

EXCERPTED FROM

The Roots of Somali Political Culture

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1

A Fragmented State

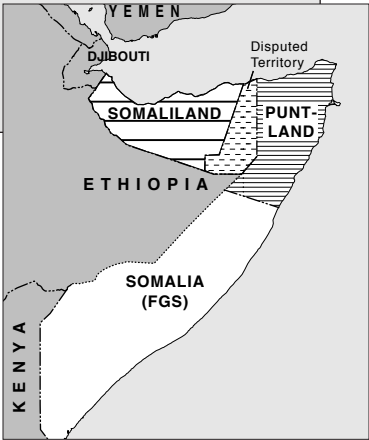
The value of historical evidence, harnessed in focused, within-case comparisons of successive periods of history in a single country, remains relatively untapped.¹

The fragmentation of the former Somali Democratic Republic as three distinct political entities constitutes a political and legal phenomenon, the likes of which exists nowhere else in the world today. Most remarkable is the sheer durability of what is now Somaliland, Puntland, and the recently formed Federal Government of Somalia (FGS).² How they came about and why they have endured for more than twenty years is a complex political puzzle that has engendered a significant body of literature. Yet behind the range of explanations and the more immediate news of Somali political struggles, al-Shabaab's persistence, humanitarian crises and international involvements, there are compelling historical influences that are able to shed some light on present circumstances.³ Some of these influences can be observed in the deep-rooted path of Somalia's political culture, or rather, the distinctive historical political culture *paths* of the "three Somalias."

Of these three independently administered regions, Somaliland and Puntland have been and still are relatively peaceful, consensual in character and economically viable, though in their own distinctive ways. In contrast, the south has remained the focal point of unrelenting violent conflict based on the political power rivalries of different groups at different times. More recently, the south's FGS has provided some reasons for optimism, though even with renewed international support, it still has a long road ahead of it. As an oft-cited example of a failed state, the south still experiences the year-in, year-out cycle of attempted reconciliations and conflict management punctuated with violent armed conflict. This so contrasts with the very different circumstances in the two northern regions, which have manifested as persistent political



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stability rarely seen in newly independent states not only in Africa, but globally as well. Perhaps most notable among the three is democratically-inclined Somaliland in the northwest, which since 1991 has been unrecognized internationally and is far from ideal, but has successfully created and held on to its home-grown *de facto* sovereignty. Autonomous Puntland in the northeast has experienced several successive attempts at centralised, *ad hoc* administration in an effort to run its day-to-day affairs largely through consensus and election, though the appeal of profits from piracy did interfere with these efforts at one point. In regard to southern Somalia, for years its unrelenting bad news has eclipsed the good news of the north, and was responsible for the violent images that would first come to mind when the word “Somalia” was mentioned at all. It is extraordinary that on a continent which has been so saturated with violent conflict and immeasurable suffering that peaceful progress of any kind emerging from this sisyphian Somali dilemma has taken place, the circumstances of Somaliland and Puntland serving as surprising deviations from what had come to be expected as a discouraging norm for Somalia on the whole. The case of Somalia is an anomaly in the midst of more than a few states on the African continent itself, which has seen more than its fair share of authoritarian rule and violent conflict in the post-colonial era.

These unique circumstances stand out even when viewed from a global perspective, where there is a roster of other contemporary quasi states or stateless states, from Palestine and Kurdistan to Taiwan and Transnistria, and it is additionally distinctive from them in two quite notable ways. First, and most obviously, it has not only remained consistently divided, but has been so divided as primarily *three* distinct entities rather than the usual two in other divided states and entities. The second distinction concerns how the division has taken place amongst a purportedly homogenous people and their shared ethnicity and shared culture, particularly their agnatic, segmentary clan system.⁴ This is a significant departure from many other divided states since the conflict divisions here are not specifically nor primarily characterised by or based on marked ethnic or religious differences, though some extremist religious element presently does exist within southern Somalia. However, that religious element only serves to further divide the south itself, and has had very limited impact on the two northern entities.

Curiously, although a range of arguments have been forwarded to explain the extended and extensive demise of southern Somalia, ranging from innate clan structure to land distribution inequities to poorly conceived external interventions,⁵ no equivalent contrasting arguments have been proposed to explain the north.⁶ This is in spite of numerous

and excellent descriptive works examining the north, but yet not accounting for *why* the outcome in the north might have been able to come to pass in the first place. In addition, the significant historical differences between the three regions do not appear to have been comparatively explored or assessed.⁷ For example, it is well known and acknowledged that there was a colonizing Italian presence in southern Somalia for several decades, as well as British administration in the northwest during roughly the same period, yet the influence of those differences and their subtleties, as well as their more apparent similarities and the legacies which were created have not received the attention they well warrant.⁸ Of particular importance is the precolonial era, which has only been lightly touched on within discrete topics, and also not comparatively explored. As such, this era merits inclusion in the larger story, adding more historical depth to the overall picture.

It is the very nature of these differences throughout time among the three Somalias that is so compelling and reveals how the ways in which they each have cooperated and conflicted have varied in substance consistently through the precolonial, colonial, and post-colonial eras. This long-term view involves a stepping back in order to take that longer view, using a different lens for different views. Within the historical record, in between the history of governments and leaders, there is a further story to tell, one that identifies, compares and contrasts meaningful political patterns among the Somali populations as they pass from one decade to the next, and then one generation to another. There were, after all, some events and some treatment that the Somalis experienced as a whole, crossing clan and social boundaries, sharing experiences at a broad level. This approach coexists with other lines of explanations and historical approaches and does not supersede or negate them, aiming only to examine political culture patterns over time.⁹

An Overview of Somali Culture

Before scanning the wider sweep of Somali history, a brief outline of the centuries-old clan system and particularly its traditional self-governing component is valuable. As a distinctly identifiable people who for centuries had no centralized rule, how well the Somalis established a functioning political order among themselves was no small feat. The Somali clan system and its accompanying culture is intricate and vast, its complexities having been well documented and intensively discussed for decades. Understanding clan and kinship alliances and their built-in paradoxes, the genealogical tree itself, the significance of Somali oral history and poetry, the differences and similarities between pastoralists,

agro-pastoralists, and sedentary farmers as well as urban versus rural dwellers, and much more are all elements of a complex integrated web which is perpetually changing in sometimes subtle and sometimes overt ways. Here, only an overview of what is more immediately relevant as background for the larger discussion is covered, particularly in view of the overriding focus on clan despite the fact that clan division is by no means the only social division.¹⁰ In view of this, the intricacies of clan mapping, ever-shifting clan relations and speculation on the contemporary significance of the agnatic clan system are not examined.¹¹

The Somali people can be traced back about two thousand years. They are part of a wide group of peoples of the Horn of Africa called Eastern Cushites, and then from an early sub-group referred to as the Proto-Sam. The branch that settled in southern Somalia as agro-pastoralists after the first century CE came to be known as the Samaale. Prior to this, and reaching back to the time of Alexander the Great, there are references to trade in aromatic spices between early ancient Egypt and people from a region known as the “land of Punt”. Somalis today trace their ancestry agnatically back to a foundational bifurcation which categorizes them as either Samaale or Sab, the former primarily pastoral and located mainly in the north, and the latter sedentary-pastoral (according to season and circumstances), and located primarily in the south. The names Samaale and Sab both refer to mythical individuals from whom the six major clan-families are said to descend, the Samaale widely believed to have been founded by Muslims from the Arabian Peninsula. The four main Sammale clans are the Darod, Dir, Hawiye and Isaaq. The primary clan in the south, the Rahanweyn, is considered to be of Sab extraction, and divides into two sub-clans, the Digil and the Mirifle, the latter sometimes used interchangeably with Rahanweyn. These six primary clan groups further divide into decreasingly smaller familial units.

The Samaale eventually populated the entire Horn by approximately 1000 CE. The clan-family system seems to have necessarily developed as a survival and organizing strategy, and has endured because it proved to be such a successful strategy. It is generally accepted that clan system foundations can most likely be found around 1000 CE, from its agnatic focus to consensus-based decision making, from set rules and fines for settling disputes to the role of marriage in forming alliances and more. In lieu of overarching political rule, it served the lifestyle of the Samaales well and proved to be a stabilizing influence. By the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Islam added to this and became an additional stabilizing influence. Although Islam had been slowly gaining ground since the seventh century, increased travel due to increased trade

accelerated its widespread acceptance. Pairing the clan system with Islam resulted in a potent and resilient social structure that was to last for centuries.

Over time the six main clan families expanded and broke down into smaller units as sub-clans with more immediate common ancestors. The most politically and socially relevant clan-family unit became the diya-paying unit, also known as the mag unit. Besides sharing a common ancestor, diya-paying units also held a shared collective responsibility for and entitlement to compensation in cases of offences committed by or to them, and this included homicide. Over time, Somalis thus had at once a sense of a distant ancestor shared by almost all of them and yet the more immediate day-to-day belonging to their diya-paying group. To quote Laitin and Samatar, who articulate the consequences so clearly:

A curious feature of Somali segmentation is that it is both centripetal and centrifugal, at once drawing the Somalis into a powerful social fabric of kinship affinity and cultural solidarity while setting them against one another in a complicated maze of antagonistic clan interests. A person, for example, gives political allegiance first to his/her immediate family, then to his immediate lineage, then to the clan of his lineage, then to a clan-family that embraces several clans, including his own, and ultimately to the nation that itself consists of a confederacy of clan-families...The result is a society so integrated that its members regard one another as siblings, cousins, and kin, but also so riven with clannish fission and factionalism that political instability is the society's normative characteristic.¹²

It is important to note here that the political instability Laitin and Samatar refer to was never, throughout the centuries, so great that it resulted in the demise of the Somali people, however. The “clannish fission and factionalism” does not necessarily doom Somalis to be caught on an endless loop of inevitable internal fighting, as their self-governance includes the existence of a legal system referred to as *xeer* or *heer*.¹³ *Xeer* is a precedent-based social code which served and serves today as a necessary restraint and moderating role in disagreements and feuds between groups and individuals. It might be maintained that the moderating influences of *xeer* and Islam together historically controlled society as a whole, keeping it from even more frequent and more intensive conflict. *Xeer* not only determined relations within clans but between them as well, with conflicts largely resolved by groups of elders who determined damages and penalties for undesirable behaviour.

