



Scars of the past! A psychosocial examination of corrupt ethnic nationalism in Somalia during the Issaq Genocide

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Rationale for research

- This dissertation centralises on the complexities of corrupt ethnonationalism in Somalia during a time of political uproar during the dictatorship of Siad Barre and the violent regime he deployed during his presidency.
- To further detail the histories of political violence that was imposed, this research will detail the case of the 'Hargeisa Group,' also known as the 'UFFO,' a self-help socialist group of academics and professionals subject to horrific war crimes and extreme violence.
- I aim to examine the extent of political discourses during the Issaq genocide contribution to the perpetuation of complex identity formations among the affected communities, and how do these identities intersect with broader social, political, and cultural dynamics.
- This research will employ qualitative methods of critical discourse to fill the gap in the literature by connecting how political violence in Somalia was justified by corruption within ethnonationalists, clan culture superiority and histories of categorisations due to colonisation.
- A unique standpoint as I aim to connect these with psychosocial frameworks of subjectivity and complex identities. Opening the discussion for how power and violence were used to subjugate the members of the 'Hargeisa group' and how perception and identity were navigated in these processes of human rights abuses within a corrupt governmental

Research Questions

How did the members of the 'Hargeisa group perceive and navigate their identities in the aftermath of experiencing human rights abuses within a corrupt governmental system?

How does language, particularly the rhetoric used by political leaders and influential figures , shape perceptions of corruption, power, and identity during and after the Issaq genocide?

How has political discourses around ethnic nationalism during the Issaq genocide in Somalia/Somaliland perpetuated subjectivity and complex identity?

What are the key themes and narratives present in the discourse surrounding the Issaq genocide, and how do these narratives contribute to the formation of subjectivity among different groups affected by the genocide?

Methods

Fairclough's Model of CDA:

- **Text**
(the objects of linguistic analysis)
- **Discursive practices**
(the production, distribution and consumption of texts)
- **Social practices**
(the power relations, ideologies and hegemonic struggles that discourse reproduce, challenge or restructure)



What is it 'CDA'?

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is discourse analysis is a qualitative and interpretive method of analysing texts or documents

CDA offers an analytical approach in identifying the relationship between social structure and power

Why for this study?

(NAA) offers a contextual background of the important historical artifacts of the UFFO group due to its story like examination it provides a rich tapestry of detail to connect the themes that become relevant

Explaining the impacts of Siad Barre's regime, its heavy political corruption

Fairclough (2013) argues that the relation between social processes and social practices 'mediate' a relationship between the organisation/ structuring of institutions. To explore the relation of power and dominance with social inequality including 'racial' and 'cultural' inequality

This study uses critical discourse analysis as its the most appropriate method for data collection and analysis as it based on historical events

& a Narrative analytical approach to explore and explain the Hargeisa group its formation, purpose, what happened to them? The context.

