of war and violence of 1988-1996 where the moral and political economy upon which it thrived has been eroded. People are preoccupied with a quest for livelihood as opposed to art and creative production. Fourth, the birth of online media is a major player in the popular culture world of Hargeysa with most publication taking place online before circulation to larger public spaces.

Chapter Seven

OFFICIAL SOMALILAND: POWER, *A PRIORI*, AND PUBLIC IDENTITY

This chapter is concerned with the ways in which, and the nature of ‘regime of truth’ that is mobilised in the making of a Somaliland public identity, and national consciousness through the national flag, and select major monuments of Hargeysa. The chapter argues that official Somaliland – through the national flag, and monuments – mobilises and enforces discourses – towards a regime of truth – that projects southern Somalia, as an inherent foil for Somaliland discursively and institutionally. Projected as an omnipresent enemy-interlocutor, southern Somalia is constructed as vile, a war criminal, colonial and exploitative, and has to be avoided by all means necessary. By this process, Somalilanders are constructed and mobilised as both victims and survivors of several ills inflicted upon them by southern Somalia including genocide, and economic marginalisation – a process which then valorises the hero-hood of the Somali National Movement (SNM). Also central to this mimetically constructed consciousness is the notion that Somaliland represents the death of the 1960s nationalist dream of union of all Somali territories as an imagined cultural community that was mobilised under the banner of *Soomalinimo* or grand Somali nationalism (that is, unity on the grounds of culture, religion and language).¹¹⁸

In the course of the analysis, this chapter demonstrates the connection that the national flag, and the major monuments of Hargeysa enjoy in mobilising nationalist sentiments in Somaliland. These two popular cultural items (also items of memory-making) do only reproduce each other, but also work complementarily to each other and weave a narrative that simultaneously speaks about the people of Somaliland and Somalia as bounded together, but at the same time, identifying as different from each other. While Somalia should be escaped, it is the knot against which a new nationalism is crafted. This paradox forms the core of secessionist nationalism, and this chapter demonstrates its manifestation in the context of Somaliland.

¹¹⁸ Under this dream – *Soomalinimo* – the Somali dominated regions in the Horn of Africa in Djibouti, northern Kenya, and Ethiopia were expected to join the two, Italian-colonised Somalia and British-colonised Somaliland to form the Greater Somali Republic.

In terms of narrativity, the story of the national flag is told through (a) a historicist, and close analysis of the constituent parts of the flag, and (b) tales and actions built around the flag in Hargeysa. The story of monuments on the other hand is told through vivid descriptive analyses, photography and literary analysis. It quickly becomes clear that these two items reproduce each other both aesthetically or thematically. While the dominant feature remains the colours of the SNM-inspired national flag, the thematic features of these monuments despite their marked differences are packaged to speak a singular vocabulary, about the national identity and national consciousness building. Despite the presence of a counterpublic that rhymes against, or sometimes, complicates the discourses in the official items of popular culture (explored in the next chapter), I argue that the official discourses explored here portend towards a hegemony as they have the full backing of the state. Indeed, any ideas to the contrary end in serious repercussions such as arrest and detention.

This chapter is located at the heart of this dissertation, and provides a major pillar around which the conclusions (theoretical and empirical) of this dissertation are built. The first part of the chapter is a discussion of the idea of “regime of truth,” which throughout the chapter, I show that the monuments mobilise a specific regime of truth upon which actions and other discourses are legitimated. (Although not directly explored in this chapter, an earlier on explored phenomena of *pre-defined public identity* [Chapter Six], thrives on the idea of a ‘regime of truth,’ where Hargeysa ns are mobilized and are expected to naturally respond and conform to an Islamic-inspired public identity, which is enforced by the security-judicial forces, and vigilante groups as is legitimated through the regime of truth already mobilised in these artefacts and is presumed already existent and well known). Second part of this chapter deals with the national flag of Somaliland, and tales about it. Beginning by going over its history, and discussing the its constituent parts, I demonstrate how, and the nature of truths crafted in the flag for the agenda of mobilising a [new] nationalist sentiments and identities. This is followed with two tales about the national flag: one in Mecca, another in Mogadishu (with the one in Mogadishu having real implications to those involved upon return to Hargeysa, and happened in the course of my fieldwork). The final section is an analytical description and examination of the major monuments in Hargeysa drawing on lessons and connections with the national flag.

A Regime of Truth

The analytical drive for this chapter is the notion of a ‘regime of truth,’ which denotes a discursive context, one in which actions, inactions, discourses and sentiments, are ‘recognised to be true.’ It is some sort of a ‘common sense’ which arbitrates, mediates or sanctions good and evil, acceptable and unacceptable, legal or illegal. In *The Order of Things*, Michel Foucault (1970) called “a sort of a historical *a priori*,” to mean what,

[in] a given period, delimits in the totality of experience a field of knowledge, defines the mode of being of the objects that appear in the field, provides man’s everyday perception with theoretical powers, and defines with the conditions in which he can sustain a discourse about things that is recognised to be true (1970: 172)

The *a priori* or ‘regime of truth’ (Mavelli, 2013) are never permanent constructs that are in-transmittable from time to time signalling the level of scientific and social advances of the time. They keep changing with time, and provide the basis for actions and practices that are considered truthful or wrong in their specific time. A priori thus signifies the presence of an order of concrete terms – a field of knowledge – where in its context, the genealogies and the actual existence of things and practices are not questioned, but simply understood as belonging to this order. Foucault was not simply concerned about a “framework of thought,” which he dispels as not part of *a priori*, but rather he was concerned by some of scientific existence of “a domain of knowledge”, which enables and makes certain discourses and other inquiries possible. A priori, Foucault continues, “covers a series of complex operations that introduce the possibility of a constant order into a totality of representations. It constitutes a whole domain of empiricity as at the same time *describable* and *orderable* (ibid, italics in original). It enables items to be examined, classified, identifies signs, and items or phenomena can be named, and the entire process is believed to be true and fixed in the understanding of the people of the time. What is powerfully striking is that Foucault noted that *a priori* has to be manifest in a particular period, and can after a period become obsolete. This also means, it is technically mobilized or socially and methodically engineered within a specific place and time.

A related concept that concerns itself with space and time in which actors exercise their agency – and could be termed as a domain of knowledge – and where their actions are legitimated by the awareness of the dynamics of this domain of knowledge is what Scott

(2004) has called a “problem space,” which is a space of possibilities and impossibilities. Scott noted that a problem space,

is meant to demarcate a discursive context, a context of language. But it is more than the cognitively intelligible arrangement of concepts, ideas, images, meanings, and so on – though it is certainly this. It is a context of arguments and therefore, one of intervention... an ensemble of questions and answers around which a horizon of identifiable stakes (conceptual as well as ideological-political stakes) hangs. That is to say, what defines a discursive context are not only the particular problems that get posed as problems as such... but the particular questions that seem worth asking and the kinds of answers that seem worth having (2004: 3-4).

Scott also draws our attention to the fact that a problem space emerges from both scientific and sociological advances. It is a moment of exposure to specific modes of knowledge systems, which cultures and becomes a fulcrum around which knowledge of negotiated. Both Foucault and Scott demonstrate an awareness of fluidity in that regimes of truth change over the period. But while Foucault in this particular instance creates the impression of *a priori* as being settled in place, Scott is keen to point out that this is a space of dispute (2004: 4). Scott has noted that the problem space is ‘a context of rival views, a context, if you like, of knowledge and power’ (ibid). Interesting to note is that what dictates the regime of truth is the power of the time. One would also be right to argue that Scott here follows an intimately Foucauldian tradition on knowledge and power developed in *Discipline and Punish*. The point I am trying to stress here is that in this discursive context, or otherwise, *a priori*, actions and items are acceptable and are ‘recognised to be true’ in the sense that they make meaning and can organise the world in which actors exercise their agency. It is also cultivated over a period and often by power – which is often, the state. Indeed, from the vantage point of the state in Somaliland, *a priori* has been mobilised and continues to be mobilised through popular culture, in which a public identity and consciousness outlined above is made possible, and is recognised to be true. Let me start with the national flag of Somaliland, which is one of those items involved in mobilising a ‘regime of truth’ in and about Somaliland.

The Somaliland Flag

In October 1996, the government of Somaliland discarded the old flag, and adopted the flag of the former rebel movement, Somali National Movement (SNM) as the new national flag of Somaliland. In Chapter Four, I recounted the history of the SNM as the rebel group that was formed and based in north-western Somalia during the fight against the regime of Mohammed Siyad Barre. SNM, despite having not started out as a separatist movement, is credited for spearheading the declaration of secession from southern Somalia. As an act of memorialisation, and ‘refashioning futures’ for a particular objective (Scott, 1999) the major reason adopting this SNM flag was, from the official channels, to commemorate the blood of the lost heroes.¹¹⁹ Narratives claiming to commemorate the blood of the lost heroes are a recent construction of the intelligentsia after 1991 when independence was declared. As earlier pointed out, it is for certain that the SNM fighters who died in the Somali civil war were not fighting for the independence of Somaliland, but rather the liberation of all of Somalia from Siad Barre’s tyranny. But the construction of these narrative is powerful as it signals a particular direction in the identity-making and national sentiment building in a new country. The civil war, crimes of southern Somalia, and the victims and survivor consciousness start to emerge with these narratives becoming the knots around which nationalist consciousness and identity is built.

Indeed, the return of this flag marked a process of returning and centring the SNM in national consciousness.¹²⁰ The overwhelming feeling among the intelligentsia was that the SNM history had to be mobilised for the collective good of the country coming on the heels of a debilitating civil war amongst the Somalilanders in the period between 1991-1997 (Balthasar, 2013; Höhne, 2009). It is arguable that unity against southern Somalia – as a common enemy – was envisioned as a way of avoiding clannist fighting among the people who, a few years earlier, had declared independence from Somalia – only to start fighting amongst themselves. Höhne (2009) has noted that the first years after the independence declaration were generally lukewarm towards the idea of

¹¹⁹ Conversation with Dr Adan Abokor, at Academy for Peace and Development (APD), 4 August 2015, Hargeysa.

¹²⁰ Ibid. In the larger project of returning SNM history to the core of national consciousness in Somaliland, Dr Abokor also told me that around the same time, the curriculum for primary and secondary schools was being revised to teach SNM history as the history of new Somaliland had to be learned from a young age.

independence itself. But after the civil wars, and with ‘the introduction of a new currency (the Somaliland shilling), the establishment of Somaliland newspapers, and the erection of national and civil war monuments’ (2009: 260), Somaliland as a national and political unit became more concrete. A specific narrative had to accompany this development.

The SNM flag has red, white and green stripes.¹²¹ Writing about this new national flag, Bradbury (2008) has noted the stripes of the national flag are inverted to make a slight variation from the SNM flag, which started with red, white and green at the bottom. But it remained the SNM flag. The inversion is meant to symbolise the people’s aspiration for independence (2008: 1) as opposed to the earlier idea of reforming all of Somalia for which SNM had been started. Green symbolised prosperity, white symbolised peace, and red the fallen heroes.¹²² Like the old Somaliland flag (1991-1996), this flag also has the Shahada at its centre. The Shahada is meant to indicate that Somaliland is an Islamic society.¹²³ The return of SNM regalia and insignia was meant to reconstruct the idea of union and peaceful existence around a common enemy – southern Somalia (see also, Abokor, 2005: 7; Philips, 2013: 26).¹²⁴ Indeed, Bradbury narrates that the black star at the centre of the Somaliland national flag (which is the only addition to the SNM flag away from the inversion of colours), is meant to juxtapose with the white star of the national flag of the Somali Republic, and “is interpreted by some Somalilanders to symbolise the demise of Somali unity.”¹²⁵ This is a popular view in Hargeysa [perhaps the most well-known meaning of the flag in popular discourse] as conversations about the flag often point to the black star as signalling the death of *Soomalinimo* – Somali unity. Its inclusion as a juxtaposition or foil for southern Somalia marks the institutionalisation of Somalia into the Somaliland fabric and national consciousness. Thus, southern Somalia earned a permanent seat in the heart of the Somaliland nationalist consciousness in their struggle for independence. At the same time, the addition of this black star actually transforms SNM ideations

¹²¹ The old flag of Somaliland (1991-1996) was all white with a green disk in the centre around which was inscribed the Shahada or Tawhid.

¹²² Bradbury, 2008, *ibid.*

¹²³ *ibid.*

¹²⁴ Also, conversation with Dr Adan Abokor, at Academy for Peace and Development (APD), 4 August 2015, Hargeysa.

¹²⁵ *ibid.*

(1980-1991) into present claims of independence as SNM history is reconstructed for an entirely new project – reinforcing Foucauldian claims of historical narrativity as often being a project of the present.

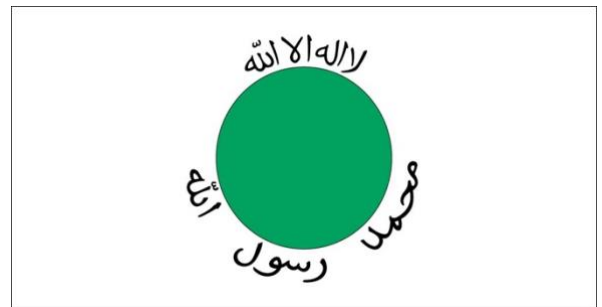
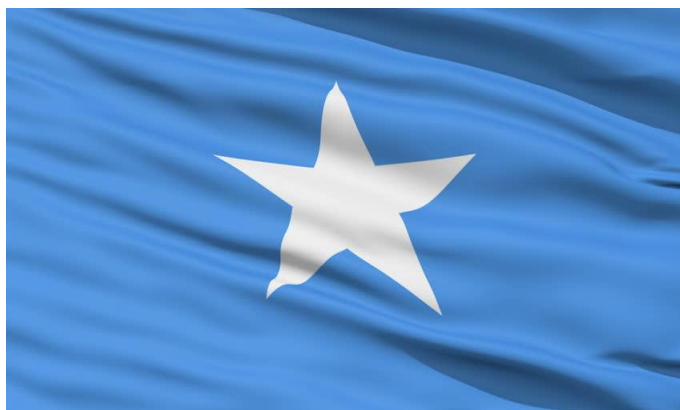


Image XIII: Flags of Somaliland and Somalia side by side
The official national flag of Somaliland adopted in 1996. It is green, white and red in colour, with a black five-pointed star on the white and the Shahada on the green.

The old flag of Somaliland (May 1991- October 1996). In October 1996, this flag was replaced by the one on the left.



On the left is the national flag of Somalia. The white five-pointed star – also known as Star of Unity – stood for the different five different places in which colonialism had divided the Somali people: Somalia, Somaliland, Djibouti, Kenya, and Ethiopia in the Ogaden region.

Plenty of scholarship has underscored the symbolic and nationalistic importance of national symbols such as the national flag and anthem – especially as spaces of history making, identity, contest and negotiation (Billig, 1995; Cerulo, 1993; Mitchel, 1991). Karen Cerulo (1993) has argued that flags “provide perhaps the strongest, clearest statement of national identity” (1993: 244). Embedded in them are histories and traditions, “used to invoke a glorious past as well as a symbol of a modern nation-state that is being constructed” (Pai, 2009: 38). National flags are not only important in creating an imagined community that help in constituting a nation (ibid; see also Anderson, 1983: 13), but they also “serve as modern totems...signs that bear special relationship to the nations they represent, distinguishing them from one another and reaffirming their identity and boundaries” (Cerulo, ibid). Scholars of the Indian

national flag, for example, have demonstrated how the national symbol is not just a passive representation, but an active space of contest for both narrow and broad aspirations (Pai, 2009; Jha (2008). Writing about the Indian national flag as “a site for daily plebiscite,” Jha (2008) brings to our attention the potency of the politics and discourses assembled and contested in the national flags. Pointing to an ingredient of popular culture of the flag, Jha notes that the “flag travels long distances...and seems to be occupying everyday moments” of the people and the state including emptying houses and nationalising the gaze (2008: 105). The Indian flag has been modified a great many times to meet different aspirations and represent various historical circumstances. Pai (2009) tells us that concerns over whether India should be represented as a secular country, or the dominant religions in the Indian subcontinent have been central to debates in the final forming of the Indian national flag (Pai, 2009: 40-41). The flag becomes a synecdoche in the sense that it actually stands for whole communities and attracts greater weight and power. These different representations are often meant to bring forth national or communal affiliations in ways that underscore differences between one community and another; between one border and another. I find this dynamic of the national flag insightful in reading the national flags, not just in Somaliland but several other flag-waving communities.

Indeed, the modifications on the Somaliland national flag explored earlier are meant to legitimate a particular world, cultivate a specific regime of truth for and about the people of Somaliland. From emphasising the Islamic identity in the Shahada, to the black star in the centre, and bringing back and repackaging the narratives of the SNM liberation war, the intention is to both privilege but also reformulate SNM ideations into nationalist histories – as the springboard for a new nationalist imaginary. I now turn to the tales of the national flag, in which Somaliland flag, does not only emerge victorious [albeit symbolically], over the one of southern Somalia, but also becomes an item of controversy and conflict.

Tales about the Somaliland National Flag

An incident in Mecca

There is a much-celebrated tale in Hargeysa about a Somaliland “victory” over the Somalis during an incident in Mecca in the month of Hajj. This tale involves the two flags – of Somaliland and Somalia. I picked this tale from my neighbour, Hamdi Mohamed (not real names) at the guesthouse I stayed in 2015 in Badhacas in the east of Hargeysa. Recently returned from the diaspora a building a permanent residence in Hargeysa – was building an illustrious bungalow about 500 meters away from our guesthouse – Hamdi Mohamed telling me this story was emotionally uplifting as it demonstrated not just a sense of superiority, but also difference over southern Somalia. I had had plenty of conversations with Hamdi Mohamed showing me different things and dilemmas facing Somaliland in its quest for secession and international recognition. But with every story I learned from Mohamed, Somalia was both othered and associated with. Fluent in English, Mohamed had often referred to the people of southern Somalia as “fools eating each other,” and Somaliland represented the saner opposite. I will reproduce the story of the incident in Mecca below. Mohamed noted that this incident could have happened either during the 2008 or 2009 pilgrimage. When I checked with my other respondents in Hargeysa, the much older ones noted to have heard the tale, and relished its conclusion. Mohamed does not either say whether she was a part of it.

It happened that while the Somalis were in Hajji that year, all people holding Somalia passports were placed in one tent. Officially, they are all Somalis from the one state of Somalia.¹²⁶ In what could have been a feat of nationalist fervour – the tent had no flag – one of the pilgrims from southern Somalia got the national flag of Somalia and erected

¹²⁶ During fieldwork, I also learned that unless traveling to Ethiopia, Somalilanders travel to Mogadishu to have the Somalia passport for their other travels across the world. By 2015 the year of fieldwork, with the exception of Ethiopia, no other country recognises the passport of the government of Somaliland. Although Somaliland authorities claim that more than 30 countries recognise the independent government of Somaliland, it is difficult to prove whether all these recognise the passport of Somaliland (see, for example, Mohamed Duale, “Somaliland Celebrates Independence Day 18.” <http://www.slnnews.com/2015/05/somalilandcelebrates-independence-day-18-of-may-today-sayno-debatable-against-of-our-country/> accessed January 23, 2016). The passport story of unrecognized Somaliland needs further studies as is fascinating and also enlightening to the challenges of secession. For example, in one interview, one respondent alleged that the then President of Somaliland, Mohamed Mohamoud Silanyo traveled on a UK passport. Puntland president, Abdiweli Mohamed Ali was alleged to travel on his American passport since he also held American citizenship just like his counterpart in Somaliland who held a British passport.

it atop the tent were all had been sheltered. Somalis from Somaliland did not like this turn of events. In protest, they asked the flag to be brought down because it did not represent all of them. They are Somalilanders, not Somalis.¹²⁷ A scuffle followed as the exchange got more heated with Somalis from southern Somalia insisting that there was one country called Somalia.

Mohamed continued that for the Somalilanders to make their point more emphatically, one Somalilander pulled out the Somaliland flag climbed up the tent and planted it besides the one of Somalia to indicate that there were two separate “nationalities” in this tent. Pandemonium was let loose. A crescendo of shouting voices emerged from the tent. The scuffle drew the attention of the Saudi authorities. The standoff threatened the peace of the entire event, which actually assembles nationalities from across the world. When the Saudi authorities arrived, it was obvious that the Somalis from southern Somalia had a compelling case. Somalia is the only internationally recognised country. The issue would be quickly resolved as the Somaliland flag was to be brought down. However, the Saudi official who had climbed up to bring down the “unrecognised” flag noticed that the flag that had to be brought down had Shahada (the Arabic script reading the first pillar of Islam, “There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah, and Muhammad is His messenger”) printed in the middle of the flag’s colours. On the contrary, the one that had to stay up did not have the same inscription yet all the people assembled in this tent were Muslims from Somalia – and had gathered there for the same religious event. The official could not countenance bringing down the flag with the inscriptions announcing the oneness of Allah, and leaving the one without it.

‘You are all Somalis as far as we are concerned, if we are to bring any of your flags down, it has to be the one without Tawhid,’ the official declared. ‘Otherwise, we will have to leave both of them up there,’ he concluded. Somalilanders celebrated their victory as both flags were then allowed to stay.

¹²⁷ Markus Höhne (2009, 2015) has showed us that “Somalilander” is actually a problematic construction. In addition to being inexistent in history, as Somaliland was a colonial referent, it is also problematic in the sense that people in areas including Laascaanood, Buuhoodle and Taleex who formed the Khatumo state have remained opposed to the idea of secession with Somaliland (2015: 78). I continue to use the terms “Somaliland” and “Somalilander” for the political resilience they have acquired over the years. At the same time, it is only fair for a scholar to refer to the subjects being with the terms they prefer to be identified with.

It is worth noting that the national flag of Saudi Arabia also has Shahada in its centre. As seen above, the official decision not to remove the Somaliland flag, one bearing the shahada must have been prompted by feelings of a shared religious community in the Anderson's (1983) sense of horizontal comradeships. The message of the oneness of Allah and the prophethood of Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) evoked emotions of a religious brotherhood; shared horizontal comradeship (Anderson, 1983: 7) visible throughout the Muslim world where Saudi Arabia, for having the blessed religious sites of Mecca and Medina, claims central position in Islamic history and discourses.

In that single gesture of including Shahada in their flag, Somalilanders earned symbolic recognition from the Saudis – for the community they imagined for themselves and so shared with the Muslim world. Indeed, Dr Adan Abokor of University of Hargeysa, and Rift Valley Institute (RVI), brought it to my attention that President Abdirahman Ahmed Ali Tur, Somaliland's first president, once asked about the inclusion of Tawhid in the center of the Somaliland flag, had responded that it was meant to draw the attention of Saudi Arabia for help during the course of the liberation struggle.¹²⁸ More importantly, however, the people of Somaliland have often sought to emphasize their Islamic roots, and this explains inclusion of the Shahada into the flag of Somaliland.¹²⁹

This story helps us demonstrate two things, that speak to the ideation of being connected by separate, which presents as some sort of dilemma: (a) the ways in which southern Somalia is constructed and viewed in Hargeysa. This 'victory' is narrated with the ambition of projecting Somaliland as the better of the two countries – say on the ground of Islam, as they even have the Shahada on their flag. Indeed, in the context of the tale above, narrating the tale achieves this effect, and laughter that follows celebrates Somaliland. (b) At the second level, the story demonstrates the challenges

¹²⁸ Conversation with, Dr Adan Abokor at Academy for Peace and Development (APD), Hargeysa. 4 August 2015.

¹²⁹ The inclusion of the Shahada on the SNM flag in the 1980s is located in the history of the country at the time. USSR Socialist leaning Siyad Barre had introduced, what came to be called, scientific socialism in Somalia in the late 1970s, something that conflicted with Islam in the country. In 1977, Said Barre executed seven sheikhs in Mogadishu for disagreeing with him on the inheritance law he had introduced. Siyad Barre believed Islam was unfair to women, and socialism was fair to all. The SNM fighters in stressing their Islamic heritage sought to reinstate the position of Islam in the national fabric, which was waning under Siyad Barre. The same sentiment about southern Somalia has continued to this day.

and dilemmas of mobilising a different identity from southern Somalia, the country being escaped – especially after the 1960s intelligentsia in British-colonised Somaliland sought union with Somalia on the ground that they were united on the grounds of culture, language and religion – Soomalinimo – items which are still true today. Indeed, we should not lose the irony with which the Saudi official delivered their verdict and the way in which the Somaliland victory came. First, it was an assertion that *all* the people assembled in that tent were Somalis and came from one country – which had only two flags. They did not recognise the presence of Somaliland as a political unit. Somalilanders would have rejected this homogenisation of all of them, which actually had been the claim of the Somalis from southern Somalia. But they did not, which is a rather deliberate process of silencing traditionalist claims. As I will argue later in this dissertation, cultural roots and other claims of tradition are deliberately silenced in any secessionist nationalisms. Indeed, the Saudis only agreed that this rather *single* group of people from *one country* had two different flags. In other words, the only point of difference that the Somalilanders had from the Somalis was a function of symbolism; specifically, a political representation of an Islamic identity in their flag, yet all since all were Muslims. Indeed, even as Somalilanders congregated around their flag to celebrate this victory, their sense of close political and cultural kinship with Somalis from the south could not be lost on them nor the Saudi authorities. But while southern Somalia wanted to emphasise these cultural-traditionalist claims, the people from Somaliland wanted them silenced.

Against the above, as scholarship about nationalism and modern nation states has showed (Billig, 1995; Williams, 1983; Anderson, 1983, Mitchel, 1991), we can conclude that the flag is a crucial symbolism that makes the Somaliland state visible and is an embodiment of its identity and political aspirations. The confrontation above demonstrates Billig's (1995) claim that flags and flag-waving are useful in mobilising; fighting wars as they tend to represent the integrity of a nation. Indeed, flag burning is a common practice of demonstrating anger against any state. In its specificity, the national flag of Somaliland imagines a community of Muslim at home and abroad, yet at the same time, while being the symbol of Somaliland, it methodically deconstructs any union with southern Somalia by silencing any cultural-traditionalist claims (as will be demonstrated in a while) to give rise to specific markers of difference. By waving this flag in Somaliland, cultivating and telling tales about it, and the embedded meaning

being re-cultivated every day, a regime of truth is mobilised, one that concretises the SNM, Islam and southern Somalia in a specific way. The idea is that any actions emerging thereof are recognised to be true, and not question, but instead as normal reflexes.

The following incident I turn to involves both a tale about the Somaliland flag, and actual events that I witnessed in the course of my fieldwork. I argue that this incident involved a territorisation of the bodies of Somaliland nationals – in a manner that not contains, but rather extends and uses nationals as part of the sovereign territory. More concretely, this incident demonstrates, among other things, an effort to forcefully translate of a regime of truth into actual events on the ground, which includes actively othering Somalia, and extending the Somaliland sovereign territory onto bodies of Somaliland nationals.

An incident in Mogadishu

I was in Hargeysa during the 2015 Eid al-Adha celebrations when news broke, that members of one of Somaliland's most renowned music bands, *Hidigaha Geeska* or The Horn Stars, had been arrested at the Egal International Airport on their way back from Mogadishu. *Hidigaha Geeska* had visited southern Somalia for a concert. Earlier, they had visited Jigjiga, the Somali-dominated city in Ethiopia and Djibouti the capital of Djibouti. Visiting these specific countries did not raise any issues. Even if they had extended their visit to Kenya or Uganda it would have been all right. But not Somalia. A couple of days later, I caught up with Boobe Yuusuf Ducale, who is a writer and cultural critic, and former Minister of information in the Somaliland government for an interview about several items including the arrest of these artistes, which was one of the big stories in the news in the country. Ducale, who is fluent in English, would tell me the band is 'quite a sensation':

Every Somali dominated place loves listening to them especially their finesse at the new form of love songs. Everybody loves them, and they have the right to go wherever they want.¹³⁰

¹³⁰ Interview, Boobe Yusuf Ducale, 30 September 2015, Maan Soor Hotel, Hargeysa.

The story circulating in the news and the public domain was that after their concert in Mogadishu, a picture appeared on social media where these Somaliland-borne-and-based singers were waving Somalia's national flag, a thing which irked the authorities in Hargeysa. On their way back to Hargeysa, the four singers, Nimcaan Hilaac, Xamda Queen, Mahamed Ahmed Bakaal and Abdirahman Aydiid were arrested at the airport in Hargeysa. Their crime, pitched variously, was "holding performances which oppose Somaliland's independence."¹³¹

In an interview with the BBC, Somaliland's deputy Interior Minister, Ahmed Adarreh noted that, "they were on the payroll of the Somaliland's information ministry and were not allowed to do anything against Somaliland,"¹³² and 'were not supposed to get involved in anything that recognises the unity of Somalia and Somaliland.'¹³³ Not seeking to dispute the minister's claim that band members were on the Somaliland government payroll – a claim that should be allowed to stand for its political and analytical significance – but Ducale told me Hidigaha Geeska was not on the payroll. In the same story, BBC spoke to another musician, Khadra Silimo, who had disputed the minister's claims saying "the four were not government employees and had done "nothing wrong." They sang love songs in Mogadishu and I don't think that should be a crime. However, it was the main band often *hired* to sing at government celebrations, especially the May 18 independence celebrations.

In his interview, the minister continued that these artistes were free to 'perform *anywhere in the world but not in Somalia*. They should not be involved in politics. Somaliland and Somalia have conflicts to resolve.' [emphasis added].¹³⁴ It is important to note that the minister not only emphasised Somaliland's opposition to Somalia but also crafted Somalia as an intimate other out of so many others countries. That is, while the rest of the world is free for them, and despite southern Somalia being part of the rest of the world, it was of a special type, one with whom they shared a close relation and "have conflicts to solve." For the singers, accentuated by their visibility in the public domain – as celebrity persons – they were constructed and narrativized as an

¹³¹ "Somaliland Horn Stars Band Arrested Over Somali Flag" BBC, 28 September 2015. Retrieved on 15 January 2016 available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-34378350>. In another story, it was noted that this

¹³² *ibid.*

¹³³ *ibid.*

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

extension of Somaliland sovereign state even in their private capacities – as their presence in southern Somalia and waving the Somalia flag was seen as involved in an act that ‘recognises the unity of Somalia and Somaliland.’ Indeed, while I discussed this matter with Ducale, he disagreed with Minister Adarreh whom he thought contradicted himself when he argued that they were “free to perform anywhere in the world but not in Somalia.”

But if Somalia is another country, and not Somaliland, why not let the singers go make their names and money in that other country called Somalia? What then makes Somalia so special to us if we broke away from it? I find that self-contradictory.¹³⁵

In asking the questions he does, Ducale’s concerns are relevant to notions of “celebrity association” and “heroes and heroines”, in a tragedian sense, which I develop here to make sense of these arrests and detentions. Why these artistes? It is in classic tragic drama, that we find a more appropriate theoretical appreciation of celebrity association. (I use the same formulation in the discussion Poets Mohammad Hadraawi, and singer Salha Halgan in Chapter Eight). This formulation picks from discourses about classical tragic drama (mostly Greek and Elizabethan tragedy with authors including Sophocles, Aristophanes, and Shakespeare) where heroes were men and women of nobility or high social standing: kings, queens or princes and princesses, and military generals or men with other incredible talents (war generals, poets, musicians, athletes) as forming the subject of tragedy. These men (they were rarely women) stood for larger constituencies not just themselves as private individuals. Thus, their death, life, work, utterances and silences were representative of larger groups, and group aspirations. So, a character in Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* would say upon Caesar’s death, “O, what a fall was there, my countrymen! Then I, and you, and all of us fell down.” Drawing on this, I focus on that point when an individual ceases being a mere individual but a symbolism of constituencies and positions: Their death or life, decisions, actions (or inactions and silences, appearances and disappearances) are like their speech, loaded with readable meaning. Scholars of “survivors justice” pitched against criminal justice have followed this formulation where after conflict all the survivors, victims and perpetrators have to forge common ground. Prosecution of individuals (leaders) becomes problematic since individuals do not stand for themselves, but larger constituencies behind them (see for

¹³⁵ Interview with Boobe, 30 September 2015.

example, Mamdani, 2002; 2009). Thusly, there is a time in the life of individuals where they cease being private individuals but become associated with entire wholes or parts.

In this spirit—celebrity association—the artistes of Hidigaha Geeska had ceased being individuals representing themselves, but were being treated as people associated with the dreams and aspirations of Somaliland especially since they had cultivated their stardom in Somaliland. Thus, Somaliland was them and they were Somaliland. To put this in perspective, one has to appreciate a similar incident where a person of high social standing from Somalia – Abdi Aynte—was denied entry into Somaliland for the single reason that he had been closely and prominently associated with Mogadishu. As founding director of the Heritage Institute for Policy Studies (HIPS) based in Mogadishu and former journalist with Aljazeera news network (before becoming Minister in Mogadishu), Abdi Aynte was a well-known Somali citizen, however, with close association with Mogadishu—not the government—but Mogadishu as a political and social space. He could be denied entry into Hargeisa in 2015 where he had come on a private visit. The nature of the visit notwithstanding, he was associated, treated almost as symbolic, with Somalia’s political and social aspirations (contrasted against Somaliland’s own). This frame helps us put the arrests of Hidigaha Geeska in perspective, but also to vividly see the active foiling of Somalia by Somaliland.

I need to return to the flag that was claimed to have been waved during the concert in Mogadishu. Either this actually happened or the picture was photo-shopped as it was claimed in the milieu that ensued may not concern us here. The point was the picture of that nature appeared and became a cause for public heated conversation, and arrests of the musicians. From my own fieldwork, the issue of the flag being waved during their performance stood out as the major cause for controversy and arrests of musicians. We will never know whether they would still have been arrested had they not waved the flag of Somalia despite being well-known Somaliland nationals. But the claims around the flag and events that followed signal to the power with which flags are items of national identity making and sovereignty, and wars are often fought in the name of the flag. Their celebrity personae – as people in the public domain – combined with the story of waving the flag to produce a moment in which Somaliland identified as a different from southern Somaliland. this moment is not a passing event, but is a lifetime project for the secessionist nationalism – often weighing up against the other.

The push and pull and contests mobilised around the national flag and persons (singers) are true to the scholarship on nationalism, statehood and sovereignty (Billig (1995; Williams, 1983; Mitchel, 1991) where nationalism and states are often represented and made visible through symbolic items including the national flags, emblems, architecture, military uniforms, and now, celebrity personae. There are two points to take from these tales and the events that followed: First, representative items are the ones around which *a priori* is mobilised, and upon which other acts are based and recognised to be true and the world is thus ordered. They legitimate actions and discourses emerging thereof. Secondly, it is difficult to establish the veracity of the tales upon which a national construct is built. Indeed, tales and other narratives of nationalism do not have to be necessarily true, but have to emerge in the right discursive context, and are then made privileged and crafted into the nationalist consciousness. These narratives combine with others elsewhere and produce a concrete fully developed nationalist identity and consciousness.

As noted at the beginning, a series of items are involved in mobilising the regime of truth in Hargeysa in the context of independence from Somalia. These items do not work in isolation of each other, but systematically and inter-textually combine to form one singular coherent narrative. I will now turn to the monuments of Hargeysa, which are involved in the same process and make visible similar tropes about Somaliland public identity and consciousness – as visible in the flag – but in an even more dramatic and direct way. These are more explicit, powerful and as visible as the national flag. They do not only make allusions to the war, say as the SNM flag seeks to remind Hargeysa ns about the war and the struggle for independence, but explicitly work with the actual items of war (the real fighter jets, which participated in the war, replica of tanks) have been turned into memorials in Hargeysa. In the context of the fighter jet in the centre of Hargeysa city, one would be right to argue that looking at it, Hargeysa turns into an open museum. Again, like the narratives in the tales explored earlier, the ways in which monuments are plotted is intended to package a particular ambition a specific regime of truth about this new imagined country. Also, worth noting is that monuments do not only share a thematic relation with the flag, but also an aesthetic one, most of them explored below are covered in colours of the SNM-inspired national flag – an aestheticism which is loaded with meaning as explored above.