More than fifty years ago, the founder of Somali studies, I. M. Lewis, noted, “the cohesion of Somali pastoral groups, which is

exceptionally strong, thus does not depend either upon territorial attachments or upon allegiance to a political office. Its basis lies rather in community of descent in the male line (*tol*) and in a kind of social-political contract (*xeer*, also *heer*).¹⁴ Xeer is also described by Ahmed I. Samatar as being one of the two elements which comprise kinship ideology, the other element being blood-ties or genealogical descent.¹⁵ These and other practices within the clan system had been a way of life for hundreds of years, and had brought the Somalis forward into the modern era successfully; it was a system that functioned well enough for the Somalis to have experienced significant autonomy for centuries.¹⁶

Decisions were deliberated by the *shir*, somewhat equivalent to an ad hoc village council and at which all males were ostensibly permitted to voice their opinions. A high council of consensually agreed-upon elders, known as *gurti*, also took part in shir deliberations and ensured that contracts were kept. The degree to which decisions were determined by adult males or the *gurti* depended on local or regional practice, although it is notable that freedom for non-*gurti* males to speak is known to be more prevalent with the northern clans. The *gurti* were particularly relied on for matters relating to conflict and the resolution of conflict.¹⁷ There were of course some other regional and clan differences in practice, but the fundamental system was shared. It was with such significant skills for self-rule acquired partly through the practice of *xeer* that the Somalis entered the nineteenth century, encountering an unending procession of European visitors and intruders who shared an increasing interest in the Horn of Africa. To varying extents their indigenous mode of ordering and governing themselves was interfered with and interrupted as European colonial ambitions intensified. The fact that the Somalis had been well able to manage and endure disputes among themselves for centuries is their starting point on the eve of the nineteenth century.

Past and Present

In looking at the Somali people as far back as the twelfth century and as late as 1800, both within the Horn and beyond,¹⁸ generally being only nominally governed also suggests ever-changing styles of rule, boundaries, and jurisdictional areas, and yet the Somali people did not just adapt but often flourished. Moreover, to be so organised socially and politically within their agnatic clan system, generally ruling themselves more by consensus than conflict contributed greatly towards making them particularly independent and self-reliant. Throughout time, descriptions of Somalis have reflected these qualities. One particular

Somali sub-clan, for example, was famously characterized as “a fierce and turbulent race of republicans”¹⁹, and Somalis in general were referred to as having “considerable independence of spirit”²⁰ and being “politically acephalous.”²¹ Interestingly, these descriptions are from 1856, 1924, and 1987 respectively, and are among dozens of similar historical and contemporary descriptions, and point to some continuity of character over time, a continuity which can be observed today.

From the early Middle Ages both the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean coastal areas became well established as trading centers. Mogadishu especially earned prominence early on,²² and even as the fortunes of Mogadishu and other coastal towns rose and fell over the centuries, trade never stopped, though Portuguese involvement from the fifteenth through to the eighteenth century did disrupt Somali-Arab trade for a time.²³ However, once the Portuguese disengaged from the region, by the late eighteenth century trade quickly surged again, and there were Arab, Indian, Chinese, Europeans and Americans engaged in commerce with the Somalis.

With the nineteenth century came a steadily growing foreign presence along the Somali coastlines and eventually the interior as well. This presence was partly due to the Horn being situated along an abbreviated route to India and the Far East in general, a route which would allow ships to avoid sailing around the Cape of Good Hope and thus cut shipping time by weeks. Although there was still a short but difficult overland route from the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea, a distance of more than 100 miles/160 kilometers, the completion of the Suez Canal in 1869 addressed this. The canal not only brought about an even further increase in European presence, but also represented substantial European investment in the region.²⁴ Along the Indian Ocean coastline, there had long been a steady flow of trade to and from Zanzibar just to the south, and then the gulf region just north and east of the Horn. This was also a period of increasing anti-slavery activity, particularly on the part of the British, who interfered substantially with Indian Ocean slave trading. Significantly, the slave trade does not appear to have been as intense in the north as in the south, and so trade in the north along the Gulf of Aden was not quite as deeply affected. This is expanded on in the following chapters.

The dividing up of Africa among the European powers was inevitable. Famously, this “Scramble for Africa” took place at a formal level through the 1885 Berlin Conference (see page 9 for a map of Somalia at this time); within a few short years after the Berlin Agreement was signed, a large part of northern Somalia, comprising contemporary Somaliland and part of Puntland, came to be completely under British



Somalia, 1885

(Boundaries are approximate due to fluctuating circumstances)

administration. The majority of the south and most of what is now contemporary Puntland came to fall under Italian rule, though the inconvenient distance of the northeast tip from Mogadishu in the south limited the extent and duration of Italy's hold on it. Italy lost Italian Somaliland to Great Britain at the beginning of World War II, and at the end of the war the Four Powers Commission agreed that north and south were to be prepared for independence, with a target date set for 1960. Surprisingly, it was also agreed that from 1950-1960 the south was to be under Italian trusteeship in preparation for statehood. The same preparations for statehood in the north remained in the hands of the British.

Statehood finally did come to the Somalis in 1960, though not particularly smoothly.²⁵ Hesse notably points out "the immediate post-independence era was marked less by national unity and more by heightened clan rivalry."²⁶ From 1960-1969, the Somali Republic encompassed all three areas of Somalia, with the capital Mogadishu located at the southern end of the country. Notably, the capital was thus rather remote from the two northern areas. Even more importantly, this was the first time in the Somali people's entire history that there was an ostensibly unified, centrally-run Somali state.

In 1969, and thus within nine years of its birth, and perhaps predictably, the construct of their democratic state fell to a military coup led by Major General Mahammad Siad Barre, just immediately following what was to be the last civilian election to be held for the coming decades. For just over twenty years, from 1969-1991, Barre ruled exclusively over the Somali people; there were limited overt challenges to his authority, though in time northern opposition increased. What initial gains he made for the Somalis – such as dramatically improving literacy – were offset by his attempt to reject clan culture through "scientific socialism" and increasingly severe authoritarian rule.²⁷ Eventually, after several significant attacks on his own people, challenges to Barre's rule even appeared in the south. It was his particularly brutal bombing raids in the north, however, on Hargeisa, Burao and Berbera in August 1988, that sealed Barre's fate. By January 1991 a coalition of opposition forces reduced Somalia's "Victorious Father of the Nation" to fleeing the capital.²⁸

After 1991 the country almost reflexively reverted back into its three primary regions. Since then, and perhaps not surprisingly, each has exhibited its own distinctive political character, with Somaliland demonstrating the most democratic inclinations, though not without its shortcomings, Puntland remaining internally quiet though struggling with political problems and other matters, and southern Somalia

experiencing attempts to rebuild a government amidst continuous violent conflict.²⁹

Somaliland

Somaliland, now populated by close to four million people and being 53,100 square miles or a little larger than Greece, announced its independence on 14 May 1991, just a few short months after Siad Barre's swift departure. Independence was agreed upon by consensus through an ongoing series of conferences which took place in Burao from April-June 1991. Significantly, it occurred in conjunction with revoking the 1960 Act of Union, a document which had joined it to southern Somalia and thus created at that time the Somali Republic.³⁰ Its new name was in fact not that new at all, but reflected the name by which it had been known throughout the colonial era. Although the announcement and revocation was made in May 1991, in actual fact Somaliland experienced what could be called a long labor, and was birthed into existence as a result of several remarkable, linked, multi-clan conferences, the most conclusive of which was the final conference in Borama in 1993.³¹ At that time, Somaliland had established itself as an independent state with elections and freedom of participation for all adults, including women, which was also a significant step forward.³²

The Borama conference itself was indeed a significant event, held from late January to May 1993. Beforehand, for the few weeks following Barre's downfall, Somaliland was ruled by the combined efforts of the Somali National Movement and selected elders from the northern clans, that is the Isaaq, Dir and Haarti.³³ Although so much of great and lasting consequence was decided at Borama – from reconciliation codified into their Peace Charter to the formation of an interim government through their National Charter – it is easy to overlook the fact that Borama was actually the great culmination of almost two years of previous efforts, conferences and meetings, and upon which Borama was based. All of these conferences and meetings were diplomatically sensitive, and organized with great consideration, especially by taking into account the interplay of several clans and various sensitivities among themselves and each other. What is additionally notable here is that talks between one clan and the Somali National Movement were organized within weeks of Barre's departure, to take place in February 1991, and it was a meeting to which all northern clans were to be invited.³⁴ This inclusive, conciliatory approach was to carry through to 1992 and several internal disputes, the 1993 Borama conference, and continues to exist to the present. Anything

could have collapsed or gone wrong at any time, especially during the formative stages, but it is notable nothing happened to the point of complete derailment.³⁵

The outcome of the Borama conference included, but was not limited to, the election of a President and Vice-President and the creation of a transitional National Charter, which was essentially Somaliland's temporary constitution and as well provided the political and institutional framework for the next three years. It was to suffice until a permanent constitution could be created. The constitution beginning as the National Charter in 1993 slowly evolved in the following years, culminating in being approved (97 percent) by referendum in May 2001. Other gains were made due to Borama too, but most importantly, the events leading up to Borama and the achievement of Borama itself revealed an enduring and deeply entrenched disposition for decision-making by consensus, an inclination for inclusiveness, and a political sensitivity without which very little would have been accomplished. The years immediately following the Borama conference were also checkered with some internal problems and accompanying conflict, but without the foundations established in Burao and Borama, the outcome was likely to have been less successful.³⁶

In subsequent years Somaliland struggled unsuccessfully for state recognition, and in the meantime developed its own currency, built schools, held elections, developed a busy economy, and tackled undemocratic challenges – whether they generated from the inside or outside – and did so quite successfully. Writing ten years after the Borama conference, authors Bradbury, Abokor and Yusuf commented on the accomplishments of Somaliland:

The relative stability sustained over the past decade has made it possible to restore much of Somaliland's urban infrastructure, municipal services and systems of education and health that were destroyed during the war. International aid organisations, who have been active in Somaliland since 1991, have done much to help restore essential services and infrastructure, clear land mines, reintegrate displaced populations, promote indigenous welfare organizations, and more recently to strengthen government bodies. Somaliland no longer generates refugees. Instead most of those who took refuge in neighbouring countries during the war have returned to Somaliland. Commercial activity has revived and there has been a progressive development of civil society organisations, including the media, community development, and social welfare organisations and human rights groups. As a result of the better security, human development indicators in Somaliland are generally better than in other regions of Somalia.³⁷

They continue on to point out that due to non-recognition as a state, Somaliland alone has not been eligible for assistance from the more significant donors, and that “reconstruction has largely been achieved from the resources and resourcefulness of the Somalilanders themselves.”³⁸ This is not to say no development aid ever reaches Somaliland, but that aid is still allocated to all of what was once the Somali Democratic Republic, and that aid for Somaliland competes with aid for southern Somalia and Puntland. Nevertheless, part of Somaliland’s success can also be attributed to the people’s developed skills for commerce and trade, which is only encouraged by the government’s policy of limited interference in entrepreneurial affairs. From small shops and market vendors to money transfer companies,³⁹ a lively export trade, its own airline, and even a wildly successful annual book fair, the Somalis in the north have engaged themselves fully in wholesale and retail as well as providing services.⁴⁰ There has also been some notable and indeed game-changing commercial and industrial interest in Somaliland from China, with a joint agreement on the building of twenty factories. However, with limited infrastructure and uncertain access to such basic necessities as potable water, it may take some time for such projects to materialize.⁴¹

In regard to the lack of recognition, there is no doubt this has been one of Somaliland’s greatest frustrations, though it also might be one of its blessings. Without international recognition, those in positions of political power have had to rely directly on their constituencies for continued legitimacy. This speaks to the need for maintaining credibility at and support from the popular level, and serves as a kind of internal check on abuse of power, which can only go so far before a backlash occurs. Without the advantage of foresight, however, and not knowing how successful their internal legitimacy was to be, within Somaliland’s first ten years of independence, great efforts were made to send representatives out internationally to present their case to several countries, including establishing consular offices in several major international cities. However, the big push for recognition was repeatedly dismissed or put aside. Even though Somaliland has clearly fulfilled the Montevideo Convention’s qualifications for what constitutes a state, and also having been both explicitly and implicitly recognised by other states, Somaliland’s *de jure* statehood can be perceived as having received both declaratory and constitutive recognition, though the penultimate recognition of and membership in the United Nations is still out of reach.⁴² Beginning with former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s firm stand against “micro nationalism” in the mid-1990s, the road to UN recognition has changed

little. His successor, Kofi Annan, took a more conciliatory approach, conceding that a separate state solution was an option, but only after it would be clearly expressed by the people that federation was definitely ruled out.⁴³ The position at one point was that the African Union would need to recognise Somaliland first before the US would follow suit.⁴⁴ Of course, the African Union recognizing a new state born from fragmentation of a once-larger state would quickly open a Pandora's box on the continent. Although legal and political arguments have been made, international legitimacy in the form of state recognition still eludes Somaliland.⁴⁵ Well-known interest from Israel and increasingly close relations with China has not brought Somaliland closer to the goal of recognition, nor are other major actors bringing about any possibilities for recognition either.⁴⁶

Importantly, it needs to be pointed out that even though this lack of recognition was directly linked to being ineligible for its own specific development aid, it did not prevent the Somali diaspora from their own form of investment. Even by the late 1990s, aid did not totally escape them, and the United Nations, for example, invested in renovating the port of Berbera, which in fact took some of the market away from the port of Bosasso in neighbouring Puntland. At that time the EC and the Danish government were jointly undertaking road repairs, and USAID and UNICEF were rehabilitating Hargeisa's water system; these are only three of dozens of examples from that time.⁴⁷ The United Kingdom has more recently financed a significant number of buildings, including a military hospital and the renovation of a lookout station, provided a range of police and armed forces training programs, and contributed heavily to communication and information technology.⁴⁸

And so in spite of lack of international recognition, by the very late 1990s Somaliland had managed to shine even more, prompting the appearance of several quite positive articles in the *International New York Times*, which went so far as to call it an "oasis of peace." Besides reporting on developments in the budding armed forces and the president's former wife's efforts to singlehandedly organize the building of a maternity hospital for poor women, the articles also presented a particularly positive image of Somaliland as a whole.⁴⁹ By 2012, the army numbered 13,200 individuals, though it was reported that half to two-thirds of them were "not fit to serve" and there was an intention to reduce the count to 8,000.⁵⁰ Notably, the recruitment of an additional 1500 soldiers "on a non-clan basis" was approved for 2011-2012.⁵¹ The coast guard is a combination marine police and minor navy, and numbers just over 600, patrolling the Gulf of Aden coastline looking for pirates, illegal fishing and illegal trafficking in general.⁵² Remarkably,

they have been effective in spite of being woefully under resourced and making the best of Soviet-era weapons and equipment.⁵³ Both are also looked on favorably by society, the army considered a “respected and effective organization” and coast guard “viewed as necessary and formed part of the community.”⁵⁴

Problems began to surface. From about 2005 to 2010 all was not well in regard to a border dispute between Somaliland and Puntland regarding the Sool, Sanaag, and Cayn regions. The problem reached a peak in 2007 when Somaliland was quick to militarily take over the main city of Las Anad, and it has remained there ever since. As of this writing the situation is still unresolved, with Somaliland still present in Las Anad and the formation of autonomous Khatumo State – encompassing parts of Sool, Sanaag and Cayn – claiming some degree of autonomy.⁵⁵ The added factor of the discovery of oil and the pursuit of oil exploration from foreign interests has not helped matters here, and if not handled properly, has the potential to escalate out of control.⁵⁶

There were other shortcomings which began to come to the fore in Somaliland at the turn of the century, “oasis of peace” as it might well have been. Perhaps among the keenest observers of contemporary Somaliland are Michael Walls and Steve Kibble, who have been well able to identify the positives and negatives on Somaliland’s path. They note, for example, that it “remains weak and poorly funded, but has paradoxically enjoyed a degree of legitimacy exceeding that of many other governments, African and otherwise.”⁵⁷ They refer to its “deepening democratic deficit” as well as how “parliament and specifically the House of Representatives do not consider themselves guarantors of civil liberties.”⁵⁸ and are particularly concerned with the rather secondary role women have had, their voices being “barely heard in the formal political system.”⁵⁹ Although women are not in general as fully participating as many would hope, there have been calls for women to now actively pursue political participation through running for office.⁶⁰ There have also been intermittent freedom of the press issues and as mentioned, the boundary problems with Puntland, a minimum of external aid as well as lack of sufficient formal support for *de jure* statehood.

In spite of the various challenges, what is worth noting is more how they have handled various challenges rather than whether or not they had any challenges at all. It is Somaliland’s disinclination to avoid resorting to armed conflict or allow circumstances to deteriorate to the levels of southern Somalia, as well as their rather ingrained intolerance for conflict that is significant. Since 1991, no anti-democratic or autocratic efforts have managed to achieve more than a temporary toehold in Somaliland: the necessary critical mass for support of such

groups just does not seem to exist. Although, for example, during the Barre era they were well able to launch a collective resistance against Barre, this is very different from courting or encouraging anti-consensual or anti-democratic elements from among themselves or externally.

With these concerns and several others there is then little doubt Somaliland still has a long way to go in order to be considered a fully functioning democracy. However, considering its recent and distant path, the fact that there are any positive developments at all is appreciably striking. There is little doubt “Somali traditions of discourse and negotiation have enabled genuine progress,”⁶¹ and it is a progress built on a “home-grown process of ‘bottom-up’ reconciliation and state-building” and further fortified by “an overwhelming public desire to avoid a return to conflict and by an accompanying urge to win international recognition.”⁶² In spite of this tradition-based progress, there is an irony in the observation “clans as bodies of collective decision making on matters of national politics now have somewhat diminished significance.”⁶³

Over time and including the present, Somaliland has certainly experienced fluctuations, but seems to always have been able to weather the various storms intact, although there are yet plenty of storms ahead. From 75 percent unemployment among youth and mass emigration of educated Somalis,⁶⁴ to secessionist problems⁶⁵ and complaints of current President Silanyo being accused of corruption, autocratic methods and interference in public freedoms,⁶⁶ the future is unlikely to be smooth sailing. However, if the past is to provide any reliable indications of what is likely to come, Somaliland is likely to continue on the course it has been on for many years.

Puntland

If Somaliland can be viewed as the most politically evolved and stable of the three polities, and thus located at one end of a spectrum, and southern Somalia can be located at the other end of that spectrum, then Puntland⁶⁷ stands between the two, both politically and geographically. Most important politically is that Puntland has not declared itself an independent state and is not seeking state recognition. Beginning east of Somaliland along the Gulf of Aden coast and then rounding the tip of the Horn and going south along the Indian Ocean coast for about 450 miles/700km, the southernmost Puntland border is still about 500 miles/800km from the reach of Mogadishu⁶⁸ and the problems of the south in general. Primarily comprising Bari Region and its port of

Bossaso, as well as Nugaal and Mudug regions and the contested Sool and Sanaag provinces mentioned above, it covers an area of 82,000 square miles,⁶⁹ and has an estimated population of 3.9 million people.⁷⁰ Southern Somalia and Puntland are separated by the fledgling and struggling autonomous region, Galmudug, which, having declared its independence in August 2006, sees itself as autonomous within the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) to the south.

Puntland might best be understood as a work in progress. As the base of the first significant coup attempt in 1978 and then as the first armed challenge to Barre in 1981, this northeastern region was openly defiant to Barre's increasingly autocratic rule.⁷¹ After the departure of Barre, trying out different systems of governance followed, including a type of rule which was predisposed to several years of supporting piracy and the corruption that came with it. Puntland nevertheless managed to steadily progress economically and yet avoid prolonged violent internal conflict. The Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF), often in the foreground, originally began as a Darod clan-based guerrilla group opposed to Barre and then became more pointedly political after Barre's fall. Puntland has experienced a succession of administrations, sometimes attempting improvement from the last administration and other times misusing power. After several years of some locales notoriously serving as a base for Somali piracy and involving the wider population in supporting it too, former President Abdirahman Farole demonstrated a concerted and committed effort at eradicating piracy from Puntland territory.