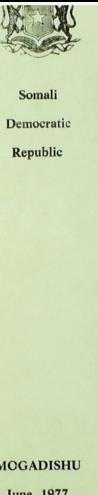
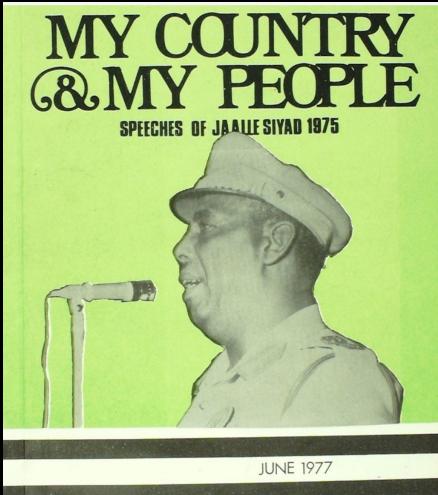
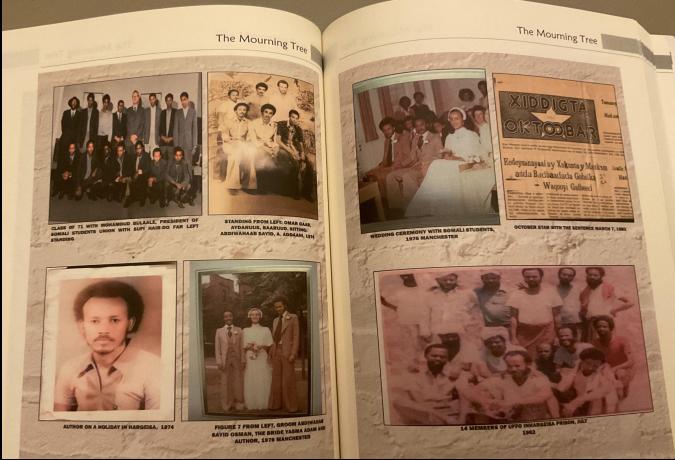
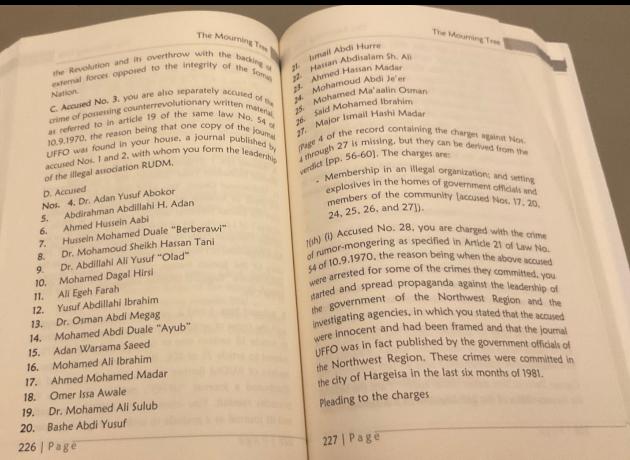
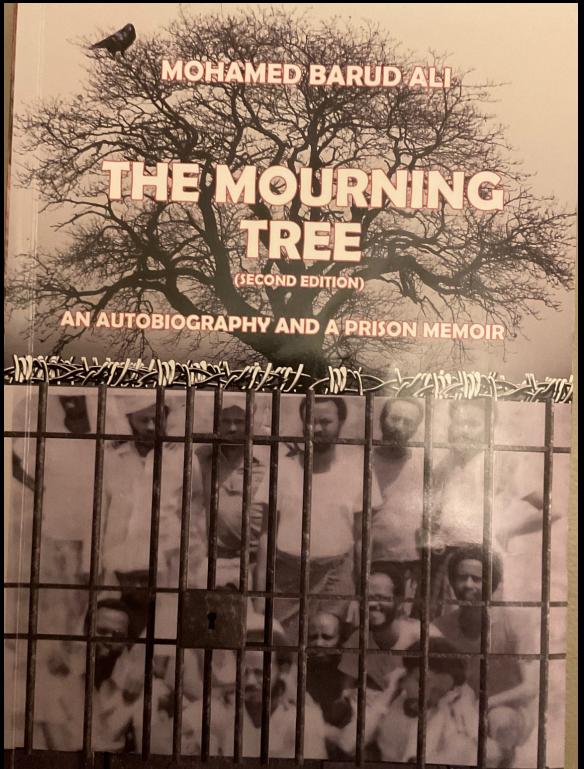
Data

Two sources of secondary data

1. A collection of Siad Barres political speeches 'My country my people'

By Siad Barre 1975

2. A book 'The mourning tree' By Mohamed Barud Ali (A member of the UFFO group)



**My Country
and
My People**

Selected Speeches
of Jaalle Siad,
Chairman of the SRC
1975

Published by the
Ministry of Information

'UFFO' The Hargeisa group

Who were they and what happened to them?