The Monuments of Hargeysa

Some of the major debates in the study of monuments relate to the nature of truths and memories constructed, authorship and audience, and the myriad contests over these different aspects of monuments. Within these larger debates, notions of authenticity, accuracy and representativeness are also often debated. Michalski (2008) has noted that public monument “reflects the state’s ideological foundations” (2008: 27). As “sites of memory” and as indicators for present and futures aspirations, monuments tell stories in the context of the historical-political atmosphere of the time (Ben-Amos, 1993; Sherlock, 2008, Arnoldi, 2007). Indeed, like all other repositories of history, monuments legitimate and silence certain histories depending on the political context of the time. The voices privileged in these monuments form *a priori*, or regime of truth in which people, the state and other agents act in ways in which their actions are thus ‘recognised to be true.’ The nature of truths privileged in the monuments of Hargeysa in melodious symphony with the flag explored above.

By 2015, there were five main monuments in Hargeysa. These included, “*Taalada Xoriyadda iyo Dal Jirka Dahsoon*” or the “Statue of Liberty and Country Not Yet Discovered” in Khayriya Square in central Hargeysa; *Kaare*, a replica of a fighter tank in Togdheer in Timacade Area; the dove or the peace monument; *Sanad Guuradii 23* monument, or the hand holding the map of Somaliland (also called the monument of Somaliland unity), and *Dhagaxtuur* (literary, throwing stones) the tomb of Somali fallen heroes of 20 February 1982. The sixth, which was an archer astride the road from the airport in town was replaced by a business advert for a telecommunication company.¹³⁶

After the defeat of the regime of Mohammed Siad Barre in 1991, Somaliland plunged into clannist fighting and civil war for the next five years and peace returned in 1996 (Abokor, et. al. 2005; Balthasar, 2013). During the time of fighting and political wrangling, not much happened in the area of popular cultural production or even

¹³⁶ I learned this while talking to a historian of Somaliland, Mark Bradbury, 3 August 2015, Maan Soor, Hargeysa. There are other representative monuments of Somaliland such as the cave paintings at Laas Geel, which although widely known are circulated in the popular literature on Somaliland, have been excluded from this project, for the reason that they existed way before 1991. This study focused on those monuments that came into existence after the civil war, and the declaration of an independent Somaliland in 1991.

developing and beautifying the capital, Hargeysa. Most work was geared towards building peace. President Haji Ibrahim Egal is credited for this transition from peace to stability after going against clan-based leadership to a more democratic outlook (Höhne, 2009; Balthasar, 2013).¹³⁷ The monuments in Hargeysa were erected almost the same time in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Most of the work was done by then Hargeysa Mayor, Awil Elmi Abdallah who was viewed as a developmental mayor. It was during Elmi Abdullah's term as mayor that Hargeysa is believed to have seen its best times as regards sanitation, beautification, and development.¹³⁸ It was the first time the city received both security and traffic lights, and fountains were also built in several places across the city. The fountains have since disappeared most likely under the weight of disrepair and maintenance costs. But the monuments still stand, and let me interrogate one-by-one presently.

Taalada Xoriyadda iyo Dal Jirka Dahsoon (Statue of Liberty)

One of the most visible landmarks in Hargeysa is the SNM war monument, the Russian MiG fighter jet in the main square in downtown Hargeysa. It is also called the statue of liberty. After the 1988 bombing of Hargeysa city by the regime of Mohamed Siyad Barre, mercenary fighters from South Africa who bombed Hargeysa, abandoned three fighter jets at the airport in Hargeysa.¹³⁹ Mayor Elmi had one of the abandoned jets moved to Hargeysa central square and turned into a monument. It is an *actual* fighter jet, not an impression of it. You will find the picture of this monument on websites

¹³⁷ Although Balthasar argues that he did this through war making, and broadly argues that Somaliland as a state built around war making, which is 'its best kept secret,' which turns on its head the claim that it has built its statehood through peace-making.

¹³⁸ Several semi-structured conversations with Mustafe Baroud (teacher at New Generation University, Hargeysa, and MA student at Makerere University, Kampala), Mustafe Suudi (MA student at Makerere University) and Adnan Hagoog (NGO worker, Hargeysa); Kampala and Hargeysa, May-August 2015. These respondents also noted that throughout his time, the mayor became so popular to the extent that people who phone-called radio and television during leisure shows would start by sending greetings to the mayor before their kindred and friends. They also noted that Mayor Awil popularity clouded that of President Egal and this led to his jailing for a month on trumped up charges, something that dampened his developmental instincts when released. Respondents argued that his popularity caused his dismissal by President Kahin Riyale, Egal's successor. But his tribulations and his popularity should tell us about the ways in which people related with his monuments and his entire beautification drive. It is possible to say that people intimately associated with the monuments, and the ideations they symbolised, as will be explored in a while.

¹³⁹ Mohamed Siyad Barre used mercenaries because the Somali air force marines refused to bomb fellow Somalis in Hargeysa. It is claimed that mercenaries were paid \$10000 (ten thousand US dollars) a day for their work of bombing Hargeysa city to the ground. The story goes that because the jets were flying at low heights, people saw the white faces of the pilots. Conversation with Adan Abokor, at Academy for Peace and Development (APD), 4 August 2015, Hargeysa.

advertising Somaliland's tourism, or on reports on stats and figures of Somaliland or Hargeysa.¹⁴⁰ International journalists covering Somaliland will often have this picture/footage of the monument, and reports by local journalists on the monumental sights of Somaliland often include a picture of this monument. On walls in selected parts of the city, you will find drawings of the monument.

True to popular culture, an item that is widely circulated, widely disseminated, seen and viewed (Levine, 1988; Zemon-Davis, 1992) is considered representative of the sensibilities of the people who reproduce it in their time. Bukenya and Nandwa (1983) noted about the creator of these items, to an appreciable degree exhibits the artistic quality of 'accurate observation' of society. On his part, p' Bitek (1986) considered the creator of the work as successful in mobilising the audience towards particular ideals, which still thrives on their sense of observation of the people and the time. Either way, wide circularity is read as representative of particular ideals of the time. To this end, the mayor or his office as creator of the monuments would be credited for vividly observing society. Mayor Awil actively crafts a discourse towards a 'regime of truth' in which a public identity and other socio-political process – such as arrest of Somaliland singers, foiling and crafting a permanent enemy-interlocutor in southern Somalia – are legitimated and negotiated. Because the jet constantly reminds Somalilanders of the crimes of southern Somalia, the events and tales discussed in the foregoing chapter are ordered and organised in the context set in motion by this permanent artefact in the middle of Hargeysa's busiest neighbourhood.

¹⁴⁰ See for example, *Hargeysa Statistical Handbook*, 2011. The cover picture is of this monument pointing to its symbolism to the people of Somaliland.



Image XIV: An aerial side view of Taalada Xoriyadda iyo Dal Jirka Dahsoon” or the “Statue of Liberty, and Country Not Yet Discovered” in Khayriya Square in central Hargeysa.

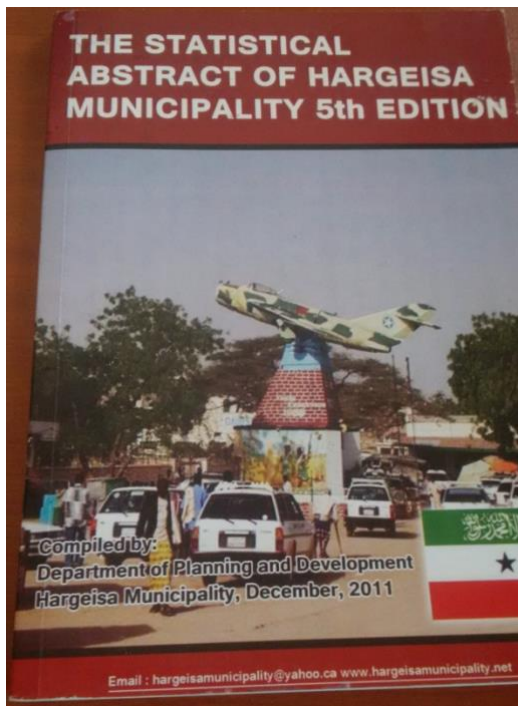


Image XV: A book cover, and a wall painting. Emphasising the wide circularity of this monument, its images of this nature are reproduced in several places. The writings in Somali on the left: ‘After colonisation is freedom,’ and *Duqayntii Diyaaradaha*, ‘when bombs rained on us.’ also ‘We will never forget history.’

Located in the centre of the business district, the site for this monument doubles as a car park during the morning hours, and a tea-and-talk (*shaa iyo sheeko*) place fitted with chairs in the afternoon (after Asir prayer time, which is often about 3.30PM) as people congregate around for “tea and talk,” a common practice among Hargeysa ns,

and Somalis more generally. The monument is erected on a pyramid-like construction with its sidewalls carrying images, paintings, and writing explaining – or more precisely, creatively reconstructing – particular moments of history. There is less writing and more drawing. On one of the four walls, is a woman holding the Somaliland national flag with a baby tied to her back. Behind her is a young man perhaps in school uniform whose leg has been maimed by, most likely, a bomb and is bleeding profusely as he trudges on. On the bottom left corner of this picture is a man in civilian clothes trying to whisk a gun away from a redtop soldier.¹⁴¹ In the background are images of a mosque, tanks, and dead bodies littering the ground. It is a scene of sheer mayhem and devastation. On the top right-hand corner is a side screen painted blue. Birds could be seen flying away, and the entire atmosphere seems serene and inviting.

On the other sidewall, are men and women dressed in Somaliland flag colours. One is holding a gun, shooting at nothing in particular. The other, supposedly, a woman is following behind, but she has lost both hands and is bleeding. In the background of this picture is a litany of mutilated bodies, other dead bodies and severed body parts including limbs, heads etcetera. There are soldiers shooting at fleeing civilians. There are fighter tanks and fighter jets flying in different directions. The overall impression is a state of general anarchy, lawlessness and destruction.

The quality of art makes it difficult to tell men from women or children from adults. However, the cinematic shots of war and devastation continue from one wall to the other. There's an inversion of roles though as you move from one wall to the other. As one side shows Somalilanders as helpless—woman holding the flag as they are being shot at—the other shows resistance, with somebody dressed in Somaliland flag colours holding the gun and supposedly fighting back despite the devastation. As texts involved in the process of generating and creating a regime of truth, a priori upon with other social political sequences and actions are legitimated, we now need to unpack the nature of truth being mobilised:

¹⁴¹ Siyad Barre's most notorious military wing was known to wear, *Hangash* or the Red Berets, and this also became their name (Ghalib, 1995: 127).



Image XVI: Close-up shots of the different sides of “Statue of Liberty.” The writings on the right read, ‘We celebrate and remember 1988.’



The imagery and figuration on this monument speak a clear language of war, violence, blood, devastation, and death as foundations upon which the Somaliland state builds in its context of secession. Images beginning from the fighter jet itself, guns, tanks and red-topped soldiers suggest an environment of war and mayhem. Mutilated bodies on the other hand, decapitated heads and maimed limbs may suggest war crimes or apocalyptic levels of violence. Interestingly, the enemy and perpetrator of these crimes is explicitly implied – southern Somalia. There is a particular sense in which victimhood of the Somalilanders is narrativized and made permanent through these monuments. As showed in one of the pictures, the writing reads, “bombs rained on us,”

and this they will never forget (see images above). But then quickly, on the other side of the wall, there is a dramatic switch from helpless victimhood to resolute resistance, which emphatically suggests the country's liberation was fought for resolutely, and the struggle is not yet concluded.

From the exorbitant use of the colours of the national flag, one would be right to argue that the flag is thus reproduced in public art. However, it struck me in the course of fieldwork that this was more of making these items speak a singular coherent language as opposed to simply reproducing the national flag. Both items are distinct in their appeal. They bring forward a distinct fact about the imagined national consciousness and identity. But they are made to sound harmonious with each other by embracing the colours of the national flag. One of the possible interpretations from the explicit use of the colours of the Somaliland national flag against the images of mayhem and violence in all the different walls of the monument is that the history of SNM becomes intimately reproduced with a new Somaliland, reproducing both a narrative that renders them as victims, but one that also valorises them at the same time.

The story below from the Somaliland's English weekly *The Republican*, reflecting on the monument of the statue of liberty, emphasises the ways in which Somalia is seen as enemy from whom independence has to be jealously protected. Headlined, 'Somaliland: Losing patience in the world's most unlikely democracy,' the reporter noted:

In downtown Hargeysa, in a small public square that doubles as both car park and tea room, rests the city's only monument of note: a MiG-15 fighter jet mounted on a colourful plinth. The jet is real. It was shot down during Siad Barre's carpet-bomb campaign, and it is significant in several levels. It is a history we will not forget. Is a mark of separation from Somalia proper, an aggressive statement of independence? But as Somaliland progress stalls, it is hard not to see in this flightless plane another symbol: of dreams deferred, of a would-be nation that is struggling to take off.¹⁴²

The headline seeks to juxtapose Somaliland's "democracy" against its neighbour that has perpetually failed to become a democracy [and projected as one that might never become one]. But it also suggests Somaliland has been waiting on Somalia on the grounds of either getting back to the united republic (which is a most unlikely

¹⁴² *The Republican*, "Somaliland: Losing patience in the world's most unlikely democracy," Saturday, 11 April, 2015. Vol. 16, Issue 845, p.7.

interpretation) or ensuring that they separate properly as required by the African Union – with the permission of Somalia. It is worth noting that the story in the newspapers carries a different history about the existence of this monument, as having been “shot down during Siyad Barre’s carpet-bomb campaign.” This [false] narrative, of the jets having been shot down, which presently circulates even in the popular discourse seeks to indicate the agency of the people/SNM in fighting for their independence. But it is powerful in this regard as is never questioned. The conclusion about this “flightless plane” as “another symbol: of dreams deferred” seeks to point to Somalia’s cruelty even in moments of peace. The dreams differed could be the dream of union, which is the 1960s dream when the two united with the hope of bringing the other Somali dominated territories in Djibouti, Ogaden in Ethiopia, and northern Kenya under one large Somali republic. With the declaration of independence by Somaliland, that dream is gone. The other interpretation is one that casts Somalia colonialist and exploitative terms as being the major hinderance to Somaliland’s take off, as Somaliland is conditioned to sit and wait for the world’s unlikely democracy to be recognised among the world of nations.

At the bottom of the monument, two dates are acknowledged: 26 June 1960 and 18 May 1991. These are the two “independence dates” that Somaliland celebrates for their liberation, one from Great Britain and the second from Somalia. It is worth noting that 26 June 1960 has been cast in new light as a date to be celebrated—as giving life to Somaliland for it reaffirms the claim for independence from Somalia. The date of 18 May on the other hand is one to be loathed for its blighted history, and celebrated at the same time as one of rebirth. In this contest of the present – independence from Somalia – colonialism is viewed as liberating, as is the basis for independence and territorial integrity (colonial borders) while union with Somalia is viewed as colonial and everything ought to be done to separate from it. Indeed, 26 June almost goes unnoticed in Somaliland compared to the funfair and drama that defines May 18.

To conclude thus far, this specific monument mobilises a regime of truth where Somalia is a perpetual enemy who, known for its violent crimes in Somaliland, which are popularised and legitimated in the monument, has to be avoided at all costs. Upon this, rests the production of a system territorialisation artistes, and foiling of Somalia in the national symbolisms, and institutional outlook. Let me move to the next monuments where similar motifs are visible. Indeed, while the flag represents the hero-hood of the

SNM revolutionaries, and the foiling of southern Somalia, the Statue of Liberty graphically demonstrates this suffering and hero-hood of the SNM, and together construct a coherent narrative.

Sanad Guuradii 23

The other monument that ostensibly reproduces the Somaliland flag or its colours is the Sanad Guuradii 23 or the monument of national unity. This is a more recent monument whose period of construction is embedded in its name, “Sanad Guuradii 23,” which is often translated as the 23 anniversary. This is located in Mohamed Ahmed Ali district in an area popularly known as Kaalinta. This is a hand holding the map of Somaliland indicating all the regions. Meant to imagine that all the regions of Somaliland are united under the national flag, this monument ostensibly reproduces the aesthetics and historical claims of the national flag and the statue of liberty.



Image XVII: Sanad Guuradii 23 (Twenty Third Anniversary or the monument of unity).

There are other monuments, which do not necessarily reproduce the aesthetics of the national flag such as the blue, white and red colours, but do reproduce the thematic concerns of war and violence, that have come to be associated with southern Somalia – and are discernible in the foregoing popular cultural items explored above. These two monuments are explored below.

Dhagaxtuur and Kaare

These two monuments string a complementary narrative, which is complete harmony with the others on the grounds of victimhood on the hands of southern Somalia. The Dhagaxtuur, which is located behind the Presidential palace, is this burial monument, which communicates powerfully through its drawings. The place of its construction is the actual site where students from Hargeysa, dressed in uniforms hurled stones at the government soldiers over the arrests of members of the Hargeysa Group in 1982.¹⁴³ This monument is a relatively small construction with a sculpture of hand raising a clenched fist. The name of the person with the clenched fist is written on the monument, Barre Xajji Cilmi Ahmed, and is believed to have been the first victim of the Siyad Barre regime during this stone throwing incident of hurling stones at government soldiers.¹⁴⁴ On the two visible walls of this monument are paintings of different historical events. On the one hand, is an impression of a court proceeding in which members of the ‘Hargeysa Group’ were tried before being detained in prisons in Mogadishu and Hargeysa. On the other side, is a group of protestors, students in uniform who hurled stones at two military carriers in the 1982 incident. The military carriers include a tank, and a vehicle fitted with a gun firing at the protestors. One of the students has been shot and fallen on the ground. Another is running, while others have their hands raised aiming stones at the military equipment.

¹⁴³ The Hargeysa Group is a group of 21 professionals in Hargeysa including doctors, teachers and lawyers, and other professionals who came together to fix the city’s broken service sector in 1980s. Majority of these had come from abroad. After improving Hargeysa Hospital to commendably good levels, and starting the newspaper *Ufo* (the whirlwind that comes before the rains), news of their work in Hargeysa spread quickly. By taking over the public service function of the state, which had neglected the region for long, members of Group were arrested and charged with sabotaging government, and making the President unpopular. Conversation with Dr Adan Abokor, who was part of the group as a young medical doctor. 4 August 2015, Hargeysa. See also, Bradbury (2008): 56-57 and Jama Musse Jama (2003) *A Note on My “Teacher’s Group”: News Report of an Injustice*.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. Also conversation with Mustafe Suudi, and Mustafe Baroud.



Image XVIII: Dhagaxtuur: Students were protesting against the bad government of Somalia and were going to the Governor’s palace. The security guards summarily shot at them. Please note that the Dhagaxtuur has the national flag of Somaliland atop of it.

As we noted with the SNM monument in the Freedom Square, violence, death, mayhem, and destruction are some of the narratives that are scripted on this monument. There is a way in which a sense of helplessness, impunity and absolute victimisation come through with students hurling stones only to be met with live ammunition and open killing. We might extend this by arguing that war crimes or extreme human rights abuse are implied in this text – and still, the implied offender is Southern Somalia. The same priori is mobilised in the *Kaare*, which is the monument of the military tank located in Togdheer Area. This is a weapon of large-scale destruction. Although it is possible to read the tank through the lens of security, it is my contention that read in the context of the other monuments, war and violence. Still, despite not being explicit, the enemy in these monuments is mobilised as southern Somalia. Some respondents noted that *Kaare* faces east, which is the direction of southern Somalia.



Image XIX: Kaare, monument of a military tanker in Togdheer Area, Hargeysa.

There is also a monument of the dove, also known as *Ahmad Dhagax*, also found in the same district, Mohamed Ahmed Ali, in a suburb commonly known as Toto (after Total fuel station, which is now non-existent). These do not continue the language of victimisation but rather paint a story of romanticist triumphalist overcoming. But this notwithstanding, the idea of overcoming implies the enemy who was overcome – and this is southern Somalia, who still has to be avoided. The dove seated atop a pole, was interpreted by some respondents as symbolising the peace the country has earned after seceding from Somalia.¹⁴⁵

Music of Independence

Especially in the 1970s during the Ethiopia-Somali war over the Ogaadeen, poetry ceded ground to music in the political and cultural wrangling. Not that poetry completely lost its lustre, but the astronomical rise of music cannot be overemphasised. The genre of music present in Somaliland is called *Heeso*, or *hees*. As opposed to poetry, this genre of music has a history that goes as far as colonialism especially after the Second World War. Writing about this genre, Kapteijns (1999) noted that it was associated with a “new elite” and growing middle class that emerged in Somaliland when Britain increased its economic activities in Somaliland after the defeat of Italy in the war (Kapteijns: 1999: 104). With the rise in the colonial economy in the region,

¹⁴⁵ Several conversations with Mustafe Baroud, Mustafe Suudi, Rooble Mohammad and Nuur Al-Huda, August 2015, Hargeysa.

more people connected their livelihoods to an urban, and foreign way of living (ibid). The story goes that in the 1940, two forms of music emerged *balwo* and *heello* and from which heeso would be derived. With his associate Khadiija Ciya Dharaar, Cabdi Deeqsi who was a truck driver on the coast towns of Zeila and Djibouti, and in Boorama and Diredabe in the interior created the genre. *Balwo* was “a short, sensual, philosophical often witty or even mischievous love song” many times meant for a lover (ibid). With the creators being a generally townspeople, the genre easily appealed to the elite and colonial government civil servants (ibid). However, despite being associated with a new way of life, it still “derived its alliterative systems, its dialect and much of the imagery from the older literary genres of pastoral society” (ibid). The marked difference from the pastoral tradition was that it “introduced melody and musical instruments” and “women participated in the performance,” which drew the ire of the community (ibid).

Kaptejns narrates further that it *balwo*, after the influence of broadcasting services soon gave birth to *heello* sometime in the mid 1940s (1999: 105). First, it seemed like a couple of *balwos* put together in the sense that it was longer than *balwo* (ibid). Heello would be met with a bit of respect, and would be even used for the expression of political themes (ibid). Needless to add is that it was after Radio Hargeysa and Radio Mogadishu started recording and playing these songs that they were legitimated as part of the Somali collective consciousness (ibid). With the birth of the Somali play in the 1950s which were staged without a script but instead alliterative poetic lines, and provided musical and melodic recitations that saw the birth of Heeso. This is what has been called the modern pop song, with musical settings, musical instruments, refrain, and individual melody for each song. (1999: 108).

Equally important was the open singing about love and sexual desire, and companionable marriage built of love, which directly opposed arranged marriages that were common in the countryside (ibid). It is this tradition of music, which has got more modified nowadays with computer generated and faster beats that is used in the both political and private negotiation. It is still called Heeso, which is literary translated as

song.¹⁴⁶ The music under study is by *Hidigaha Geeska* (the Horn Stars), one of Somaliland's most renowned bands.¹⁴⁷ *Hidigaha Geeska* does both official and unofficial music. A great deal of nationalist music is done by people in their individual capacities (Boobe Yuusuf Ducale, Marian Mursal, Muhamad Budul and Sahra Halgan as examples), but *Hidigaha Geeska* is on record for doing music paid for by government. This is what I have called *officially sponsored* music.

I discuss two songs here that have come to define the life of *Hidigaha Geeska* as a “national” band. The first song, is called “Allow noo tiirisee,” that is, “Allah has supported us.” Supported alongside Mursal Muuse, who is not a member of the band, but a rising star in the country, was performed by over 12 singers, with exactly twelve stanzas.¹⁴⁸ Each of the stanzas is repeated twice before the singer follows it with the refrain, “Allah has supported us, as our flag flies high/Oh Allah keep supporting and guiding us.” And then all the others join in repeating the repeated refrain (or chorus) one more time before moving to the next stanza.

The sweat that flowed, we earn its fruits
We use our effort to increase our harvest
Allah has supported us, as our flag flies high
Oh Allah keep supporting and guiding us

We have put our effort to good, walking on the right path
The complete *Shahada* as part of our flag

Although time has passed, history is written
And we'll use these examples and memories

The struggle continues as blood was spilled
To eliminate all the enemies, and send them strong signal

¹⁴⁶ The present heeso, however, is not as sophisticated linguistically and philosophically as was in the 1940s through to the 1980s. Some of my respondents noted that music in Hargeysa today is just “nice words put together and are often forgotten after a couple of months.” I need to also point out however that the modern pop songs of the 1960s and 80s in Somaliland are still memorable to this day that many young adults have crammed them by heart and often sing them at places such as Hiddo Dhawr.

¹⁴⁷ Started in 2009, and concentrating mostly on nationalist and community mobilisation songs, and sometimes working on government commissions, this is the most popular band in Hargeysa presently. With some of its members including Mohammad BK, Nimco Cali and Hamda Queen singing love songs, they have become favourite singers across Somalia, and in the diaspora communities. Because of the popularity of their music, they have held shows in Nairobi, Mogadishu, Djibouti, London and several other places around Europe and North America. A wedding in Hargeysa is incomplete without performances from Muhammad BK or another member of *Hidigaha Geeska*.

¹⁴⁸ With no particular order, I reproduce only six stanzas for discussion here. The complete song, together with the Somali transcript appears in the appendix. I do the same for the song that follows.

The day dead bodies filled the land, we killed as they killed
We shot further than them, and they were overwhelmed.

Peace has taste, and we are enjoying the fruits (of peace)
Freedom is in our hands, and the challenges are over

Written by poet Abdullahi Cumar, nicknamed “OOG”, its rather melancholic tune was composed by Muhammad Siciid BK, one of the most renowned members of the group. Coming across as a prayer to God, thanking Him for the blessings of peace and stability, and then entreating Him to continue doing so, the tune, augments the tenor and content of the message. Perhaps because these two, content and tune are in such a seamless symphony, it enabled the song to appeal to a majority and dominates the nationalist music charts ever since its release.¹⁴⁹

In addition to celebrating the peace as they pray to the Almighty, the song asks people to work. It also reminds them of the beautiful flag as the oneness of God is proclaimed. In other words, it reminds listeners, Hargeysans and visitors of their Islamic identity, which they ought to be proud of. At the same time, the song does not miss the chance to remind the people of their terrible history, one of struggle and sacrifice: “The day dead bodies filled the land, we killed as they killed/We shot further than them, and they were overwhelmed.” Clearly, it was a hard-won victory, and now that peace has returned, through independence (secession), the challenges the country faced are over and prosperity continues to return. Viewed in context, the song mobilises an enemy, and without explicitly mentioning the enemy, there is a permanent reminder of Somalia in this piece of lore.

The other song considered here is “*Dhulkiina u hura Waxaad Haysaan,*” that is, “Contribute to Your Country Whatever You Have.” This song comes across as a call to service, with the refrain being a loud call to the community: “bulshooy hooy bulshooy.”

Our labour and resources are needed
For our country to progress

¹⁴⁹ Field notes, March-October 2015. On many occasions when nationalist music was to be played, this song often came. Taxi drivers would often play it in their vehicles. Although I learned that every May 18 was occasion for new music composition, this song had some permanent presence.

The peace that we have
Is the one we possess
That our country should progress
Must be our dream (vision)

Nations without a mission and a vision
Never make progress
Never earn development

Your country needs your support
If neglected, who then will support it?

In the selected stanzas above, it is evident that the country is called together to celebrate the peace, and move in the direction of development. In almost all these stanzas, development, progress, and good use of available resources are key referents. Development, seen in a very special way such as building roads, and manufacturing (as also seen in the video) has technically become the language around which the country is mobilised. As I discuss later in the concluding chapter, it seems the ways in which Somaliland as a seceding government has mobilised does not talk the language of culture, an identity is mobilised in an internationalist language, with essentially internationalist epistemologies.

Fliers of Recognition

Searching through a book published by the Somaliland's Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, on the investment potential of the country, I landed a flier placed somewhere within the pages of the book. It was an ad selling Somaliland to the world, and seeking international recognition. Because these investment promotion books are handed out for free, they circulate widely. By the same token, the flier carried inside this book circulates widely. Because fliers have an aesthetic quality in their making, plus wide circulation, even without being carried inside books, I read them as popular culture and literature. This particular flier (see picture below) came with a clear message claiming to present what "Somaliland stands for." Printed in full colour, there was a great deal of method and creativity to this flier—what Bukenya and Nandwa (1983) would call "ingenious expression." In addition to the simplicity in language and method of figuration of the text, there is something peculiarly eye-catching about the way the story of Somaliland is told in this flier: The histories mobilised, the images and

expressions coined, and the aspiration the country longs for. Let me briefly describe the flier.

First, there are two outstanding pictures on the flier that are strategically placed and unmistakable: One is a group of little children looking on amiably. The Somaliland flag is painted on their cheeks. (This particular picture has been reproduced many times in different settings). The other is of the cave paintings of Laas Geel, believed to have existed in “pre-historic Somaliland,” estimated to be 7000-9000 years old. Secondly, the writings at both sides of the flier do strongly stand out. The idea is that whichever way you view it first, something powerful about Somaliland will strike the reader. Taking a somewhat defiant and aggressive tone, at the front, it is written, “Recognition of Somaliland is Long Overdue,” while at the back, it is written: “Somaliland is here to Stay.” The narrative starts with pointing to the overshadowing presence of Somalia in the life of new Somaliland, and later pointing to the disastrous relationship that Somaliland shared with Somalia for over 30 years before 1991: “You have heard a lot about Somalia, but there is another country in the Horn of Africa called **Somaliland** (in bolds).”

In another sub-headline, quite snappy and invitingly conversational, “Yes, Somaliland,” the flier through short bulleted points goes on to detail the history of the country. It draws allusion to its two independence days: May 1991 from Somalia, and the June 1960 from the United Kingdom. After announcing that Somaliland was once a British protectorate, it then makes a strategic comparison in the fourth bullet, noting admiringly that Somaliland “is roughly the size of England and Wales combined.” This comparison is not innocent. It is meant to speak to and attract a long-lost friend, who actually has power to help out. In another equally big headline, the flier talks about democracy in Somaliland, multiparty politics with several political parties, the country's commitment to human rights and peaceful relations, and the presence of free primary education for both boys and girls. It also announces that, “Somaliland stands for peace and democracy, opposition to terrorism and piracy, and sustainable development...”



Image XX: Flier campaigning for the recognition of Somaliland. Credit: Author, 10 July, 2015.

Analysis

This flier is illuminating to the ways in which Somalilanders represent themselves (especially with the assumption of a foreign audience). First, the usage of a picture of little children is metaphorically appealing as are the paintings of Laas Geel, and as juxtaposed on the flier, they point to a bright future resting on a rich history. As we have also seen, Somalia is present in the life of Somaliland. In one way, one might argue, Somaliland seems to suggest, rather mimetically that, “they are what they are because Somalia is that.” References to “piracy” and “terrorism” are not innocent in this case. They are in direct reference to Somalia, which has been considered the hub of terrorism on the African continent. By the same token, Somaliland is constructed as a partner in the fight against terrorism. Notions of democracy and human rights that emerge in the flier also signal Somaliland belonging to the world of democratic nations. But at the same time, read through the entire shape and tempo of the flier, they also suggest a juxtaposition with Somalia, which continues to lack these institutions.

Conclusion

Let me reiterate that while the national flag of Somaliland represents the hero-hood of the SNM revolutionaries, and the foiling of southern Somalia, the monuments vividly demonstrate, on the one hand, the suffering and victimhood of the Somaliland peoples, and together construct a coherent narrative. These items are constant reminders to

Somalilanders, visitors and the international community of the Somali civil war on the one hand, and the SNM struggle on the other. They are also testimony of Somaliland's current association with southern Somalia. Because the dominant narrative in the literature on the events leading to the declaration of the Somali independence put blame on the Siyad Barre government (Ghalib, 1995; Mohamed, 2001; Jama, 2003, 2010; Bradbury, 2008), it is plausible to argue that the national affiliations in Somaliland still build upon the memories of the atrocities of the Mohammed Siyad Barre regime in southern Somalia for their collective identity and quest for independence/ international recognition as separate from Somalia. Interestingly, however, even when it takes the form of a longing for complete disassociation/disengagement with Somalia as showed in the case of the Somali Horn Stars, Somaliland still holds Somalia as a permanent interlocutor. There are two conclusions here both related to foiling against southern Somalia: On the one hand, national affiliations in Somaliland are constructed through the lens of shared history with Somalia;¹⁵⁰ on the other hand, Somalilanders also construct themselves around a shared story of overcoming – which is still southern Somalia.

I need to note here that the nature in which I have read the monuments and the flag above is a rather linear and somewhat homogenised. This could be problematic especially if read as assuming a singular proposition/ambition from the state (which is true), and perhaps a similar and singular reflex of the people of Hargeysa towards these artefacts. This is consistent with the ambitions of this chapter as was structured to examine the ideations imagined by the crafters, or sponsors of these artefacts categorised as *officially sponsored* popular culture – which is the state – and the identities and consciousnesses, which they seek to represent and make visible. In Chapter Six, I noted that this is part of a predefined public identity is enforced through different processes including outright coercion. But suffice it to mention that it is also true that some Somalilanders abhor the sight of all or some of these monuments as defining their identity and worldview. A prominent cultural and literary entrepreneur in Hargeysa once told me although he liked the monuments for defining who they were, but some were 'too much and painted a wrong image.' He specifically cited kaare, the tank, noting he had spoken to the city authorities asking to bring it down. But they had

¹⁵⁰ That is of victimhood at the hands of a singularly defined villainous power (the government of Mohamed Siyad Barre), and by extension, all successive regimes in southern Somalia.

not heeded his plea. Another interlocutor, a businessman in Hargeysa, but originally from Boorama, a town in western Somaliland bordering Ethiopia noted that he believed in neither of these monuments, neither the ideation in the national flag, since even Somalilanders had been equal aggressors in the 1980s civil war. “The SNM killed my relatives in Boorama; they cannot claim to have been the only victims. Some of us are their [SNM] victims,” he had noted. It is thus possible that a different study focused on examining responses to these discourses towards an officially imagined ‘regimes of truth’ mobilised in the national flag, and the monuments and other state sponsored popular cultural items would reveal contested or alternative histories and responses.¹⁵¹ In the next chapter, I do not explore responses to the state sponsored popular cultural items, but focus on an entirely different set of popular culture materials, originating from the everyday people seeking to articulate a different world view, cultivating a different regime of truth – a counterpublic.

¹⁵¹ It could be challenging because, for the same reasons of the enforced public identity, Hargeysans are not necessarily free to challenge or question the foundations of new Somaliland – as the story of the arrest of singers in the Horn Stars has showed, and as I will show with the story of Abdulmaliq Musse Coldon in the next chapter, who has often been arrested for advocating a united Somalia with his poetry. I learned the same from my MA students class at University of Hargeysa, who often doubled as fixers and respondents.

Chapter Eight

EVERYDAY SOMALILAND: POWER, PERFORMANCE AND COUNTERPUBLICS

In the foregoing chapter, I discussed the ways in which Somaliland is constructed in *officially sponsored* popular culture. This chapter seeks to juxtapose the foregoing one by focusing on the unofficially – privately or individually – sponsored popular culture. Three main cases of items including (1) music, (2) poetry and poets, and (3) paintings are extensively examined in this chapter. Part of the discussion also focuses on the profiles of two artistes, poet Mohammad Hadraawi, and singer Sahra Halgan, who are read as texts and mediations building on discourses on classical tragic drama. (See discussion on classic tragic drama in the foregoing chapter). Several debates and themes preoccupy unofficially sponsored popular culture. These include the omnipresence of Somalia in discourses on Somaliland, women freedoms and rights, secession itself, possibility of re-union with Somalia, historiography and truth telling, and the socio-economic challenges such as unemployment and the scourge of Tahriib (illegal and precarious journeys to Europe via the Mediterranean Sea).