Previous to the current political administration of the inter-regional entity now called Puntland, there were several attempts to administer the regions individually, though these were invariably short-lived. One of the attempts to administer Bari Region and its important port of Bossaso, for example, took place under the name Bari Region Administrative Council (BRAC), and was active in the early 1990s. Run by an eight-member governing committee and a fifty-seat parliament, none of these seat-holders were traditional clan elders. Instead, the seats were filled by civic representatives of constituencies which moved beyond clan delineations, though the region was dominated by the clan-based militia, the SSDF. Similar to other examples of regional government, BRAC was not without problems but still was one of several admirable attempts. Unlike Somaliland, BRAC made no rush to claim political independence and statehood, but rather represented an attempt at order amidst potential chaos, seeking peaceful and organized autonomy, and some among them entertaining hope of cooperative reunification in the future.

During BRAC's administration, the harbour town Bosasso became a magnet for Africans from throughout the continent seeking work.⁷² The port turned into a bustling pan-African hotspot, a place where as long as a person was willing to work, it did not matter from which clan nor even from which part of Africa he hailed. Bosasso flourished due to economic vitality in the 1990s, something which could not have existed without requisite political and social stability. It also temporarily became Somalia's primary port due to inter-clan militia fighting in Mogadishu. Although the SSDF predominated and controlled the port area at that time, by 1995 the export business and small businesses were booming, and visitors to the area reported it as a hive of activity, busy twenty-four hours a day. During that same year, for example, ten million sheep and goats were reported to have been exported to Saudi Arabia alone, a number far exceeding exports during the 1970s for the entire country. For a number of reasons those quantities have since dropped, the region has remained relatively quiet and the EU set aside several million euros to modernise port facilities in hope of encouraging more business and creating more employment.⁷³

Apart from BRAC, central administration of the different regions was attempted several times, often with varying degrees of effort to distribute responsibility for the various departments or ministries among the different Somali clans. Although of course some of these areas of responsibility involved more prestige and power than others and some bias in who was appointed to certain ministries was not surprising, it is the overall presence of some *attempt* to power share within the administrations that is significant here. In other words, despite its imperfections, the administrations never deteriorated to the blatant, ongoing armed violence of the south, or individual dictatorship. There was on one hand a quite observable trend to avoid the open conflict of the south, though on the other hand the idea of completely separate statehood never took hold.

Perhaps in hope of the fruition of the widespread dream of a newly reunified Somalia, the term *government* has not been used to refer to any of the self-governing attempts in past years. It appears to have been a deliberate effort to fulfil a practical need for order, but not a desire to secede. This lack of intention to actually secede might also be linked to the presence of its Majeerteen clan's kin far south of Mogadishu as much as any principled sense of loyalty to the former unified state. Such terms as *director*, *committee*, *council* and *administration* have been used instead of terms leaning towards independence or imagined sovereignty. What has been remarkable in spite of the political changes is the persistence of relative stability as well as representative

administration. One example worth mentioning here is a series of congresses which took place in 1995 in the inland town of Qardho, to consider constructing the civil administration which became BRAC, a move which engendered a “free and open political climate.”⁷⁴ Subsequent meetings were held at a hotel in Bosasso, the Kaah Bari, a well-frequented location, and the meetings sponsored by all twenty-eight regional clans. Financial contributions were made public and listed in a weekly publication also called the Kaah Bari. And notably, in this Majeerten clan-dominated area, an elder from a non-Majeerteen clan, Ugas Yassin, was selected to appoint council members to the various regional departments or ministries which had been created. In doing so, Yassin considered clan representations as well as other types of representation, such as ideological leanings, in his selections. In spite of good intentions this administration did not last long, although it paved the way for continued similar approaches in the future, and is representative of a somewhat tenacious prevailing trend.

There was little overlap between those involved in BRAC and those behind the birth of Puntland, yet the fact remains that there has been a continuity and perhaps progression in type of arrangement, often attempting to move beyond simple clan politics and failing to last long when it did not. It represents at least an intention of a more inclusive or integrated approach in avoiding violent conflict, establishing representative government by consensus, and encouraging autonomous efforts in developing a functioning economy. Increasingly independent from the south since Barre’s demise, although the various administrations of current Puntland have never sought sovereignty, they have proved themselves to be quite skilled in maintaining their autonomy. Throughout the highs and lows of their repeated attempts, including complications, intrigues and more, and ultimately culminating in the inter-regional Puntland, a rather persistent and remarkable pattern of avoiding violence and achieving consensus is readily observable.⁷⁵

Following on from the mid-1990s’ lively economic atmosphere and disinclination to be consumed by open conflict, it was clear that individual regional arrangements were insufficient and inter-regional government was required. The impetus to move towards the latter came in a number of ways, and in 1998, for example, a UAE sheikh with ancestral ties to the area promised a donation of \$16 million to the region, but only providing certain political conditions were met, in particular the establishment of a consensually acquired administration.⁷⁶ This seems to have been answered when the autonomous Puntland State of Somalia was formed in the summer of 1998, with an accompanying Charter proclaiming to uphold such principles as “full participation of

the civil society”, a bottom up approach to reconciliation and negotiation, and no tolerance for “hostile military actions” or “atrocities against the nation.”⁷⁷ The Charter was not without its problems, however, particularly so in terms of what has been referred to as “presidential excesses.”⁷⁸ The birth of Puntland was in fact a rejection of the idea that government should be top-down, and began based on the idea “it would be prudent to let smaller autonomous Somali states emerge first, and after that, begin a process of putting Somalia back together again.”⁷⁹

Puntland’s internal quarrels and conflicts have been limited in scope and duration, with no instances of the same level of violence and destruction seen in the south. However, partly due to the excesses of the flawed Charter, there were well-founded reports of endemic corruption for Puntland’s first seven or eight years, creating conditions which are known to have fostered the conditions for piracy.⁸⁰ The enticement of piracy was substantial, Menkhaus reporting that in 2009, for example, “the funds accrued by pirates equal the annual budget of the unrecognised secessionist state of Somaliland”, those funds estimated at \$20-\$40 million.⁸¹ He added that because the money was reaching into and affecting all levels in society, it created “a serious disincentive” even for those in authority to tackle the problem.⁸² Piracy has since decreased significantly, partly due to a concerted international response as well as deterrence efforts from within Puntland itself. One report reveals that the number of ships approached and/or attacked went from a high of 193 in 2009 to only 12 in 2013, with the numbers of ships actually pirated being 45 and 0 respectively.⁸³

However prominent piracy, corruption and other problems might have been, they were not to be particularly long lived, and when the newly-elected President Abdirahman Farole took office in January 2009, he promptly replaced the problematic Charter with a new and more comprehensive Constitution. By June 2009, Puntland had ratified all of its 141 articles, and the presidential excesses were now under control and restraint. The Constitution also allowed for the integration of traditional leaders into the judicial branch, though only as a neutral body and whose rulings only applied as a last resort. It also remained vague in terms of Puntland’s ultimate status, but that is likely a reflection of the varying expressed opinions among the people themselves.⁸⁴

Puntland exists in a gray zone in terms of status; neither sovereign state nor fully engaged with southern Somalia’s FGS, it nevertheless remains an active autonomous entity which has managed to hold itself together and even progress. It seems to have weathered the difficult birth pangs so common in newly emerging states, and is slowly but decisively

moving beyond it. Although the border problem of Sool and Sanaag is not resolved, and there are other attempts at autonomy within Puntland, the fact that these and other challenges are being managed rather than accelerating out of control is a positive sign. After all, the test of a governing administration is not so much the absence of problems, but how problems are met and dealt with when they appear. In this light, Puntland, similar to Somaliland, seems to be passing the test of time, although how they handle the discovery of oil on their border area mentioned earlier might be an ultimate test.

Southern Somalia

With its capital Mogadishu now estimated to be well over two million,⁸⁵ southern Somalia largely comprises the area from the struggling autonomous region of Galmudug⁸⁶ in the north to the Kenyan border in the south, with Ethiopia on its west side and the Indian Ocean on the east, a total of 93,200 square miles. Perceived for years as the poster child for failed states and the scene of continuous “unconscionable violence” since 1991, it is estimated that at least 500,000 people have been killed due to the conflict, which represents about 15 percent of its present estimated population.⁸⁷ It has also experienced more than fifteen attempts at formation of a viable government, none of which have proved particularly effective or lasting, and some of which have had only fleeting dalliances with positive performance.

After Siad Barre was last seen fleeing Mogadishu in a tank in January 1991⁸⁸ and was no longer a key actor, the very clan divisions he ostensibly was so intent on ending came to the fore more aggressively than ever, though they had been brewing significantly in the years leading up to Barre’s demise. Armed and violent intra and inter-clan conflict broke out and then relentlessly continued, all of it fighting over resources and territory, and ultimately control and power. This resulted in humanitarian crises which brought on three major international interventions in a three year period, the UN operations UNOSOM I and UNOSOM II, and the US-led UNITAF in between them.⁸⁹ Although there is no doubt that they certainly did provide some relief, the scale of the problem was so great and the causes and consequences so complex that their effect was bound to be limited, though some might even say unsuccessful.

Despite the numerous attempts at conflict negotiation and democratic governance, there has been limited substantive and lasting change. Emigration has been proceeding steadily, and reports of chronic fighting, kidnappings, looting and shooting of civilians continued, and

seemingly without end. Eight years after the fall of Barre, for example, some statements from a 1999 UN report on Somalia summed up the deteriorated conditions quite clearly:

[L]ittle or no development has taken place in Somalia for ten years. Indeed, the country's development process has gone into reverse. Most children receive no health care or education; two generations have had no access to formal education. Life expectancy at birth is surely lower than the sub-Saharan average of 51 years. On almost all developmental indicators, Somalia ranks among the poorest and most deprived countries in the world. Virtually all the infrastructure of government – from buildings and communication facilities to furniture and office equipment – has been looted. All government archives and records, libraries, files and museums have been totally destroyed. In most of the country, there are no police or civil service. Communications, apart from private satellite and cellular telephones and radio links, are non-existent. Electricity is not available on a public basis, but only to those who can afford generators. There is no postal service. The economy is in dire straits...the value of the Somali shilling fell from about 7.5 shillings to the dollar to over 10,000 shillings to the dollar. There are now four different Somali shillings in circulation in Somalia...the functions that states perform, such as the provision of social services, including health and education, the regulation, for example, of the movement of goods and persons, control of the environment, airspace and coasts, and so on, as well as the representation of the Somali people in intergovernmental and international fora, are absent⁹⁰.