Stories About Working

UFFO

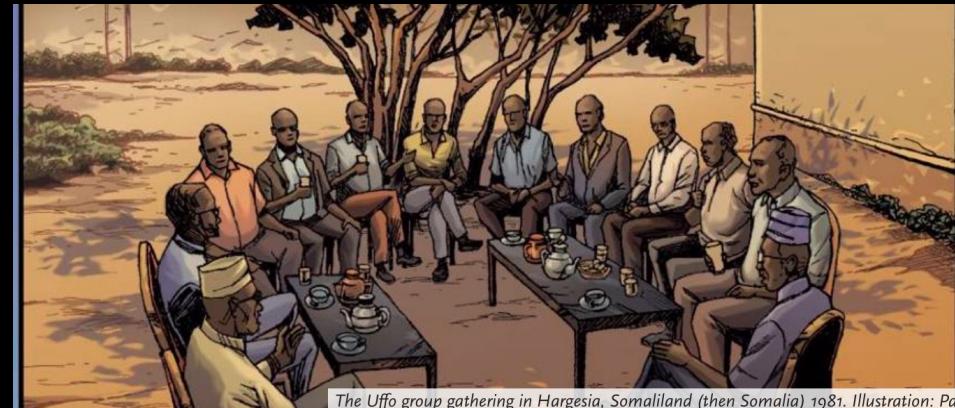
IN THE EARLY 1980S THE PEOPLE OF SOMALILAND* SUFFERED GREATLY FROM THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE SIAD BARRE REGIME AND THE EFFECTS OF THE 1977-1978 WAR WITH ETHIOPIA: HARGEISA DID NOT HAVE ADEQUATE BASIC SERVICES SUCH AS ELECTRICITY, SANITATION, AND HEALTHCARE. AT THE SAME TIME, POLITICAL OPPRESSION WAS BLATANT.

DESPITE THE HIGH RISKS A GROUP OF YOUNG PROFESSIONALS, INCLUDING TEACHERS, ENGINEERS, AND DOCTORS, INITIATED SELF-HELP ACTIVITIES WITH THE AIM OF PROVIDING VOLUNTARY ASSISTANCE TO THE PEOPLE IN SOMALILAND. THEY STARTED WITH CLEANING AND REFURBISHING THE HARGEISA GROUP HOSPITAL. LOCAL BUSINESSMEN AND COMMUNITY LEADERS MOBILIZED FUNDING, AND A RELIEF ORGANIZATION CALLED GERMAN EMERGENCY DOCTORS PROVIDED ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT, STAFF AND FUNDING.

THANKS TO THESE ACTIVITIES THE CONDITIONS OF THE HOSPITAL IMPROVED TREMENDOUSLY, AND THE GROUP GREW IN POPULARITY. HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT STARTED TO BECOME SUSPICIOUS OF THE SELF-HELP GROUP. ITS SUSPICION INCREASED WHEN PEOPLE WORKING FOR THE STATE CAME TO POSSESS A NEWSLETTER CALLED UFFO, WHICH VOICED INJUSTICES IN THE REGION. THE NEWSLETTER HAD BEEN PRODUCED IN SECRET BY TWO MEMBERS, WHO HAD DISTRIBUTED IT THROUGH TRUST-BASED NETWORKS.

IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 1981, 28 YOUNG INTELLECTUALS WERE ARRESTED BY THE REGIME AND WERE ACCUSED OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES. THE REGIME MAINLY TARGETED PEOPLE FROM THE ISAAQ CLAN, AND SEVERAL OF THOSE WHO HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN THE ACTIVITIES WERE NOT ARRESTED. THE ARRESTED INTELLECTUALS WERE INTERROGATED AND TORTURED FOR MONTHS. IT BECAME KNOWN AROUND HARGEISA THAT THE INTELLECTUALS WERE FACING DEATH SENTENCES. THIS CREATED OUTRAGE AMONG THE POPULATION, AND ON THE DAY OF THE PLANNED TRIAL, 20TH FEBRUARY 1982, STUDENTS, TOGETHER WITH OTHER RESIDENTS STARTED TO PROTEST OUTSIDE THE COURT BUILDING.

THE POLICE, WITH HELP FROM THE MILITARY, SUPPRESSED THE DEMONSTRATIONS, AND MANY STUDENTS WERE INJURED AND ARRESTED. ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE PROTESTS ONE STUDENT WAS KILLED. DESPITE THE VIOLENT REPRISALS, THE PROTESTS CONTINUED AND SPREAD TO OTHER CITIES.