Unofficially sponsored popular culture does not necessarily present a diametric counter-discourse to the ideas of national consciousnesses and identity mobilised in officially sponsored popular culture. But a varied and complex one: while some of the cases studied openly oppose, others seek complement, modify or complicate the hegemonic positions of officialdom. My conclusion is that despite its overt presence and reach, counter-discourses in unofficially sponsored popular culture are still subservient to the hegemony of state power – although they also continue carving spaces for alternative expression and articulation of identity and national consciousness.

Music, Poetry, and the Artists

My decision to put music and poetry together builds, in part, on the history of music in Somaliland. Music in both Somalia and Somaliland borrows heavily from poetry (Johnson, 1968; Kapteijns, 1999). To this day, most poetry in Somaliland is turned into music. Poet Hassan Warsame told me about how *almost all* of his poetry had been

turned into music.¹⁵² The artistes in this chapter were selected basing on the power of their personas and popularity of their compositions and general craft.¹⁵³ My list thus includes Mohammed Ibrahim Warsame, nicknamed “Hadraawi,” Sahra Halgan, Amran Mahad Xuseen, Abdirahman Yuusuf Ducale, nicknamed, “Boobe,” and Acbdimalik Musse Coldon. For Xuseen, Boobe, and Coldon, I only focus on their music for which is most known. While for Halgan and Hadraawi, I focus both their music and profiles. Their profiles and investment on the popular cultural scene in Hargeysa are massive. Over these years, Halgan and Hadraawi have garnered powerful biographies, which makes their actions, works, speeches and silences reverberate with large audiences. For these two, a mere mention of their names brings forward series of memories, debates and anecdotes touching on their persona and music/poetry. Important to note is that although the artistes here belong to different age groups, they have been active in the same period, and have responded to similar questions relating to a new Somaliland [public] identity, and national consciousness.

Halgan: The Fighter

One Friday morning in April 2015, a friend of mine working with an international NGO in Hargeysa called me suggesting I prepare for an evening of music and “traditional” Somali food. He noted I should be discrete and not tell anyone where we would be going. The invitation had been extended to me alone, he stressed. About two weeks earlier, him and I had visited Crown Hotel in Badhacas, a suburb of Hargeysa, for a music show by a group of singers from Djibouti. Because of the Islamic-inspired and strictly enforced public identity (discussed in Chapter Five), music shows are rare in Hargeysa. If they come, they are quietly advertised. I learned of the need to be discrete when I narrated my Crown Hotel outing to another set of friends. They had expressed reservations, and since I am a practicing Muslim, one of them exclaimed “you might lose your religion; that place is not good,” making the point that Crown Hotel was a marked place for religious corruption.

¹⁵² Interview, Hassan Warsame, 8 November 2014, Togdheer, Hargeysa. In another interview with Boobe Yusuf Ducale, 30 September 2015, Maan Soor Hotel, he confirmed this position of turning most poetry into song including some of his that had been turned into songs in Djibouti.

¹⁵³ As a participant observer, I lived through most of the items I draw on. I was regular at Hiddo Dhawr Tourist village, the Hargeysa Cultural Centre, Cup of Art Italian Coffeehouse, Crown Hotel, and witnessed the 18 May celebrations of 2015. For a while, I worked with a music group, Black East Band where conversations on music and art were common.

Picked up from my guesthouse for the evening, we drove to Xafada Bibsi, in Shacab Area in the direction of the Hargeysa Cultural Centre (HCC). It was about 8.00 pm when we arrived and there were several vehicles in the parking lot. Security was tighter here than any other place in Hargeysa I had been to. We were thoroughly checked and the men guarding the vehicles were unusually armed. I quickly realised this was Hiddo Dhawr, a place of great cultural and political significance in Somaliland. I had been to this place a couple of days earlier while I tried to find Sahra Halgan for an interview. Halgan is a very renowned singer in Hargeysa and around the Somali dominated territories, and her place Hiddo Dhawr was getting the reputation for culture and music. The evening went as planned. We sat on low-level stools, on extended rows of well-lined dining tables, and dined to our full. You were served with either rice, chips or spaghetti locally known as *Basto*. These came with either goat meat or fish prongs. Judging from their sense of fashion and sophistication with tableware, most of the patrons that night seemed to be the elite of Hargeysa. There were expatriates and visitors visible from their white skins and uncharacteristically darker complexions like my own. There was plenty of singing. Playing with a live band, Halgan did most of her songs and those of other singers of the 1970s and 1980s – especially the love song. The crowd cheered mildly mostly and danced from their seats. Her teenage daughter made an appearance doing one of the songs of her mom to the excitement of the revellers. Later on, local patrons would take the microphone to sing their own favourite love songs of the 1980s while the band played the tune.

In the course of my fieldwork, I returned to this place plenty of times. But like had been on the first visit, the invitations were often discrete and had to be confirmed early enough. The more I attended and began to know the more regular patrons, I confirmed my initial suspicion that the patrons of Hiddo Dhawr were the elite and rich of Hargeysa, and more culturally diverse-minded. Like Crown Hotel, Hiddo Dhawr was a marked place for cultural corruption [extended discussion ahead]. On every occasion, I saw similar things with some small and major adjustments – narrativizing the same things. It is worth noting that during this and other performances I witnessed, Halgan's persona and music had performative presence. The Somaliland nationalistic packaging of her place, and music were loved and people danced to it. In the foregoing chapter on officially sponsored popular culture, I narrated how on the May 18 celebrations

(Independence Day) elite Somalilander and expatriates ended the day to music and food at Hiddo Dhawr. In truth, even outside this exclusive space, Halgan's music had power and presence and her name was easily recognisable. I will return to Hiddo Dhawr for a more detailed description and analysis of its symbolic significance. For now, let me stay with Sahra Halgan and her music.

Born Sahra Ahmed Mohamud, Sahra got her nickname, "Halgan," which literally translates as "the fighter," for her contribution to the SNM struggle. She specifically helped to nurse the wounded. Her name, Halgan, is directly derived from Radio Halgan, which was the name of the pirate radio of struggle during the SNM struggle.¹⁵⁴ She is one of the few women who actively participated in the rebellion that fought the regime of Siyad Barre, which had bases in Ethiopia and Somaliland.¹⁵⁵ Like the radio Halgan, Sahra was also a singer cheering the fighters.

A great-granddaughter of traditional singers, Halgan has been singing since the age of thirteen. Halgan has claimed having been born with her lyrics, which she has been transcribing throughout her musical life. Since 1991, Halgan continues to sing supporting the cause for Somaliland independence composing music for the people at home, but also campaigning from the diaspora. After the war, Halgan settled in Lyon in France where she lived up to 2011 when she moved back to Hargeysa and opened the Hiddo Dhawr Tourism Village. For her French connections, Halgan has had the opportunity to connect with both diaspora Somalilanders and the French community in advocating the cause for Somaliland independence. On several projects, she has worked with French artistes and has given her artistry the allure of world music.¹⁵⁶ Reviewing her 2015 album *Faransiskiyo Somaliland*, Benjamin Richmond writing for an online music magazine, *Afropop Worldwide*, noted that the collection

¹⁵⁴ Having had no name recognition during the struggle, the proprietors of the radio wanted an artiste that could easily identify with the audience. They thereby decided to associate her with the name. Conversation with Christina Woolner, podcast at: <http://www.socanth.cam.ac.uk/media/listen-and-view/camthropod#episode-5--hiddo-dhawr--singing-love-in-to--somaliland---by-christina-woolner> accessed on 5 July 2016

¹⁵⁵ Information available on her website, <http://www.sahra-halgan.com>, accessed on 20 July 2016.

¹⁵⁶ "Somaliland Act Sahra Halgan Trio to presents new album "Faransiskiyo Somaliland" at Studio de l'Ermitage," Accessed on 2 June 2016 at: <http://worldmusiccentral.org/2016/02/01/somaliland-act-sahra-halgan-trio-to-presents-new-album-faransiskiyo-somaliland-at-studio-de-lermitage/>

[Mixes] several Halgan-penned originals with a few traditional songs and classics from the 20th century Somali songbook all delivered via a combo of traditional percussion, electric guitar, drums and one cameo appearance by a *ngoni*.¹⁵⁷

This is a glowing tribute to her genius and her power to connect music across generations and across different worlds. Mostly, however, her songs, described as “pure un-artificial musical form show the world of Somaliland people, their sufferings and joys.”¹⁵⁸ To her, the 1991-post Somaliland is constructed around peace, and freedom, and one that is moving towards modernisation.



Image XXI: Sarah Halgan. (Photo Credit: CNN). In 2017 story, CNN, an international American news network describes her as “the star singing for Somaliland recognition.”¹⁵⁹

Fond of celebrating 18 May, the day when Somaliland declared independence from Somalia in 1991, Halgan’s songs also show the presence of Somalia in Somaliland’s

¹⁵⁷ “Faransikiyo Somaliland: Sahra Halgan’s Trio,” by Benjamin Richmond, accessed on 2 June 2016 at: <http://www.afropop.org/28217/faransikiyo-somaliland/>

¹⁵⁸ Picked from her website, at <http://www.sahra-halgan.com/>. There is something unique about Halgan’s website as regards the call for recognition from the international community. By the time of writing, the website whose link appears above had as its backdrop moving pictures about Somaliland showing footage of the landscape, the civil war wreckage and the developing city picked from Halgan’s historical-biographic movie, “Sahra Halgan Returns to Somaliland.”

¹⁵⁹ Chris Giles. “The Star singing for Somaliland Recognition,” CNN, 12 July 2017. Accessed here: <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/07/12/world/somaliland-famous-singer-Hargeysa-africa/index.html> on 10 July 2020.

history declaring her distaste for Somalia, and highlighting the bravery of the Somali fighters as they fought the dictatorship. In one of the songs entitled, *Eighteenth of May*, she narrates the sacrifices Somalilanders went through for their independence, which she notes did not come on a silver platter. [these are excerpts from the songs, the complete songs and their translations are contained in the Appendix].

Ragba dhiigood u saydhiyeey	Men shed blood
Sadqeeyoo naftooda soo hureyeey	They were slaughtered in the struggle
Saaxiib baryo laguma taaginay eey	Friends! We didn't beg for our peace
Sabaale iyo igadh salaaxeey aa	It is not gift nor was it a favour

In the same song, she also pays homage to the Somaliland national flag noting how, with the *Shahada* written on it, signals a Somaliland that is Islamic, with the Islamic religion being the “foundation of our existence.” This actually reinforces the official construction of Somaliland as their peace and stability being the testament of respect of Islam, and the lack of peace and stability in Somalia as the representation of the lack of the same (religious-inspired sensibility symbolised by peace and stability) in southern Somalia. She sings:

Calankaa oogada sudhaneey	The flag is flying upon us
Shahaadada lagu sargooyey aa	And the <i>Shahada</i> is part of it
Waxa seeska loo adkeeyo waa	The Eighteenth of May
Sided iyo tobankii meeyoo waa	This is the foundation of our existence

Somaliland’s independence, according to Halgan also signals the beginning of wealth and prosperity. She sings that eighteenth of May should be hailed as it is “The dawn of freedom/ We have wealth and prosperity.” Historically, development and prosperity were some of the main grudges that Somaliland had with Somalia throughout the time of the time of the union (which inspired the creation of the Hargeysa Group discussed earlier). In another Song, *Ha Dagan (Beware)*, Halgan continues the same trajectory signalling a growing Somaliland under its independence from Somalia. Calling onto Somalilanders to “beware” of their history and be “vigilant” about their present. She notes that after recovering their land, they have embarked on investing in it and developing it:

Degmadani siday kusoo doogta iyo	The way this land recovered
Dib u hanashadii intaa door ku maqan	And regained all our investment
Ma diihnoonino waan ognee	We have not forgotten and we remember
Dunidan sidaan dagalka ugalniyo	This land, and how we have rehabilitated it
Cadawgii doraad siday damacsanyihiin	From the enemy of yesterday, and all their plans
Ma diihnooninoo waan ognee	We have not forgotten and we remember

Above, we are presented with a Somaliland that should be seen through the lens of development, something that the country was denied for the entire the union. Rehabilitating the land and using it for development is a major theme in this song. Indeed, the song's video complements and accentuates this impression. Through series of long shots, in the background, the city into proper developmentalist perspective. It is depicted as serene, green as having several properly lined buildings, and well-designed sceneries of Hargeysa city are showed as Halgan sings from the front view. The emphasis on these images is meant to attract but also show the audience the long-awaited victories especially in the arena of development, that since 1991, are now visible and should not only be celebrated, but also protected.

Still in this song, *Ha Dagan*, which celebrates the feats made in Somaliland after the declaration of independence in 1991, Halgan also emphasises the place and importance constitutional governance, the rule of law, and democratic elections. Plus, working in concert with elders. A combination of these four is constructed as the bedrock upon which Somaliland has built itself after recovering its lands from Somalia. I argue in the concluding chapter that this “internationalist” and “progressive” language being the cornerstone of a national identity is intriguing in the discourse on (secessionist) nationalism.

Digadii la shiday, dirirtii amniga	The beginning of a new era and struggle for peace
Durba odayadii, damalka ugu dagay	And elders concerting under a tree
Ma diihnooninoo waan ognee	We have not forgotten and we remember
Distoorka iyo sharciga, habka	The constitution, the law and the bureaucracy
dawladeed	And democratic elections
Iyo doorashada dimuqraadinimo	We did not forget, and we remember
Ma diihnooninoo waan ognee	

With the refrain, “we did not forget, and we remember,” Halgan seeks to draw Somalilanders’ attention to a specific history one that constructs a specific enemy. As opposed to Abdulmaliq Coldon’s (discussed later) enemies, the enemy referred to here is Somalia, not Ethiopia nor Kenya (two countries with known historical-imperial interests in the Somali territories). This enemy is constructed as supposedly envious of the progress Somaliland has made. The enemy is also constructed as one waiting for an opportunity to stall Somaliland or drag the entire country back to the dark days. Somalilanders have to be fully aware, and vigilant.

Isku duubnideeniyo danta aynu hananaa	Our integrity and the work we have done
Ibo ku noqotee hadagan soomaalilaaneey	Is a pain to our enemies: Somaliland! Beware!
Waa lagu doondaanayaye ha dagan	The enemies are looking for you! Beware
Dereen feegigan lahoow	And be vigilant

In the videos of these songs, the singers and the entire crew are dressed to reflect a particular worldview. In the song, *Eighteenth of May*, all the singers are draped in fabrics designed in the colours of the Somaliland national flag, from head to toe. They gaily sing from some place in a green wilderness suggesting plentiful natural beauty from the peace the country enjoys.

Hiddo Dhawr

Halgan’s Hiddo Dhawr, which literary translates as “take care of heritage, opened in 2013 Sha’ab Area. The full name is Hiddo Dhawr Tourism Village and is a renowned restaurant and theatre. Mostly known for its Thursday and Friday nights, which are marked with ‘traditional’ good food and music shows. The shows are often occasion for young singers to showcase their talents. Oftentimes, members of the audience interested in singing their favourite love songs of the 1970s and 1980s have the chance to pick their microphone and sing their hearts. Once the guitarists and pianists understand the song, they will play the instruments of the love song for the one holding the microphone to sing along. The singer sits or stands, and then relays the lyrics of his favourite song to an audience, which many times sings along.¹⁶⁰ With events happening often in the night, the audience is often a select elite of Hargeysa, diaspora returnees Somalilanders, and expatriate workers.

¹⁶⁰ *ibid.*

Hiddo Dhawr Tourist Village is itself a place of great symbolism in the cause of Somaliland independence, identity and national consciousness. As soon as one enters into the compound, a monument of the map of Somaliland, displaying all the regions welcomes you. You either sit in the large open restaurant or the small private Somali traditional huts, the *aqals*, which have been built with more sophistication in both material and architectural impression. The food, which is described as ‘traditional Somali food’ is served in wooden dishes, clay pots, and several other ‘traditional’ artefacts as cutlery. There are several paintings on walls of traditional Somali life including people going about their chores, camels, wildlife, music instruments, and home utensils etcetera. With many people around the world just learning about Somaliland, as regards the traditional artefacts, Hiddo Dhawr is presented as serving the function in introducing one to a “Somaliland cultural heritage,” as suggested in the name on its website.



Image XXII: A monument of the map of Somaliland in the compound of Hiddo Dhawr Tourism village. Photo credit: Author (26 March 2015).

On 18 May 2015, a bigger hall was opened exactly coinciding with the independence celebrations. There used to be a smaller one that opened in 2012, when Halgan returned to Hargeysa from France where she had been self-exiled. But it had become too small for the place's ever-increasing patrons. In the new hall, a chart with all the flags of the world had been placed in one corner of the hall. The flag of Somaliland was also very prominent. Despite this loud declaration to belong to the community of nations, Hiddo Dhawr at the same time represents defiance in a way that it seeks to contest the conventional Somaliland public and personhood that abhors music and performance (see chapter six). It seeks to construct a Somaliland that is open to the world with all its myriad traditions. In this way, it destabilises the mainstream formations that seek a bounded, cast-in-stone identity for Somaliland by offering space for multiple imaginaries especially the component of art and performance.



Image XXIII: Pictures of the inside of the newly opened hall at Hiddo Dhawr (above and below). Opened 18 May 2015. The map of Somaliland is visible at the stage and a chart showing the maps of the world is on the side with the one of Somaliland more emphasised in the centre of the chart. Photo credit: Author (18 May 2018).



A more comprehensive analysis of Hiddo Dhawr has to consider Halgan's recent biopic, the 2014 film, *Sahra Halgan Returns to Somaliland* with Cris Ubermann and Aymeric Krol. This film documents her return to Somaliland marking "the different stages that marks her life and travel across Somaliland." Pitched as a "search for the past and the present," the feature film documents her journey from France where she had lived for 20 years. It shows a fascination with the topography and natural endowments of Somaliland. But most importantly, it follows a narrative pattern, which thrives on the destruction that Somaliland suffered at the hands of Somalia. The stage is set through long and close-up shots of the destruction: Broken buildings, bombed vehicles, dead animals and mass graves. Years of violence destroyed everything including schools, theatres, houses and the entire economy. Produced in 2013, the clips are contrasted against the city of Hargeysa, which is depicted as blossoming, filled with activity and work. Emphasising the importance of music, she calls it "the weapon that they used against the evil that had befallen their land and now live in peace." Quite paradoxically, this weapon is loathed in the new nationalist identity making for Somaliland.

Analysis: Hiddo Dhawr and Sahra Halgan

It is insightful how the images of destruction remain important in mobilising a consciousness for Somalilandness even in unofficially sponsored popular culture. It is difficult to gauge whether this sensibility is the independent choosing of the individuals or they are conscripts of the campaign that government has embarked on for the last

two decades. For example, because of their conspicuous presence in Hargeysa 's capital, the monuments (the Statue of liberty, or the Russian-made MIG) continue to find space in music videos and movies such as Halgan's biopic. In addition to the emphases on democracy and constitutionalism, secession is also viewed as the magic bullet against the challenges of the 1960-1991 postcolonial state, which makes southern Somalia alive in the present imagination of Somaliland. As seen above, Halgan is intensely involved in this campaign through her music and investment in the cultural industry.

However, Hiddo Dhawr is viewed as a corruption of the state of Somaliland identity in the sense that it is a space for music and dancing and performance—which is viewed as a cultural corruption to the country.¹⁶¹ As was noted in chapter six, sections of the Somaliland religious and political elite—an extremely powerful constituency—are averse to music and performance as being part of the Somaliland national fabric and identity.¹⁶² In the words of one popular cultural entrepreneur, cited in chapter five, music and Hiddo Dhawr are tolerated because Halgan was part of the SNM struggle.¹⁶³ At this point, we can note that the celebration of Somaliland independence happens in different forms in different spaces—legitimizing different claims to Somalilandness. It is fascinating how Hiddo Dhawr has been able to intimately link Somaliland with music, and bringing with it a certain sense of “western modernity,” with men and women eating and dancing to music together, something which the large part of Hargeysa abhors. Hiddo Dhawr represents such a complex identity for Somaliland, it both represents the ideals of democracy and development, but also insists that music should be a core component part of the new Somaliland.

There is another level of complexity of Hiddo Dhawr and Halgan: in other parts of the compound of this tourist village, are Somali traditional huts, and *aqals*, which look

¹⁶¹ Several conversations with Mustafe Baroud, Mustafe Suudi and Adnan Hagoog, March-October, 2015. See also, Christina Woolner, podcast: <http://www.socanth.cam.ac.uk/media/listen-and-view/camthropod#episode-5--hiddo-dhawr--singing-love-in-to--somaliland---by-christina-woolner> accessed on 5 July 2016

¹⁶² *ibid.*

¹⁶³ I also noted in Chapter Four that the National Theatre, which is located in downtown Hargeysa although under construction continues to face a great deal of resistance because it is viewed as cultural corruption to a society that insists on identifying as Islamic and views theatre as a corruption of the youth. At the Hargeysa Cultural Centre for example, where there is a theatre for occasional music shows, security has to be beefed up, and only discreet invitations are made on days of performance.

“modern” in their architecture but maintain the spirit of the traditional homesteads of the Somali people. It is not clear how these speak to the uniqueness of Somaliland, but they do point towards the shared traditions of the Somali people. These traditions speak to sameness with southern Somalia and not necessarily different traditions, yet Hiddo Dhawr has been designed as a quintessentially Somaliland project. How we should think about a Halgan who is deep in the campaign for a separate national identity yet at the same time is promoting/preserving their shared cultural traditions is a compelling paradox. However, this paradox is ignorable in the eyes of the larger hegemonic ideals espoused and enforced by officially sponsored popular culture, which on its part, ignores and thus silences any claims of tradition.

Poet Mohammad Hadraawi

On the final day of the 2015 Hargeysa International Book Fair (HIBF) organised at Guleid Hotel in Badhacas, I was seated outside the hall when I heard an unusually loud and extended cheering inside the hall. Revellers who had been standing outside were scampering into the hall while others crowded around windows finding a good vantage position to view of events on the stage. Everybody wanted their eyes on the stage. Being a guest myself, I had access to the reserved for VIPs front entrance. But that too was equally crowded but not too much to allow me view of the stage from where I stood. Then, I caught sight of an elderly man taking his position on the stage with a ‘traditional’ *suuka* drawn around his shoulders. This was poet Mohammad Hadraawi readying himself to recite some lines from his poetry – and also take some questions from a moderator. The book fair had had quite a number of poets before, but neither of them attracted even half the excitement as this man. Indeed, like the icing on a cake, he was performing at the extreme end of this five-day fair. Who was this man, Hadraawi? I started asking backwards. While we discussed him with groups of friends days later, I learned about his illustrious career and position he held in the hearts of not only people in Hargeysa, but Somalis across the Somali territories.

I learned about the Hadraawi Peace March: In 2004, Hadraawi embarked on one-man peace march going to all Somali major towns in East Africa and the Horn “appealing for peace and show of solidarity with all those suffering.” In Kismayo, Juba, Garowe, Awdal, Mogadishu, or Galkayo, wherever Hadraawi reached, he was received to red-carpet reception. One respondent, Mustafe Suudi told me “Every community wished

to own him.”¹⁶⁴ His sojourn around Somalia came to be called “Hadraawi Peace March.” Holding a single-man’s peace march and being received the same way is a feat of magical proportions – and is statement of Hadraawi individual profile one that he has cultivated over the years. Mustafe Suudi would say conclude on Hadraawi’s peace march that “no single Somali politician can ever have such reception everywhere; all of them have problems” (ibid). Indeed, for his creative and cultural genius, the international community recognised him in 2012 with the Prince Claus Award, a Dutch funded prize given to persons and organizations that have done work on issues of culture and development. Just like Sahra Halgan, it is difficult to make sense of Hadraawi’s politics without making going via his profile, which is not only credentialed with artistic accomplishment, but also flourishes with political and cultural engagement. Poet, dramatist, songwriter, political activist, peace campaigner, and elder, Hadraawi is an icon to Somalis at home and abroad. Exploiting his genius as a poet, Hadraawi protested the dictatorial regime of Siyad Barre, and is now a campaigner for peace.

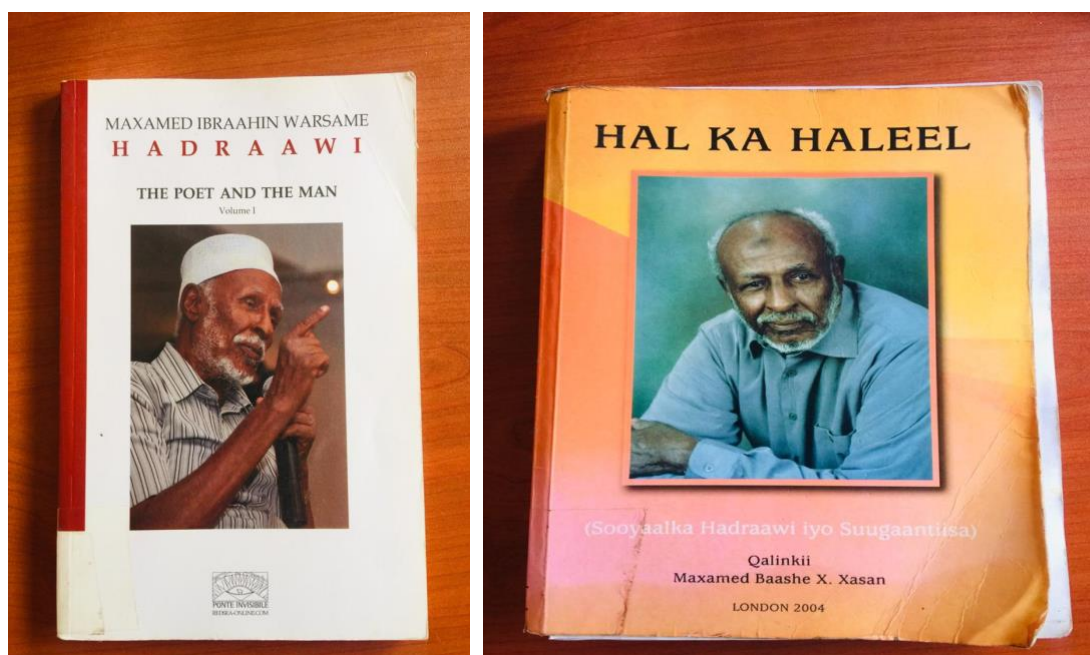


Image XXIV: Books of Hadraawi, as statement of his illustrious profile, and representativeness of the community, books are published on his works. The above are some of the books on Hadraawi. The book on the right is “The History and Poetry of Hadraawi.”

¹⁶⁴ Mustafe Suudi is one of several respondents with whom I had several conversations on this and other matters both in Hargeysa and Kampala. A resident of Hargeysa with interests in languages and cultures, Suudi and I met in Hargeysa but soon moved to Kampala and studied a masters’ degree in International Relations at Makerere University.

My interest in Hadraawi for this project is his life story – not his poetry. He is the classic tragic hero whose life becomes a representative of larger constituencies and symbolic of larger ideals. As one of the most decorated and respected artistes in Somalia, who is currently resident in Somaliland in the city of Burco, his life-story covertly brushes with the secessionist project of Somaliland. I want to read Hadraawi as a text and make it speak to the context of secessionism, which has engulfed all the major artistes in Somaliland from groups such as Hidigaha Geeska (The Horn Stars), to poets such as Hassan Warsame, Abdulmaliq Coldon, and singers such as Sahra Halgan. Let me construct Hadraawi’s memoir for the analysis that follows.

Born in Burco in 1943 in British Somaliland, Hadraawi followed the footsteps of many who had come before him by taking Quran education in Yemen as a child. Like the “mother of Somali music” Abdullahi Qarshe who had studied in Aden earlier, Hadraawi left Burco for Aden in 1955. For revelling his fellow students with folktales from the Somali countryside every time the teacher was away, Mohamed Ibrahim Warsame, soon earned the nickname *Abu Hadra*, which colloquially meant “the one who talks too much.” It would soon get modified by his Somali brethren to Hadraawi. Jama Musse Jama (2013) writes about Hadraawi as a poet and dramatist who gained prominence in 1968 when his first play, *Hadimo (Trap)* was staged at the National Theatre in Mogadishu. Jama narrates that this play, which was skilfully scripted to entertain, with powerful dialogue and beautiful songs, and also entertainingly staged, with Hadraawi himself cast. Although Hadraawi held a teaching position at Lafole Teacher’s Education Centre in Mogadishu, he was more renowned for his artistic production especially the love song for which he established himself as a master by releasing in quick successions of adored hits.¹⁶⁵

With Somalia slipping into deeper autocracy, it became difficult for Hadraawi to stick to love poetry. He became political released poetry that was critical of the regime. His poems *Hal La Qalay Raqdeedaa (The Killing of the She-Camel)*, and the play *Aqoon iyo Afgarad (Knowledge and Understanding)*, which saw the advent of the critical

¹⁶⁵Jama has noted some of his main songs as including Suleykha (name of a person), Cajabey (Wonderful), Beledweyn (name of a village), Axadii (That Sunday), Jacayl Dhiig Ma Lagu Qorey (Has Love Been Ever Written in Blood?), and several others.

Siinley poetry angered Siyad Barre. In 1973, he was jailed. Advised to make a written request for pardon pledging never to get involved in oppositional politics in future, Hadraawi rejected the offer and ended up spending five years in jail as a political prisoner. He would be released in 1978, and offered, as patronage, to head the Academy for Arts and Social Sciences, he refused to keep quiet. He soon fled the country and joined the SNM rebel movement that was fighting the regime. In exile, his poetry even became fierier. Poems such as Daacalan (Clarity), Waxyi (Revelation), Sirta Nolosha (Life's Essence), Gol Janno (a name of a village), Bulsho (Society) reverberated across Somalia.

With brief and long periods of exile in the United Kingdom, where he refused to seek asylum despite profuse encouragement from friends, Hadraawi returned to Somaliland in 2001, settling in his birthplace, Burco. For his artistic production, Hadraawi's fame is as big as the Somali population extends. Books and articles are published on his poetry, and his voice on peace and reconciliation across Somalia is highly respected.

Besides his peace march, Hadraawi has not produced any poetry in the context of Somaliland's campaign. But while doing fieldwork, I learned about his rather poetic response to a question put to him sometime in 2012 about where he stood on Somaliland independence from Somalia. His rather cryptic response, to use the words of Chinua Achebe, "spread like a bushfire in the Harmattan." Many of my friends, younger and old, knew it by heart and easily produced the line.

Hadii Soomaaliya u qaybsanto labaatan, annigu wali waxaan ahaanayaa Hadraawi. Even if Somalia divides itself into twenty parts, I will still be Hadraawi Even if Somalia split into twenty parts, I will remain Hadraawi."

I have gone over Hadraawi's profile and legacy to put his ambivalence in context. As explored, the youthful and young adult Hadraawi was a vocal political activist who openly articulated what he felt was right and wrong about the leadership of the time. This is also evident in his sole 2004 peace campaign, and his decision to join the Somali National Movement (SNM) in 1979 when it was being formed to fight the dictatorial regime of Siyad Barre. However, ever since Somaliland embarked on the independence agenda in 1991, and since his return to Burco, Hadraawi has chosen to keep a "neutral"

or silent position. He has been neither opposed, nor supportive of the campaign. This is a remarkable silence.

I want to argue that this is not indifference, but a deliberate *conscious voice* of a different nature. His response “remaining Hadraawi,” seeks not to attract adoration or retribution from any political factions but focuses himself and his singularity. It could be read as suggesting a longing for a single Somalia, which includes Somaliland but this is not overtly stated as the focus is rather on his individual persona. There is a subtle voice of protest in Hadraawi’s position, as it could signal a longing for uniting the entire country – encoded in his peace match, and response.

Boobe Yuusuf Ducale

Boobe Yuusuf Ducale participated in the SNM liberation struggle (1980-91), and is a renowned literary critic, and former minister of information. His song, “Midigtaan ku xoreynayn mandeeq” or “Independence is in our Right Hand” has lyrics that actually complement the hegemonic ideations we saw from the official popular culture. Written as strong criticism of Somalilanders living abroad, and the journalists at the BBC – Somali service radio,¹⁶⁶ whom Ducale accuses them of circulating malicious information about Somaliland. His song of nine stanzas seeks to not only craft a Somalilander identity, and mobilise Somalilander pride, it is also an effort to ‘correct’

¹⁶⁶ Started in 1957, and directed to less than a million people, the BBC Somali service was meant to perpetuate the British colonial agenda. An undated article by Mohamoud Hassan who claims to have worked at the service since 1967-2000 notes that, “the reason for the establishment of the BBC Somali Service was to counter the president of Egypt, Jamal Abdu Nasir, who was spearheading the freedom of Africa and the Arab World from colonial rule or foreign tutelage and whose popularity was spreading like bush fire in British Somaliland. Radio Cairo’s Arab Voice and its Somali programmes were avidly listened to and Radio Hargeysa was no match for it, least of all when it was derided as a colonial dummy.” Hassan adds, that the, “Service was never meant to last long but somehow it acquired a life of its own like most other services of the BBC.” However, he also notes that many times, it has been threatened with closure only to be saved at the last minute by friends of Somalia in the British media and the House of Commons.” This story corroborates with the one I received from the field about the formation of the station. Interestingly, although Hassan claims the service was anti-Stable Somalia (working for or with the warlords in Mogadishu), and is in favour of a broken-up Somalia, the sentiment I got from Hargeysa and as is from this Ducale’s song is that the service was anti-Somaliland. Hassan’s writing, “The British Motives Behind the BBC Somali Service” is available at, http://www.banadir.com/the_bcc.htm, and was accessed on 15 June 2016.

the historical mistakes circulating on BBC Somali service, which is mostly controlled by Somalis from the south. He writes:

Mudh weeye sadeetanimo dhab ahoo	It is clear from the history of the 1980s
Tobanku migle iyo mariin u yihiin	And our May anniversary is now 20 years
Ma meeybaa laabtan meersatayoo	Somaliland hosts guests and asylum-seekers
Martidu magan iyo martiba u tahoo	Government and the people are united
Dadkii madax iyo midoobay mijoo	Haters and pessimists will often regret
Maangaabkii saluugay murugoodaa	...
...	
Ma naxaan cadawgii na maaruqay	Merciless enemies who committed genocide
Mujaahid cartamoon mill dhaabaynoo	Our passionate martyrs fought them
Kaariyo madfacbaa malaaygii liqoo	The well-armed Somaliland soldiers engaged them
Yaa maali jiraa la magansadayoo	Somaliland needs more heroes to carry on
Mawlaha rabibaa maciin la bidoo	As we seek Allah's support
Midigta ku xoreynay mandeeq	Independence is in our right hand
...	...
...	
Togdheer madaxiyo mareegta xidhoo	Togdheer organised the conference for independence
Miscirir Awdal iyo maarayn nabadeed	Awdal managed conflicts among Somalilanders
Marsada saaxil iyo madaar ku lamaan	The coast of Saxiil (Berbera) and the airport
Sanaag mudhacyada hidaha mudan	Sanaag is the home of our "expected" culture
Sool waa mus danbee milgihii qarankee	Sool is the route of our dear nation
Maroodi-dhexjeex mayalka xijisoo	Maroodi-Dhejeex keeps the country together
...	...
...	
Rajjada muuqataan miliilicayaa	I see hope from a distance
Dhibtaan mudanaan ka maydhanayoo	We have been cleansed of our dirt
Martida timibaa markhatiga ahoo	Our visitors are witness to this
Barina meersiyo lasii mudiye	Tomorrow is day for more work

In this song, Ducale accuses diaspora Somalilanders for regurgitating BBC narratives because they have been away for long and therefore lack proper knowledge of the events at home¹⁶⁷ In straightening the historical record, he claims their independence did not actually start with 1991 when it was actually declared at a meeting in Burco.

¹⁶⁷ In the video, the song was recorded with images of the BBC journalists and other diaspora Somalis who are known for being opposed to Somaliland independence.