And in spite of good intentions, there was limited substantive positive change after 1999 as well. For example, eight years after the above report, a 2007 effort at forming the government was described as “a government of national unity which neither governed nor was unified.”⁹¹

This is not to say there was no change at all. With the environs of Mogadishu in particular and southern Somalia in general divided primarily as territories of clan-based militias and their respective rival leaders, the instability from their infighting and the lawlessness it engendered prompted a need among civilians for some level of authoritative stability. This stability began to be fulfilled by Islamic courts, practicing, of course, Sharia law. By 2000, as the courts gained credibility and respect among the populace, they eventually created the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), and became involved in more than just settling disputes and meting out justice, but also began to provide services in education and health as well as increasing some level of security for civilians. Affiliated with some armed militias and opposed by others, by the end of 2006 they were in control of a significant

majority of southern Somalia, including Mogadishu. There was great concern internationally of the ICU's purported affiliation with Al Qaeda.

Approximately the same time that the ICU was growing in strength, attempts were made to form the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), an idea which was supported by the UN, the US and the African Union. Its purpose was to restore the various national institutions and serve as a counterweight to the ICU. With significant support from Ethiopia as well as clan militias opposing the ICU, the TFG successfully took back Mogadishu from the ICU in December 2006, and the ICU retreated. However, by 2009 the increasingly unpopular TFG formed a coalition government with the ICU and other groups in order to maintain support, though by then the ICU had begun to splinter. One group resulting from that splintering was the militant al-Shabaab, suspected to have links to Al Qaeda and at various times having significant control of southern Somalia. It was not until August 2011 that Mogadishu was recaptured from their control by the TFG and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) troops, though as of this writing there is still sporadic fighting taking place in southern areas. In spite of making great efforts to appear as formidable and in control as possible, however, the TFG was unable to escape some quite harsh criticism from international observers.⁹² By the middle of 2013 the Mogadishu area was considered to be reasonably safe and well under the control of yet another much needed and new administration, the Federal Government of Somalia. Al-Shabaab's continued existence perhaps being more a symptom of a broader trend than a singular response to opportunity, their efforts to control the region have not been successful.⁹³

In the midst of this, incidents of piracy were taking place. The general disorder and lack of consistent leadership which took place in Puntland during the first several years of the twenty-first century and created conditions for piracy to develop and flourish also took place in southern Somalia. It should be stressed that the piracy occurred at a level far above and beyond the only occasional but related acts some Somalis have been engaged in for centuries. Although contemporary piracy in the south might have begun as a reaction to foreign ships fishing Somali waters or in response to toxic dumping, it quickly escalated into blatant profiteering, making ransom demands in the millions. In spite of some reduction in piracy which began towards the end of 2011, there was a turn towards land-based kidnappings and attacks with ransom demands as well, though this latter development has not yet proved to be as predatory or extensive as piracy had been.⁹⁴

After Barre's fall, southern Somalia and especially the Mogadishu area fell into a whirlpool of inter-clan conflict, seen by some as "purely

an economic war,”⁹⁵ and the violence in the south was often and erroneously assumed and accepted as the norm for all Somali people and their territories. The truth of the matter is that the extremes of the conflict in the south in fact have been an unprecedented deviation from the entire historical past of the Somali people. Abdi I. Samatar has importantly pointed out, “at no time in the recorded history of Somalia has nearly one-third to one-half of the population died or been in danger of perishing due to famine caused by civil war. This calamity surpasses all previous ones and has most appropriately been called “Dad Cunkii,” an era of cannibalism.”⁹⁶ It was an unparalleled violence; it was a level of violence unmatched in scope.

The details of the serial failed attempts to resolve the ongoing violence are confoundingly complex, each one as equally discouraging as the next, with a long line of interested third parties – from the United Nations to the United States and even Muammar Gaddafi – each trying their hand at finding a resolution or at least a path towards resolution.⁹⁷ Simply put, southern Somalia’s “spectacular state failure” seemed to have been taking on a rather long term or at least deeply entrenched character.⁹⁸ Without the support provided to the TFG – and lessons learned from it – and then its replacement with the FGS, it could have been predicted that southern Somalia was well on its way to having birthed and fostered a new and rather distorted political culture, and one which did not at all bode well for the future.

In the midst of the continuously deteriorating conditions, some small bright lights have appeared. One has come specifically from the business sector, rarely an ally of violent conflict and instability, even if only for reasons of self-preservation. It arrived in the form of the growing money transfer system, which particularly filled a gap left by the collapse of the formal banking system in Somalia.⁹⁹ Money sent back home – whether for personal or business reasons – is now recognised internationally as being globally significant, particularly since it is known to be a multi-billion dollar business. Money transfers take place throughout the three Somalias, and in places like the conflict-torn south, they represent creative initiative and adaptability in a difficult conflict environment. Moreover, several of the money transfer firms in Somalia also appear to be concerned with some degree of social responsibility, charging discounted fees in disaster areas and also contributing to development and relief projects. This is a welcome development since some members of the business community have been profiting because of the conflict and not in spite of it. What is important to note here is that there does exist in Somalia a population of businessmen who have a vested interest in and make efforts to preserve

some degree of stability in all parts of Somalia, including the south. In spite of stemming from different clans, they tend to cooperate with each other and stand in sharp contrast to the past warring factions of the south.¹⁰⁰ Another bright light of cooperation appeared in the form of a civic-based movement in 2005 which was opposed to the leadership of the TFG as well as the militia and Islamist agendas in general. Menkhaus described it as, “the best hope in 15 years for a grass-roots mobilization against the entire class of failed political leaders in Somalia.” Ultimately the movement lost momentum, but it was an effort involving the cooperation of different groups to work towards increased security and stability in the region. Menkhaus adds, “Had it succeeded, Somalia’s political trajectory might have been very different.”¹⁰¹ Indeed, and despite its lack of apparent or immediate success, the fact that this mobilization took place at all is a kind of success in and of itself.

Almost ten years on, the continued presence and activities of al-Shabaab in the face of the FGS’s determined efforts – as well as the international community’s efforts - to reinvent itself stand in contrast with the achievements in the north. The nearly cyclical nature of events in southern Somalia gave rise to a deluge of literature attempting to either forward solutions to the problem or to understand and explain the factors behind these circumstances, all in an effort to answer the question *why*? This was likely to continue had it not been for the insightful and carefully outlined initiatives in the September 2013 document *The Somali Compact*,¹⁰² which appeared to be filling several gaps, including programs for civic education, community participation, and support for grassroots development, among many others, all of them crucial to a healthy political culture. A shift in a more positive direction has been noted by others, but with some caveats to consider as well, such as how “it is impossible to overstate how difficult it will be to dismantle the architecture of corruption”¹⁰³ and repeated recommendations on the key role of the business class.¹⁰⁴ How long it will take, and how rough a road it will be for a more democratic or consensual political culture to take hold is uncertain, though the path in that direction is unmistakable.

“Habits of the Heart”

Clearly the political cultures that have developed and been fostered over time in the three Somalias merit a closer look, and this includes a review of the concept itself. Just what is and is not meant by *political culture* requires some clarification, and particularly since it has at times served as an indefinite catch-all. The concept has been linked with “fuzzy

thinking and sloppy explanations”¹⁰⁵ as well as “improvised theorizing”¹⁰⁶ and other weaknesses. To offer some background, then, the idea of political culture was perhaps most notably brought forward in the nineteenth century by Alexis de Tocqueville in *Democracy in America*. This far-reaching study of the fledgling America’s perceived success with the great democratic experiment credited its preliminary gains to its broader political culture, which had over time “developed the mental habits that sustain liberty.”¹⁰⁷ At its core, political culture or “habits of the heart”¹⁰⁸ referred to “the sum of the moral and intellectual dispositions of men in society . . . [and] the sum of ideas that shape mental habits.”¹⁰⁹ Although it can appear that the concept was, from the beginning, off to a somewhat imprecise start, Tocqueville was interested in moving a step beyond simply reporting observable behaviour to instead identifying and understanding those behaviours and attitudes which had direct and indirect political implications. According to him, this behaviour had its roots in the past. Likening countries to individuals, he claimed, “people always bear some marks of their origins. Circumstances of birth and growth affect all the rest of their careers.”¹¹⁰

Tocqueville’s idea that the roots of contemporary political life can be traced back and reliably observed over a long period of time was to endure, and was applied in a range of twentieth century studies.¹¹¹ More than a century and a half later, this showed up most notably in Robert Putnam’s *Making Democracy Work*. Though not without its critics, the work caused a sensation in the early 1990s when Putnam accounted for contemporary widespread civic capacities in northern Italy by its medieval “unprecedented form of self-government.”¹¹² Although Putnam was faulted for not thoroughly and convincingly tracing that thread of civic-mindedness through such a long stretch of time,¹¹³ a subsequent work by Larry Diamond, *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries*, made a more tangible conceptual contribution.