The Uffo group gathering in Hargeisa, Somaliland (then Somalia) 1981. Illustration: Pat Masioli

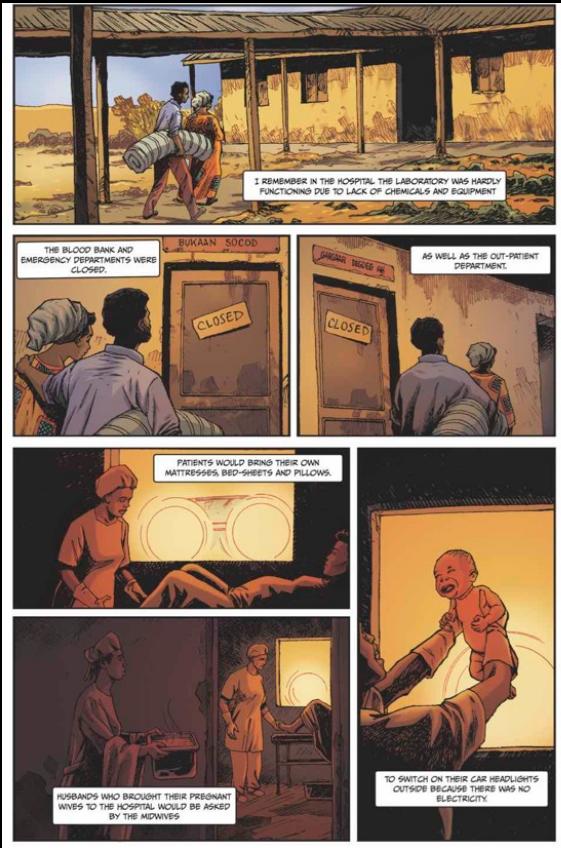
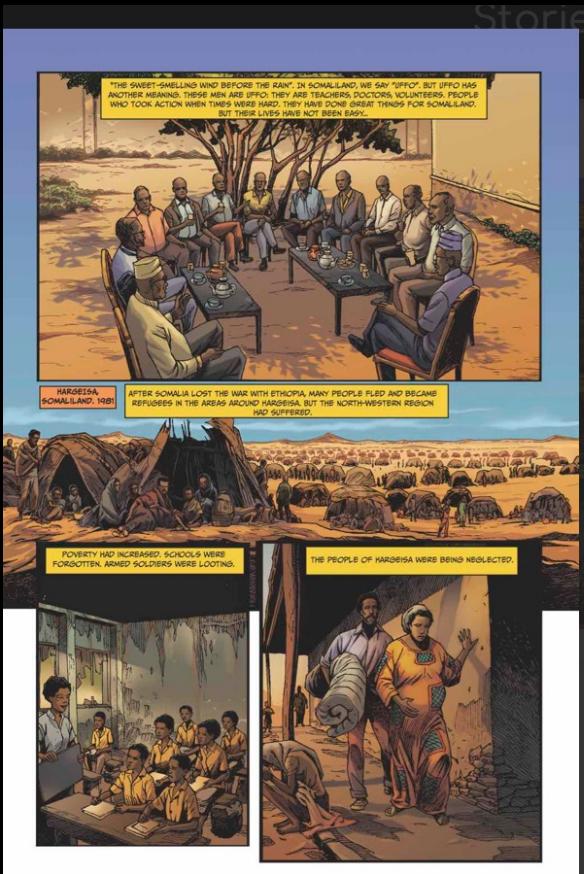
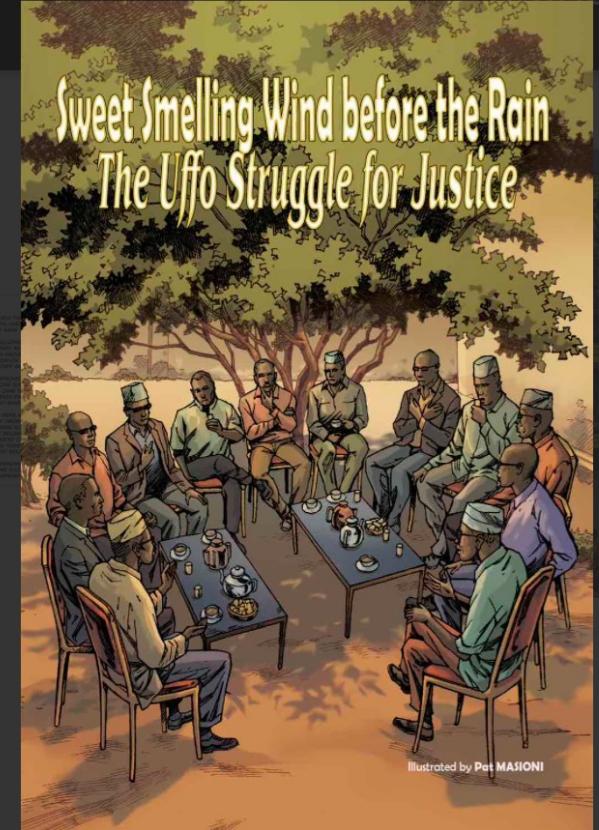
DUE TO THESE REACTIONS, THE REGIME COMMUTED THE DEATH SENTENCES TO PRISON SENTENCES RANGING FROM THREE YEARS TO LIFE. EIGHT PRISONERS WERE RELEASED. THE MAJORITY SERVED THEIR SENTENCE IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT IN THE NOTORIOUS PRISON, LABAATAN JIROW ('20 YEARS'), IN THE SOUTH. SEVERAL OF THEIR FRIENDS IN THE DIASPORA STARTED TO LOBBY FOR THEIR RELEASE, WITH THE SUPPORT OF NGOS SUCH AS AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND US NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES COMMITTEE OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