Instead, it started in 1980 with the formation of the Somali National Movement (SNM), and the gradual rise of resistance against, especially the economic neglect of Hargeysa by the Mohamed Siyad Barre government. Since 1980, Ducale argues, the Somaliland government has been friendly with their neighbours (meaning Somalia)¹⁶⁸ where it has hosted asylum seekers and refugees fleeing the violence that continued in Somaliland after 1991. Like many other critics of the Barre regime, Ducale notes that Somalia – often taking the place of Mohammad Siad Barre – committed *genocide* in Somaliland.

Merciless enemies who committed genocide
Our passionate martyrs fought them
The well-armed Somaliland soldiers engaged them
Somaliland needs more heroes to carry on

In lines that are meant to call on Somalilanders to work hard for the continued prosperity of their country, Ducale constructs the enemy, and their crimes as genocide. The first heroes of Somaliland, the SNM bravely engaged the enemies and defeated the perpetrators of genocide. It is interesting that this crime is called genocide, “maaruq” (n) or “maaruqay” (v) but not crimes against humanity, and not clan cleansing of the Isaaq either as Kapteijns (2013) has described almost similar atrocities in Mogadishu. Sometimes, the word “xasuuq” is used.¹⁶⁹ There is power in the naming – and genocide has currency in the world of responsibility to protect (R2P).

Through a deliberate selection of diction, it is difficult not to miss the way Ducale is juxtaposing the heroes against their enemies: the enemies were “merciless,” and the heroes, were “passionate.” Helplessness on the one hand and powerful-ness on the other is achieved in this simple juxtaposition of meticulously selected words. Perhaps this is meant to diffuse claims—often by BBC and other anti-Somaliland independence critics—that both the SNM liberators and the government forces of the Barre regime

¹⁶⁸ This was the translators’ interpretation (with the help of Mustafe Baroud and Mustafe Omar Suudi).

¹⁶⁹ During our interview on 30 September 2015, which was in English, Ducale often used the word “genocide” to describe the crimes the government of Mohammad Siad Barre committed against the north in 1988 during the carpet bombing of Hargeysa. It is also common in many public forums in Hargeysa discussing Somalia-Somaliland to hear the word “genocide” used to describe the crimes of Somalia.

participated in the genocide claims, which is the classic argument that in moments of violence, victims and perpetrators are always switching sides (Mamdani, 2002; 2013).

Countering claims of a disunited Somaliland where regions such as Awdal and Laascaanood (including Sool and Sanaag) are believed to be opposed to Somaliland independence, Ducale dedicates a stanza demonstrating that at least all the regions of Somalia have contributed something to the final forming of their country after the civil war. The lines read,

Togdheer organised the conference for independence/
Awdal managed conflicts among Somalilanders/
The coast of Saxiil (Berbera) and the airport/
Sanaag is the home of our “expected” culture/
Sool is the route of our dear nation/
Maroodi-Dhexjeex keeps the country together.

In other words, every region in the country has played a part or is doing so in the final forming of the country as it recovers. Although it could have been explained as an issue of brevity in composition, it is worth noting that some regions such as Laascaanood are not mentioned in this expose. By setting the record straight, Ducale appears content that they have “been cleansed of our dirt,” and there is hope in the distance in spite of the fact that more work has to be done. Again, like happened in the official constructions of Somaliland, the history upon which Somaliland views itself is the history of its relationship with Somalia, and upon this, the country’s future is premised. Working in juxtaposition with Somalia is intertextually connected to other songs. The one below sang by Amran Mohammed plots a similar pattern.

Written by Faysal Aw Abdi Cambalaash, “Tagimayno Xamar Abid”, that is, “We will Never Go Back to Somalia” (with Xamar being the other word for Mogadishu), singer Amran Mahad Xuseen speaks to the frustrations of the 1960s where they had big dreams, which were terribly frustrated:

Hobey lixidankii tabtaan rabayeey	We had a big dream in the 1960s
Hobey tartankii midnimadiiyeey	The race towards unification
Hobey waa tacab khasaar kale oo	Is a hopeless cause!
Hobey taa anaan u noqonaynoo	And we will never return to this (hopelessness)
Hobey dantu waa turxaan li'iyeeey	Our new ambition is transparent
Hobey taayadaaba nagu filaneey	What we have is sufficient
Hobey tagimayno Xamar abideey	We will never go back to Mogadishu
Hobey nimmaan tiisa kaafiyineey	People who cannot solve their problems
Hobey waxbba yaanu Ii talineey	They will never lead us
Hobey rabiyoow na tabantaabiyeey.	May Allah gives us support

Singing in the *Hobey* tradition (where every line starts with *hobey* and the audience is responds to it with a similar refrain, *hobeyoo*),¹⁷⁰ Amran's song goes that unification was "a hopeless cause", which they "will never return to." Critiquing the past to as a project of the present, the song notes that the dreams of 1960 were not "transparent," and "sufficient" compared to the present dreams of an independent Somaliland. Moving from the past to the present, and contrasting Somaliland against Somalia, she points to Somalia's perennial weakness manifesting in continued violence and poor administration concluding that such helpless people cannot provide leadership to a united Somalia: "We will never go back to Mogadishu/ People who cannot solve their problems/ They will never lead us." With the song title declaration "Never" that is, never going back to Somalia, we are presented with the end of the Greater Somalia dream and Somaliland being the living embodiment of this conclusion. It is a process I refer to as imagining a new unit but essentially built on de-imagining/ undoing an earlier unit. [With Benedict Anderson's (1983) *Imagined Communities* in mind, I have termed this "de-imagined communities." I return to it later in the conclusion of this dissertation]. It is noteworthy that the declaration of never returning to Somalia is not constructed in cultural terms just the way the union was mobilised in 1960, but in political developmental terms – a different set of identity markers.

¹⁷⁰ Like *Heello helleloy*, these words do not mean anything specific; they instead give the song its musicality by controlling the pace and giving them pace. It is typical pastoral tradition, which modified into the modern pop song.

To conclude thus far, Amran and Ducale (a) construct a Somaliland that is consistent with the Somaliland imagined in officially sanctioned popular culture, and (b) present us with a rather linear historical narrative of Somaliland where Somalia is implicated of myriad crimes, from genocide to economic marginalisation. Somaliland is presented only as victim, composed of resilient survivors, and are presently more orderly and better organised. However, there is also Sahra Halgan, who despite popularising the officially sponsored narrative, complicates it in a manner that exposes some contradictions in the ways in which the imagination of new Somaliland is scripted. In the official public discussed earlier, they destabilise it and then remake crafting it differently to suit their realities, needs and ideations. I now turn to a poet and singer who, unlike Hadraawi, is diametrically and openly opposed to the idea of secession.

Abdulmaliq Musse Coldon

Like Hadraawi, Abdulmaliq Musse Coldon lives in Burco, a place that has been described as “free territory” as opposed to Hargeysa, which is more restrictive as regards the secessionist agenda. In Burco, it is claimed, one is free to say whatever they want against the secessionist project, but may have difficulties upon visiting Hargeysa (including being arrested). Coldon uses poetry to campaign for Somalia unity – of all the territories – in absolute contravention of the campaign of secession overtly present in Hargeysa. Based in Somaliland, he is focused on reminding Somaliland (and other Somalis more generally) that *all Somalia* belongs to them. Coldon has released poem after poem reminding his audiences not to forget the lands of their ancestors all the way from Gaarisa in Kenya to Diridhaba in Ethiopia. Take for example, his signature poem, “I’m a Somali”

Soomaali baan ahay	I’m a Somali
Diridhaba anaa lehe	Diridhaba is my land
Gaarisa anaa lehe	Gaarisa is my land
Ma ilaawin inay tahay	I will not forget that
Dhaxalkii awoowahay	The inheritance of my ancestors
Soomaali oo idil	The entirety of Somalia
Wax xumaana uma qabo	I have no problem with them
Aan ahayn walaal nimo	Except brotherhood

Afku hadal islaamiyo	We speak the language of Islam
Isirbaan wadaagna	We share the ethnicity
Isa saamaxaan idhi	I say, forgive each other
Ma jiraan aduunyadan	We are unique in the world
Dad intaa kawada mida	The only homogenous community
Dhulkiinana ilaashada	Protect your land
Iska jira cadaawaha	And avoid our enemies (Ethiopia and Kenya)

His entry point is the emphasis, like Hadraawi is that he's a Somali, and will remain Somali whatever the circumstances. Coldon reminds all Somalis that they speak one 'language,' which is Islam. While appealing to an ancestral connection, and cultural community, he reminds his countrymen that all Somali dominated lands belong to all of them as *one Somali* ethnic community as did their ancestors. They should not divide themselves into different small communities as the colonialists divided them. Harping further on the idea of a cultural community, Coldon tells his audience that they are a unique in the world for their "homogeneity" – at the level of language, religion and culture – the same debates that animated the 1960 union project. Thusly, they need to remain one and guard against their common enemies, who, by implication, are Kenya and Ethiopia as references to Gariisa and Dhilidhaba exactly suggest.

At the same time, Coldon makes reference to Somalia's blighted history. First, he acknowledges the wrongs of history and suggesting that Somalis should forgive each other and move forward as one group. Secondly, he appeals to Somalia's history with its neighbours especially Ethiopia, noting that they need to protect their land from the true enemies. This is a rivalry, which predates colonialism, and was only exacerbated by British colonialism.

In another poem, "In Defence of My Country," Coldon continues with the same drive – history, and their homogeneity. Coldon quickly makes reference to his journalistic background noting that he is reporting the truth. Referring to debates in historiography, he suggests that events in history are often narrated privileging specific interests. For him, events have to be reported straight with the intention being to raise awareness.

This awareness, in the context of Somalis recent history, should be meant to primarily defend the country for its enemies.

Waxa dhacay imay wiiqin	Things that happen never affect me
Wadaydayda kam weecan	And they never divert me
Iyaguna imay waabin	And they never stop me
Warka waan tabinayaaye	I report the news
Wacyigalinta iyo toosba	I report it the way it happens
Toosbaan u wadayaaye	I raise awareness straight
Wadankayga hiilkiisa	In defence of my country
Waraabaha ka celintiisa	To protect it from the hyena
Wacad baan ku marayaaye	It is a promise I made
Sidan laguma waaraayo	We will not be the way we are
Warwar laguma jiifaayo	Living in fear
Wuxuunbaa hagaagaaya	The future is bright
Mugdiga wareegaaya	Darkness will return
Waqalbaa hilaacaaya	And thunder will roar
Waabaa dilaacaaya	And a new era will be born

It is important to critically follow Coldon's claims of not being affected by events that happen around him. That is the events of 1980-1991 when Somalia was caught up in flames of civil war. They are but a distraction from their main goal, he claims. The main goal being defending the country against its enemies (who are implied with the mention of Dildhaba and Gariisa in the earlier poem, "I'm a Somali"). In this, Coldon is reminding his countrymen that however tragic the events in their history were, they should not be distracted from their ultimate goal (of union as one people). In this sentiment, Hadraawi's claim of "remaining Hadraawi" even if Somalia split into twenty separates parts is reproduced in Coldon's simple poetry.¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ Coldon's poetry is simple in the sense that it does not measure to the philosophical, rhythmical and linguistic sophistication that is associated with Hadraawi or *manso* poetry, which is a men's type of poetry

Hargeysa 's Paintings

On 20 August 2014, Afrikanation, an art project curated by painter Ebony Iman Dallas who is an African-American Somali organised an 'international art exchange exhibition' at Maan Soor Hotel in Hargeysa. Organised under the theme, "Family, Ritual and Traditions," the project brought together painters from Somalia, Ethiopia and Somaliland, and the United States. A sizeable audience had turned up for the exhibition composed of mostly Somali diaspora (they are visible as a category in the socio-cultural milieu in Hargeysa), 'elite' Somalilanders working with NGOs and other international organisation such as the UN, and other expatriates. There were several other Somalis enjoying the exhibition. Being organised at Maan Soor Hotel is also powerful in that, as the most renowned hotel in Hargeysa, Maan Soor is the centre of most cultural-political negotiations in the country. Even outside its profile as a centre of negotiation, it is a major meeting place for Somali politicians and foreign dignitaries for coffee and dining. The artistes' interventions and impressions would thus reach this audience as well. But the reach of paintings would not be limited to Maan Soor Hotel audience alone. Weeks later, some of these paintings were exhibited in the compound at the Hargeysa Cultural Centre, which is open to a more diverse audience.

At Maan Soor that day, there were several paintings on display touching different themes as will be discussed in a while. Addressing her audience, the main curator, Ebony Iman Dallas spoke about the struggles of crafting an identity for herself as a Somali woman born and associated in the United States of America. Her passionate connection with her childhood grooming and dreams from her mother was unmistakable. She was also concerned with notions of identity and belonging:

While growing up, my mother raised me up to be a good Somali girl in the United States. She made sure I learned speaking Somali, and understood the culture of my people. And in my work, I grapple with the struggles of my

(Kaptejns, 2010). One literati respondent described Coldon's work as "nice words put together and given a bit of musicality." It is arguable that the literary sophistication of Hadraawi is too abstract for ordinary folks and Coldon has chosen not to tread that line. More technically, Coldon appears to dismantle the categorisation of *Manso* and *Heeso*, which is "prestigious" and "non-prestigious" poetry (see, Kaptejns, 2010). *Manso* is often described as being lofty in poetic sophistication often coming across as heavily metered and rhymed and also dealing with themes in a communitarian manner. Although Coldon's poetry is not linguistically sophisticated, its thematic pre-occupations and his targeted audience cannot be categorised as non-prestigious, not even being unmistakable.

mother and it has been homecoming for me to come to Somaliland and work with painters who live here... As you will see from the work of the other painters, they show the daily struggles of ritual, family, identity and belonging in the world we inhabit... This is why we chose this theme.¹⁷²

Iman Dallas and her fellow painter colleagues were echoing the well-known contribution of painters to society. Indeed, across human history, painters have been engaged in negotiating the vicissitudes of society. Art is never been art for art's sake, but as an intervention, commentary or record of history, a mediation in the present debates of the time. Pablo Picasso (1930) famously captured the life of painters thus:

What do you think an artiste is? An imbecilic who has only eyes if he's a painter, or ears if he's a musician, or a liar at every level if he's a poet, or even if he's a boxer, just his muscles? On the contrary, he is at the same time a political being, constantly alive to hear trending, fiery or happy events, to which he responds in every way...No, painting is not done to decorate apartments. It is an instrument of war for attack and defence against the enemy (Cf. John Street, 1997).

True to Pablo Picasso, the painter in Somaliland uses his talents to attack, defend and craft his personhood and dream for Somaliland. It is a daring act especially since is carried out amidst myriad odds ranging from very low returns to risk of cultural backlash as art, in the broad sense, is viewed with disdain as a moral corruption. Writing in *Somalia: Art of Hope* (Benetton, 2015),¹⁷³ Abdi Latif Dahir, notes that artistes have a strong aspiration to retell that tragic episode, which often shapes the path into the future (2014: 13). He notes that in that collection, the “paintings portray a painful existential reality, and the tragedy of a nation and its people, whose way of life has fallen apart...you catch a sense of innocent nostalgia, and a wishful longing for a better tomorrow” (ibid). The anthropologist, Johannes Fabian would note that painters often assume a sense of historicist making as a springboard for re-imagining and refashioning a future for the spaces they occupy. As Fabian has written, the painters

¹⁷² Opening remarks by painter Ebony Iman Dallas at the Afrikanation Art exhibition. 20 August 2014, Maan Soor Hotel, Hargeysa.

¹⁷³ In a collection of paintings, titled, *Somalia: Art of Hope*, art collector Luciano Benetton (2014) reproduces 150 paintings he collected from painters across Somalia. Most of these are noted to have been showed at art exhibitions in Hargeysa at Kulan Hotel (2012, 2014) Man Soor Hotel (2012) and 2011 under the Afrikanation banner.

assume the responsibility of a historian at one time, and of progressive thinker in another (Fabian, 1995). Their paintings question, critic and seek to refashion the aftermaths of the civil war world that they have come to occupy, with all its complex histories and challenges.

Indeed, the painters in Hargeysa have learned to organise themselves and speak as a collective voice. Under the association, Hanad Arts in Hargeysa, painters work and organise exhibitions in collaboration with other painters especially from the diaspora and the region. In collaboration with artistes from Ethiopia, Djibouti, US and the UK, they encourage each other, and together debate the world they inhabit. Indeed, it is under such arrangement that the Afrikanation exhibition that I witnessed in 2014 was built.



Image XXV: Arts exhibition in Maan Soor Hotel. (Above): The signpost showing the title and theme of the exhibition. **Below:** Ebony Iman Dallas and shows one of her paintings to the audience as photographer and producer, Mustafe Abdirashid holds the microphone for her. Photo Credit: Noor Al-Huda Banfas.



Women and Public Identity

In negotiating their identity and relationship within new Somaliland, Afrikanation exhibition, and earlier exhibitions at Kulan Hotel (2012, 2013) and Maan Soor (2011, 2014) often gave painters the opportunity to engage in the conversation in the country. Debates on the position of women in society, music in Hargeysa and secession are among the major items discussed – which are actually current debates in the country. Take for example the paintings below:

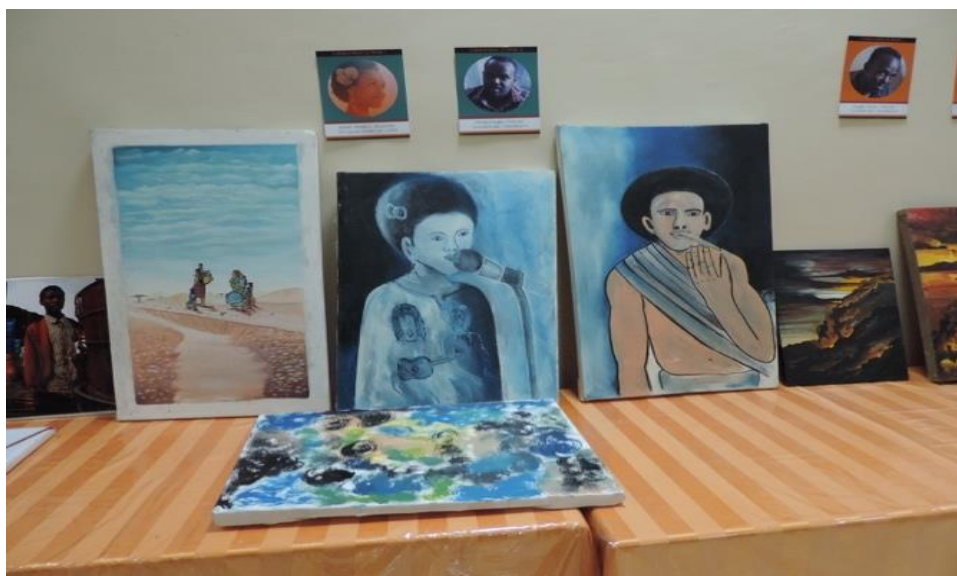


Image XXVI: The painting **above** is by Ahmed Najib a resident of Somaliland shows a woman singing. I want to emphasise her uncovered hair and the idea that she is singing. Below is a painting (artiste unrecorded) of a portrait of woman. Notice she has no head covering and her arms and neck are visible. Photo credit: Noor Al-Huda Banfas.



Against a public identity which abhors music as discussed earlier, it is indeed radical that among the paintings that were on display in 2014 was one of the women in front of a microphone singing – which uncovered hair. The artist behind these paintings is Ahmed Najib, who lives in Somaliland. As pointed out in chapter six, he is surely aware of the ways in which women are supposed to appear in public and also be portrayed in images and paintings. At the same time, he is aware of the ways in which Hargeysa treats music, especially women singers. But that he chooses to paint a woman in this format, and one who has guitars and little children inside her also singing is a very radical intervention – it is a counter-discourse to the imagined and enforced public identity in Hargeysa.

On the right, the same pattern is repeated and the woman is still showed in the traditional way. As showed in Chapter Six, the women on billboards and other official signs are covered in full Islamic attire. The painters here tend to portray women outside this attire with appeals to an earlier time when religious sensibility was not widespread in Somaliland. One of my respondents narrated to me a heated debate he had with his mother over her pictures before the 1980-91 violence as she went around with no covering or just a simple head covering over her head patronising with men. Yet presently, all these were not allowed and were publicly chastised.

Tahriib

Painters have also discussed Tahriib, where many people especially Somalis have died immigrating to Europe and North America via the Mediterranean Sea. This is one of the major challenges facing the Horn of Africa with countries including Somalia and Eritrea as most hit.¹⁷⁴ One respondent noted young men have risked the high seas longing for simple entertainment such as the cinema and disco hall.¹⁷⁵ This was because the strict Islamic public identity abhors these forms of entertainment which many young men and women would be interested in. One of the paintings exhibited at the Afrikanation demonstrates the precariousness of these journeys even more graphically: a heavily crowded boat on the sea is braving high and powerful waves. The sailors of the boat, most likely human traffickers are holding axes, guns and machetes forcing people off the boat into the sea. Two people are being lifted off the boats most likely for hurling them into the sea. The boat, which is depicted as made out stick-nets, is precariously struggling for balance. Some people are ready drowning in the sea. The story goes that once faced with high waves, the smugglers often cast some people into the sea to reduce on the overcrowding in an effort to balance the boat. The intention behind such graphic painting is to not only show potential travellers how precarious the journey could be but also challenge government to do something to combat the situation.

Contrast this against another painting where a young woman is held captive by trafficker and she is calling crying to her mother to send money. The thought burbles on the painting call, “hooyo”, which is mother, and then “lacag hooyo,” which is “money mother” and translatable as asking the mother to send money for the traffickers to return her freedom. While doing my fieldwork in 2015, I listened to several desperate calls for help from kidnapped Tahriib candidates calling to get money for traffickers. The traffickers were mostly Arabic speaking and my friends who were fluent in Arabic – such as Sara Hajj – were often called upon to take the calls as translate the message to parents and other kindred.

¹⁷⁴ For a comprehensive discussion of Tahriib, see Nimco Ihlán Ali (2015) *Going on Tahriib: The Causes and Consequences of Youth Migration to Europe*. London: Rift Valley Institute.

¹⁷⁵ Conversation with diaspora returnee working with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Somaliland, September 2015, Hargeysa.



Image XXVII: Expressions Photo Credit: Noor Al-Huda Banfas.

Openly notable here is that painters express concern to a not only Somaliland problem, but one that has afflicted *all* Somalia and the Horn in the aftermath the civil war. This search to foreground these problems could be read as a subtle displacement of the secessionist project from not being the main focus of new Somalia but the challenges that the people in the Horn are faced with as a whole.

Secession

Hitting the question of secession and independence of Somaliland right on the head, Abdirahman Arab Ibrahim's watercolour on canvass painting, which, in the present political context of Somalia and Somaliland, could be read as critical of the campaign for secession (see below). The untitled painting portrays a man being split into two halves. The face (or identity) of one half of this man is visible while the other is invisible as the entire side of the face is painted black. Two men, only visible by their smartly dressed hands are exchanging a briefcase as their other hands partake of the different sides of this man. The briefcase is open showing bundles of money, a pair of scissors, and razorblade. The blades, and the money are all patched with blood.

Read intertextually with another painting, which was exhibited on 20 August of an open mouth (see image below), where underneath the tongue are loads of cash, one could argue they are speaking to the same theme of secession. That the mouth is widely open in a posture of one making noise or talking at the top of their voices, it could be read as pointing to the motivations of those talking most in the public domain. Are they really driven with genuine, nation building concerns or are they driven by the need for self-

interest such as money? The painter seems to suggest exactly that – those talking most, or those making the loudest noise are paid agents. Money in the painting on the right (see below), and money in the painting on the left speak to relatable themes – of secession.



Image XXVIII: Paintings L-R: Painting exhibited in 2011 and 2012 (at Kulan Hotel, and Maan Soor Hotel); R: Painting exhibited at Maan Soor Hotel 2014. Photo Credit: Noor Al-Huda Banfas.

We can argue that the painting on the left points to the oneness of Somalia, visible through this one man, who is being split into two halves – but for blood money intentions. The painter seeks to signal that this entire process of dividing Somalia has been costly in terms of lives lost, signalled by the blood and the beneficiary are only exchanging money for individual benefit. And selfishness and greed also emerge from the paintings on right. The painters seek to show the division of Somalia is a process driven not by utopian visions of nationalism, but by money exchanging hands mostly for selfish ends. The smartly dressed hands, could be read as politicians or foreign interests. It is possible that the artist intended to ridicule the motivations behind any secessionist projects. Whatever the interpretation of the constituent parts of the painting could mean, the bottom line is that the grotesque appeal of the painting is opposed to the campaign for secession or division of the Somalia Republic.

Conclusion

Two related concepts drove the narrative and analytical focus of this chapter: “everyday forms of resistance,” and “counterpublics.” The notion of counterpublics is inspired by Nancy Fraser’s work on “counterpublics” as arenas of alternative discourse against the

main discourse. After Fraser (1990), Warner has noted that, “when public discourse is understood only as ‘a single, comprehensive, overarching public,’ members of subordinate groups have no arenas for deliberation among themselves about their needs, objectives and strategies” (Warner, 2002: 118). They thereby “found it advantageous to constitute alternative publics” (ibid). These alternative publics, also called subaltern publics are “parallel discursive arenas where members of the subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter discourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs” (ibid).

The idea of “oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs,” speaks closely to what I have explored above in the everyday spaces, which may seek not to necessarily oppose the official public discourse, but *reformulate* the official discourse or entirely come up with new ones. My contention is that unofficially sponsored popular culture could be read as a counterpublic, as an arena of alternative discourse. Additionally, the notion of counterpublics also brings the question of method in the crafting of a counter discourse: Warner has noted that because of the “friction against the dominant publics,” it has the tendency of forcing “the poetic-expressive character of the counterpublic discourse to become salient on consciousness” (2002: 120). As we have seen, artistes have often crafted their message in ways that are subtle and sometimes could be missed by the power. In this context, they can avoid reproach from power, so Hadraawi would claim to remain one Hadraawi, while the painters would use very complex imagery to drive their concerns across. Acknowledging this friction and the ever-present repercussions of seeking to disagree with the overarching hegemonic public, Kapteijns (2013) writing about artistes who used their craft to counter the excesses of Mohamed Siyad Barre regime in Somalia, recognises them for “speaking the unspeakable,” which they found in poetry and music (2013: 22). Therefore, it is important to recognise that individually-sponsored popular culture as a counterpublic is often artistically rendered, in part, for the fear of retribution from officialdom.

The other related concept, which closely relates with counterpublics, borrows from debates in agrarian studies in modern history where the peasants resist the expansion of capital, which often sought to extract their labour, rent, taxes and interest (Scott, 1986; Isaacman, 1990; Davidson, 1974). I am tempted to adopt this way of thinking and narrating everyday practices and artistic expressions in Somaliland not to suggest that

ordinary people are *essentially* bent on resisting the cause for Somaliland independence as imagined from officialdom. Instead, my intention is to underscore a mode of participation of ordinary people in the face of an overarching, single and dominant narrative/power. The conceptual and epistemological thrust of debates on peasant resistance illuminate the form, intention, and aesthetics of participation of the ordinary people.

Two caveats are in order here: Firstly, Somaliland is not an agrarian society, and this project was not interested in political economy/agrarian studies of resistance in Somaliland. My interest in these debates is the insight they provide for an appreciation of subtle and escapist forms of articulation (more accurately, social cultural negotiation in a seemingly totalitarian order) such as silence, evasive speech rumour.¹⁷⁶ Secondly, I do not intend to follow a schema of narrating the nation from the periphery or locating culture on the margins of society. Instead, my focus is on a power relation where the everyday people have to correspond, engage and talk back in a context of domination. Sometimes, however, this talking back simply complements the speech from the official channels.

This chapter sought to bring to focus the different ways in which ordinary people construct their sense of Somalilandness, their aspirations, and identity. Borrowing from the conceptual thrust of counterpublics and everyday forms of resistance in agrarian studies, this chapter focused on music, and poetry (and biographies of celebrity poets) of the everyday people and paintings. The picture that emerges is that the ordinary people continue to quietly, subtly, informally refashion their sense of identity and belonging in their country. In the chapter on officially sponsored popular culture, I considered the ways in which public identity and history in Hargeysa has been pre-determined through specific tropes, which have actually attained hegemonic power. Among the commonest refrains, officially sponsored popular culture is focused on seceding from Somalia, is also premised on foiling Somalia-Mogadishu as a permanent interlocutor. It also portrays a specific understanding of Islam, which is also discursively and institutionally enforced. However, in this chapter, whilst some of the

¹⁷⁶ See for example, Jama Mohamed writing about “rumour”—as a weapon of the weak—about the locust-baits in 1945 drove popular nationalism in colonial Somaliland, 2002: 189-92.

individually sponsored popular culture also compliments the hegemonic ideations, other actors seek to challenge the ideals of officially sponsored popular culture. With the exception of poet Abdulmalik Coldon who is openly opposed to the idea of Somaliland secession, both forms (the officially sponsored and unofficially sponsored popular culture) tend to strategically silence claims for tradition or culture. Even in Sahra Halgan and her Hiddo Dhawr, tradition is but an appendage to the modernist or internationalist language that is advocated as basis for their identity and nationalist sentiment.

Chapter Nine

THE QURBAJOOG: DIASPORAS AND SOMALILAND PUBLIC IDENTITY

On 22 July 2015, hundreds of young men who claimed were of the right marriage age but were still single—forced by circumstances beyond their control—staged a protest in Hargeysa over the high cost of marriage. The unaffordable cost of marriage, they claimed was inflated by their compatriots, the Qurbajoog who lived abroad, but constantly returned home to find brides. Protesting inside and around Mansoor Hotel, Hargeysa's poshest and most renowned hotel, patronised mostly by expatriates and diaspora returnees, these young men carried placards reading "I am still single." Many of these young homebred men noted that the girls and their parents preferred diaspora men over them because of the money. With the cost of marriage estimated between \$15,000-\$20,000, a price tag, which they claimed was "diaspora-inflated," the story was that this was beyond just marriage, but rather life and death. The narrative goes that these expensive marriages had become one of the reasons young men were dying at the high seas crossing the Mediterranean into Europe and North America so as to go and return as diaspora with money for a bride.¹⁷⁷ Abdulrazak Hersi, a young filmmaker and actor who had lost two lovers to diaspora returnee told me of a common joke that when "a parent's eyes turn green," that is, with a reflection of dollar bills in their eyeballs, be sure to lose your lover.¹⁷⁸

The protestors at Mansoor Hotel also found issue with the items that brides expected to find in the homes of the grooms where standards had been inflated by their diaspora compatriots. The quality and amount of furniture, kitchenware, cutlery and other amenities expected were claimed as unaffordable to local boys especially because the diaspora returnees have set an exorbitant standard. Finding less had become stigmatised, and a hinderance to boys choosing marriage. It is important to note early enough that these marriage-related accusations and contestations are made in a context

¹⁷⁷ Nimco-ilhan (2015, 2016) has written about *Tahrib*, the dangerous journeys where many young Somalis were dying at sea to cross to Europe, and noted that the behaviour and appearances of the diaspora returnees is one reason for the surge in numbers of young men risking their lives on the high waters (2016: 35-6).

¹⁷⁸ Conversation with Abdulrazak Hersi, 20 September 2015, Hargeysa.

where [early] marriage is a highly cherished idea, and is central to the Islamic tradition or a society seeking to cultivate a Muslim national psyche and consciousness. Indeed, as explored in Chapter Six, sex outside marriage, which is termed as *zinna* in Arabic, is highly discouraged and closely policed. Discussing the marriage protests weeks later, the commonly repeated refrain was, “if you make marriage expensive, zinna becomes cheap.” Normally, men in Somali and Somaliland marry in their early 20s. Beyond 25 years of age, one enters the bracket of late marriage and becomes subject for finger pointing and mild social stigma.

It is worth noting here that the push and pull in the marriage market does not consider the agency of the women being taken as brides. Local male protestors protesting the Qurbajoog suitors appear to treat women as artefacts without agency simply available to the highest bidder. It does not matter whether the girls themselves prefer the wealthier returnee or not. Regrettably—perhaps because of the performative nature of the research design where any investigation tended to follow performance—this project did not investigate the sensibilities of the brides being “grabbed” in respect of the local male protestors. Neither did it look into the dynamics of the female diaspora returnees finding husbands in Hargeisa whether they also met same privileges as the protestors claimed about the male returnees contesting in the marriage market.

During the protests, diasporas were also accused of being behind the astronomical hikes in prices of rent, food and other items sold in the markets and political campaigns (see also, Abdile and Pirkkalainen, 2011) since they had more money to throw about. Related to having the green dollars, the Qurbajoog also outcompeted their homeland Somalis in the social scene as they are often more smartly dressed, plumper and better looking, signalling to their good feeding abroad. They also hold fancier electronic gadgets such as phones, cameras and laptops, and can afford to patronise any restaurants in town for extended periods. Many female diaspora returnees wear clothes that are fancier, and with more expensive makeup. This is despite the fact that some of these fashions are largely abhorred by the local community as “un-Somali,” and “un-Islamic” since they are deemed inconsistent with the imagined Islamic ethos for women in the public domain. A typical female diaspora returnee, despite an effort to cover their entire bodies, the garments are rarely capacious enough to fitting local standards. They often “abuse” the head covering by revealing sections of their hair, and not

covering their entire bosoms.¹⁷⁹ The men on the other hand will be seen strutting around in tight fitting or baggy jeans, trunks, designer T-shirts, and a bit of gold-shining necklaces and bangles. It was also claimed in some circles that majority of these diaspora returnees have a lukewarm attitude towards prayer and general Islamic behaviour, which is interpreted as a form of corruption, and in extreme cases, un-Somali-ness.

Diasporas speak an easily recognisable brand of Somali, which is deprived of the local taste for which they are recognised and profiled. At the same time, the Qurbajoog speak better English (a much more privileged language especially when it comes to work with the better-paying NGOs), and can, with relative ease, move from one linguistic sphere to another—with some being able to speak Arabic, Italian and English in addition to their native, Somali. With their homebred compatriots, the Qolqoljoog feeling unfairly marginalised, they sought for government to come and remedy these anomalies by enacting laws to limit the price of marriage including wedding and *Mahr* (the religiously mandatory gift for the bride). Despite being forced into exile by life-threatening conditions, it seemed exile had turned out as a blessing for their kindred which they were using to disadvantage them at the same time.



Image XXIX: A montage of selected of diaspora returnee fashions styles: These are unusual Hargeysa n dress styles. The woman on the right would be considered very radical in her fashion. Credit: Author: 11 August 2015.

¹⁷⁹ Semi-structured group discussion, Abdirahman Warsame, Weris Ducale, Adnan Hagoog, Rooble Mohamad and Sara Hajji, 16 September 2015, Cup of Art: Italian Coffeehouse, Hargeysa. This conversation was in English as this group composed of diasporas from Canada, the UK and elite local Hargeisans.

During summer when diaspora return to Somaliland for holiday, most of the high-end restaurants—including Summer Time, 4 Seasons, and Cup of Art, Royal Lounge—are “colonised” by the diaspora returnees to the extent that the almost all local patrons retreat to less cosy places.¹⁸⁰ However, such retreat does not happen innocently. Often, it proliferates into rumour, gossip and speculation about diaspora returnees, their social behaviours and about the places they patronise (see also, Nadifa Mohamed, 2015).¹⁸¹ This ends up sparking off an entirely new conversation about diasporaness and Somali identity with questions about moral and cultural authenticity on the one hand, and corruption on the other defining the terms of the debate. Since claims of drug abuse, and improper sexual conduct are made about the returnees, the process often prompts government to tighten security and mounts innumerable roadblocks and occupants are often rigorously searched. Ideally, not just to check crime, but also to enforce acceptable standards of identity and behaviour in Somaliland.