Diamond forwarded a practical working definition of political culture, stated as, “a people’s predominant beliefs, attitudes, values, ideals, sentiments, and evaluations about the political system of its country, and the role of the self in that system.”¹¹⁴ He also provided an analogy, explaining that “political culture is better conceived not purely as the legacy of the communal past but as a geological structure with sedimentary deposits from many historical ages and events” where “in each new historical period, new value orientations have partially displaced but not completely erased pre-existing ones.”¹¹⁵ It is here that political culture becomes a discernible thread over time, no longer a static condition, but more of a living, continuous process. Diamond’s work also dovetails quite well with Lucien Pye’s observation regarding

(political) culture's long term tenacious and pervasive nature, and its "coherent patterns which fit together and are mutually reinforcing."¹¹⁶ Pye also explained that an abrupt change in political culture "involves true trauma," such as a cataclysmic event or a revolution. Thus, a background of trauma and disruption versus consistency and stability is also to be considered within the discussion on Somalia.¹¹⁷

With relevance for the Somali people, then, Diamond suggests that previous political cultures do not always simply vanish or become erased and then replaced by successive ones, but often can be relegated to a subsidiary or subordinate position which might indeed move to the fore at another time or under certain conditions. The political culture of the past can sometimes be the forerunner or ancestor of subsequent political cultures. This furthers the idea that political culture is an ongoing process, and so, like geological layers, does not necessarily have an abrupt beginning and end point, but has linking layers which are made up of elements from previous and subsequent layers.¹¹⁸ It does not remain static, though it can experience variations and shifts which are not usually to be understood as a break in the overall process itself. This has been touched on in the literature on Somalia but never expanded, although it fits quite well into Diamond's idea of sedimentary layers. Prunier inadvertently provides an example:

[T]he diya-paying groups of Somali society were not kept intact and untouched by British intervention, but neither were they destroyed; they survived by becoming something else. The pre-Protectorate clan leadership used to manage kinship relations and pastoral resources; under the British it entered the domain of broader legal action and the management of political and economic entitlements. But it did not do so entirely in the spirit of the old self.¹¹⁹

With this understanding, the path of a people's political culture is generally one characterized by subtle, gradual shifts and changes, and only rarely sharply punctuated steps. Part of the past moves forward with time and can change form. Such subtle shifts and changes seem to be suggested in what Ahmed Samatar, in writing about Somalia, also later referred to as the important role of "discrete factors."¹²⁰ The importance of subtleties is also shared by Pye, who pointed out that "culture is helpful in mapping different routes of political development because it treats seriously the nuances in behaviour patterns which may seem only trivial but which actually are critical in distinguishing between successes and failures."¹²¹

But the very nature of both Samatar's discrete factors and Pye's nuances also imply the likelihood that they could be easily overlooked or dismissed in preference for larger, more obvious contributing factors or explanations. Other contributors to the political culture discussion were aware of this as well, including Ron Inglehart, who noted, "cultural factors have been deemphasized to an unrealistic degree."¹²² This was perhaps partly due to the general criticism of the concept's weakness for being vague and difficult to define. In order to systematically observe political culture over time, then, specific attributes or indicators of it would need to be identified and then traced within a selected time period.

Tracing political culture needs to be undertaken cautiously. In order to avoid broad claims based on vague observations, the literature does provide some direction. Even looking back as far as Tocqueville, specific political culture themes have persisted in the literature over time, most commonly those of liberty and equality. These two themes became more systematically identified and observed in a 1965 study by Lucien Pye and Sydney Verba, which came in the form of four recurring pairs of themes (or *values*) on ten case studies.¹²³ Two of those pairs correspond with previous and subsequent literature, and were expressed as liberty/coercion¹²⁴ and equality/hierarchy. In regard to observing them over time among the Somalis, they would need to be observed in broad strokes, and not sought, as might be possible in other cases, in indigenous literature or records from the period, and this is due to an overall dearth of the written word.¹²⁵ *Liberty* can be simply understood as physical freedom of movement and degrees of autonomy in political, economic, and/or social matters; *liberty* is still rather broad for the purposes herein, and *autonomy* seems to apply more directly to the Somalia cases. *Equality* would denote a lack or minimum of clearly defined social strata as well as similar treatment of all individuals within political, economic and social matters. It is the deliberate tracing of the autonomy/coercion and equality/hierarchy attributes over time that distinguishes this study from historical observation.¹²⁶

Contemporary observation of Somaliland provides clues which call up these paired themes when referring to "socio-political norms that emphasize the importance of negotiation and compromise"¹²⁷ and "Somali traditions of discourse and negotiation (which) have enabled genuine progress."¹²⁸ These observations allude to a cooperative and consensual political culture, one which would have been unlikely to come about in an environment dominated by the themes of coercion and hierarchy respectively.¹²⁹ These themes as indicators might at first glance seem too broad or even imprecise; however, they serve as useful

starting points in this preliminary extending of the political culture concept. As such they are useful when researching back in time, as more narrowly delineated indicators might prevent historical tracing. Observing political culture over time is not to simply be a reiteration of historical events, but a particular path of investigation taking place within those historical events.

Herein, the historical tracing of political culture among the Somalis begins in the early nineteenth century since the nature and number of sources, as well as their availability and variety, began to increase at this time, largely due to a rise in European exploration. These factors designate the beginning of an important juncture in Somali history – the advent of increased European involvement and attempted colonization – as a practical starting point. Although there is historical evidence from earlier periods, the early nineteenth century also marks the beginning of a consistent stream of information hailing from comparable sources. It allows for pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial observations to be compared and contrasted, with each era roughly similar in length of time. This is not as ambitious as, for example, Putnam's work, but the advantage is that proceeding with a more moderate approach in terms of time also contributes to reliability. Practices and behaviors reported on in earlier times might appear to ebb and flow in subsequent periods, and yet never fade so completely that they did not resurface time and again, including the present. In taking on this first focused comparative pass at two hundred years of history, trends in political culture must be sought more in the mainstream historical narrative than in discrete microscopic investigations; it is the larger, overarching trends considered here.

Mention must be made of the choice to not include Somali oral sources in reviewing the historical record. This was decided in the interest of maintaining some level of source consistency as well as accuracy regarding dates, names, locales, statistical information and more. Somali perceptions as found through oral sources are indeed valuable in providing a window to a Somali perspective on knowledge of and experiences in the past, and certainly can shed light on social complexities. However, these sources tend to be contextual and anecdotal, and while this type of source and the disciplines which employ them are not at all to be underestimated, they clearly constitute another type of source and with it a different type of exploration. Specifically, oral accounts are more phenomenologically or hermeneutically relevant, which is not the direction of this work. Although it is unclear just how wide or narrow the gap between hermeneutics and this approach might be, they are not close enough to combine in this preliminary round of historical tracing.¹³⁰ Scott Reese took a similar

view in his notable work on the colonial era Benadir, commenting, "Somali oral traditions tend to be episodic with no epic narratives that might provide lengthier accounts for analysis."¹³¹ The sources relied on are mainly primary and secondary sources, though with consideration taken into account for likely contemporary subjectivity. With this in mind as well as a specified theoretical direction, the path is then opened for a different line of inquiry to be explored.

Changing the Question

For a little more than the past twenty years, the main political questions about the former Somali Democratic Republic have been primarily concerned with the south, specifically the causes and management of the violence, the lack of political progress, and solutions for both. And in spite of the extensive body of literature on explanations for the south, there has been very limited speculation about the possible reasons behind the relatively good news of the north.¹³² Certainly there has been ample reporting and description of the latter, but few efforts to explain or analyze why it was able to come about in the first place and how it has managed to persist. Even though systematic comparative discussions on the three polities are lacking, this is curiously so in spite of the simple fact that the circumstances are quite ideal for comparison. They beg the question of *why* there are such striking differences in their subsequent political outcomes despite their commonalities.¹³³ Neither can the clan system nor Islam, for example, be too pointedly blamed or credited for differences in conflict or cooperation, as both clan and religion are deeply entrenched among all Somalis, though there is some variation. Of course, the extent to which the preservation or erosion of clan culture in different areas has had a contributing role in matters of peace and conflict could be an important factor. However, clan culture's ever-changing patchwork status is a study in and of itself, and a political culture approach would tend to indirectly subsume some aspects of this anyway.

Since cooperation in the north has resulted in lasting political solutions, perhaps rather than asking the almost customary question of "why protracted *violence* in the south?" it might be more meaningful to ask "why protracted *politics* in the north?" To put a political culture spin on these questions, it can be asked "why protracted *coercion* in the south?" and "why protracted *autonomy* in the north?" Although a political culture perspective cannot account for everything, it may well fill in a gap which informs and coincides with other explanations. Of course, neither the north nor the south can be said to have been entirely

cooperative or entirely violent, but what can be said is that the prevailing trend tends to be predominantly cooperative or predominantly conflictual, and there must be some factor or set of factors to account for these prevailing trends. Somaliland's laudable accomplishment of just over twenty years, and Puntland's consistent return to some consensual form of autonomy point towards a very deeply imbedded inclination, aptitude and preference for the political, for order, for governance, for rules and structure.

Put another way, then, it seems clear that Somaliland, and to a similar degree, Puntland, might have some widespread shared experience which had an impact on the political, some related but subtle understanding of self-reliance and self-rule, some comparable intrinsic grasp of cooperation and consensus which simply has been completely overshadowed in the south. There has been limited acknowledgement that the south's past has had its influence on the present, particularly in regard to "the destruction of Somali humanitarian and republican values under the colonial regimes that had preceded it."¹³⁴ This was soon enough followed by the Barre regime and "two decades of brutal governance, (*when*) a whole new generation of urban Somalis was born who had no benefit of the humanism, egalitarianism, and republicanism of the culture of their forefathers."¹³⁵ However, the experience and impact solely from the Barre era still does not sufficiently explain such fundamentally wide disparities in the post-Barre outcomes, particularly when such disparities also can be observed further back in time.

When taking that step back from the Barre era to the brief post-independence years of 1960-1969, it is clear that this period was not sufficient to have spawned such a rift, and not only because it was only nine years in duration, but also because it was nine relatively uneventful years. In other words, nothing sufficiently traumatic happened during those years which could explain or help to explain the disparities between north and south. Any north-south differences which might have existed at that time were not exposed to any conditions in which they might overtly manifest.

However, it is within the 1961 referendum on the first national constitution that some intriguing inconsistencies are notable: only half of the voting population in the north supported the new constitution, although in the south, the numbers *reported* to be supporting it exceeded the entire population of that region. Prior to independence, similar voting irregularities were also reported in the south, along with the report of a 1958 UN mission to Somalia stating that southern Somalia would not be ready for independence by 1960.¹³⁶ This and other problems during the pre-independence trusteeship era (1950-1960)

certainly signalled that the north and south were not experiencing much political parity. What is clear here is that north-south differences were well observable not only prior to Barre, but prior to independence.