MEANWHILE, THE STUDENT PROTESTS CONTINUED AND MERGED INTO THE ARMED MOVEMENT WHOSE STRUGGLE LED TO THE FALL OF THE DICTATORSHIP AND THE SELF-PROCLAMATION OF SOMALILAND IN 1991. THE PROTEST IS REMEMBERED AS THE DHAGAX TUUR, WHICH MEANS 'STONE THROWING'. IT IS COMMEMORATED EVERY YEAR AND IS REGARDED AS THE BEGINNING OF THE RESISTANCE.

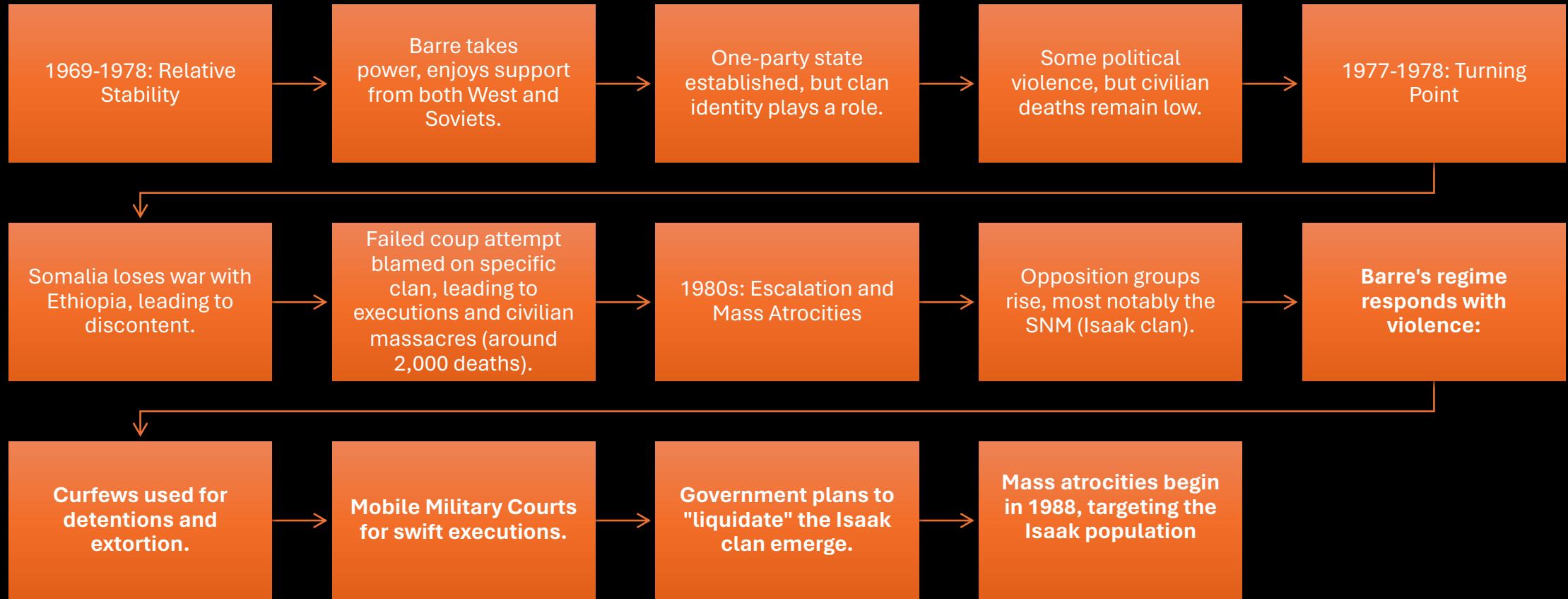
AFTER EIGHT YEARS IN PRISON, THE PROFESSIONALS WERE RELEASED. THEY RETURNED TO HARGEISA AND FOUNDED SOMALILAND'S FIRST HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATION: THE SOMALI RELIEF AND REHABILITATION ASSOCIATION (SORRA). THE ORGANIZATION FOCUSED ON REHABILITATING AND CONSTRUCTING HARGEISA AS WELL AS BUILDING SCHOOLS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. IN 1993, SORRA RAISED FUNDS FOR THE BOROMA PEACE CONFERENCE.