There are three things we learn from these protests, and which I want to bear on the broader arguments of this chapter and overall dissertation: (a) the diaspora returnee or the Qurbajoog is not just a loved and loathed group of people, but one that has carved for itself a unique status and are identifiable and should be studied as such—with power to influence discourse and events in the homeland. (b) We are pointed to the presence of diaspora-homebred cultural social wrangling with not just potential for conflictual relations, but also for destabilising already established power relations, sentiments and identities. (c) These contestations and negotiations play out in the performative realm. The question about the returnees is not over the nature of their kin relations, but rather, their performative practices, also, diasporic practices, which have been learned and are

¹⁸⁰ *ibid.* Sara Hajji, who is the proprietor of Cup of Art used the term “colonized” in the sentence above.

¹⁸¹ In an article published in *The Guardian*, novelist Nadifa Mohamed outlines how rumor and gossip about the diaspora returnees has proliferated in Hargeysa. Nadifa narrates that although the foreign “nationalities of those blamed change regularly, but the persistent refrain is “those” people are bringing their “foreign” ways to a country that the year-round residents are trying to keep pure and authentically Somali. At night, checkpoints at regular distances throughout Hargeysa maintain surveillance on diaspora youths and enforce cultural norms.” See “Somalis Returning to the Motherland are Finding their Foreign Ways out of Favour,” available at <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/sep/11/diaspora-somaliland-Hargeysa>, accessed on 15 October 2015. Earlier, Clifford (1994) warned us about the possibility of ambivalence and potential violence when demands for authenticity or original identity are pursued.

reproduced. These directly implicate the performance and crafting of nationalist sentiments and identities about being a Somalilander—different from Somalia.

Thus, this chapter focuses on two things: First, the salience and discourses on the category, “diaspora returnee” in socio-political milieu in Hargeysa. My contention is that an ethnography of ‘diasporic practices’ in Hargeysa provides us with evidence and space to think about and theorise the ‘diaspora returnee’ as an analytical category in identity making, diaspora and migration studies. Secondly this chapter also demonstrates that through the performative, every-day and repeated ideations, the diaspora returnees complicate the making of national identity and nationalist sentiments in Somaliland after 1991. First, the diaspora returnees actually destabilise the pre-defined Islamic-inspired public identity mobilised in Hargeysa. And secondly, as I will demonstrate with the example of the Hargeysa Cultural Centre (HCC), which organises both the annual Hargeysa International Book Fair (HIBF) in Hargeysa, and the Somali Cultural Festival in London, the returnees actually add an own version, a layer, of what Somaliland ought to be identified as. In this example, I critically interrogate, side-by-side, the implications of a decision to organise a *cultural* event in London, and a *literary/book* event in Hargeysa —by returnee activists whose organisations are deeply steeped in the campaign for Somaliland independence and international recognition.

Diasporic Practices

Focusing on *performative practices* of the returnees [repeated practices in fashion, nature of speech, worship, entertainment, socialisation, cuisine, etcetera] enable us to observe “a set of discursive practices, which are performed, constructed and imagined” (Kleist and Hansen, 2005: 5, see also Werbner, 2002). Feminist researchers have problematized the use of “diaspora” as a “totalizing identity” for its tendency “to homogenize diasporic groups and neglect internal power differences and struggles” seeking to use the concept more as a verb *diasporise* and adjective *diasporic*, and less as a noun (Kleist and Hansen, *ibid*). By focusing on performative practices of returnees, one of this study’s claims is that performance and performative practices make the diasporas visible in their distinct and varied nature on the social political milieu—and thus observable as consequential.

Against a recent history of violence (especially between 1983-1996), and a rise of stricter notions of Islamic behaviour pitched as a quest for autochthony and

authenticity, and a socially “organically” identifying town (which I explored in Chapter Six as “Organic Hargeysa ”), a complex rift between the returnees, the Qurbajoog, and their homebred compatriots, Qolqoljoog, is fast emerging and continues to filter into the institutional and identity development of Hargeysa, and Somaliland more generally. As evident from the marriage protests, and with returnees’ behaviour viewed not just as hostile but also as “un-Somali,” “anti-cultural” and sometimes “un-Islamic,” Hargeysa presents us with a complex case of diaspora-home cultural wrangling, which is often less focused in diaspora and African studies.

My contention derived from fieldwork is that three factors combine and make the ‘diaspora returnee’ a visible and contentious category. Specific to Somaliland [or any other countries with similar conditions], these include: (a) Time, that is, the duration diaspora persons spend away from the homeland, which has tended to be Europe and North America, before conditions at home enabled return. (b) The social-cultural distance between diaspora host countries and the homeland (place of return). The cultural distance or difference between these two countries tends to have individuals radically and diametrically different from each other when they meet at home, despite being of the same kindred relations. Often, with returnees having lived in Europe and North America, the stereotypical west, they tend to be culturally associated in ways that have tended to be different from their homebred compatriots. (c) Performed numerical strength of returnees against the homebred population. This is the number of people identified and categorised as diasporas who are returning home. The bigger the number of returnees against the homeland population, the more visible as a category. [I will explore these three factors more empirically along the way].

There is an understudied trajectory in diaspora studies from which this chapter springs and seeks to make visible (important, but less integral to the broader ambitions of the entire dissertation). This is the question of the African *diaspora returnee*. The scholarship on African diaspora has often focused on the historical roots, nature and experience of the diaspora away from the continent (Clifford, 1994; Jallow and Maizlish (eds.), 1996; Akyeampong, 2000; Bradbury, 2008) highlighting the conditions that prompt their departures, and the often trouble-ridden journeys/routes away from plight or search for opportunities (Farah, 2000; Nadifa Mohamed, 2010). There is

plenty of work on the connection between the diaspora and their homelands especially in the arena of development, peacebuilding and technology transfer (Hammond et al., 2011; Mohan and Zack-Williams, 2002, Höhne, 2010). But the cultural-political implications of diaspora *returning home to stay*—not simply visiting or just sending cash, technological transfer—is often ignored in the scholarship.

Why do the Qurbajoog in Somaliland remain a visible category in the political-social negotiation in Somaliland (Mahdi and Pirkkalainen, 2011; Nimo-Ilhan Ali, 2015)? When does a “diaspora returnee” become a constituent ordinary member of the original homeland after return? Despite their obvious theoretical urgency, these questions simply offer background to the broader concerns of this chapter.

In Hargeysa, the Somali language word for diaspora is *Qurbajoog*, which literary means, ‘living abroad,’ but is often translated as diaspora (Hammond et.al, 2011; Nimco-Ilhan, 2015; Abdile and Pirkkalainen, 2011).¹⁸² It is the same word for both diaspora living abroad and those that have returned home to stay—as long as they exhibit certain *diasporic* traits. In reference to ‘diaspora at home,’ the term does not discriminate between long-staying visitors and permanent returnees, as long as traits of ‘diasporaness’ remains visible. In the words of Pnina Werbner (2002), diasporaness is “sentimental *performances*” (2002: 125, emphasis in original), which is either performances that are exhibited out of love or out of association. In other words, these performances are involuntary for they become, some sort of *a priori*. In other cases, the word ‘Qurbajoog’ has been said to carry pejorative connotation—when it comes to notions of “authenticity” in Somali-ness – a condition where one is labelled Qurbajoog to underscore the fact that they are not authentically Somali (see for example, Abdile and Pirkkalainen, 2011). In other cases, it is a marker of superiority from the ignorance and “inexperience” or “lack of world-exposure” and resources that is associated with being non-diaspora, the *Qolqoljoog*.¹⁸³ On this, Kleist (2010) has noted that it also

¹⁸² I do not intend to problematize the translation as being mindless of the historical and epistemological roots of the term. However, mindful of this limitation, I want to move from its translation and instead focus on the usage of Qurbajoog by providing an explanation for its persistence of the term. Later in the chapter, going via Safran (1991) I define the diaspora as any group with a set of performative traits. My contention is that even if it were to be translated as “returnees,” it would pose the same conceptual question: When do they cease being returnees?

¹⁸³ Semi-structured conversations, 15 September 2015, Cup of Art: Italian Coffeehouse, Hargeysa. The venue Cup of Art was key in this chapter as many diaspora returnees often congregated here for coffee and teas. With the proprietors, Sara and Kamal Hajji, a recent returnee from the UK, the coffeehouse

signals ‘access to resources as well as exposure to western culture’ (2010: 189). Indeed, as the marriage protests showed, resources are part of this contention.

Controversially, many respondents argued that the word does not include Somalis living in the Middle East, or on the African continent.¹⁸⁴ As I will demonstrate later, diasporas returning from Africa and the Middle East did not have the exclusive privileges and exhibited no distinct performative practices as their counterparts from Europe and North America. This is especially so because of their social-cultural distance with their homebred compatriots is significantly small. Thus, the term is used with more specific reference to Somalis living and returning from Europe, North America, and Australia.¹⁸⁵

Becoming a Somali Diaspora: A Historical Overview

It was after the outbreak of the Somali civil war in 1988 that huge numbers of people dispersed from Somalia moving mostly as refugees and spreading across the world (Issa-Salwe, 1996: 99; Lindley, 2006: 3; Hammond, 2014). When rebel movements emerged in Somalia to fight the regime of Mohamed Siyad Barre, the government clamped down hard on them (Issa-Salwe, *ibid*). The most serious of the anti-Barre rebel groups was the Somali National Movement (SNM) with bases in Ethiopia. However, on 6 April 1988, Ethiopia and Somalia signed an agreement to stop funding rebel groups on either side (*ibid*). The SNM, which constituted mostly Isaaq clan members (the biggest clan family in Somaliland) was prompted to move into Somaliland for territory and bases. It thus seized the town of Burco and taking almost all of Hargeysa (*ibid*) later in 1988. Government responded with all its might turning its entire firepower onto the civilian populations believed to be hosting and hiding the rebels (Issa-Salwe, 1996; H. Adam, 2008: 91). It ended in the deaths of more than 50,000 people; 400,000 refugees fleeing to Ethiopia, 40,000 to Djibouti, and several other in the countryside or Mogadishu (Bradbury, 1997; H. Adam, 2008: 91). With the fierce

had a certain “western” appeal for returnees. One could say, “elite” Hargeysa ns also often met here for coffee and talk.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*.

¹⁸⁵ There was a lot of disagreement while we discussed the term with some of my respondents over whether the term included reference to Somalis returning from or living in the Middle East and Asia. However, it was *generally* agreeable to all my respondents that Somalis in East Africa or Ethiopia could not be considered as Qurbajoog (see also, Kleist (a), 2008: 1132-1132; also, Abdile and Pirkkalainen, 2011: 52). But as I will be showing later, my central premise is that the term is mobilized around notions of performance not host-country considerations necessarily.

fighting in Mogadishu throughout 1989-1991 when Siyad Barre was overthrown, violence caused more death and displacement. More people fled the country. For Somaliland, the incidents of May 1988 remain the most brutal in their history, causing the highest amount of death and displacement. These refugees have transformed into diasporas over the years.¹⁸⁶

We need to note however that the violence-related migrations were not the first migrations in Somalia. Anna Lindley (2006) writes about the earlier mass movements of people from Somalia into the especially the Gulf states that she dates from 1973. This was a time of an oil production boom in the gulf countries and casual labour was in high demand. Lindley narrates that starting this time, “many people went to work in the booming economies of the Gulf States as construction labourers, drivers, house cleaners, maids, guards, and some worked in skilled occupations as carpenters, cooks, electricians, masons, and heavy truck and machinery drivers” (2006: 3). We note here that the first mass movements from Somalia were economic migrants into the Gulf, where people went for jobs with a higher pay, but also to reclaim their economic lives that had been shattered by the famine of 1974 (*ibid*). These, too, became a diaspora.

By 1987, Lindley notes that, “it was estimated that there were 375,000 Somali migrant workers abroad, mainly in the Gulf (2006: 4).¹⁸⁷ With the war in Somalia, even more people moved into the Gulf States in the 1990s and onwards. Studies estimate that over one million people were displaced by the violence in Somalia. Against a context of violence and mass movement, between 1-1.5 million Somalis were estimated as living in the diaspora by 2011 (Hammond, 2011: 1). This makes the diaspora a major constituency in Somali life especially in the process of reconstruction – and any negotiations afterwards. These figures are silent on who is where, the Somalis in Europe, North America or Africa and the Middle East. This could be attributed to the fact the fact that Somali diasporas are always moving and switching places [see, for

¹⁸⁶ The process through which refugees become diaspora has often been taken for granted, but does need more extensive study. In the course of my study, I have not found any conceptualization of the process. Later in this chapter, I attempt a brief theorization of the of the process through which refugees became a diaspora, and not immigrants who later naturalized as is common with the Americas as a land of immigrants.

¹⁸⁷ Anna Lindley continues that, “as the labour market in the oil producing countries tightened in the 1990s, many people were forced to move on, to Europe, or back to Somalia” (*ibid*) but very few people moved back to Somalia as conditions had actually worsened.

example, Cindy Horst (2005) who labels them as “transnational nomads”].

Indeed, any Somali study after 1991 would be incomplete without integrating the story of the diaspora community interacting with the homeland. As one commentator put it, the *Qurbajoog* is becoming the seventh clan in Somalia.¹⁸⁸ For example, Bradbury (2008) has noted that the 1991 Grand Conference of the Northern Peoples, which ended in the call for secession from the Somali Republic, had been sponsored by diaspora and business people (2008: 80).¹⁸⁹ Plenty of scholarship has also noted that the diaspora, in different ways, remains an important constituency in the daily life of Somalia and Somaliland (see for example, Lilius ed., 1998; Abdile and Pirkkalainen, 2011, Hammond et al., 2011; Lindley, 2006). In Somaliland, it is indicated in national figures (which are often estimates) that out of the population of 3.5 million people, 15% of them live in the diaspora.¹⁹⁰ Indeed, from issues such as peace and conflict resolution, constitutionalism, democracy, religion, trade, fashion and lifestyle, the diaspora community remains an active and powerful constituency.¹⁹¹

Diasporization

Defining the diaspora, William Safran (1991) noted that the diaspora was that community *forced* from its original homeland to another place. Contrary to the groundbreaking work of Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002) critical of methodological nationalism and borders, here, borders of both political and cultural nature are important in the sense that to be diaspora is to be away from a homeland defined by a border, and a political unit (Clifford, 1994; Zeleza, 2009).¹⁹² The proliferation of works in the field of diaspora studies in the 1990s brought a great deal of conflicting scholarship on the implications of the term, diaspora (Kleist and Hansen, 2005: 4). But there was shared

¹⁸⁸ Semi-structured conversations, 15 September 2015, Cup of Art: Italian Coffeehouse, Hargeysa.

¹⁸⁹ The Somali National Movement (SNM) – the main protagonist in new Somaliland – itself was formed by exiles in London and Saudi Arabia who came together to challenge the regime. Over the years, the diaspora has been involved in the peace process – financing and negotiation – in Somaliland (Hammond, et al., 20011; Abdile and Pirkkalainen, 2011). Stories abound of diaspora returnees taking jobs in parliament when they return home – not because of their political experience, but because of their money and superior education. Over 30 per cent of the members of the Somaliland Parliament are from the diaspora returnees (Ahmed Ali, 2015 [unpublished MA dissertation]). Members of the diaspora hold many government ministries.

¹⁹⁰ Somaliland Statistical Handbook, 2010.

¹⁹¹ Op. cit.

¹⁹² Many related terms emerge in the course of this examination: exile, displaced persons, illegal immigrants or even refugees. Paul Zeleza (2009) has noted that, “the relationship between dispersal and diasporization is complicated (5).” Without deeper exegesis, I want to suggest that my usage of diaspora presupposes a later forming of all those terms put together.

understanding that diaspora involved “dispersion from an existing or imaginary centre or homeland” (ibid; see also, Zeleza, 2010: 5; Werbner, 2002: 121). In a sense, diasporic communities remained implicated in the material and ideological formations of their homeland (Zeleza, ibid; Werbner, 2002: 120). Safran has written that diaspora:

... 2) they retain a collective memory, vision or myth about their homeland – its physical location, history, and achievements; 3) they believe that they are not – and perhaps cannot be – fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it; 4) they regard their ancestral homeland as their true, ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendants would (or should) eventually return – when conditions are appropriate; 5) they believe that they should, collectively, be committed to the maintenance and restoration of their original homeland in one way or another, and their ethno-communal consciousness and solidarity are defined by the existence of such a relationship (Safran, 1991: 83-4).

As Safran has noted, becoming a diaspora is never a deliberate choice, it involves forceful expulsion from one’s original home (Safran, 85), a process that underscores the existence of often life-threatening forces at home at a specific moment in history. Although a number of Somali nationals lived across the Middle East, the United Kingdom and the United States for long (for example, as the existence of the Anglo-Somali Society formed in 1962 demonstrates, with a periodical, *Journal of the Anglo-Somali Society*), the largest number of Somali immigrants into Europe and the United States were escaping civil war and famine in 1970-1990 Somalia (Bradbury, 2008; Lindley, 2006; Halane, 2001, Maimbo, ed. 2006, Kleist, 2008). Despite declaration of independence from Somaliland in 1991, the guns did not go silent forthwith. There were more episodes of violence pushing more people out of the country (Balthasar, 2013; Renders, 2015). Since war does not stop when the guns go silent, even with relative calm, but with war-related challenges still abundant including unemployment and a broken infrastructure, more are still emigrating to Europe and the United States to this day.

It is in the spaces where Somalis landed as refugees that they became diasporised. The process of diasporisation in the context of Somalia and Somaliland needs a little demonstration: In the spring of 1997, the *Journal of the Anglo-Somali Society* wrote a story about a Somali woman who together with her children had escaped Mogadishu to the United Kingdom. The journal wrote that:

They left Mogadishu with nothing except the clothes they were wearing. One of her children had a heart problem, which was successfully remedied... Her children are very anglicized; they do not know anything about the country of their birth except what she tells them. She is trying very hard to retain their interest in, and sense of belonging to, Somaliland. Their first language is by now English (Spring 1997).

As the excerpt above shows, the process of diasporization was inevitable. The lives of the refugees were both remedied, in the sense that with better facilities—medical, academic, employment—in the host countries, but also *culturally transformed*. These transformations, as the excerpt above shows, were not voluntary, but inevitable.¹⁹³ It is also worth noting that many Somalis failed to accept their host countries as their new homes, as host countries also failed to accept them (Lilius, ed., 2001; Farah, 2000).¹⁹⁴ Indeed, they have maintained close connections with the homeland gleaned from the endless stream of remittances and cultural nostalgia (Hammond, 2011; Hopkins, 2004).¹⁹⁵ From the excerpt above, we note that diasporization came more natural to children of refugees and other people who moved when still young. This is because the new host community easily assimilates children than does with adults as they are quickly enrolled in schools learning the language and other mannerisms of the host community.

¹⁹³ This was in spite of the fact that some European countries would not allow foreigners to assimilate. See for example, Safran (1991) on Germany society, which he says traditionally defined “organically” rather than “functionally,” with citizenship that often tended to be based on decent rather than birth (or long residence) (1991: 86).” Visitors were often reminded of their foreignness—notwithstanding the period they had stayed, and the many generations of offspring—in the sense that they would have to go back to their original homelands at some point.

¹⁹⁴ Several essays in this volume demonstrate how the Somali diaspora is still struggling to call home their host countries. This is for reasons that are either rooted in the nature of the host community or the Somalis themselves. On the host country see for example, Fadumo Warsame Halane, “Somalis in Sweden: Forty Years of Ups and Downs,” pp382-386; also, Abdi M. Kusow, “Stigma and Social Identity: The Process of Identity Work among Somali Immigrants in Canada,” pp318-365). On the other hand, Somalis themselves continue to refuse to change their ways to those of the host society, see for example, Hamdi Mohamed, “Dislocating Culture: Traditional Practices, Identity and Somali Refugee Women in Canada,” pp294-308.

¹⁹⁵ Gail Hopkins, “Exceptional Circumstances: Somali Women in London and Toronto” in *Journal of the Anglo-Somali Society*, Spring, 2004, issue, 35. In the course of fieldwork, I learned of a mother who had lived both in the UAE and UK but refused to learn neither Arabic nor English language, and constantly waited for the day to return home. Later in Hargeysa after they returned, refusing to learn the ways of the host countries would become a contested issue with her children as they believed their mother did not understand their “westernized” (which they took for modern) lives. It was cause for disagreement almost on each and every issue.

With political conditions in Somalia improving—especially in Somaliland—many are returning home to get involved in re-building their homeland (see also, Abokor et al, 2005; Kleist, 2007; Mohamed, 2015). Diaspora participation in life at home (economic and political) remains a welcome and many times a sought-after affair.¹⁹⁶ However, the cultural-social implications of these returnees is viewed with disdain and is contested. As Warsi Ducale, a Toronto-born female diaspora returnee from Canada would tell me over lunch at the Turkish Restaurant in Shacab area, “they love our money, but they would rather we did not come back. We do not look like them; our fashion, language, we are really different.” Echoing the marriage protests at the beginning of this chapter, Ducale signalled to the push and pull between these two groups, despite being closely knit through kin relations (family and blood), involuntarily, performatively, differed from each other with one group having been diasporised.

It is here that I stage my departure noting that the category “diaspora returnees” or “returnees” is less studied in the literature on diaspora especially after they return home. As I noted earlier, there is a great deal of emphasis on the diaspora and the connections they have with the original homelands, and the technology and skills transfer (Kleist, 2008a; 2008b; Zeleza, 2009). This conversation is often marked with references to brain drain turning into brain gain and brain circulation when the diaspora become returnees (Kleist, 2008a: 99; Mohan and Zack-Williams, 2002: 224-7). Scholarship is minimally focused on the cultural-social implication of returning to a homeland (see for example, Abdile and Pirkkalainen, 2011).

My contention is that we tend to think that once diaspora return home, their “diasporic identity” disappears. They are assimilated into the original homeland and become “naturalised” members of their original homeland. The understanding that the world is divided into classes mediated by access to resources fuels the assumption in the sense that people are defined through class, and not culture or something else (Zeleza, 2009: 15). As soon as they returned home, they would find their class and seamlessly fit in. There is a problem with this kind of reading since these returnees, just as are seen in

¹⁹⁶ Somaliland annually organizes a diaspora welcome party with the idea of encouraging more Somalis to return home and get involved in the rebirth of the country. In 2014, Government established an association to help diaspora returnees interested in investing in the country.

the host communities as “retaining a vulgarised ethnic culture (Safran, 1991: 93),” when they exhibit a westernised identity when they return home after a long period, which would have radically reordered them—performatively, culturally. Part of my contention is that the problem arises from the disciplines through which we study diaspora communities, and their contribution to the original homelands. An anthropological and cultural studies approach focused on the space of return, the original homeland, would guide us into reading the dynamics and social-cultural implications of return.

Returning

During summer in the United States and Europe that is between July and September, many Somalis diaspora return home for different reasons. Some come to spend time with family and relatives who have kept the family home and piece of land.¹⁹⁷ Children are sent to connect with their “roots,” as much older folks return to reminisce over the old times.¹⁹⁸ Many end up staying the entire time, which is often about three months. Some actually end up staying permanently especially after landing themselves new jobs or starting small businesses. While the Qurbajoog are in Hargeysa, several western cultural social practices and privileges on display throughout the town.

In Hargeysa, the rendezvous begins with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which organises the “diaspora welcome party,” a kind of get-together exclusive for returnees. To receive an invitation card, one has to present their “diaspora passports” to the Ministry and is served with an invite. Or you can simply show up at the entrance of the venue with your foreign passport. In 2015, it was organized in Guleid Hotel on 29 July. Speeches and entertainment are meant to display progress made in the country with a vision of encouraging investment at home. The get-together is meant to encourage more and more diaspora to return home and invest and also get involved in the process of rehabilitating the country. It is also meant to encourage the diaspora to love their country and their heritage. In addition to speeches, there is a great deal of entertainment

¹⁹⁷ Semi-structured group discussion, 16 September 2015, Cup of Art: Italian Coffeehouse, Hargeysa. This conversation was in English as these group composed of diasporas from Canada, the UK and elite local Hargeysa ns.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

and feasting paid for by the state of Somaliland. The best Somaliland musicians are hired to perform for these beloved diaspora persons. This function, which is open to only foreign passport holding Somalis is closed to non-foreign passport holding Somalis. This function not only elevates the position of the diaspora, but also makes them admirable for the special treatment they receive from government. Being diaspora then becomes, not just an exclusive club, but also an admirable identity, which allows one access to particular venues and occasions. This marks the beginning of the construction of Qurbajoog not just as a unique category, but as a popular culture item. Delegations of diaspora returnees have almost unlimited access to the top political establishment including the President and have often held well-publicised talks with the president on the political and economic future of the country.

Besides their state-enabled privileges, diaspora returnees also have power to act differently, imagine Somaliland differently with some degree of leverage. They do not only have these exclusive parties offered by the state, but they can also marry any women of their choosing as showed earlier. What follows is an example of a returnee project, which took the form a literary/book event and has come to define Hargeysa as the literary capital of East Africa. I write about my participation and presence in these festivals in Chapter Two on fieldwork and the methods. I return to it here to show both the power returnees have in influencing discourse, but also the push-and-pull relationships and contestations they have often found themselves in upon return to the homeland.

Xarunta Dhaqanka ee Hargeysa

The fourth day of the Hargeysa international book fair in August 2015 was a Thursday, which marks the end of the week. Friday is the first day of the weekend, and is dedicated to prayer and resting. On this Thursday, news broke that one of the guest participants from England, activist Jude Kelly had been profiled in one of the local newspapers, *Jamhuriya*—the most popular Somali language daily—highlighting her activism towards the rights of LGBTQ persons. Jude Kelly was director of the Southbank Centre in London, which also hosts and curates the Women of the World (WoW) Festivals. WOW drives an agenda to empower and promotion of women in different spaces and circumstances. Invited as part of the HIBF festivities, Jude Kelly was in Somaliland to promote women empowerment and rights alongside the celebration of books and

reading. Not gay and homosexuality rights. However, the news segment that Thursday afternoon focused on her LGBTQ activism, and media questioned the judgment of the organisers of the HIBF for inviting her to their event. Profilers seemed to ask: How would she manage to promote women empowerment and desist from being positive or simply smuggle into her speech favourable lines about homosexuality and lesbianism? Clearly, the organisers had been taken by surprise.

Once the news was reviewed on radio—and started gaining traction—the entire organising team was thrown into sheer pandemonium. As regards religion and sexuality, Somaliland is “a very sensitive place,” the director of HCC, Jamac Musse Jamac would tell me one time. It was feared that the vigilantes might mobilise and attack guests and organisers for disrespecting revered traditions—and “promoting homosexuality” in the country. Organisers quickly arranged to have Jude Kelly exit the country as soon as possibly could, and programmes started changing immediately. The usual music festival staged on the final day of the event was cancelled, and visitors from guest countries, Nigeria, Ghana and Kenya could not be hosted to dinner that evening. Also, exit plans were quickly arranged for all guests, and by Saturday, none was still in the country. I was one of the organisers, and had been in the country since February and lived amongst the communities. No exit plan was arranged for me.

On Thursday evening, security at HCC offices, which were in Bibsi Area had to be tightened. New and better armed security personnel were deployed. I recall going through extra layers of security checks that evening as I went for a scheduled historical movie watching. We started talking in whispers sharing news of latest developments on the matter. Director Jama Musse Jamac had to phone-call and visit all key religious leaders who would be preaching in their different mosques the following day not to stir up emotions by addressing the issues directly. He then booked and appeared on a show on Radio Hargeysa, the only station in the country, to explain and apologise for their failure of judgment, and promise not to fall short again. When I bumped into him in his office on Sunday after all guests had left, he was clearly exhausted but glad he had survived the moment.

Just like the diaspora returnee young men coming to the country, who, because of their privileged conditions are marrying all the beautiful girls in the land and inviting protests

unto themselves, the HCC inadvertently fell into the same loop. For its diasporic practices, which took the nature of a fascination with books and seeking to connect with the outside world, its signature event, HIBF risked protest and rejection by a single unintended action: inviting Jude Kelly. There are a couple of conclusions to make from this episode, but quickly, I will point out that the diaspora, again, found themselves in a love-hate relationship with their homebred kindred. While the homeland loved the book fair, they clearly hated some parts of it.

The Hargeysa International book fair is a major event on the cultural and political calendar of Somaliland. Hosted in Guleid Hotel in 2015, one with the biggest hall in Hargeysa, with capacity to sit over 5000 people, the HIBF is the only non-political event that attracts the biggest amount of people in the country. The town actually comes to a standstill in the week of the bookfair. The HIBF, the HCC, Redsea Cultural Foundation and Kayd Foundation are all the brain child of Somali diaspora returnee Jama Musse Jamac and his wife, Ayan Mohammad who both lived in Pisa in Italy. These two eminent Somalilanders—renowned campaigners for Somaliland independence from Somalia and its recognition—also annually organise the Somali Cultural festival in London. While the Hargeysa event is specific for Somaliland (although might attract other Somalis from other regions including Mogadishu), the London event is meant for *all* Somalis coming from the Horn and elsewhere. With the book fair coming before the cultural centre, 2008, it was celebration of its eighth year in 2015. The book fair had grown so big that it ended in the birth of the cultural centre which came in 2014. Because of its nature as a book fair, attracting journalists, writers and publishers from neighbouring countries, this event has played a major role in promoting Somaliland’s existence (and independence agenda) to the world.

Through its texture and performance, we are introduced to a literate and book-loving Hargeysa. That is, a Somaliland that respects and cherishes books, and through an “international” book fair, seeks communion with other international communities across the world that cherish books and knowledge. Throughout its life, the HIBF has both “a theme” and “a visiting country.”¹⁹⁹ Countries including Nigeria, Kenya, South

¹⁹⁹ field notes, August 2015. This researcher was a major participant in the HIBF 2015 where he both chaired and paneled debates.

Africa, and Ghana have been guests to the Hargeysa International Book Fair, with some of the most renowned authors in these guest countries making appearances. Renowned Nigerians authors including poet Niyi Osundare, novelist Okey Ndibe, and Chuma Nwokolo have participated in several editions of the HIBF.²⁰⁰ Upon return, novelist Okey Ndibe would write in a Nigerian newspaper how he had learned about Somaliland in the course of the book fair.²⁰¹ This sort of promotion and publicity is exactly what the book fair sought to achieve in the national quest for international recognition and independence.

In the course of the book fairs, which are often weeklong event, Somaliland has the opportunity to expose some of its finest authors and make linkages with others from the rest of the world. The HIBF is not just a fair where books are exhibited for literati skim and buy, it is, more accurately, a book gala with a day long programme filled with items including debates, speeches, poetry, musicals, dances and other artistic performances.²⁰² It has all the contours of a national event visible through the numbers of people it attracts, including those who neither can read nor write.

As a book fair, with all its “western” (or at least, un-Somaliland) epistemologies, it is likely that it is pointed more to the ambition of the general political state—international recognition—as opposed to promoting an internal sensibility of reading and buying books. Started in 2008, in a country recovering from civil war, with extremely low levels of literacy, it is arguable that the book fair sought to fit into the campaign for Somaliland recognition as a member of a group of other countries with a lively literary heritage. This is a new layer of identity making added by the mighty diaspora returnees.

As I argue later in the conclusion of this dissertation, the HIBF has not simply added a layer of sentiments, and identities, but also repackaged the ways in which officially sponsored popular culture such as monuments and national flags (discussed in Chapter Five) seek to construct and mobilise Somaliland nationalist sentiment: outside looking, but also with Somalia-Mogadishu as a permanent interlocutor. As a popular cultural

²⁰⁰ Ibid. Including several conversations with authors Niyi Osundare, Chuma Nwokolo and Okey Ndibe, 1-6 August 2015, Hargeysa.

²⁰¹ Okey Ndibe, What Somaliland Taught Me. Opinion Nigeria. 12 August 2015, available at: <https://opinionnigeria.com/what-somaliland-taught-me-by-okey-ndibe/>

²⁰² Ibid.

event, the cultural centre and the international book fair suggest a particular Somaliland with literary and cultural linkages with the world outside. It celebrates belonging to a nation of literati, thinkers, and book lovers, something that Somalia has failed to do.

But at the same time, this “international book fair” with all the trappings of internationalism, connects to the world of capitalism and commoditisation of reading. Indeed, nationalist sentiments and identities in this case, are plunged into a “liberal-rationalist dilemma” in imagining nationalism (Chatterjee, 1986). With debates over authenticity and cultural corruption being common in Hargeysa public identity, while linkages with the outside world are politically appreciated for announcing and marketing Somaliland to the world, they are also hated for their connection with the un-Islamic and corrupt western ideals. As the Jude Kelly case demonstrated, this dilemma is very common. While Somalilanders love the job that HIBF/HCC is doing in selling the country, they hate the fact that the same institution would host persons with “difficult” resumes such as Jude Kelly. Some of my responders actually noted that the cultural centre allots little significance to discussing Islam and preservation of Islamic literature and instead does more secular items. Against these seemingly contradictory responses, the HCC gives us insight into the dilemmas of nationalist mobilisation in a secessionist context, which not only involves a diaspora, but also heavily seeks endorsement from the international community, which would be socially-distant from the “original” sensibilities in the homeland.²⁰³

But while my intention here is to highlight the power and ways in which diaspora Somalilanders influence nationalist sentiments and identities in Somaliland, I will add another layer of analysis—reflecting on the broader aspirations of my dissertation—to demonstrate that events in Somaliland have tended to be mimetic to Somalia. In this specific example, the diaspora, while they destabilise and complicate sentiments and

²⁰³ The above reading of the Hargeysa Cultural Centre does not seek to discredit the center, for which I have a great deal of respect. As I demonstrate, its contribution to the promotion and preservation of culture and cultural production in Somaliland (and the region) is tremendous. In 2015, the center having been present only through the Hargeysa International Book Fair (HIBF) made the most inspiring move by establishing base in Somaliland where many Somalilanders, young and old have had the opportunity to engage in events of literary and cultural nature. My contention is that the center, however, provides us with an insightful entry into the politics of the time, and the performance of nationalism by diaspora [as uniqueness] in Somaliland. Suffice it to add, although intriguing, my reading might be entirely wrong.

identities inside the country demonstrate awareness of the need to juxtapose their practices against Somalia. To appreciate the deliberate and direct power of the HIBF—as mimetic of Somalia—one has to look at one other almost similar event, organised by the same institutions and persons, but with a different, more localised thematic agenda—a cultural festival—held in a “neutral” location, London. The Somali Week Festival (sometimes called, cultural festival) is annually held in celebration of *all* Somali art and creativity. Started in 2007, earlier than the HIBF, the Somali Week Festival, or otherwise, Kayd in Somali, literally translated as Preservation, the organisers noted:

“...[Was] founded on the desire to promote the *cultural and literary heritage of the Somali people*...to encourage current and future generations of Somalis to cherish their heritage, and embrace a culture of reading and writing that will help them to preserve and further develop their artistic and cultural heritage (Somali Week Festival Magazine, 2014, emphasis added).”

Organising an *all-Somali* culture festival in London, and the book fair in Hargeysa is not an innocent juxtaposition.²⁰⁴ If it were for the promotion of the *Somaliland* cultural heritage, the Somali Cultural Festival, and not the Hargeysa *International* book fair, would have been held in Hargeysa since this would be central in the construction of history and identity of the Somaliland more than a westernised, a book fair, whose epistemological roots are alien to a community recovering from war. It is true that in the tradition of book fairs, they are held in cities of countries in which they are named after, and this ought to be treated as a benign endeavour. However, juxtaposed with the Cultural Festival (from the same organisers and happening right after), the Hargeysa book fair then acquires a new reading. By being able to organise the book fair, Somaliland has created a critical literary and intellectual distance from its nemesis (as a claim for its national identity).²⁰⁵ I now turn to why returnees are visible and powerful

²⁰⁴ Mimetically, somewhat belatedly, in 2015, the Mogadishu International Book Fair was born, with all the subtext for a rival book fair for the HIBF. In the same year, The Garowe International Book Fair was also born in Puntland, an arguably less ambitious semi-autonomous region of Somalia. that two other book fairs would be born in a war-ravaged country speaks to the perceived intentions of the HIBF.