Stepping back further to the period 1941-1949, when Italy was no longer present in southern Somalia as a colonial power, and all of Somalia was under British rule, we see a time when political organizing among the Somalis was taking place. It is even here that some differences between north and south are apparent, particularly regarding an incident in the south in 1948, when dozens of Italians and Somalis were killed and just over 175 Italian homes looted.¹³⁷ This in turn only leads to looking back even further, during the height of the colonial era, where there was a vast difference in the way Great Britain and Italy perceived and dealt with the respective Somali populations. It is during the heart of the colonial era that differences between north and south seem most apparent, with Puntland placed somewhat between the two, being technically under Italian rule but geographically distant from the epicenter of the Italian power base and Italian authority in general. With two very different administrative styles and colonial goals, it is worth considering that the disparate conditions of the colonial era are the distant foundational roots of the three Somalias' political strengths and weaknesses today. Fifty years of very different governing styles and indeed the presence of administrative versus colonial rule would no doubt have a different impact on any people. But might there already have been some notable differences prior to this? The decades leading up to the British and Italian presence are rich with differing circumstances which also need to be considered.

Perhaps in identifying and exploring those differences and the role of political culture, comparably observing its nature and its development over time would contribute to a broader understanding of what has led to the current circumstances. By wearing a political culture lens and focusing on the paired themes and an eye for the seeds of the present, it may well be worth considering the Somali people's past, reviewing those two hundred years of sedimentary layers and whatever they are willing to reveal. Those layers are divided up as the historical chapters which follow, beginning with the bustling and sometimes turbulent precolonial period, which then leads to the complexities and struggles of the colonial era, with the British and Italian experiences covered separately. The subsequent chapter examines the long road towards unifying north and south and briefly outlines early attempts at unified statehood. Each chapter concludes with a political culture discussion, and the final chapter wraps up with an overview and the results of this tracing of political culture in the three Somalias over time.

Notes

¹ Menkhaus, "Calm Between the Storms?," p. 558; in this 2014 article, the author reminds us of the important work addressed by Alexander George and Andrew Bennett ten years ago in *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (London: MIT Press, 2005).

² The Federal Government of Somalia follows from the eight-year term of the Transitional Federal Government, the latter concluding in August 2012. In this work, "Somalia" and "Somali Republic" both refer to the territory comprising the former Somali Democratic Republic, which lasted from 1969-1991. "Southern Somalia" or "the south" refers to the general area where conflict has persisted since 1991, with Mogadishu as its primary city. "Northern Somalia" or "the north" refers to both regions comprising contemporary Somaliland and Puntland. Other entities with Somali populations, such as Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya, are not part of this discussion. Smaller Somali entities which have been attempting autonomous government in very recent years are also not considered to be part of the twenty-year phenomenon.

³ Al-Shabaab is the Islamist military wing of the Islamic Courts Union. Formally called Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen/Mujahideen Youth Movement, its reported links to al-Qaeda are tenuous or at least unclear.

⁴ Importantly, the argument has been made that their observed ethnic homogeneity has been over-emphasized in contrast to the countering influence of clan identity. Lewis has pointed out that "solidarity at the level of the ethnic group (the nation) is less binding than that within the clan structure" and that "clanship remains a more comprehensively powerful focus of identity." Lewis, "Visible and Invisible," p. 511. There is also a minority population of non-ethnic Somali, Bantu-based clans, many of them the descendants of slaves; see for example Besteman, "Translating Race."

⁵ The list is extensive, but see, for example Besteman, "Primordialist Blinders," pp. 109-120; Lewis, *Blood and Bone*, Besteman and Cassanelli, *The Struggle for Land in Southern Somalia*, Dehérez, "The Scarcity of Land in Somalia"; Menkhaus, "International Peacebuilding," pp.42-67; Prendergast, "When the Troops Go Home," pp. 268-273.

⁶ Brian J. Hesse offers some excellent comparative discussion on Somaliland and Puntland in his 2010 article "Lessons in Successful Somali Governance."

⁷ One example of this is Lee Cassanelli's *The Shaping of Somali Society: Reconstructing the History of a Pastoral People, 1600-1900*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982). This exhaustively researched work is limited only to southern Somalia.

⁸ Prunier, for example, contributed a brief chapter discussing the differences between British administration and Italian colonialism and their possible impact on contemporary circumstances; Prunier (2010).

⁹ For a critique of the problems of political culture with historical inevitability and other related issues among political scientists and historians, see Formisano, fn. 1.

¹⁰ Cassanelli stresses this in Besteman and Cassanelli, *The Struggle for Land*, p. 14.

¹¹ The literature on these topics is abundant and easily available, and there is no need to replicate such discussions. One recent and particularly thorough work on contemporary Somalia is *Getting Somalia Wrong: Faith, War and Hope in a Shattered State* by BBC journalist Mary Harper, and referred to by I. M. Lewis as “the most accessible and accurate account available of the contemporary Somali world – pirates and all”; (London: Zed Books, 2012). Aside from the classical works of I. M. Lewis, for examples of recent scholarship on the intricacies of clan and lineage, some of which challenge long held assumptions, see: Barnes, “U dhashay, Ku-dashay”; Besteman, “Primordialist Blinders”; Hesse, “Lessons in Successful”; Hesse, “Introduction: The Myth”; Lewis, “Visible and Invisible”; Makinda, “Politics and Clan Rivalry.” “Clan distinctions between the three regions, such as the predominance of the Isaaq in Somaliland, and the diversity of clan in the south, are not at all denied here, but are simply not the focus of discussion.

¹² Laitin and S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search*, pp. 30-31.

¹³ See Michael van Notten’s interesting approach to xeer as customary law in *The Law of the Somalis*, pp. 3-81; see also Abdile, “Customary Dispute Resolution in Somalia”, pp. 87-110.

¹⁴ Lewis, “Historical Aspects,” p. 37.

¹⁵ A. Samatar, “Under Sieg,” p. 9.

¹⁶ See the writings of Ibn Batuta, which provide an informative glance at early Somalis: *Ibn Batuta in Black Africa: Selections*; also by the same author, *Travels, CE 1325-1354*.

¹⁷ Michael Walls offers a lucid discussion on contemporary gurti (also guurti) in his *A Somali Nation-State*, pp. 46-48.

¹⁸ Some Somalis also have been a seafaring trading people throughout history, having had their own districts far from home, such as in Mocha, India, Madagascar and having traveled as far as China in the early Middle Ages.

¹⁹ Burton, p. 174; this quote has erroneously long been attributed to Somalis in general. However, Burton very specifically only applies this to the “Eesa” clan (most likely *Issa*, a subclan of the Dir, located in northwest Somaliland and Djibouti), which comprised approximately “100,000 shields”. In referring to Eesa submission to their clan chief, Burton added, “He is obeyed only when his orders suit the taste of King Demos”, a reference to the strong independent egalitarian character of the “Eesa”; p. 175. Former Republic of Somalia President Igal also gave an interesting speech on the role of “tribalism” versus nationalism about one year before he was ousted from power; see Egal, “Nomadic Individualism.”

²⁰ United Kingdom, *Precis*, p. 14.

²¹ Laitin and Samatar, p. 30.

²² Ibn Battuta provides a detailed fourteenth century account of a bustling Mogadishu from his travels; see Battuta, pp. 110-112; also see Jama, “The Origins and Development,” p. 37.

²³ Mukhtar, “Arabic Sources,” p. 145.

²⁴ When initially built, the Suez Canal cost approximately \$100 million, and was 102 miles/164 kilometers long. It has since been expanded.

²⁵ UN General Assembly Resolution 1514, also known as the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

²⁶ This was due to clan-segregated distribution of political positions: Hesse, Introduction: "The Myth," p. 251.

²⁷ Lewis comments on this brief but difficult period: "Somalia was now a prison presided over directly by the tireless tyrant Siyaad, who had immense energy and by preference worked through the night"; "Visible and Invisible," p. 502.

²⁸ Ibid, p. 501.

²⁹ Though the boundaries of each of the three areas has shifted somewhat over the centuries, the reality of there actually being three regions with their own specific characteristics has been consistent over time.

³⁰ For an excellent discussion of the process written approximately ten years on, see Bradbury, Abokor, and Yusuf, "Somaliland: Choosing Politics...".

³¹ For a detailed account of the entire process, see Walls, "Emergence of a Somali State," pp 371-389.

³² Hesse provides a comprehensive account of Somaliland's political system and politics; see Hesse, "Where Somalia...", pp. 352-354.

³³ In fact it was subclans of the Dir and Haarti which participated.

³⁴ Walls, "Emergence," p. 378.

³⁵ For a thorough account of this period, see Walls, *A Somali Nation-State*, pp. 161-178.

³⁶ One author has been critical of the apparent "peaceful and democratic" image of Somaliland's development, and reveals the sometimes questionable political strategies employed by Egal in Somaliland's formative years and the crucial role they played in Somaliland's success; see Balthasar, "Somaliland's Best Kept."

³⁷ Bradbury, et al, pp. 457-458

³⁸ Ibid, p. 458.

³⁹ See Hesse, "Where Somalia," esp. pp. 355, 357-358; Feldman, "Fund Transfers."

⁴⁰ Several authors have commented on the role of the business community here as a cornerstone for peace and as a possible model or springboard for southern Somalia. See, for example, Hammond, "Somalia Rising"; Hesse, "Lessons"; Feldman, "Amidst the Chaos," esp. p. 302 and throughout; Feldman, "Somalia: Amidst the Rubble"; Lindley, "Between Dirty Money." In regard to Somaliland's inspiring book fairs, see: www.economist.com, August 2013.

⁴¹ <http://somalilandpress.com>, "Somali and Chinese Investors Sign a Major Industrialization Deal with the Government." In June 2013, there were some health and safety problems reported concerning a Chinese tannery not far from Hargeisa: www.theguardian.com, July 2013. The government's failure to act on this does not bode well.

⁴² Montevideo Convention Article 1 requires that "a state as a person of international law" should have a permanent population, defined territory, a government, and the capacity to enter into relations with other states.

⁴³ Response to the author, Uppsala University, 11 August 1997; the Secretary-General also added the rather surprising opinion that those who advocated state break-up were "more fanatical" and that the international community could only "help" but "not impose".

⁴⁴ David Shinn, then Director of East African Affairs at the US State Department, reiterated this on Radio Hargeisa in May 1996.