A historical comic “Uffo” which tells the true story of doctors and teachers in the 1980s in Somaliland, who engaged in humanitarian activity and political critique when they created a self-help group to restore the hospital in Hargeisa

By Ebba Tellander and produced by Positive Negatives for the Societal Transformation in Conflict Contexts (TRANSFORM) project.



Siad Bare's Regime:



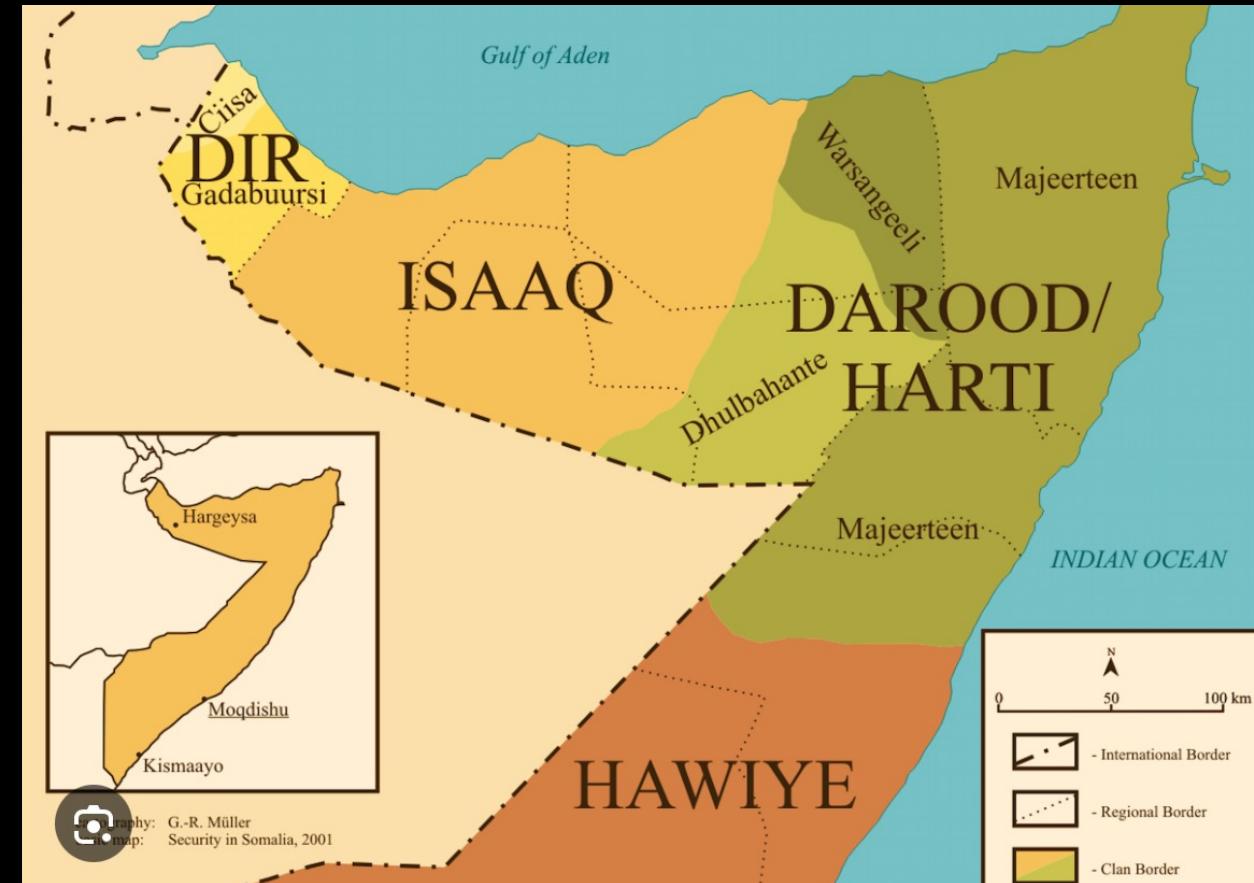
Clans in Somalia

What is a clan?

A clan is a patrilineal large group of people who believe they share a common ancestor. These clans can be complex and include sub-clans.

Key features of clans in Somalia:

- Descent: Clan membership is based on perceived or actual descent from a shared ancestor.
- Social Identity: Clan affiliation is a strong part of someone's social identity in Somalia.
- Historical Significance: Clans have played a major role in Somali history and continue to influence politics and social dynamics.
- Internal Divisions: Clans can be further divided into sub-clans, which can sometimes lead to competition or conflict.



Why is this significant?

Clan culture is a central aspect of the Somali people's identity socially and politically

Clan loyalty and interclan violence are basic and accepted ingredients of Somalis sociopolitical life despite being one of few countries in Africa with ethnic, cultural and religious homogeneity

The focus is on the division that it has bred in Somalia's history with violence, war crimes and economic struggle

Making connections using three psychosocial frameworks

Subjectivity:

- Refers to the experience of the self as a subject
- Examines how individuals come to understand themselves and their place in the world