²⁰⁵ it is worth noting that the Somali Week festival in London actually reflects anti-colonial nationalism sentiments of the 1960 where a united Somali peninsula for all the Somali people was being mobilised along the languages of culture and tradition. Kayd magazine notes that it was “founded on the desire to promote the cultural and literary heritage of the Somali people... current and future generations of Somalis to cherish their heritage.” This sort of sentiment making is anti-Somaliland secessionism agenda.

in the political-cultural milieu in Hargeysa, and actually merit attention as a distinct category.

Conclusion: Aftermaths, Time, Socio Distance, Numbers

Writing in *Omens of Adversity*, Scott (2014) has noted that the aftermaths of violence tend to often radically alter the hitherto familiar world. They end in new forms of belonging, new centres of power; new notions of security, and new medias of hope as people act in fields of potentially rival actions and in circumstances over which they exercise only but partial and unstable control (Scott, 2014: 34; see also, Kapteijns and Richters, 2010: 6). The aftermaths often become not only unpredictable, but ends in newness, with both continuities and discontinuities. Simply put, the aftermaths of violence are never the same as the world was before violence. For Somaliland, after over 20 years of unrest, returnees coming back to Somaliland are finding themselves in an exotic space, a sort of exile, which is ironically one of the places they call home. To this end, returnees are standing out of the crowd; they are visible and can be profiled as a distinct group of actors—with special power, privileges and hinderances. There are three factors one easily observes in Hargeysa as explanation for this state of affairs. These have to be appreciated as operating together for a more succinct explanation.

Firstly, Time, that is, the length it took for favourable conditions for return to be realised. Extended periods of being away from the original homeland radically transforms the people that moved during moments of crises. In the context of Somalia, it has taken over 20 years for normalcy to return to the entire region. Although Somaliland remains largely peaceful, scattered episodes of violence—piracy, and civil war related—have continued in different parts of the country. Over 20 years of being in another cultural environment is long enough to alter one’s cultural sensibilities (manifest in *performativity* of fashion, language, religious sensibility, political views, etcetera). In different forms, the people returning to “organic Hargeysa ” are an alien mass especially for their new ways of life and practice, which have been categorised as inauthentic, vulgarised and un-autochthonous ways. Abdile and Pirkkalainen (2011) have noted:

The local perception of that diaspora members have stayed abroad for a long time and adopted other cultures, habits and ways of life that are different from those in Somalia has earned them the reputation of being socially and culturally different...the diaspora is bringing back corrupted Western habits and is in need of cultural re-orientation, locally known as *dhaqan* (2011: 60).

And a shopkeeper would tell Abdile and Pirkkalainen that the diasporas were “too westernised,” did not have discipline, and were “bad examples to others, especially the children” (ibid). We need to note that since diasporaness is visible through performance, the people who display these practices have only normalised them because of the time spent away. These have become their ways. Calling this adoption, however is inaccurate as it would mean voluntary choice. Yet in truth, diaspora simply learned the ways of their environment. In the language of Scott (2004), they were not volunteers. Instead, the conditions in which they lived forced them to repackage themselves so as to survive.

Secondly, this cultural contest between the locals and returnees becomes more visible when demographics are considered. As the Somali civil war unfolded, a huge number of people, estimated in millions fled the country (Kleist, 2008; I. Samatar ed., 1993). The direct effect of this displacement of huge numbers of people is that when conditions for calm return in the homeland, a huge mass of people returns. Because of their sheer size against an equally small home-bred population (Somaliland is 3.5 million people with 15% of them recognised as living abroad) they become easily visible especially in the towns such Hargeysa. If the numbers were to be small against the homeland population, they would be ignorable like happens in many high population societies such as the other East African capitals. But large numbers of diaspora returnees against a small home population presupposes and huge and visible impact.

Third, describing returnees as “too westernised” suggests that we locate and view diaspora returnees from the host communities where they come. This means seeing them through the global world of social and political contests of the present. We are in a moment in history where the world is diametrically divided into “them and us.” The “social distance” (Pape and Feldman, 2011) between the places of origins of the returnees (especially Europe and North America) and the place of their return, that is, Somaliland is diametric and polarised especially in terms of social practices and

behaviours. Images of “us” and “them” have persisted their time, both “here” and “there”.²⁰⁶ Popular perceptions in Hargeysa have the understanding that the world is diametrically divided into two, the Muslim world and the West/Rest as concrete categories.²⁰⁷ Because of the westernised mannerisms visible about the returnees, they are oftentimes seen as carrying the cultural corruption, and evils of their host countries opening themselves to suspicion, a cultural backlash or sometimes, smouldering hatred.²⁰⁸ This explains why returnees from the mostly Muslim Middle East, and Africa are not regarded Qurbajoog.

Reflecting on returnees, and diaspora studies more broadly, Hargeysa offers us a case where the confluence of time, the unpredictability and fluidity of the aftermaths of violence, numbers of returnees against the resident population, and social distance of the host country of returnees against the homeland, and the shape of the present global-political environment combine and make visible the returnee as a permanent category. At the same time, returnees then have an impress, often involuntary, on the ways in which nationalist sentiments are being mobilised in the context of secession.

²⁰⁶ In his 2003 introduction to *Orientalism*, Edward Said (2003) noted: “Today, bookstores in the United States are filled with shabby screeds bearing screaming headlines about Islam and terror, Islam exposed, the Arab threat, and the Muslim menace, all of them written by political polemicists pretending to knowledge imparted to them and others by experts who have supposedly penetrated to the heart of these strange Oriental peoples over there who have been such a terrible thorn in “our” flesh. Accompanying such warmongering expertise have been the omnipresent CNNs and Fox News Channels of this world, plus myriad numbers of evangelical and right-wing radio hosts, plus innumerable tabloids and even middlebrow journals, all of them recycling the same unverifiable fictions and vast generalizations so as to stir up “America” against the foreign devil.” Even Said himself was acutely aware of the breadth of the social distance.

²⁰⁷ In March and April 2015, I gave a course at the University of Hargeysa, “The Muslim World and the Rest” to an MA class in International Relations. I designed the course mainly to destabilize the use of Muslim and West as concrete global categories. My readings included Samuel Huntington’s “A Clash of Civilizations” alongside his most eloquent critics, Edward Said (2001) essay “A Clash of Ignorance, and shorter versions of Mamdani’s (2004) *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*. I also assigned Mazrui’s “Islamic and Western Values” and Lila Abu-Lughod’s “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?” At the beginning of the class, we engaged in a futile exercise to locate the west and the rest in geographical time. My students had an idea of where the west was located or at least what made them the west. The general perception was of a concrete homogenous West, and a concrete homogenous other. It was difficult explaining the inexistence of a concrete homogenized West or the Muslim world.

²⁰⁸ Culture talk as an explanation for violence in the post 9/11 world has pointed to the performed cultural practices of Muslims especially in terms of fashion including veiling (see for example, Abu-Lughod, 2002), spotting a big bushy beard, rituals such as prayer, closed sexual relations, lukewarm attitude to music, and intoxicants, etcetera, as representatives of their backwardness and lack of progress, and perhaps hatred for the west (for an extended historical reading on culture talk, see Mamdani 2004: 17-27).

Chapter Ten

DE-IMAGINED COMMUNITIES: TOWARDS A THEORY OF SECESSIONIST NATIONALISM

I divide this concluding chapter into two broad sections: The first section is a summary of the discussions that pre-occupied the previous chapters, and how all of them tie together into the final forming of this dissertation. The second is a discussion of the scholarship on Somaliland and captures my reflections on the major debates on the scholarship on Somaliland specifically peace and security. The final is a debate on nationalism and national consciousness of a secessionist mode in the life of a postcolonial state.

In Chapter One, I introduced the central puzzle/concern and questions of my PhD project, which was understanding the ways in which Somaliland nationalist sentiments are *mobilised* in the ongoing campaign to secede from Somalia. The key questions of this project included (a) understanding the items or props used, and the histories and futures [in a Foucauldian sense of a *history of the present*, not any claims to the truth], mobilised and imagined in crafting a Somaliland nationalist identity and consciousness? I also sought to highlight another puzzle asking what it meant—in a sentimental, conscientized sense—to be a Somalilander therefore. I moved ahead and spelled out the debates in which this project was rooted, which was nationalism and postcolonial studies noting that secessionist nationalist making (which is always an artificial process, championed by the intelligentsia) ought to be understood as a later phase in the life of a postcolonial state, and thus ought to be understood as different from anti-colonial nationalism (as theorised and narrativized most prominently, by Partha Chatterjee, 1986; 1993; Benedict Anderson, 1982; and Ahmed Aijaz, 1992). I thus go on to introduce my key terms, “secessionist nationalism,” and “de-imagined communities,” perhaps creating a departure from usual discussions on secessionist movements with focus on the border and other political contestations (see, for example, Vries, Englebert and Schomerus eds. 2018; and Höhne 2015). I will discuss at the end of this chapter with a little more detail.

In chapter two, which is titled, “Fieldwork and Research Methods,” I narrate *the* field, showing how I encountered and interacted with it, and the decisions that I made in the course of fieldwork. I noted that his project utilised literary and anthropological methodologies in gathering and narrating its data, making its broader analyses and conclusions. Through mostly Malinowskian ethnography, and extended case method (Burawoy, 1998), which gives rise to detailed notes narrating ‘what “natives” actually were doing with accounts of real events, struggles and dramas that took place over space and time’ (1998:5), and through photography, I make the world of this project, and my own as a researcher, visible and readable.

In addition to describing the city, Hargeysa, I showed the places where I did most of my fieldwork including most notably, Xarunta Dhaqanka ee Hargeysa [or the Hargeysa Cultural Center], Hargeysa International Bookfair; Cup of Art Italian Coffeehouse, Hiddo Dhawr Tourist Village; Jamacada Hargeysa; Academy for Peace and Development (APD), Mansour Hotel, downtown Hargeysa, and several others). This chapter also discusses the ways in which empirical data is collected, analyzed and made sense of as is consistent with social sciences methodologies of meaning making. Briefly, I touch on debates in popular culture (Levine, 1988; Zemon Davis, 1992, Weeden, 2008; Okot, 1986; Nandwa and Bukenya, 1983, Strinati, 1995), and the ways in which studying performance or performative ethnography (Ranger, 1975; Fabian, 1990; Wedeen, 2008) enables one to arrive at real experiences, with similar dynamics as the extended case method.

Chapters Three and Four are both historical chapters, with chapter three focusing on the people called the Somalis, their social, economic and political organisation, area of inhabitancy, and how they received and resisted colonialism. It is also here that I dealt with the contested history of Mohammed Abdille Hassan, the Sayyid or sometimes problematically called, the “Mad Mullah.” Chapter four on the other hand deals specifically with the two major historical events of this PhD project—that are juxtaposed in the study—that is, unification (1960) and separation (1991). Both events have involved mobilising a national consciousness and identity, and 1960 offers us the requisite juxtaposition, and springboard to focus 1991. Here I also talk about the Somali National Movement (SNM), the former rebel movement turned nationalist/secessionist, often hailed for championing the independent Somaliland agenda after the 1991 civil

war. These two chapters, side-by-side, underscore the core question: If the mobilisation of anti-colonial nationalism in 1960 was wound around culture, language and religion, what are those things, the new cultural markers, around which of secessionist nationalist sentiments are mobilised?

Chapter five is a discussion of Popular Culture, in theoretical and Historiographic terms. Since my source materials were popular arts and cultures (music, poetry, monuments, book fairs, coffeehouses, paintings, etc.) the driving question for this chapter was: Is it possible to use the arts as core source materials for answering questions on nationalism and national sentiments? Are the arts core sources of historical material? Thus, the first part is a discussion of popular culture and the different approaches to it, and here I attempt to disabuse popular culture with the commonest tendency in especially political science studies to see it as “oppositional expressions”—opposition to elite culture or officialdom—often emerging from below. I showed that I am persuaded by Nadine Dolby (2006) who notes that “popular culture forms an important locus of public debate and of individual and community agency” (2006: 33). Dolby springs from Stuart Hall (1981) who termed popular culture as the “arena of consent and resistance. It is partly where hegemony arises, and where is secured (Hall, 1981: 239).” Taken as an arena—of both consent and resistance—locus of public debate, popular culture then becomes that open space for the advancement of public debate—open to everybody and every institution irrespective of class, breeding, location, etcetera. Against this framing (Hall, 1981; Dolby, 2006; Zemon-Davis, 1992) I created two categories in which I place my material, *officially sponsored* and *unofficially sponsored* popular culture, with emphasis on sponsorship to mean the auspices under which particular items are created. I will demonstrate this in the table on chapter seven and eight.

Chapter Six is titled “the mother of Somali Arts: Context and Location of Popular Culture in Hargeysa.” While examining and pointing to a temporal push and pull between and pre-defined Islamic-inspired public identity on the one hand, and the rather un-Islamic arts (with the arts, ironically, being claimed as the greatness of Hargeysa), this chapter mapped the manifestations of these contestations, and spaces of popular culture in Hargeysa, showing production, recording, circulation and performance. At the same time, it also showed Hargeysa’s affinity towards popular culture through its

fascination with graphic painting and poetic expressions. The chapter answered where is popular culture in Hargeysa beyond its everyday manifestations in the streets of the city.

The unity of chapters six, seven, eight and nine

Building on Chapter Six, the next three chapters are studied in conversation with each other. Officially sponsored popular culture (Chapter Seven), against or augmented by unofficially sponsored popular culture (Chapter Eight), and then the diaspora returnees (Chapter Nine) who also come in and destabilise normalising notions generating a temporality in the identity project of secessionist Somaliland. Let me demonstrate this more graphically.

Table I: Table of fieldwork materials and their summarized analyses as covered in Chapters Six, Seven, Eight, and Nine.

Chapter Seven: Official Somaliland: Power, A Priori, and Public Identity	
Popular cultural Item/ text (Summary analysis)	Names of the specific items/ renowned features/ studied item/
Monuments of Hargeysa (A Somaliland that is ever mindful of the crimes of genocide, but resilient)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “<i>Taalada Xoriyadda iyo Dal Jirka Dahsoon</i>” or the “Statue of Liberty and Country Not Yet Discovered” in Khayriya Square in central Hargeysa; • <i>Kaare</i>, a replica of a fighter tank in Togdheer in Timacade Area, • The dove or the peace monument; • <i>Sanad Guuradii 23</i> monument, or the hand holding the map of Somaliland (also called the monument of Somaliland unity), • <i>Dhagaxtuur</i> (literary, throwing stones) the tomb of Somali fallen heroes of 20 February 1982
Somaliland National flag Vs Somali national flag (A Somaliland whose existence is in the undoing undoing the union of 1960; more moderate Islamically)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stories about the Somaliland flag in Mecca (undated) • 2015 Incident in Mogadishu involving Hidigaha Geeska music band • Parts of the Somaliland flag, the stars, the colours that deflect with Somalia
Music of Independence (Pro-secessionist music, which also imagines a country built around core Islamic values)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two songs: “Allow noo tiirisee,” [Allah has supported us], performed by Hidigaha Geeska and Mursal Musse. By Abdullahi Cumar; music by Muhammad Siciid BK. • “<i>Dhulkiina u hura Waxaad Haysaan</i>,” [Contribute to Your Country Whatever You Have].
Fliers of Recognition (Makes disguised references to Somalia by pointing to terrorism and piracy; appeals to UK sensibilities, and signals to a progressive/ democratic Somaliland, again, in comparison to southern Somalia)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed with Somaliland flag; the cave paintings of Laas Geel, estimated to be 7000-9000 years old; • Inscribed with “Somaliland is here to stay,” • “Recognition of Somaliland is long overdue.” • Somaliland, as “roughly the size of England and Wales combined.” • “Somaliland stands for peace and democracy, opposition to terrorism and piracy, and sustainable development...”

<p>Routine of Hargeysa, public identity of Hargeysa (mostly chapter Six)</p> <p>(Imagines a Somaliland public identity that is Islamically identifying, but also the mother of the Somali Arts)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mother of the Somali Arts • Exponential growth of mosques in the city • Requirement to close shops when call for prayer is made • No female waitresses in rests and teashops • Women expected to be properly covered, also representation on wall other signs • Requirement for couples to produce marriage certificates to enter same rooms in hotels and guest houses • Fridays and Saturdays are the weekends, not Saturday and Sunday as is in the rest of Eastern Africa. (i.e., Islamic calendar followed. • Celebrating the birthday of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.)
<p>Chapter Eight: Everyday Somaliland: Power, Performance and Counterpublics</p>	
<p>Singer and cultural entrepreneur, Sara Halgan: the fighter</p> <p>(Pro-secession, but an Islam identity, which also accommodates the arts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The poet studied as text (a summarised memoir) • Quit politics for being attacked as symbol of cultural corruption because she did music, attacks which also targeted her party, Waadane. • Two songs, studied: “Ha Dagan” and “<i>Eighteenth of May</i>” (<i>pro-secessionist songs</i>) • Focus on Hiddo Dhawr Tourist Village (preservation of the arts, cultures)
<p>Poet Mohammad Hadraawi</p> <p>(In noting he would “remain Hadraawi” undivided, subtly voiced his opposition to secession).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The poet as text/ summarised memoir • The 2004 Peace March to Kismayo, Juba, Garowe, Awdal, Mogadishu, or Galkayo all of Somalia (Arguably, anti-secessionist march) • <i>Famous Quote: Hadii Soomaaliya u qaybsanto labaatan, annigu wali waxaan ahaanayaa Hadraawi. Even if Somalia divides itself into twenty parts, I will still be Hadraawi</i> Even if Somalia split into twenty parts, I will remain Hadraawi.”
<p>Artist, Boobe Yusuf Ducale</p> <p>(pro-secessionist artist/critic, a more moderate analyst, Boobe also sees Somaliland as resilient survivors of the crimes of Mogadishu)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His song: “Midigtaan ku xoreynayn Mandeeq/ Independence is in our Right Hand • Cultural Critic, poet and songwriter • Once served as Minister for Information
<p>Poet Abdulmaliq Musse Coldon</p> <p>(Radically anti-secessionist, only imagines unity with Mogadishu)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two songs studied: “I am a Somali” and, • “In defence of my country” • Arrested plenty of times for his pro-Somali poetry, and endless visits to southern Somalia, Mogadishu.
<p>Singer, Amran Mohammed Xuseen (Pro-secessionist, worked with Sahra Halgan)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tagimayno Xamar Abid” or “We will Never Go Back to Somalia”
<p>Hargeysa ’s Paintings, painters</p> <p>While some are openly anti-secessionist, other simply prefer a Somaliland, which accommodates different versions of fashion, one, which does not police fashion and women bodies.</p>	<p><u>Painters:</u> Ahmed Najib; Abdirahman Arab Ibrahim; Hanad Arts; Ebony Iman Dallas</p> <p><u>Themes</u> (Tahrib; women rights, fashion and public identity; and secession</p>
<p>Chapter Nine: The Qurbajoog: Diasporas and Somaliland Public Identity</p>	
<p>Qurbajoog/Diasporas</p> <p>(Why their visibility?)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visible social-political category because of (a) their numbers against the home population, (b) time spent abroad, which has altered their lives permanently, and (c) ‘social distance’ or cultural distance between the home country and diaspora host country, which is Europe and North America. For example, returnees from the Middle East or Africa not visible, easily integrate and become normal Hargeysa ns.
<p>Summer Returnees/ permanent returnees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display <i>diasporic practices</i>, in the areas of fashion, where they are not very consistent with Islamic standards of fashion. Considered inauthentically Somali.

(Mostly, pro-secessionism, but imagine a Somaliland identity that appreciates traditions from elsewhere, sometimes called modernity. Constantly destabilising any claims of cultural authenticity).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally radical coffeehouses and restaurants, e.g., Cup of art Italian coffee house; Four Seasons; Summer Time, Royal Lounge; newer forms of cuisine, indifference towards prayer, destabilising the marriage space because of more money
<p>Xarunta Dhaqanka ee Hargeysa (Hargeysa Cultural Centre)</p> <p>(Mostly, pro-secessionism, but in a love-hate relationship with the homeland. Imagine a “modern” and literati Somaliland identity that appreciates traditions from elsewhere, sometimes called modernity). Open in its approach as regards relations with Somalia.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signature events, include the Hargeysa International Book fair (HIBF), international visitors; hosts allegedly bad visitors like people with LGBTQ campaign profiles, celebrates music, art, scholarship and books. Also, the Somali Cultural Week festival organised in London.

As showed in the table above, Somaliland identity and national consciousness is negotiated between the state, individual actors based at home and the diaspora returnees (who include visitors that spend entire summers and permanent returnees who are constantly returning since the conditions of return are currently suitable. Clearly, there is no uniformity of opinion over whether Somaliland should be independent from Somalia or not. What was clear from the fieldwork is that the official position, espoused by state actors such as those behind monuments and flags, fliers, and supporting nationalist music have the stronger more hegemonic appeal especially since they have the tools of coercion and have on several occasions contained anti-secessionist voices. But over and above this contention, the identities and nationalist sentiments in independent Somaliland remained endlessly contested, with alternative and more diverse talking points coming from the everyday actors and members of the diaspora. But this ought to be understood as a temporal contention as these negotiations are characterised by a peculiar fluidity that is conditioned by time and temporal moments.

Somaliland’s politics, peace, stability

Most of the scholars on Somaliland, especially those focused on politics, peace studies and post-conflict, have tended to celebrate the peace and stability in the country as a hallmark of internal processes (Walls, 2009; Jhazbhay, 2008, Bradbury 2008; see also, Hansen and Bradbury, 2007; Huliaras, 2002; Philips, 2013). This scholarship also often treats Somalia as an already-escaped and forgotten entity in the internal political and social formations of Somaliland (see also, Hansen and Bradbury, 2007; Huliaras, 2002; Philips, 2013). I problematize these positions and argue that Somalia is one major

omnipresent ingredient in the “new” Somaliland. My findings suggest that Somalia is present in both the institutional and discursive formations of Somaliland, and Somaliland may have to rebuild around the referent of Somalia for years. I also argue that although the guns went silent in Somaliland, it is still a country at war.²⁰⁹

In especially the state-sponsored popular cultural items — which forms a hegemonic consciousness as discussed earlier — it emerged quite succinctly that national consciousness in Somaliland is mobilised and constructed through a foil. Something like, ‘WE are this because THEY are that.’ In this type of consciousness building, the people appear to seek to move forward in the way they do, because their foil has moved backwards, failed or wronged them on the original ideals, which had been the base and ambitions of their nationalist project. Somaliland is constructed as a foil for Somalia in every aspect of its identity, national consciousness and cultural aspirations. In its secessionist imaginary, *it is not Somaliland, if it does not mirror or foil Somalia*. There are four key items upon which this relationship is built: (1) a stricter, but moderate Islamic public identity and personhood, (2) victims of a failed Greater Somalia project, suffering genocide and human rights abuses, and (3) progressives, that is, democratic and free, open to the outside world, anti-extremism, and stable. In all these three ideations, references to Somalia are both implicit and explicit making Somalia’s permanence in Somaliland’s post-1991 imaginary visible. As I show in the next section, Britain – Somaliland’s actual coloniser – is viewed as friendlier and liberationist. (4) In a more explicit form, Somaliland packages its national consciousness around being the living example of the death of Somalia.

That means, Somaliland has remained a country at war (especially in its nationalist symbolism) even when the guns went silent. Most of the popular cultural items we studied are formed at their point of contact with Somalia, with specific reference to a violent history of 1980s. The statue of liberty, the military tank, the cenotaph and several others images found in music and poetry speak to an institutionalised sense of

²⁰⁹ On the two points above, it is important to state here that I do not concern myself with notions of statecraft, state building or nation building or democracy in Somaliland. Neither do I concern myself with questions such as whether Somaliland should or should not receive international recognition. Although my questions are closely related to the above, those other questions—on statecraft, democracy and recognition—are outside the scope of my project.

conflict with Somalia. This nationalistic image, symbolic of war with Somalia needs to be appreciated as it sustains a difficult worldview, with violence at the core of Somaliland nationalist sentiment. And since these images mobilize Somalia, it renders Somaliland vulnerable to a mind-set of war and violence. But there is a temporal dimension to it, that is, these images ought to be understood as contained in the moment of the campaign for international recognition. This would mean, upon recognition, Somaliland will find itself needing to refashion anew in the new “problem space” it would have been cast. The point worth stressing here is that scholars of Somaliland politics, democracy, peace and post-conflict studies ought to appreciate the omnipresence of southern Somalia in the new and peaceful life of Somaliland that has existed between 1991 and in the present.

At the same time, as I argue in the next part of this conclusion, and Somaliland will still need Somalia as the referent, as a permanent interlocutor to hold together. Studies on the violence in South Sudan have showed that tenuously defined through its opposition with Khartoum; South Sudan plunged into internal wrangling and violence as soon as the Khartoum disappeared from the picture. Perhaps this points us to the challenges of the imagination of nationhood under secessionist movements defined through a process of uniting around an enemy – real or invented. According to Tronvoll, Eritrea has had to craft new enemies in their border skirmishes to as the glue that binds the people together thus avoiding plunging into violence (1999: 1055). I will return to this comparison later on in this conclusion.

Colonial Somalia, Benevolent Britain

I noted earlier that in portraying Somaliland as a foil for Somalia, British colonialism is narrativized and rendered more endearingly especially for having provided the border division upon which claims of national sovereignty are currently being mobilised. In their demand for an independent nation state, Somaliland points to their existence as a political entity before 1960 when the time the union with Italian-colonised Somalia was formed. Oftentimes, the intelligentsia points to Somaliland borders that were drawn by the British during the partition of Africa, as the borders to which Somaliland has returned (Jama Musse Jama ed., 2011; Eggers, 2007; Constitution of Somaliland,

Chapter 1 (1) Art. 2). Although the anti-colonial longing for “total liberation” agenda of 1960 challenged the unfairness and abstractness of these borders (as a Greater Somalia was imagined to include all Somali dominated places, with Somalis defined as united through cultural identity, language and religion), the 1991 shift, that is, secessionism seeks to proudly restore these borders with the colonial encounter being springboard of their existence.

There is an inversion of roles here: The union with Somalia is constructed in colonial terms, while British colonialism is constructed in liberating terms.²¹⁰ The editorial of *The Republican* (Saturday, March 28, 2015) makes this point more powerfully. The editor notes that it was an error uniting with Somalia more than half a century ago, then goes on to ask, rather rhetorically, how long should Somaliland “continue being denied its basic human right of freedom by the UK, which should be the vanguard of its recognition?” The editorial continued to challenge the United Kingdom to come and stand with its former colony say with ammunitions, and also recognise it – as Italy was allegedly going about arming Somalia. The editor, asks, “would Her Majesty’s government stop punishing the people of Somaliland for refusing to join the Commonwealth in 1960, by preferring the dream of Great Somalia that turned into a nightmare?”

In line with that editorial, the poet Mohamud Togane becomes all more important in this endeavour when he calls for a *re-colonisation* of Africa. In his poem, “When I considered,” Togane wrote:

When I considered
in lucid drunken anger
the freaks of Africa
I hollered: UHURU, a Whore!
A shout shook me shuddering the shack bar

²¹⁰ Höhne’s (2008) piece on media in Somaliland highlights this debate as being particularly sensitive to all involved (102-4). It is evident that working with colonial Somalia in any way is treated as “treasonable,” as are claims that all regions of Somaliland are opposed to Somaliland independence (107).

Come back! Come back, white man! Come back to Africa
EVERYTHING FORGIVEN²¹¹

It is difficult to miss Togane's frustration with the postcolonial state. It borders on the extreme when he calls independence "a whore" and asks the white man to return and assume direct control of his country, overtly suggesting that things were better under colonialism. From the sections read in the newspapers, and the portrayals of Britain in these friendly terms, Togane becomes appropriate in this moment when Great Britain is held in high esteem as the giver of existence, and national identity to Somaliland for its colonial contribution. We need not to forget as well, that even in this example, Somaliland invokes Great Britain only to spike Somalia, which, again, makes Somalia present in the nationalist sentiment of Somaliland. It goes without saying that to assume and actually argue that the 1960s intelligentsia—who preached and advocated union of all Somali territories—gave wrong responses to otherwise good questions of their time is to actually obscure the "discursive context" in which they offered the answers they did. In calling this a unique "problem space," David Scott (2004) not seeks to point to the temporal nature of these contexts, but also to warn present intelligentsia of assuming a constancy of time, thereby imposing their context onto the context of their predecessors. At worst, they might be even making graver mistakes than their predecessors read in a subsequent context.

Towards a Theory of Secessionist Nationalism

The third second part of this chapter is a debate into the scholarship on nationalism, and nationalist consciousness. I am interested in introducing "secessionist nationalism" as a reference for a conceptually distinct form of nationalism; different from anti-colonial nationalism, which dominates the scholarship on nationalism in postcolonial studies. To this end, inspired by the work of Faisal Devji (2013), I enter into conversation with Partha Chatterjee (1986) and Benedict Anderson (1983) on nationalism as a progressive and forward-looking force. Thus, this subsection discusses nationalist thought in secessionist movements – refashioning new futures after a violent turn in the postcolonial dream. This moment, what I have called the interregnum after Gramsci to signal a morbid breakdown of the state. This phase of the postcolonial state needs to be

²¹¹ Poem cited from Ali Jimacale Ahmed eds. (1995: 144)

appreciated differently. Part of my contention springs from the understanding that, specific to formerly colonised places, secessionist nationalism is a reaction to the failures of the imagined post-colonial state. It is a response to the morbidity of the dreams of the anti-colonial intelligentsia.

Specific to the postcolonial state, I want to argue that secessionist nationalism is backward looking, that is, builds on disrupting and dismantling what was built during the anti-colonial struggle or the process of making a nation-state – immediately or many years after independence. I want to call this “de-imagination” or “de-imagined communities” as the conceptual-theoretical term for this undertaking. To this end, I use my findings on Somaliland as the starting point to reflect on secessionist nationalism in other places including beginning with neighbours Eritrea and South Sudan. I am not sure if these conclusions can be exported to other secessionist contexts.

First, I use secessionist nationalism only in reference to countries experiencing separatist sentiment after the nation state had ‘fully formed’ as a unified entity by some processes by the actors of the time. The notion of a nation state being ‘fully formed’ does not mean that internal negotiations and other processes about, say, what national culture should be, modes of governmentality, constitutionalism or questions over what should be the overarching national consciousness were agreed and concluded. Rather, the notion seeks to underscore a condition where a country, within its arbitrary colonial borders, either through the actions of its eminent intelligentsia and statesmen, or act of referendum, treaty or acquiescence (quiet approval) agreed to forge common-ground. This period marks the beginning of the long debate on the internal dynamics of national culture, governmentality, constitutionalism and other local processes—but the question of being contained within a singular border being concluded in this time. But to be “fully-formed’ also means to have started pursuing different politico-developmental projects together.

Somaliland-Somalia presents an interesting case of a nation state that fully formed in 1960 when through a pact, the two Somalias agreed to come together and form the Greater Somali Republic. Other countries include Anglophone Cameroon voted to join Francophone Cameroon and not Nigeria, while Julius Nyerere and Abeid Karume agreed to unite Zanzibar and Tanzania. Southern Sudan problematically joined in with Khartoum. In other places, such as Buganda, which had demanded separate nationhood

at independence, finally agreed, through negotiation and quiet approval to work with the rest of Uganda. It is important to note that these high points where the different ethnic, religious or other-organised communities agreed to form common ground were fraught with myriad complications and challenges. Oppositional voices were silenced, or a decision could have been smuggled as happened in Tanzania. But that the pre-eminent statespersons, and local intelligentsia of the time moved in this direction the way they did, provides the basis for my formulation, and conceptualization.

At the same time, the scholarship on separatist movements is filled with countries where the modern state in formerly colonized states has never had common ground. Here, the separatist movement represents direct continuity with colonial struggle. Examples include Southern Sahara, Ogaden, Katanga, Eritrea etcetera. There is not a single time in their life where these communities agreed to imagining a life, or working on politico-developmental projects together within the border thus formed. Despite being separatist, these manifestations do not represent a secessionist nationalist consciousness in my formulation. While both contexts present with “separatist” ambitions, it is my contention that it is problematic to view all of them as secessionist nationalism. This is a major pitfall with Lotje de Vries, Englebert and Schomerus (2019) recently published edited volume, *Secessionism in African Politics: Aspiration, Grievances, Performance, Disenchantment*. The editors do not make an effort to appreciate this distinction, even when some of the chapters in the collection appreciate concepts such as incomplete decolonization.

Anti-colonial Nationalism

In the course of anti-colonial nationalism, Chatterjee (1986) has noted, nationalist thought was often cast through the dichotomous contest of tradition against western-colonial modernity, which meant tradition simply mirrored itself against the very European Enlightenment it sought to critic (1986:17). Here, nationalism seemed to have been caught up in its critic of colonialism in the sense that the language in which the critic was made was conscripted to the episteme of a colonial paradigm. To both the colonised and the coloniser,

...[Nationalism] sought to demonstrate the falsity of the colonial claim that the backward peoples were culturally incapable of ruling themselves in the

conditions of the modern world...it also asserted that the backward nation could 'modernize' itself while retaining its cultural identity. It thus produced a discourse in which, even as it challenged the colonial claim to political domination, it also accepted the very intellectual premises of 'modernity' on which colonial domination was based (1986: 30).

Forming the central questions of anti-colonial nationalism were concerns over the autonomy and rationality of the colonised people and their ability to move outside colonialism—say constructing a cultural community—but also construct modern nation states. This actually explains the development of the Somali Republic in the 1960s, which sought to assert its cultural unity with language, cultural customs and religion as key uniting markers of identity. In this they sought to build a cultural community wound around a cultural identity (Mamdani, 2001) although they had the aspiration for modernity at the same time, which also meant building a political community (Ahmed, 1995; Kapteijns, 2010; Samatar, 2016). What becomes visible in the theoretical-historical formulations of Chatterjee, Kapteijns, Samatar, and Aijaz (only those cited here) is the temporal push and pull between modernity and tradition in anti-colonial nationalisms, a such for the “regeneration of the national culture [which meant tradition], adopted to the demands of progress, but while retaining at the same time, its distinctiveness” (Chatterjee, 1986: 2).

Chatterjee went on and created what he called, the spiritual/internal contention of nationalism arguing that while anti-colonial nationalism sought to step outside and avoid a “colonial modernity,” by looking inside, in tradition as it sought to build an identity as cultural fabric, it also looked at the colonial modernity (the external realm) especially on matters of statecraft. Thus, it found it imperative to integrate aspects of the colonial regime/modernity that were seen as beneficial for state building and forms of government. Thus, while the intelligentsia distanced itself from colonialism, it had no choice but to embrace parts of the thing they were trying to escape. In David Scott's (2004), more sanguine phrasing, they were conscripts of this modernity, but not volunteers as they are being chided by the present intelligentsia. They didn't choose to be in the space the way they did, but found themselves in space which had pre-determined the reach of their creativity. Chatterjee would conclude that this attempt was almost contradictory:

The attempt is deeply contradictory: It is both imitative and hostile to the models it imitates... It is imitative in that it accepts the value standards set by the alien culture. But it also involves a rejection: in fact, two rejections, both of them ambivalent: rejection of the alien intruder and a dominator who is nevertheless to be imitated and surpassed by his own standards, and rejection of ancestral ways which are seen as obstacles to progress and yet also cherished as marks of identity. This contradictory process is therefore deeply disturbing as well...the liberal-rationalist dilemma in talking about nationalist thought (1986: 2).

The intelligentsia of the anti-colonial struggle sought to be both traditional and modern (colonial modern) at the same time. This presented itself as a dilemma, the “liberal-rationalist dilemma” of nationalism in the formerly colonised world. But the only way one would move forward.

Three knots of secessionist nationalism

Non-anti-racism discourse, Enemification, and Exhibitionist de-imagining

My contention is that secessionist nationalism presents itself differently from anti-colonial nationalism. And despite itself also a process of nation-building in the postcolonial turn, it ought to be understood differently because of its peculiar character. There are three theoretical points I want to consider as extrapolatable and abstractable to other secessionist nationalisms:

First, what is unique with secessionist movements is that although nemeses (I will problematically call these ‘mother countries’ to mean the country from which secession is sought) are constructed in colonialist terms, and secession often talked about as “liberation” or “independence”—their ‘nationalist texts’ are directed to speak to *only* the people (who are said to constitute the new country), and the political project, and not to the “colonial master,” the country being escaped. We need not to lose the racism in the colonialist view of the natives under anti-colonial nationalism. When Chatterjee writes that, “...[Nationalism] sought to demonstrate the falsity of the colonial claim that the backward peoples were culturally incapable of ruling themselves in the conditions of the modern world,” he is emphasising anti-colonialism’s imperative to push back on embedded racism of colonialism that deemed the colonised inferior and

backward. The fear or imperative not to imitate a colonial modernity was steeped in racist and orientalisng discourses that had driven the colonial project. The anti-colonial intelligentsia, in a longing for total liberation, wanted to have neither of it, an attempt which only proved futile, as they had been conscripted early enough. The departure here is that secessionist nationalisms are not driven by the desire to escape the racism of the “mother country” being separated from. The mother country is not accused of any racial crimes, but is rather accused of other crimes, which take a different form. If the need is to escape exploitation, the discourses never take racist undertones as was the case with colonialism. As we have seen with Somalia and Somaliland, the contention ranges from governance questions, economic hardships, democracy or other—and are never discoursed with racialised or anti-racial grammar.

On the other hand, however, [and this is the second point of departure], the mother country being escaped is constructed rather as permanent interlocutor, from whom the seceding country does not struggle to learn and embrace anything from, but rather a permanent enemy who ought to remain as enemy to hold the new imaginary together. The term “*enemification*” could apply. By constructing a permanent enemy, the secessionist movement thus mobilises itself towards moving forward by negating the enemy, whose is not only negated but also held up as conflict point, an existential threat, which could anytime attack or compromise our new imaginary. This enemification might be contained to just the temporal moment of the campaign for secession or might continue into the lifeblood of the country even after secession is attained and international recognition. Indeed, with more young people unfamiliar with the magnitude of atrocities of Somalia in Somaliland in 1988-1991, the location of Somalia in their national imaginary is becoming lost on them (see, for example, poet Abdulmalik Coldon, and singers in Hidigaha Geeska, or the Qurbajoog). But also, as showed Khatumo State (including Laascaanood, Buuhoodle and Taleex regions) seeking to break-away from Somaliland and others seeking to re-join with Somalia (see, Höhne, 2009: 264; and 2015: 78), especially since they never experienced atrocities to the magnitude of Hargeysa. Thus, the permanence of the enemy might become blurred over time. There is a temporal dimension to this. In Pakistan, however, Devji (2013) has showed us that, years after independence, Pakistan has continued to mobilise itself around the notion of India as an existential threat, a permanent enemy who if not carefully mediated, might jeopardise our entire existence.

The third point is that since secessionist nationalism is steeped in an earlier union, there is often a longing to represent, and identify the new secessionist dream as undoing the earlier union – in a manner that is exhibitionist. This is what I have called, de-imagining. While it is true that every process of *imagination* involves a de-imagining, a silencing of one feature and privileging another (Schlee, 2004), under secessionist nationalism, there is a deliberate effort to also show and exhibition that which is being silenced, undone or dismantled. In the context of an earlier imagined community, this takes overt forms of looking backwards.

Let me demonstrate this more succinctly: as discussed in detail in the historical chapter, Greater Somalia nationalism of 1960 was understood to be located in territorial and cultural claims including homogeneity of language, culture and religion across the Somali dominated territory. Colonialism was thus blamed for having destabilised this neat package of culture, and the intelligentsia sought to remedy it in the postcolonial moment through union thus forming Greater Somalia. In the making of Somaliland (which is actually, the breaking up of Somalia) these items around which 1960 was mobilised are being proudly undone. The language of national consciousness in Somaliland silences any claims to territory, blood or ancestral heritage (which were key anti-colonial positions). Post 1991 Somaliland nationalism is simply mobilised using other internationalist cultural markers. These include claims of democracy, human rights politics, stronger and ‘progressive’ moderate Islam, development and progressive, and collective victimhood as regards the injustices meted against the region by the dictatorial regime of Mohamed Siyad Barre (1969-1991). As showed with the national flag of Somaliland, and the fliers of recognition, the things that bound the Somali republic together are being radically undone.

The formation of Pakistan and Israel could also provide insight into this form of nationalism especially its internationalist features, which also privileges undoing specific earlier points of unity with the mother country. Faisal Devji (2013) has showed in that in the making of these national identities – Israel and Pakistan – claims of indigeneity are outrightly silenced from the narratives of nationalism (2013: 9). With Pakistan and Israel as religious nationalisms, identity is constructed around these internationalist markers claims no boundary limitations, nor ancestry. In secessionist Somaliland, even when the territory is known to be dominated by a single clan, the

Isaaq, [see detailed discussion on Somali clans, and map in Chapter Three], which has many times, given the independence campaign movement the clannist slur including “clan project,” and Somaliland as “Isaaq-land,” these “clan” narratives in Somaliland have been systematically silenced in the mobilisation of secessionist Somaliland.²¹² Like Pakistan and Israel, ancestral/primordial claims to the land are silenced, and instead, Islam and Zionism are given as the claims for occupation and allocation of a place. For Somaliland, however, specifically with Islam, it is not religion to define them per se, but a certain sensibility about religion (moderate, anti-extremism, liberal).

Examples from Eritrea, South Sudan

Does this resemble secessionist nationalisms elsewhere? This comparison might need an entirely different project to succinctly theorise and debate the comparisons. But for purposes of this current project, I will briefly consider Eritrea and South Sudan. It is difficult to explain South Sudan nationalism as an instance of Muslim north and Christian South, nor Arab north and Black south failing to get along, as the Arabs in Khartoum attempted to Arabize them (Khalid, ed. 1992; Mamdani, 2009: 87-90), South Sudan’s secessionist nationalism was a product of other processes—internationalist processes and notions—especially the politics of the Cold War, and the War on Terror, claims of genocide and human rights abuses, and underdevelopment. Primordial, religionist or racial claims do not suffice. There is an internationalism in the language of secession. All these reasons were internationalist and coming from elsewhere. Mamdani, for example, has noted:

External factors militated in favor of South Sudan. Madeleine Albright’s decision to back the SPLM against Khartoum in 1997 was a child of Washington’s war on terror. Only a reasonable fear that it could be next target of a U.S. aggression in the post 9/11 era that had begun with the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq explains why the government of Sudan agreed to hold an independence referendum in the South and let half the country to secede...The comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed in 2005, when the South gained autonomy from Sudan in preparation for full independence in 2011, turned out

²¹² Field notes, March-October, 2015, Hargeysa.

to be a shoddy affair. In spite of opposition from some regional states...it was rushed to the table by a troika of western states—the United States, the United Kingdom and Norway—once it was clear that Washington’s interests in the Sudanese civil war had forced Khartoum on the defensive. Without the threat of the U.S. intervention in an African country identified as an enemy in the war on terror, Khartoum would not have signed the agreement (Mamdani, 2016).²¹³

Firstly, it is U.S. interests mobilizing Cold War rhetoric and packaged under the war on terror that drove secession in South Sudan, not internal cultural-political formations. Secondly, by identifying and creating an enemy in Khartoum for South Sudan (South Sudan as proxy for the United States as well), South Sudan independence was given an enemy to escape, an interlocutor around which national sentiments could be mobilized. This was even more evident with the war in Darfur, with the American-interest driven Save Darfur Movement and International Criminal Court (ICC) explaining the violence and deaths in Darfur as Khartoum’s genocidal hand in the region (Mamdani, 2009).²¹⁴ This would be extended and implied for South Sudan highlighting the badness of the government in Khartoum. Sudan-Khartoum then became a cornerstone against which South Sudan defined itself.

Eritrea provides another equally fascinating example of the traits of a community formed by de-imagination. For Eritrea, Tronvoll (1999) notes that with cultural/internal nationalism being intricate and a cause for continuous wrangling between Ethiopia and Eritrea (and also internally within Eritrea), with cultural communities rooted on either side of the border with long histories and cultural connections (1999: 1049- 1053), Eritrean nationalism has been mobilised by other means, that make no reference to any primordial claims. Like is with Somaliland, where Somaliland nationalism finds solace in British colonialism on the one hand, and opposition to Somalia on the other, the Eritreans have also rooted their identity in Italian colonialism which the intelligentsia continues to mobilise for present nationalist ends, with notions of economic development, and having an external enemy around their borders a source of national

²¹³ The other possible explanation is economic deprivation and the absence of democracy in the government in Khartoum evident in several speeches of former SPLM/A leader John Garang (Khalid, ed. 1992).

²¹⁴ *Saviours and Survivors*, especially, the final chapter, ‘Responsibility to Protect or Right to Punish.’

identity and national cohesion. Tronvoll (1999) points to three factors that must have contributed to the rise “a separate and distinct Eritrean identity and consciousness among major parts of the population” (1043). These included “a territorial identity which distinguished Eritreans from the old Greater-Ethiopia identity-sphere” (ibid), which he argues developed out of Italian colonialism having mobilised people under its civilising umbrella after marking them off in the Italian borders (ibid). The second factor is the economic boom that was created in Eritrea during the Italian-Ethiopian war. Tronvoll notes that, “a huge indigenous wage-labour market was created—thereby effecting Eritrean citizens’ inclusion in a modern money economy” (ibid). The third reason is the Ethiopian-Italian war and the role that the Eritreans played with over 50000 of them fighting alongside the Italians. With attention to the first two reasons, Tronvoll notes that the Eritrean intelligentsia continue to exploit them to mobilise a distinct Eritrean identity, whose main characteristic is “based on the notion that Eritreans and their land were more developed than the rest of the Ethiopia empire” (ibid). It is worth noting here that although nationalism is fond of making claims of cultural and ancestral relations to the land, Eritrean nationalism does not claim so. The Eritrean People’s Liberation Front (EPLF) constantly claimed that, “*Eritrea* has never been an ethnic category” (1999: 1054). Instead, it chose to rally nationalism around the peace they had achieved and their history of violence, and in the process constructing an enemy, a significant other, which according to Tronvoll, constructed as all their neighbouring countries including Sudan, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Yemen.

Conclusion

Secessionist nationalism has not received much academic attention (at least in the terms spelt above). And since most secessionist projects never succeed, often enter stalemate, rarely does the scholarship move beyond this failure/stalemate to think about secessionist nationalism as an independent force—a form of nationalism. Part of my ambition has been to introduce “secessionist nationalism” as language in discourses of separatist movements, both successful and ongoing. While I sought to understand the ways in which nationalist sentiments, and identities were mobilised in Hargeysa after the 1991 civil war and in a context of secession, I found that the country being escaped remained permanent in the national psyche of the new one being imagined. It thus follows that the new country has to find its life against or on the back of the old one.

This kind of discovery prompted me to consider other secessionist projects elsewhere and the findings form my conclusions on de-imagined communities discussed above. As I write, Somaliland remains unrecognised as an independent state. Several African countries have secessionist movements in their backyards (active and passive) and cannot countenance the idea of recognising Somaliland as this could open a can of worms for themselves. Somalia, even at its weakest point, is granted the powers under the African Union to be first to let Somaliland leave. I have argued that even if Somalia allowed Somaliland to leave, Somaliland will need to construct a permanent image of “colonial” Somalia as Pakistan continues with India, South Sudan and Sudan, Eritrea with Ethiopia or might have to quickly find new anchors around which to mobilise.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abdi, A. A. (1993). *Divine Madness: Mohammed Abdulle Hassan (1856-1920)*. London: Zed Books.
- Abdile, M., & Pirkkalainen, P. (2011). Homeland perception and recognition of the diaspora engagement: The case of the Somali diaspora. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 20(1), 48-70.
- Abdinassir Hassan M., (2015). *Culture and Statehood: Examining the Viability of Somaliland as a Modern State*. Unpublished MA Dissertation (International Relations), University of Hargeysa.
- Abdullahi, M. Abdurahman. (1950-2000). *The Islamic Movement in Somalia: A Historical Evolution with a Case Study of the Islah Movement*. Unpublished PhD Dissertation, McGill University.
- Abokor, A., et. al. (2005) "Further Steps to Democracy: The Somaliland Parliamentary Elections." London: Progressio.
- Abu-Lughod, L. (2002). Do Muslim women really need saving? Anthropological reflections on cultural relativism and its others. *American anthropologist*, 104(3), 783-790.
- Abu-Lughod, L. (2004) *Drama of Nationhood: The Politics of Television in Egypt*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Achebe, Chinua. (1957). *Things Fall Apart*. London: Heinemann.
- Adam, H. (2008). *From Tyranny to Anarchy: The Somali Experience*. Trenton, N.J.: Red Sea Press.

Adam, H. M. (1994). Formation and recognition of new states: Somaliland in contrast to Eritrea. *Review of African Political Economy*, 21(59), 21-38.

Ahmed, A. J. (1994). Daybreak is Near, Won't You Become Sour? *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies*, 22(1-2).

Ahmed, N. (2015). Influence of Returning Diaspora on Somaliland Politics. Unpublished MA Dissertation (International Relations), University of Hargeysa.

Aidid, S. (2015). The New Somali Studies. *The New Inquiry*. accessed on 15 May 2016 at <http://thenewinquiry.com/essays/the-new-somali-studies>.

Aijaz, A. (1992). *In Theory, Nation, Literatures*. London: Verso.

Akyeampong, E. (2000). Africans in the diaspora: the diaspora and Africa. *African Affairs*, 99(395), 183-215.

Alagoa, E.J. (2002). The Dialogue between the Academic and Community History in Nigeria. In Louise White and David William Cohen eds. *The African Words, African Voices: Critical Practices in Oral History*. Indianapolis: University of Indiana Press, 91-102.

Amin, S. (1972). Underdevelopment and dependence in Black Africa—origins and contemporary forms. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 10(4), 503-524.

Amoko, A. (2010). *Postcolonialism in the Wake of the Nairobi Revolution: Ngugi wa Thiong'o and the Idea of African Literature*. Nairobi: Palgrave.

Amuta, C. (1989). *The Theory of African Literature: Implications for Practical Criticism*. London and New Jersey: Zed Books.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1983.

Andrzejewski B.W. (2011). Poetry in Somali society. *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 23 (1), 5–8.

Andrzejewski, B. W. and I.M. Lewis. (1964). *Somali Poetry: An Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Arnoldi, M. J. (2007). Bamako, Mali: Monuments and modernity in the urban imagination. *Africa Today*, 54(2), 3-24.

Asad, T. (2009). The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam. *Qui Parle*. 17 (2), 1-30.

Asad, T. (1992). Conscripts of Western Civilisation. in Christine Gailey, ed., *Dialectical Anthropology: Essays in Honour of Stanley Diamond*, vol. I, *Civilization in Crisis*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 333-51.

Asiwaju, A. I. Ed. (1985). *Partitioned Africans: Ethnic Relations Across Africa's International Boundaries 1884-1984*. Lagos: University of Lagos Press.

Askew, K. (2002). *Performing the Nation: Swahili Music and the Cultural Politics in Tanzania*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Balthasar, D. (2013). Somaliland's Best Kept Secret: Shrewd Politics and War Projects as Means of State-making. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 7 (2), 218-238.

Barabantseva, E., & Sutherland, C. (2011). Diaspora and citizenship: Introduction. *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 17(1), 1-13.

Barber K. (1987). Popular Arts in Africa. *African Studies Review*, 30 (3), 1-78.

Barnes, C. (2006). Gubo: Ogaadeen poetry and the aftermath of the Dervish wars. *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 18 (1), 105–117.

Barnes, C. and Carmichael, T. (2006). Editorial Introduction Language, Power and Society: Orality and Literacy in the Horn of Africa. *Journal of African Cultural Studies*.

18 (1),1–8.

Bauman, R. (1977). *Verbal Art as Performance*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Ben-Amos, A. (1993). Monuments and memory in French nationalism. *History and Memory*, 5(2), 50-81.

Bendix, R. (1992). National Sentiment in the Enactment and discourse of Swiss Political Ritual. *American Ethnologist*, 19 (4), 768-90.

Benetton, L. (2014). *Somalia: Art of Hope: Contemporary Artistes from Somalia*. Rome: Fabrica.

Besteman, C. (1996). Violent Politics and the Politics of Violence: The Dissolution of the Somali Nation-State, *American Ethnologist*, 23(3), 579-596

Besteman, C. and Cassanelli, L. V. (1996). Eds. *The Struggle for Land in Southern Somalia: The War Behind the War*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press.

Besteman, Catherine. (1996). Representing Violence and "Othering" Somalia, *Cultural Anthropology*, 11, (1), 120-133.

Billig, M. (1995). *Banal Nationalism*, London: Sage.

Bjorkman, I. (1989). *Mother Sing for Me: People's Theatre in Kenya*. London: Zed Books.

Bloch, M. (1974). Symbols, Song, dance and the Features of Articulation. *European Journal of Sociology*, 15, 55-81.

Bohlman, P. (2004). *The Music of European Nationalism: Cultural Identity and Modern History*. California: ABC-CLIO Inc.

Bradbury, M. (1997). *Somaliland: Country Report*. London: CIIR.

- Bradbury, M. (2008). *Becoming Somaliland*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers.
- Brown, C. (1970). *The Sudanese Mahdiya*. R. I. Rotberg and A. Mazrui. Eds. *Protest and Power in Black Africa*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bulhan, H. (2008). *Politics of Cain: One Hundred Years of Crises in Somali Politics and Society*. Bethesda, Md.: Tayosan International.
- Burke, T. (1996). *Lifebuoy Men, Lux Women: Commodification, Consumption and Cleanliness in Modern Zimbabwe*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Burton, R. (1982). *First Footsteps in East Africa*, London: Tylston and Edwards.
- Cabdullahi, R. (2009). *War and Peace: An Anthology of Somali Literature/ Suugaanta Nabadda iyo Colaadda*. London: Progressio.
- Cain, W. E. (1986). Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory: An Introduction (Book Review)*. *Comparative Literature*, 38, 362.
- Camus, A. (1955). *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays*. Translated into English by Justine O'Brien.
- Cassanelli, L. (1982). *The Shaping of the Somali society: Reconstructing the History of a Pastoral People, (1600-1900)*. Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press.
- Cerulo, K. A. (1993). *Symbols and the World System: National Anthem and Flags*, *Sociological Forum*, 8 (2), 243-271.
- Cham, M. (2008). *Official history, popular memory: reconfiguration of the African past in the films of Ousmane Sembène*. *Contributions in Black Studies*, 11(1), 4.

Chappell, F. (1970). Six Propositions about Literature and History. *New Literary History*, 1(3), 513-522.

Chatterjee, P. (1986). *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Chatterjee, P., & Caṭṭopādhyāya, P. (1993). *The nation and its fragments: Colonial and postcolonial histories*. Princeton University Press.

Chomsky, N. (2009). Statement to the United Nations General Assembly Thematic Dialogue on the Responsibility to Protect. New York 23 July 2009.

Cingal, G. (2000). FARAH, Nuruddin, *Yesterday, Tomorrow, Voices from the Somali Diaspora*, New York, Cassell, 2000, 198 pp. *Études littéraires africaines*, (10), 66-68.

Clark, S. (1983). French historians and early modern popular culture. *Past & Present*, (100), 62-99.

Clifford, J. *Diasporas: Further Inflections: Toward Ethnographies of the Future*. *Cultural Anthropology*, 9 (3), 302-338.

Colonial Office Report on the Protectorate Constitutional Conference, held in London in May 1960. Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Colonies by Command of Her Majesty, May 1960.

Connerton, P. (1989). *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Croft, S. (2012). *Securitizing Islam: Identity and the search for security*. Cambridge University Press.

Davidson, A. (1984). People's History and Popular Culture. *Labour History: A Journal of Labour and Social History*, (46), 116-127.

Davidson, B. (1974). African Peasant and Revolution. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 1(3), 269-290.

De Waal, A. (1997). *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa*. Oxford, UK: James Currey.

Devji, F. (2013). *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a political idea*. Hurst Publishers.

Diaspora Somalis. (2015). *Horn of Africa Bulletin*. September-October (2015). 27(5), 13-16

Dipio, D. (2014). Audience Pleasure and Nollywood Popularity in Uganda: An Assessment. *Journal of African Cinemas*. 6 (1), 85-108. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1386/jac.6.1.85_1

Disarmament, Hargeysa, Somaliland. Unpublished report. August 2016.

Dolby, N. (2006). Popular Culture and Public Space in Africa: The Possibilities of Cultural Citizenship." *African Studies Review*, 49 (3), 31-47.

Drewal, M. T. (1991). The state of research on performance in Africa. *African Studies Review*, 34(3), 1-64.

Dritsas, L. (2006). John Edward Philips (ed.), *Writing African History*. Thornton, J. (2005). *European Documents and African History*. Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 76(4), 602-603.

Drysdale, J. (1964). *The Somali Dispute*. London: Pall Mall Press.

Ducale B. Y. (2002). *The Media and Political Reconstruction*. Academy for Peace and Development (APD), Draft Report.

Ducale B. Y. (2012). *Poetry and the Life History: Cabdillahi Suldan Maxamed (Timacadde)*. Addis Ababa: Flamingo Printing Press.

Ducale, Y. (2012). *Boobe. Poetry and Life History of Cabdillahi Suldaan Maxamed (Timacadde) (1920-1973)*. Hargeysa: Boobe Publications.

Eagleton, T. (1983). *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.

Eggers, A. K. (2007). When is a State a State-The Case for Recognition of Somaliland. *BC Int'l & Comp. L. Rev.*, 30, 211.

Ellis, S. (2002). Writing histories of contemporary Africa. *The Journal of African History*, 43(1), 1-26.

Ellis, S. (2002). Writing histories of contemporary Africa. *The Journal of African History*, 43(1), 1-26.

Eno, M. A., & Eno, O. A. (2014). Performance Poetry and Political Conscientization in the Horn of Africa: Examples from the Somali Bantu Jareer Community. *Eastern African Literary and Cultural Studies*, 1(1-2), 95-106.

Fabian, J. (1978). Popular Culture in Africa: Findings and Conjectures. To the Memory of Placide Temples. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 48 (4), 315-334.

Fabian, J. (1990). *Power and Performance: Ethnographic Explorations through Proverbial Wisdom and Theatre in Shaba, Zaire*. Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press.

Fabian, J. (1996). *Remembering the Present: Painting and Popular History in Zaire*. London and Berkeley: University of California Press.

Fabian, J. (1996). *Remembering the Present: Painting and Popular History in Zaire*. California: University of California Press.

- Fanon, F. (1963). *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press.
- Farah, I. (2009). *Foreign policy and conflict in Somalia, 1960-1990* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Farah, Y. and Lewis I.M. (1993). *Somalia: Roots of Reconciliation: Peace-making Endeavors of Contemporary Lineage Leaders: A survey of Grassroots Peace conferences in Somaliland*. Research paper commissioned by Action Aid.
- Farax, M. "Qoti". Dhaxalkii-Gobonimada (Legacy for Sovereignty), Hargeysa: ASAL, (undated).
- Fillitz, T., & Saris, A. J. (Eds.). (2012). *Debating authenticity: Concepts of modernity in anthropological perspective*. Berghahn Books.
- Flaubert, G. (1978). *The Dictionary of Received Ideas*, Bouvard and Pe'cuchet, trans. Krailsheimer A. J., New York: Penguin, 291–330.
- Foucault, M. (1975). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. (Translated by Allan Sheridan). New York: Penguin.
- Foucault, M. (1978). *A History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. Translated by Robert Hurley. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Foucault, M. (2005). *The order of things*. Routledge.
- Fox, M. J. (2015). *The Roots of Somali Political Culture*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Fraser, N. (1990). *Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy*. *Social Text*. No. 25/26, 56-80.

Gagale, I. H. (2016). Challenging Another Dictatorship in Somaliland, in The Somaliland Tribune, issue 124, accessed on the January 20th, 2016, available at: <http://www.somalilandtimes.net/2003/124/12425.shtml>.

Garang, J and Khalid, M. (1992). The call for democracy in Sudan. New York: Keagan Paul International.

Gellner, E. (1983). Nations and Nationalism. Oxford: Basil and Blackwell.

Ghalib, J. M. (1995). The cost of dictatorship: the Somali experience. L. Barber Press.

Giles, M and Zack-Williams, A. B. (2002). Globalisation from below: Conceptualising the Role of the African Diasporas in Africa's Development" Review of African Political Economy, 29 (92), 211-236.

Gramsci, A. (1971). Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci, edited by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith. London: Lawrence and Wishart.

Greene, S. (2002). Sacred Sites and the Colonial Encounter: A History of Meaning and Memory in Ghana, Indiana University Press; Bloomington.

Hall, S. (1981). Notes on Deconstructing the Popular. In Samuel, R. ed. People's History and Socialist Theory. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 227-240.

Hammond, L. (2014). History, overview, trends and issues in major Somali refugee displacements in the near region. New issues in Refugee Research, UNHCR: Research Paper No. 26.

Hammond, L. et. al. (2011). Cash and Compassion: The Role of the Somaliland Diaspora in Relief, Development and Peace-building. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Publication.

Hansen, S. J., & Bradbury, M. (2007). Somaliland: a new democracy in the Horn of Africa? Review of African Political Economy, 34(113), 461-476.

Hargeysa: Department of Planning and Development Hargeysa Municipality. (2011). The Statistical Abstract of Hargeysa Municipality, 5th edition.

Hargeysa: Ministry of Statistics, 2014. Somaliland in Figures: National Development Plan (2012-2016). Ministry of National Planning and Development (MO MP&D) 10th edition.

Harris, J. E. (1996). The dynamics of the global African diaspora', in Alusine Jalloh and Stephen E. Maizlish. Eds. The African Diaspora. Arlington, TX: Texas A & M University Press.

Heath, S. and Barthes, R. (1977). Image-music-text. Fontana Press, London.

Henson, R. (2012). Hargeysa, Somalia: A City Rising from the Ashes. World Literature Today. 86(1).

Hersi, A. A. (1977). The Arab Factor in Somali History: The Origins and Development of Arab Enterprise and Cultural Influences in the Somali Peninsula, Unpublished PhD dissertation; University of California, Los Angeles.

Hess, R. (1966). Italian Colonialism in Somalia. London: The University of Chicago Press.

Hinds, H. E. Jr., "A Holistic Approach to the Study of Popular Culture: Context, Text, Audience, and Recoding," Studies in Latin American Popular Culture 16 (1996): 11-29.

Hobsbawm, E. (1990). Nations and Nationalism since 1970: Programme, Myth, Reality. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hobsbawm, E., and Ranger, T. (Eds.). (2012). The invention of tradition. Cambridge University Press.

Höhne, M. V. (2006). Political Identity, Emerging State Structures and Conflict in Northern Somalia. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 44(3), 397-419.

Höhne, M. V. (2008). Newspapers in Hargeysa: Freedom of Speech in Post-Conflict Somaliland. *Africa Spectrum*, 43(1), 91-113.

Höhne, M. V. (2009). Mimesis and mimicry in dynamics of state and identity formation in northern Somalia. *Africa*, 79(2), 252-281.

Höhne, M. V. (2015). *Between Somaliland and Puntland: Marginalization, militarization and conflicting political visions*. London and Nairobi: Rift Valley Institute.

Hopkins, G. (2004). Exceptional Circumstances: Somali Women in London and Toronto. *Journal of the Anglo-Somali Society*, 35.

Horst, C. (2015). *Somalia's hope for the future? The return of young Diaspora Somalis*. Life and Peace Institute Brief.

Huliaras, A. (2002). The Viability of Somaliland: Internal Constraints and Regional Geopolitics. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 1-26.

Humphrey, M. (2009). Securitisation and Domestication of Diaspora Muslims and Islam: Turkish immigrants in Germany and Australia. *International Journal on Multicultural Societies*, 11(2): 136-54.

Huntington, S. (1993). A Clash of Civilisations? *Foreign Affairs*, 72 (3), 22-49.

Isaacman, A. (1990). Peasants and rural social protest in Africa. *African Studies Review*, 33(2), 1-120.

Issa-Salwe, A. (1996). *The Collapse of the Somali State: The Impact of the Colonial Legacy*. London, Haan.

Jallow, A. and Maizlish, S. (1996). Eds. *The African Diaspora*, College Station: Texas A&M Press.

Jama, M. J. (2003). *A Note on My Teachers' Group: News Report of an Injustice*. Pisa: Ponte Invisible.

Jama, M. J. (2010). Ed. *Somaliland: The Way Forward: Achieving its Rightful International Status*, Pisa: Ponte Invisible.

Jama, M. J. (2011). Ed. *Essays in Honour of Muuse Ismaacil Galaal*, London: Ponte Invisible.

Jama, M. J. (2013). Ed. *Maxamed Ibraahin Warsame "Hadraawi": The Man and the Poet*. London: Ponte Invisible.

Jeffrey, J. (2015). *Somaliland Abuzz from Ethiopia's Khat Convoys*. Aljazeera, retrieved on the 20th April, 2015: Available at:
<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2015/03/somaliland-abuzz-ethiopia-khat-convoys-150325100843701.html>.

Jha, S. (2008). *The Indian National Flag as a Site of Daily Plebiscite*. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 43(43), 120-111.

Jhazbhay, I. (2008). *Islam and Stability in Somaliland and the Geo-politics of the War on Terror*. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 28 (2), 173-205.

Jhazbhay, I. (2008). *Somaliland's post-war reconstruction: Rubble to rebuilding*. *International Journal of African Renaissance Studies*, 3 (1).

Jhazbhay, I. (2009). *Somaliland: An African Struggle for Nationhood and International Recognition*. Johannesburg: Institute of Global Dialogue, and Southern African Institute for International Affairs.

Johnson, J. W. (1974). *Heelloy, Heelleellooy: The Development of the Genre Hello in Modern Somali Poetry*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Kaariye, M. B. (2015). *The Role of Somali Poetry for Somaliland*. Unpublished document.

Kapteijns, L. (1999). *Maryan Omar. Women's Voices in a Man's World: Women and the Pastoral Tradition in Northern Somalia, c. 1899-1980*, Portsmouth: Heinemann.

Kapteijns, L. (2004-2010). I. M. Lewis and Somali Clanship: A Critique. *Northeast African Studies*, 11(1), 1-23.

Kapteijns, L. (2009). Discourse of Moral Womanhood in Somali Popular Songs (1960-1990). *Journal of African History*, 50, 101-122.

Kapteijns, L. (2010). Making Memories of Mogadishu in Somali Poetry about the Civil War, in Kapteijns, L. and Richters, A. eds. (2010) *Mediations of Violence in Africa: Fashioning New Futures from Contested Pasts*, Leiden and Boston: Brill.

Kapteijns, L. (2013). Black Hawk Down: Recasting U.S. Military History at Somali Expense, in Nigel Eltringham ed. (2013b) *Framing Africa: Portrayals of a Continent in Contemporary African Cinema*, Oxford: Berghahn.

Kapteijns, L. (2013). *Clan Cleansing in Somalia: The Ruinous Legacy of 1991*, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Kapteijns, L., & Richters, A. (Eds.). (2010). *Mediations of violence in Africa: Fashioning new futures from contested pasts*. Leiden and Boston: Brill.

Khaldun, Ibn. (1967). *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*. Translated by Franz Rosenthal. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Kleist, N. (2008). *Development and Change: The Somali Diaspora at Work (2008a)*.

Kleist, N. (2008). Mobilising 'the diaspora': Somali transnational political engagement. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 34(2), 307-323.

Kleist, N. (2010). Negotiating Respectable Masculinity: Gender and Recognition in the Somali Diaspora. *African Diaspora*, 3, 185-206.

Kleist, N. and Hansen, P. (2005). The Big Demonstration: A Study of Transborder Political Mobilisation. AMID working paper series 42/2005.

Kusow, A. M., & Mohamud, A. S. (2006). Why Somalia continues to remain a failed state. *African Renaissance*, 3(5), 13-23.

Landau, P. and Kaspin, D. (eds). (2002). *Images and Empire: Visuality in Colonial and Postcolonial Africa*. California: University of California Press.

Levine, L. W. (1978). *Black culture and black consciousness: Afro-American folk thought from slavery to freedom* (Vol. 530). Oxford University Press, USA.

Levine, L. W. (1988). *Highbrow/lowbrow: The emergence of cultural hierarchy in America*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Lewis, I. M. (1961). *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa*. London and New York: Oxford University Press.

Lewis, I. M. (1962). Historical Aspects of Genealogies in Northern Somali Social Structure, *Journal of African History*, 3 (1), 35-48.

Lewis, I. M. (1965). *The Modern History of Somaliland*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

Lewis, I. M. (1988). *A Modern History of Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Lewis, I. M. (1989). The Ogaden and the fragility of the Somali Segmentary Nationalism. *African Affairs*, 88 (358), 573-579.

Lewis, I. M. (1994). *Blood and Bone: The Call of Kinship in Somali Society*. Lawrenceville: Red Sea Press.

Lewis, I. M. (2004). Visible and Invisible Differences: The Somali Paradox, *Journal of the International African Institute*, 74 (4), 489-515.

Lewis, I. M. (2008). *Understanding Somalia and Somaliland: Culture, History, Society*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Lilius, M. (Ed.). (2001). *Variations on the Theme of Somaliness: Proceedings of the EASS/SSIA International Congress of Somali Studies*, Turku, Finland, August 6-9, 1998. Centre for Continuing Education, Åbo akademi University.

Lindley, A. (2006). Migrant remittances in the context of crisis in Somali society. A case study of Hargeysa. *Humanitarian Policy Group Background Paper*.

Lindley, A. (2006). The influence of migration, remittances and diaspora donations on education in Somali society. *Remittances and Economic Development in Somalia*, *Social Development Papers*, 38, 9-18

Lindley, A. (2010). *The early morning phone call: Somali refugees' remittances* (Vol. 28). Berghahn Books.

Lindley, A. (2013). Displacement in contested places: governance, movement and settlement in the Somali territories. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 7(2), 291-313.

Little, P. (2003). *Somalia: Economy without State*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Lotje de Vries, Englebort and Schomerus (2019) eds. *Secessionism in African Politics: Aspiration, Grievances, Performance, Disenchantment*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mailloux, S. (2018). *Interpretive conventions: The reader in the study of American fiction*. Cornell University Press.

Mailloux, S. (1982). *Literary Theory and Social Meanings*. In *Interpretive Conventions: The Reader in the Study of American Fiction*. Cornell: Cornell University Press.

Mamdani, M. (1996). *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Mamdani, M. (2002). *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism and the Genocide in Rwanda*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Mamdani, M. (2004). *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War and the Roots of Terror*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers.

Mamdani, M. (2009). *Saviours and Survivors: Darfur, Politics and the War on Terror*. New York: Pantheon.

Mamdani, M. (2013). *The Logic of Nuremburg*. *London Review of Books*, 7, 33-34.

Mamdani, M. (2016) "Who is to blame in South Sudan?" *Boston Review*, 26 June 2016. Accessed 14 January 2017 at <http://bostonreview.net/world/mahmood-mamdani-south-sudan-failed-transition>.

Matt, B. (1994). *Fiercely Independent*. *Africa Repo*, 39 (6), 35-41.

Mavelli, L. (2013). *Between normalisation and exception: The securitisation of Islam and the construction of the secular subject*. *Millennium*, 41(2), 159-181.

Mazrui, A. (1997). *Islamic and Western Values*. *Foreign Affairs*, 76(5), 118-132.

Mazrui, A. (2005). The Re-Invention of Africa: Edward Said, V. Y. Mudimbe and Beyond. *Research in African Literatures*, 36(3), 68-82.

Mazrui, A. A. (2000). Cultural amnesia, cultural nostalgia and false memory: Africa's identity crisis revisited. *African Philosophy*, 13(2), 87-98.