- Considers the role of social, cultural, and political forces in shaping subjectivity

Coloniality :

- Refers to the ongoing effects of colonialism on colonized societies
- Examines the ways in which colonial power relations continue to shape social, political, economic, and cultural structures
- Considers the concept of decolonization as a process of challenging and dismantling these structures

Identity:

- The sense of self that we develop over time
- Examines how identity is shaped by social, cultural, and political forces
- Considers the concept of identity as a fluid and contested concept

Concluding Ideas | Aims | Purpose

- How political violence in Somalia was justified by corruption by ethnonationalists, clan culture superiority and histories of categorisations due to colonisation
- The ‘issaq Genocide’ is commonly known as the ‘forgotten genocide’ how can such heinous violence be underresearched and underepresneted in social research
- A documentation of the hargesia group ‘UFFO’ the war crimes they suffered as a result clan conflict
- Is there a link to the colonial legacy of the East African country is it rooted in the division of Somalia that was in simple terms categorised into five states by the British, French and Ethiopians in 1827-1990 the issaq genocide was a period of six years (1988-1993) likely resulted in 50,000 to 100,000 civilian deaths as a direct result of violence or hostilities.
- What are the key themes and narratives present in the political discourse surrounding the Issaq genocide, and how do these narratives contribute to the formation of subjectivity among different groups affected by the genocide