Mbembe, J. A. (2002). The Power of the Archive and its Limits, in Carolyn Hamilton et al. eds. *Refiguring the Archive*, Cape Town: David Phillips.

Mbembe, J. A., & Rendall, S. (2002). African modes of self-writing. *Public culture*, 14(1), 239-273.

Menkhaus, K. (2004). *Somalia: State Collapse and the Threat of Terrorism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Michaels, A. (1996). *Fugitive Pieces*. New York: Vintage Books.

Michalski, S. (2013). *Public monuments: Art in political bondage 1870-1997*. Reaktion Books.

Mintz, L. E. (1983). Notes Toward a Methodology of Popular Culture Study. *Studies in Popular Culture*. Vol. 6 (1983), pp. 26-34.

Mitchell, T. (1990). Society, economy and the State effect. Steinmetz, Ed. *State/Culture: State-Formation after the Cultural Turn*. Cornell: Cornell University Press.

Mitchell, T. (1991) The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics. *The American Political Science Review*. Vol. 85, No. 1. pp. 77-96

Mohamed, Aar-Abdillahi Mohamed (2001). War Crimes Committed Against the People of Somaliland. Presentation of Somaliland Research Society & SomalilandNet.com at Somaliland International Meeting, London, 2001.

Mohamed, J. (2002). 'The evils of locust bait': Popular nationalism during the 1945 anti-locust control rebellion in colonial Somaliland. *Past & present*, (174), 184-216.

Muršič, R. (2012). "The Deceptive Tentacles of the authenticating mind: on authenticity and some other notions that are good for absolutely nothing." In Fillitz, T. and Jamie Saris, A. eds. (2012). *Debating authenticity: Concepts of modernity in anthropological perspective*. New York: Berghahn Books. pp 46-60.

Nandwa, J. and Bukenya, A. (1983). *African Oral Literature for Schools*. Nairobi: Longman.

Nimo-ilhan, A. (2015). The quest to become a "Qurbajoog." *Horn of Africa Bulletin*. 27(5), 5-12.

Nimo-ilhan, A. (2016). *Going on Tahriib: The causes and consequences of Somali Youth Migration to Europe*. London and Nairobi: Rift Valley Institute.

Obiechina, E. (1973). *An African Popular Literature: A Study of Onitsha Market Pamphlets*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ogot, B. (2001). The Construction of Luo Identity in History. *African Words, African Voices: Critical Practices in Oral History*, 31-52.

Okpewho, I. (1992). *Oral Literature in Africa: Backgrounds, Character, and Continuity*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Olaniyan, T. (1995). *Scars of Conquest, Masks of Resistance: The Invention of Cultural Identities in African, African American and Caribbean Drama*. London: Oxford University Press.

Olaniyan, T. (2004). *Arrest the Music! Fela and His Rebel Art and Politic*. Indianapolis. Indiana University Press.

- Olesko, K. M. (2007). The World We Have Lost: History as Art. *Isis*, 98(4), 760-768.
- Oyěwùmí, O. (1997). *The invention of women: Making an African sense of western gender discourses*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Pai, S. (2009). The National Flag of India. *International Centre Quarterly*, 36(2), 38-47.
- Pape, R. and Feldman, J. (2010). *Cutting the Fuse: The Explosion in Global Terrorism and How to Stop It*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- p'Bitek, O. (1986). *Artist, the Ruler: Essays on Art, Culture, and Values*. Nairobi: East African Publishers.
- Phillips, S. (2013). *Political Settlement and State Formation: The Case of Somaliland*. Development Leadership Programme (DLP), Research Paper 23.
- Ranger, T. (1975). *Dance and Society in Eastern Africa, 1890-1970: The Beni Ngoma*. California: University of California Press.
- Ranger, T. (1987). Peasants Consciousness and Conflict in Zimbabwe. in Shanin, Teodor. Ed. *Peasants and Peasants Societies*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Renders, M. (2007). Appropriate 'governance-technology'? – Somali clan elders and institutions in the making of the 'Republic of Somaliland. *Afrika Spectrum*, 42(3), 439-459.
- Renders, M. (2007). New "Religious Men" in Somaliland," *ISIM Review* 20, 24-25.
- Richards, R. (2014). *Understanding State Building: Traditional Governance and the Modern State in Somaliland*. London: Ashgate.
- Rodney, W. (1972). *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. London: Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications.

Sack, R. D. (1986). *Human territoriality: its theory and history* (Vol. 7). CUP Archive.

Safran, W. (1991). *Diasporas in modern societies: Myths of homeland and return*. *Diaspora: A journal of transnational studies*, 1(1), 83-99.

Said, E. ed. (1980). *Literature and Society*. Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press.

Said, W. E. (1979). *Orientalism*. Random House: New York.

Said, W. E. (2001). *A Clash of Ignorance*, in *The Nation*, accessed on June 20th 2019 at: <https://www.thenation.com/article/clash-ignorance/>

Samatar, A. (2016). *Reconstructing the Somali Love Song at the Birth of the Nation*. Interview with Hip Deep's Banning Eyre, accessed on 10 January 2016 at: <http://www.afropop.org/17557/ahmed-samatar-somali-songs/>

Samatar, A. I. (1987). *Somalia: Nation in search of a state*. Brookfield: Ashgate.

Samatar, A. I. (1988). *Socialist Somalia: rhetoric and reality*. Zed Books.

Samatar, A. I. (1989). *The State and Rural Transformation in Northern Somalia 1884-1986*. Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press.

Samatar, A. I. (1992). *Destruction of State and Society in Somalia: Beyond the Tribal Convention*, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 30(4), 625-641.

Samatar, A. I. (2016). *Africa's First Democrats: Somalia's Aden A. Osman and Abdirazak H. Hussen*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Samatar, A. S. (1982). *Oral Poetry and Somali Nationalism: The Case of Sayyid Mahammad 'Abdille Hassan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Samatar, A. S. (1989). *Oral Poetry and Political Dissent in Somali Society: The Hurgumo*.

Samatar, A. S. (1991) *Somalia: A Nation in Turmoil*, London: Minority Rights Group Report Series.

Samatar, I. A. (1994). Ed. *The Somali Challenge: From Catastrophe to Renewal*. Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Schlee, G. (1989) *Identities on the Move: Clanship and Pastoralism in Northern Kenya*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Schlee, G. (2004) Taking sides and constructing identities: reflections on conflict theory. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*. Vol. 10, No. 1 (Mar., 2004), pp. 135-156.

Schlee, G. (2008). *How Enemies are Made: Towards a Theory of Ethnic and Religious Conflicts*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Schlee, G. (2008b). *Ethnopolitics and Gabra Origins*. Working paper, no. 103. Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology.

Schlee, G. (2013). Territorializing ethnicity: the imposition of a model of statehood on pastoralists in northern Kenya and southern Ethiopia, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 36:5, 857-874, DOI: 10.1080/01419870.2011.626058

Schlee, G. and Abdullahi A. Shongolo (1996). Oromo nationalist poetry: Jarso Waaqo Qooto's tape recording about political events in Southern Oromia, 1991. In: Richard Hayward and Ioan M. Lewis (eds.). *Voice and power: the culture of language in North-East Africa; essays in honour of B. W. Andrzejewski*. London: SOAS, pp. 229–242).

Schlee, G. and Shongolo, A. (2007). *Boran Proverbs in their Cultural Context*. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag.

Scott, D. (1999). *Refashioning Futures: Criticism after Post-coloniality*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Scott, D. (2004). *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment*. London: Duke University Press.

Scott, D. (2014). *Omens of Adversity: Tragedy, Time, Memory, Justice*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Scott, J. (1985). *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New York: Yale University Press.

Scott, J. (1986). Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 13(2), 5-35.

Serunkuma, Y. (2015). On The New Somali Studies: A Response, *Wardheer News*, accessed on 15 May 2016 at <http://www.wardheernews.com/new-somali-studies-response>.

Serunkuma, Y. (2015). Space and Representation: On Authentic Identities and the Façade of Total Revolution, *Dhaxalreeb Xagaaga, Hargeysa*, Red Sea Cultural Foundation.

Serunkuma, Y. "Secessionism in African politics: aspiration, grievance, performance, disenchantment," *African Affairs*, Volume 118, Issue 472, July 2019, Pages 597–602, <https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adz021>

Sheik-Abdi, A. (1977). Somali nationalism: Its origins and future. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 15(4), 657-665.

Sherlock, P. (2008). *Monuments and Memory in Early Modern England*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Company.

Sjögren, A. (2015). Territorializing identity, authority and conflict in Africa: an introduction, *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 33:2, 163-170, DOI: 10.1080/02589001.2015.1065577.

Soyinka, W., & Wole, S. (1990). *Myth, literature and the African world*. Cambridge University Press.

Spears, I. S. (2003). Reflections on Somaliland & Africa's territorial order. *Review of African Political Economy*, 30(95), 89-98.

Steinmetz, G. (Ed.). (2018). *State/culture: State-formation after the cultural turn*. Cornell University Press.

Stewart, P. (1994). This is not a Book Review: On the Historical Uses of Literature, *The Journal of Modern History*, 66(3), 521-538.

Street, J. (1997). *Politics and Popular Culture*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Stritzel, H. (2011). Security, the translation. *Security Dialogue*, 42(4-5), 343-355.

Stritzel, H. (2012). Securitization, power, intertextuality: Discourse theory and the translations of organized crime. *Security Dialogue*, 43(6), 549-567.

Tatira, L. (2001). Proverbs in Zimbabwean advertisements. *Journal of folklore research*, 38(3), 229-241.

Tolstoy, L. Translated by Louise and Aylmer Maude (1930). *What is Art?*. London: Oxford University Press, 171-173.

Touval, S. (1963). *Somali Nationalism: International Politics and the Drive for Unity in the Horn of Africa*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Touval, S. (1967). The organization of African unity and African borders. *International Organization*, 21(1), 102-127.

Tronvoll, K. (1999). Borders of violence-boundaries of identity: demarcating the Eritrean nation-state. *Ethnic and racial studies*, 22(6), 1037-1060.

United States Government. (1982). *Somalia: A Country Study*. Washington: Department of the Army.

Usman Y. Bala. *Beyond Fairy Tales: Selected Historical Writings of Yusufu Bala Usman*. Lagos: Abdullahi Smith Centre for Historical Research, 2006.

Vansina, J. (1994). *Oral Tradition: A Study in Historical Methodology*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 21(59), 1-20.

wa Thiong'o, N. (1981). *Writers in Politics: Essays by James Ngugi wa Thiong'o*. London: Heinemann.

wa Thiong'o, N. (1986). *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*, London: James Currey Ltd.

wa Thiong'o, N. (1998). *Penpoints, Gunpoints and Dreams: Towards a Critical Theory of the Arts and the State in Africa*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Wæver, O. (2011). Politics, security, theory. *Security Dialogue*, 42(4-5), 465-480.

Walls, M. and Kibble, S. (2011). *Somaliland: Change and continuity: Report by International Election Observers on the June 2010 presidential elections in Somaliland*. London: Progressio.

Walls, M. (2009). The Emergency of a Somali State: Building Peace from Civil War in Somaliland. *African Affairs*, 108(432), 371-389.

Walls, M. (2014). *A Somali Nation State: History, Culture and Somaliland's Political Transition*. Pisa: Ponte Invisible Edizione.

Walls, M. (2014). *State-building in the Somali Horn: Compromise, Competition and Representation*. London: Africa Research Institute.

Warner, M. (2002). *Publics and Counterpublics*. New York: Zone Books.

Waterman, A. (1990). *Juju: A Social History and Ethnography of an African Popular Music*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Web, L. U., Badiou, A., & Hallward, T. P. (2010). *Anderson, Benedict. Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. 1983. Rev. ed. London: Verso, 2006. Print.

Appelbaum, Robert. *Terrorism and the Postmodern Novel*. Seminar. Spring 2006. FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA Y LETRAS, 315.

Wedeen, L. (2008). *Peripheral Visions: Publics, Power and Performance in Yemen*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Wedeen, L. (2010). *Reflections on Ethnographic Work in Political Science*. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 13, 255–72.

Werbner, P. (2002). *The place which is diaspora: citizenship, religion and gender in the making of chaotic transnationalism*. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 28(1), 119-133.

White, H. (2014). *Metahistory: The historical imagination in nineteenth-century Europe*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

White, L. (2000). *Speaking with vampires: Rumour and History in Colonial Africa* (Vol. 37). Univ of California Press.

William, R. (1983). *Culture and Tradition: 1780-1950*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Wilson, G. G. (1935). Respect for the National Flag. *The American Journal of International Law*, 29(4), 662-663.

Wolf, N. (1990). *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty are used against Women*. London: Chatto & Windus.

Xasan, M. and Orwin, M. and Nuux, Y. J. eds. (2007). *Hagarlaawe: Diiwaanka Maansooyinka Abwaan Maxamed Xaashi Dhamac 'Gaarriye'*. London: Aftahan Publications.

Zezeza, P. T. (2010). African diasporas: toward a global history. *African Studies Review*, 53(1), 1-19.

Zemon D. N. (1992). Toward Mixtures and Margins. *The American Historical Review*, 97(5), 1409-1416.

Zenker, O. (2013) *Irish/ness is all Around Us: Language Revivalism and the Culture of Ethnic Identity in Northern Ireland*. New York: Berghahn Books.

APPENDIX

Music

Song: Sideed iyo tobankii meeyoo waa (Hail Eighteenth May!) **Singer:** Sahra Halgan

Sideed iyo tobankii meeyoo waa Xornimo subaxdaan haleelee waa Sareedo iyo nolol barwaaqo ahay Habeenkaan nabad ku seexdaayey	Hail Eighteenth May! The dawn of freedom We have Wealth and Prosperity The night I slept in peace
Sideed iyo tobankii meeyoo waa Calankaa guudka noo sudhneey Subaxdaan taagnay udubkiisaay Saacaan gobonimo haleelay aa	Hail Eighteenth May! Our flag flying high upon us The morning we built the pillar The era of freedom
Hobay sanad guuradeeyey Haday sugantahee salku u dhigaayeyey Sacabka u tumoo u saro kaceey Alla nagu simee sidirigam	Hail the anniversary! The foundation for peace is certain Let's stand and celebrate Allah has confirmed this
Raggba dhiigood u saydhiyeyey Sadqeeyoo naftooda soo hureyeyey Saaxiib baryo laguma taaginay eey Sabaale iyo igadh salaaxeey aa	Men shed blood They were slaughtered in the struggle Friends! We didn't beg for our peace It is not gift nor was it a favour
Waxay u samraan silicaaneeyaa Sahanka baadi goob dheerey Lasoo noqoshadii sugnaateeyaa Samaan iyo guul ku joogsadeeyey	There were challenges braved The prediction and search were long What we have (freedom) is stable And is promising and successful
Calankaa oogada sudhaneey Shahaadada lagu sargooyey aa Waxa seeska loo adkeeyo waa Sided iyo tobankii meeyoo waa	The flag is flying upon us And the <i>Shahada</i> is part of it The eighteenth of May It is the foundation of our existence
Saadashu waxay rumoodayaa Dadkduna saxariir ka raysteeyaa Sitaaceena u siraadmuu waa Sideed iyo tobankii meeyoo waa	The dream has been realised People have recovered from destitution The flame is burning, and the scent is in the air Hail Eighteenth May.

Song: Ha Dagan (Beware!) **Singer:** Sahra Halgan

<p>Degmadani siday kusoo doogta iyo Dib u hanashadii intaa door ku maqan Ma diihnoonino waan ognee</p>	<p>The way this land recovered And regaining all our investment We have not forgotten and we remember</p>
<p>Dunidan sidaan dagalka ugalniyo Cadawgii doraad siday damacsanyihiin Ma diihnooninoo waan ognee</p>	<p>This land, and how we have rehabilitated it From the enemy of yesterday, and all their plans We have not forgotten and we remember</p>
<p>Isku duubnideeniyo danta aynu hananaa Ibo ku noqotee hadagan soomaalilaaneey Waa lagu doondaanayaye ha dagan Dereen feegigan lahoow</p>	<p>Our integrity and the work we have done Is a pain to our enemies: Somaliland! Beware The enemies are looking for you! Beware And be vigilant</p>
<p>Digadii la shiday, dirirtii amniga Durba odayadii, damalka ugu dagay Ma diihnooninoo waan ognee</p>	<p>The beginning of a new era and the struggle for peace And the elders concerting under a tree We have not forgotten and we remember</p>
<p>Distoorka iyo sharciga, habka dawladeed Iyo doorashada dimuqraadinimo Ma diihnooninoo waan ognee</p>	<p>The constitution, the law and the bureaucracy And democratic elections We did not forget, and we remember</p>

Song: Tagimayno Xamar Abid (We will Never Go Back to Somalia) **Singer:** Amran Mahad Xuseen. **Writer:** Faysal Aw Abdi Cambalaash

<p>Hobey toban iyo sided meeyey Hobey taariikh cad weeyaaney Hobey qalbigay ku taalaayey Hobey tawxiidka calanka leheeyey Hobey waa markuu tisqaad galayeyey Hobey tashanoo go'aansanayeyey Hobey dawladbaynu taaganayeyey Hobey tabcanoo distoor qoraneey Hobey dalkii wuu talaabsadayeyey Hobey adna yaan lagaa tagineey</p>	<p>Hail Eighteenth May! Hail this clear date This date is seated in our hearts Hail the Shahada in our flag This date has is affirmed We consulted and agreed We established a state Through struggle, we have the constitution The country is progressing Nobody will be left behind</p>
<p>Hobey qarankii istaakulyaa Hobey tusmo khayr leh wuu tagiyeey Hobey baarlamaan aan kala tagin iyo Hobey guurtibaa isku tiirsadayeyey Hobey shacabkiina garab tubaneey Hobey rabiyoow na taakuliyeey Hobey rabiyoow na taakuliyeey</p>	<p>Hail! Building the country together This country will prosper The parliament is working together With a united Guurti (council of elders) With the society behind them May Allah help us! Aamin May Allah help us! Aamin</p>
<p>Hobey lixidankii tabtaan rabayeey Hobey tartankii midnimadiyeey Hobey waa tacab khasaar kale oo Hobey taa anaan u noqonaynoo Hobey dantu waa turxaan li'iyeeey Hobey taayadaaba nagu filaneey Hobey tagimayno Xamar abideey Hobey nimmaan tiisa kaafiyineey Hobey waxbba yaanu li talineey Hobey rabiyoow na tabantaabiyeey.</p>	<p>We had a big dream in the 1960s The race towards unification Is a hopeless cause And we will never return to it (hopelessness) Our new ambition is transparent What we have is sufficient We will never go back to Mogadishu People who cannot solve their problems They will never lead us May Allah gives us support</p>

Song: Xornimo Sumadle (Freedom with Distinction)
Singers: Hidigaha Geeska (Horn Stars).

<p>Xornimo sumadlaa, wanaaga sidoo Sadhii midnimaa, sarreedo dhalee Salka dhigay, samaha qarankiyee Allow u siyaadi nabadaa suganoo Barwaaqo ku soor soomaaliland</p> <p>Dhaaxaan ku sugnaa, qurbahaa sanadoo Runtaba, runtaba ka sal kacay Runtabaa ka sal kacay, hankie I sitee Hadaan sool iyo sanaag tagayoow Dhaayaha sare togdheer subaxo Mawluhu igu simay sabadii berbera Wey, hargaysoo siraadan waan sugaayee Miyaan Saw iyo Sintii Boorame Ubaxayo ku salaamay aan sidoo</p> <p>Walee kuma siisteen saami kale Sundhoow calanyahaw dhushaa sarre oo Sarree abid wanaaga sidoo</p> <p>Roobkii salal iyo oodweyne sinaa Illaa subax iyoo, subax iyoo Saqhexee da'ayey Sare iyo gobanimo Buuhoodle sifiyo Neecoow saxansaxo, sadbay u lahayd Ruuxii saldhigtaa Saraar iyo Hawd Sarrac ka qotaa, sareedo qabee Allah saatiri Gabiley lama simin Cakuye saxar iyo dhul siigo leee</p>	<p>Freedom with distinction, brings goodness Somaliland unification, has delivered prosperity The country is stable for the good of all Oh Allah increase this stability And give Somaliland prosperity</p> <p>While I lived abroad for years I missed the beauties of Somaliland Thinking I was escaping the realty Now I have visited Sool and Sanaag With my eyes I saw Togdheer rising And Allah enabled me to see Berbera I have been waiting to see Hargeysa shining When I reached Saw and Borama, I greeted them with flowers</p> <p>I cannot change you Somaliland for anything else My flag please fly higher upon us Oh flag! Keep flying and bring us goodness</p> <p>The tropical rains in Salal and Oodweyne The rains that pour day in day out It also rains throughout the night And the generosity of Buuhoodle With the fresh air of the tropical rains And those who settled in Saraar and Hawd If they cultivate, they will prosper Allah did not make Gebiley, A place of aridity and dust</p>
---	---

Song: Midigtaan ku xoreynayn mandeeq (Independence is in our Right Hand)

Singer/composer: Boobe Yuusuf Ducale

<p>Bar badiyo magaalo tumnaa Markada dibadaha intii ku maqnayd mawjada dad ahoow jacayl ku marnaa Miyirka socodkiyo mushaaximi bilnaa Muska iyo ciil ku teedsan marinadaaha Cadawgii milicsaday maryaha tuuryoo</p> <p>Miyey miyir beel asqoobeen Maroora dilaac ma quusteen Innana muxubiyo kalgacal mid ah Maashee farxadii magaabinayee</p> <p>Doqmihii muranka iyo makeekiga ahaa Cakuye muusanawga mooday dantee Erayga milkaa la meeri yiqiin Mudoba makaskii majiirayo Ee beenta malaasan miisitiqiin Ku malafsadayoo kumiciinsay gaal</p> <p>Hablihii midabada mulaaxda ahaa Mahuraan dhaqankiyo indhaha marsaday Usoo tababary mushxaradee Calanka mulkiyey mashiikda Da'yartii mitidkaa ku muunaysay Muraad nin lahaa u diiday mirtee</p> <p>Mudh weeye sadeetanimo dhab ahoow Tobanku migle iyo mariin u yihiin Ma meeybaa laabtan meersatayoo Martidu magan iyo martiba u tahoo Dadkii madax iyo midoobay mijoo Maangaabkii saluugay murugoodaa</p> <p>Ma naxaan cadawgii na maaruqay Mujaahid cartamoon mill dhaabaynoo Kaariyo madfacbaa malaaygii liqoo Yaa maali jiraa la magansadayoo Mawlaha rabibaa maciin la bidoo Midigta ku xoreynay mandeeq</p> <p>Togdheer madaxiyo mareegta xidhoo Miscirir Awdal iyo maarayn nabadeed Marsada saaxil iyo madaar ku lamaan Sanaag mudhacyada hidaha mudan Sool waa mus danbee milgihii qarankee Maroodi-dhexjeex mayalka xijisoo</p> <p>Rajjada muuqataan miliilicayaa Dhibtaan mudanaan ka maydhanayoo Martida timibaa markhatiga ahoow Barina meersiyo lasii mudiyeey</p>	<p>Those staying in a place with a port And those who are staying abroad A mass of people who love their country Pleasantly moving around their country People were full of anger, And when the enemy saw it, they fled</p> <p>The people were shocked The people were disappointed But our bonds grew stronger And we are in happiness (with our freedom)</p> <p>Fools quarrel too much²¹⁵ Their ideas are terrible (for Somaliland) They only circulate bad news They can only mislead fools They only publish lies They are addicted to their lies</p> <p>The Somali girls are pretty And they are cultured as expected They are also good at singing They represent their flag Committed young men Avoid the liars for their selfish mission²¹⁶</p> <p>It is clear from the history of the 1980s And our May anniversary is now 20 years Somaliland hosts guests and asylum-seekers Government and the people are united Haters and pessimists will often regret</p> <p>Merciless enemies who committed genocide Our passionate martyrs fought them The well-armed Somaliland soldiers engaged them Somaliland needs more heroes to carry on As we seek Allah's support Independence is in our right song</p> <p>Togdheer organised the conference for independence Awdal managed conflicts among Somalilanders The coast of Saxiil (Berbera) and the airport Sanaag is the home of our "expected" culture Sool is the route of our dear nation Maroodi-Dhexjeex keeps the country together</p> <p>I see hope from a distance We have been cleansed of our dirt Our visitors are witness to this Tomorrow is day for more work</p>
--	--

²¹⁵ (Somalilanders living abroad and criticising Somaliland)

²¹⁶ Of destroying what Somaliland has gained.

Song: Allow noo tiirisee. (Allah has supported us). **Singers:** Mursal and Hidigaha Geeska (The Horn Stars)

<p>Dhididkii naga tif yidhi tacabkiisii helnoo Waxaan u tamarsanaa, saami loo wada tartamay Allow noo tiirisee, u taagnay calankayga Raboow tabantaabiyoo, adigu noo taakulee</p> <p>Soomaalilaand talada, tabay u adeegsato Talaabooyinkii hore iyo, tuskii waa lagaga baxay === hadii lagu taami jiray, horumarr lataaban karo wataa loo tubanyahee, dantii lagu toosayaa == waxaa la tilmaansadaa, tabaabushahaa loo galaa ayaamaha loo tirshaa, sideed iyo tobanka meey. == xil tuurtaa loo ritaa, taageere lagu helaa gacmuhu talantaalibay, tus iyo ood ku hinjiyaan = = wanaag ku tuntuunsano, jidkii ku talaabsanee tawxiidbaa noogu dhigan, taamo aan kala dhignay == Intaa towbad loo ceshaa, illaahay lagu tawakalaa dhabihii uu na faray, tusbaxa loo roгаа == inkastuu tago wakhtigu, taariikhaha meel u yaal waxa lagu tirsadaa, tusaale iyo xasuus. == todobkii nagu hilaac, togagii noo qulqulee xareediibaa tigtigan, naq iyo soo bixi tigaad == halgankii soo taxnaa, xinjirihii tifiq lahaa cadawgii lagu tirtiray, ku taamilo qaaday nacab == markii maydku teetsamee, tumaatida laylsa helay shishaa layska toogtayoo, beenoow tuhunkay qabeen === ilayn nabadbaa tayo leh tusmadii lagu nagaa Xornimo taabka noo gashoo turxaantii laga dhamaa</p>	<p>The sweat that flowed, we earn its fruits We use our effort to increase our harvest</p> <p>Allah has supported us, as our flags flies high Oh Allah keep supporting and guiding us</p> <p>Somaliland has used a good method Previous challenges have been over come</p> <p>If our ambition was to <i>actually</i> move forward, We are standing up, and on the straight path</p> <p>Ours of achievement, and all preparations, And counting of days, points at May 18.</p> <p>The work is on our shoulders, for which we can get support With our hands together, we can lift the trunk of a tree</p> <p>We have put our effort to good, walking on the right path The complete Shahada as part of our flag</p> <p>We ask Allah to forgive us, and put our trust to Him And we are practicing what Allah has commanded</p> <p>Although time has passed, history is written And we'll use these examples and memories</p> <p>The rain season has started, and rivers are streaming The ground is full, and the green grass is thriving (prosperity)</p> <p>The struggle continues as blood was spilled To eliminate all the enemies, and send a strong signal (to all other enemies)</p> <p>The day dead bodies filled the land, we killed as they killed We shot further than them, and they were overwhelmed (frustrated, subjugated, dispersed)</p> <p>Peace has taste, and we are enjoying the fruits (of peace) Freedom is in our hands, and the challenges are over</p>
---	---

Song: Somaliland allow dhawr (May Allah Protect Somaliland) **Singer:** Nuur Daalacay

<p>Somaliland dhalin iyo waayeel dhamaantood Siday udhisteen dhulkoodii Nabada u dhidbeen u dhidbeen U dhidbeen allow dhawr</p>	<p>All Somalilanders: youth and elders How they are building their country Strengthening their peace May Allah bless them</p>
<p>Wa dharaatii waa dharaartii La-taagee la-dhidbayee calankee Dhalaankiinu nabad ku seexdee</p>	<p>Today is the day the flag went up! And our children are sleeping in peace</p>
<p>Xumaha dhaafaha wanaaga dhisaha Wixii dhacayaba dhankiisa hayaha Wadaniga dhabtaa allow dhawr Somaliland allow dhawr</p>	<p>They forgive wrongdoers; support the good And together build the country May Allah protect the patriots May Allah protect Somaliland</p>
<p>Somaliland dhabadii wanaagey dhaqaajeen Siday turxaanta u dhameeyeen Dhigoodii iyo qayrkood u dhaafeen U dhaafeen allow dhawr</p>	<p>Somaliland is on the right path In solving their challenges They are the champions of the horn May Allah protect the champions!</p>
<p>Somaliland dhaxalkii awoowgey ilaasheen Oo aabo tali dhagaysteen Dhagxumi iyo ceebay ka dhawrteen Oo dhiig sokeyey ka dhaarteen</p>	<p>Somalilanders protect their inheritance And they listen carefully to their elders They shun shameful behaviour They swore to keep away from violent conflict</p>

Song: Dhulkiina u hura waxaad haysaan
 (Contribute to your country whatever you have)
Singers: The Horn Stars

<p>Bulshooy hooy bulshooy hagar li'i hodonoo hirgashoo dhulkiina u hura waxaad haysaan</p> <p>hawlaha qarankee u baahan hantidu siday u hagaagayaan horseedka horseedka hawl</p> <p>nabaddaan hadhsanoo waataan hananee dadkoo horumaraa dadyoow ku hamiya</p> <p>hirkii Daaliyo hoobaanta Sanaag allow hilin taga dadkaygoow ay helaan</p> <p>umadaan hadafkiyo lahayn himilada heer maba gaadhaano wanaaga ma hantaan</p> <p>dhaaxay wadadu hadaan ahaydee halisoo ku heermaan dadkii</p> <p>dhulkii hooyaa hiilkaaga rabbee ayaad ku halayn hadaad hagrataan</p>	<p>Somalilanders! Do your best Contribute to your country Whatever you have</p> <p>Our labour and resources are needed For our country to progress</p> <p>The peace that we have Is the one we possess That our country should progress Must be our dream (vision)</p> <p>The beauty of Daalo, and the fruits of Sanaag May Allah gives us a route to reach there</p> <p>Nations without a mission and a vision Never make progress Never earn development</p> <p>Many times, the road was full of potholes There were many dangers causing enormous death</p> <p>Your country needs your support If neglected, who then will support it?</p>
--	--

Song: Dhulka waa la tolayaa (The Land is Mended)
Singers: Nimco Yaasin & Nuur Daalacay

<p>Dhulka waa latolayaa waana lagu tabcaaya inkabadan kun taakoo nin tashaday ma tamar yara</p> <p>Chorus 1: May katal galkeedii maalintii tilmaanayd toban iyo sideedii waataan xusaynee</p> <p>Chorus 2: calanyoow tilmaantaa tawxiidka eebee tiiraan jabaynoow waligaaba taagnoow</p> <p>Qabiil waa la tirayaa waana laga tagaaya tafaraaruqiisoo nin tashaday ma tamar yara</p> <p>*****</p> <p>waxa lagu tisqaadaa iksu tiirsanaantee tacab laysu geeyee nin tashaday ma tamar yara</p> <p>*****</p> <p>taariikhda dunidiyo taxana isdaba yaal ragguubaa tusmeeyoo nin tashaday matamar yara</p>	<p>The land is mended And we will be working We will move a thousand feet Taking a decision is a sign of strength</p> <p>The preparation of May This day we highlighted Ten and Eight We are now celebrating</p> <p>Signalled by our flag With the Shahada of Allah A pillar never to be broken It will forever exist</p> <p>Tribalism is no more We are leaving it behind With all its confusion (disagreements) Taking a decision is a sign of strength</p> <p>What we are growing and moving Into mutual assistance (and unity) Putting our energies together Taking a decision is a sign of strength</p> <p>The history of the world And the continuity of events It is the working of men Taking a decision is a sign of strength</p>
---	--

POETRY

Poem: Soomaali baan ahay (I am a Somali)

Poet: Abdimaliq Coldoon

<p>Soomaali baan ahay Diridhaba anaa lehe Gaarisa anaa lehe Ma ilaawin inay tahay Dhaxalkii awoowahay</p>	<p>I'm a Somali Diridhaba is my land Gaarisa is my land I will not forget that The inheritance of my ancestors</p>
<p>Soomaali oo idil Wax xumaana uma qabo Aan ahayn walaal nimo Afku hadal islaamiyo Isirbaan wadaagnaa</p>	<p>The entirety of Somalia I have no problem with them Except brotherhood We speak the language of Islam We share the ethnicity</p>
<p>Isa saamaxaan idhi Ma jiraan aduunyadan Dad intaa kawada mida Dhulkiinana ilaashada Iska jira cadaawaha</p>	<p>I say, forgive each other We are unique in the world The only homogenous community Protect your land And avoid our enemies (Ethiopia and Kenya)</p>

Poem: Wadankayga hiilkiisa (In Defence of My Country)

Poet: Cabdimaalik coldoon

<p>Waxa dhacay imay wiiqin Wadadayda kam weecan Iyaguna imay waabin</p>	<p>Things that happen never affect me And they never divert me And they never stop me</p>
<p>Warka waan tabinayaaye Wacyigalinta iyo toosba Toosbaan u wadayaaye</p>	<p>I report the news I report it the way it happens I raise awareness straight</p>
<p>Wadankayga hiilkiisa Waraabaha ka celintiisa Wacad baan ku marayaaye</p>	<p>In defence of my country To protect it from the enemy It is a promise I made</p>
<p>Sidan laguma waaraayo Warwar laguma jiifaayo Wuxuunbaa hagaagaaya</p>	<p>We will not be the way we are Living in fear The future is bright</p>
<p>Mugdiga wareegaaya Waqalbaa hilaacaaya Waabaa dilaacaaya</p>	<p>Darkness will return And thunder will roar And a new era will be born</p>

Dhaanto: Somaliland
Poem: Ahmed Budul

<p>Bal arag caasimadaa Hargeysa Hargeysa casriga ku nool Bal arag oo cajaanibkaa Bal arag caynka ay yihiin</p>	<p>Look at the city of Hargeysa Life is modern in Hargeysa Look at how wonderful Look at how they are</p>
<p>Bal arag hablo camal sanoo Bal arag caafimaad qabaa Bal arag ku caweeya oo Hargeysa ku caantahayee</p>	<p>Look and how well behaved their ladies are Look at how healthy they are Look at the Hargeysa entertained they are And Hargeysa is popular for these</p>
<p>Bal arag caradii saaxiliyo Bal arag ciida awdal taal Bal arag laysma caasiyee Bal arag caynka ay yihiin</p>	<p>Look at the land of Saaxiliyo Look at the land of Awdal Look and do not belittle them Look at how they are</p>
<p>Madaxwayne cadaala ku caanahoo Caqli garasha iyo cilmi badan laho Codka shacabka haysta oon cabsanayninbaa Ciida Somaliland cirka gaadhsiiyayoo Calankii u sida oo dadku wada calmaday</p>	<p>A trustworthy President With a powerful mind and knowledge Has the vote of the people and is not feared! The land of Somaliland rises higher Holds the flag and people love him</p>
<p>Bal arag cidhifyada togdheer Bal arag cuudka daaqayee Bal arag dhiilka loo cushee Bal arag laga caano dhamo</p>	<p>Look at the edge of Togdheer Look at the animals eating pasture Look at the milk jars prepared Look at how they drink milk all the time</p>
<p>Bal arag ceerigaaba iyo Bal arag cosobkii sanaag Bal arag cawsha joogta iyo Ugaadha cadceedsatee</p>	<p>Look at Erigabo Look at the green of Sanaag Look at how deers flourish Look at the animals busking in the sun</p>
<p>Bal arag cirka Daalo helay Cagaarka kasoo bixiyo Ba arag dhirta wada caleen Celeemaha lagu camiray</p>	<p>Look at the rains in Daalo And the grass is thriving Look how all the trees are green The green leaves covering all the trees</p>