⁴⁵ On the complexities and realities of recognition, see for example “Government Recognition in Somalia” by Anonymous, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 40, 2 (2002), pp. 247-272. See also Alexis Arieff, “De Facto Statehood?,” pp. 60-79. Although there are several articles on the topic, few have appeared in leading journals of international law.

⁴⁶ Marc Lanteigne discusses China-Somalia-Somaliland relations in his 2013 article “Fire Over Water: China’s Strategic Engagement of Somalia and the Gulf of Aden Crisis”, *Pacific Review* 26 (3).

⁴⁷ *Horn of Africa Bulletin*, selected issues 1998 and 1999. Menkhaus reports that a consortium of Somali businessman took over management and maintenance of several UNICEF water systems, and confirmed Hargeisa was among them, another example of Somali entrepreneurial spirit; Menkhaus, “Reassessing,” pp. 26-27 and private correspondence. The recent upgrade of Hargeisa’s water system does not reflect the consortium’s management skills: <http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?cid=12179&catid=233&typeid=6>

⁴⁸ Adam Smith International, *Somaliland Security Sector Assessment*, (2012), pp. 69, 85, 46-8, 79.

⁴⁹ The International New York Times articles were all authored by Ian Fisher: “An Oasis of Peace in Somalia Seeks Freedom”, November 26, 1999, Sec. A, pp. 1 and 12; “A Woman of Firsts and Her Latest Feat: A Hospital”, November 29, 1999, Sec. A, p. 4; “Somalia Militias Now Undergoing Rehumanization,” December 4, 1999, Sec. A, p. 4.

⁵⁰ Adam Smith International, p. 64.

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 65.

⁵² Ibid, p. 78.

⁵³ Ibid, pp. 58-74, 76-84.

⁵⁴ Ibid, pp. 69, 80.

⁵⁵ In August 2014, representatives of Khatumo State declared Las Anod as its capital in spite of the fact that Somaliland armed forces still control and administer the town and region.

⁵⁶ For example: www.somalilanders.net/somaliland-vs-puntland-oil-conflict/; www.nextoilrush.com; <http://allafrica.com>; www.bbc.co.uk.

⁵⁷ Walls and Kibble, “Beyond Polarity,” p. 32.

⁵⁸ Ibid, pp. 46, 44.

⁵⁹ Ibid p. 50. As an example of uneven development of civil liberties, in spite of private press and private television in Somaliland, private radio stations are not permitted, apparently due to reasons of security; see Stremlau, “Hostages of Peace.”

⁶⁰ See: www.somaliaonline.com.

⁶¹ Walls and Kibble, p. 40.

⁶² Ibid, p.32.

⁶³ Leonard, “What does the Somali,” p. 570.

⁶⁴ www.theguardian.com

⁶⁵ <http://somalilandpress.com.somalilandfear-in-khatumo-ahead-of-puntland-polls-47152>

⁶⁶ <http://somalilandpress.com>

⁶⁷ The name recalls the Land of Punt, to which the Egyptians referred regarding trade as far back as four thousand years ago.

⁶⁸ Mogadishu is about 500 miles due south; however, the roads are not direct and driving from southernmost Puntland to Mogadishu would be significantly longer, by at least 100 miles/160km.

⁶⁹ A resolution to the ongoing border dispute with Somaliland could change this significantly.

⁷⁰ No official census has been taken in Somalia since 1986, and population figures can only be approximate. In 2003 Puntland was reported to have 2.4 million people, increasing to 3.9 million in 2006. Puntland authorities continue to report a population of 3.9 million, the dramatic increase apparently due to immigration from southern Somalia and other regional countries.

⁷¹ Lewis, "Visible and Invisible," p. 503.

⁷² Bernhard Helander, "Bosasso, Somalia – Emerging Democracy?"

⁷³ "The EU will modernise Bosasso port", *Economist Intelligence Unit Country Report for Somalia*, 3rd Quarter, 1996, p.35. Subsequent inquiries to the EU and related documents only reveal that €10 million were set aside for "physical infrastructure". Also see "Financing Conditions Provided by the Commission of the European Communities to the People of Somalia," Agreement N5632/ SO, March 1996, Budget Details, Annex 1.

⁷⁴ Helander, "Bosasso," 1997.

⁷⁵ From a draft report on why the separate regional administrations were not successful and the considerations behind an inter-regional Puntland: Bernhard Helander, *The Puntland State of Somalia: Strategem or a Step towards Good Governance?*, for submission to the United Nations Development Office for Somalia, Local Administrative Structures Unit, Uppsala and Nairobi, December 1998.

⁷⁶ Helander, "Bosasso."

⁷⁷ "Principles and Position of the Puntland State of Somalia," Puntland State of Somalia, 12 March 1998.

⁷⁸ Hesse, "Lessons in Successful Somali Governance," p.77. Hesse's article offers a detailed and careful analysis of Puntland politics. Among his observations, he points out that the Charter seems to have been forwarded instead of the called-for Constitution, and gave inordinate power to the president, which essentially led to a range of abuses.

⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 77.

⁸⁰ See Pham, "Putting Somali Piracy." See also, for example "Continued U.S. Navy Operations Against Pirates off Somalia," *American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 102, No.1 (Jan., 2008), pp. 169-170 and "United States Joins International Response to Somali Pirates," *American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 103, No. 1 (Jan., 2009), pp.146-148.

⁸¹ Menkhaus, "Dangerous Waters," pp. 23-24.

⁸² Ibid, p. 24.

⁸³ www.shipping.nato.int/Pages/Piracystatistics.aspx

⁸⁴ Hesse, "Lessons," pp. 80-81.

⁸⁵ Due to ongoing conflict with al-Shabaab, Mogadishu's population has at least doubled since 2011; www.upi.com/Top_News/Special/2012/07/17/Mogadishu-population-soars/UPI-17861342548858/

⁸⁶ Galmudug consists of about 1.8 million people, and was known for harboring pirates. In fact, it accepted assistance from Puntland troops in 2012 to contain the pirate presence. Al-Shabaab has attempted to gain ground there as well.

⁸⁷ Walls and Kibble, p.372.

⁸⁸ www.nytimes.com/1991/01/28/world/insurgents-claiming-victory-in-somalia.html

⁸⁹ UNOSOM I and UNITAF were short-lived, taking place from April to December 1992 and December 1992-May 1993 respectively. UNOSOM II, however, lasted for two years, from March 1993-March 1995. More recently there was also the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), authorized by the UN, which began in 2007 and continues to the present.

⁹⁰ "Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia," UN Doc S/1999/882, Iss.body: S/Sess:54 (New York), 16 August 1999, pp. 14-15.

⁹¹ Menkhaus, "The Crisis in Somalia," p.360.

⁹² See for example: www.crisisgroup.org/enregions/africahorn-of-africa/somalia/170-somalia-the-transitional-government-on-life-support.aspx.

⁹³ Indeed, as of this writing one of al-Shabaab's top commanders was killed in an airstrike just south of Mogadishu; see: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/02/somalia-drone-strike-killed-top-al-shabab-figure150206111810686.html>.

⁹⁴ See J. Ashley Roach, "Countering Piracy off Somalia: International Law and International Institutions", *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 104, No. 3 (July 2010), pp. 397-416; Martin N. Murphy, *Somalia: the new Barbary? Piracy and Islam in the Horn of Africa*, (New York; Columbia University Press, 2011), 277 pp.; Jay Bahadur, *Deadly Waters: Inside the Hidden World of Somalia's Pirates*, (London; Profile Books, 2011), 302 pp.; for land based kidnappings see: www.theguardian.com.

⁹⁵ "No end in sight to banana war", *The Horn of Africa Bulletin*, Vol. 8, No. 3, May-June 1996, p.17; a quote from Somalia's former ambassador to Kenya. The banana trade was quite lucrative, so much so that, in an attempt to maintain some control of it for himself, one militia leader, Ali Mahdi, built his own port just north of Mogadishu.

⁹⁶ Abdi Ismail Samatar, "Destruction of State," p. 625.

⁹⁷ In 1998, amidst high praise from Aided, Libya's leader Gaddafi involved himself in settling the Somali problem, including paying for the administration and protection of Mogadishu, its airport and harbour, and equipping a police force of 6000; <http://www.arabicnews.com>.

⁹⁸ Pham, p. 326.

⁹⁹ See Lindley, "Dirty Money," pp. 519-539; and Medani, "Financing Terrorism or Survival? Informal Finance and State Collapse in Somalia," p. 2-9.

¹⁰⁰ See Feldman, "Amidst the Chaos."

¹⁰¹ Menkhaus, pp. 365-67.

¹⁰² In September 2013, representatives from United Nations, the European Union and Federal Government of Somalia met in Mogadishu to discuss and agree on renewed efforts and assistance for the south, resulting in the document *The Somali Compact*. This was the end result of a process which began in December 2012. It includes a range of short and mid-term initiatives, the implementation of which are to support the building of a more positive and lasting social and political culture. The Integrated Strategic Framework for Somalia is a document which clarifies the UN's role and priorities and poses a time frame; it was signed in October 2014; for the entire document see: <http://unsom.unmissions.org>.

¹⁰³ Hammond, "Somalia Rising," p. 191.

¹⁰⁴ Webersik, "Mogadishu: Economy," p. 1478; in this 2006 article, the author refers back to analysts stressing the crucial role of the business class even in 2003.

¹⁰⁵ Pye, *Asian Power*, p. 20.

¹⁰⁶ Eckstein, "A Culturalist Theory," pp. 789-790.

¹⁰⁷ Ceaser, "Alexis de Tocqueville," pp. 656-657.

¹⁰⁸ This term was first used by Tocqueville in his pioneering work from the early nineteenth century, *Democracy in America*; G. Lawrence, transl., (New York: Anchor Books, 1968), p. 287. See also Ceaser, "Alexis de Tocqueville," pp. 656-672.

¹⁰⁹ Tocqueville, pp. 305, fn.8; 287.

¹¹⁰ Tocqueville, p. 31.

¹¹¹ Four phases of the study of political culture have been identified, beginning with a "culture and personality school" in the early twentieth century, a rigorous quantitative and scientific approach from about 1950-1970, a period of discrediting political culture in the 1970s and 1980s, and a resurgent response to the poverty of previous approaches; from Gabriel A. Almond, "Foreward: A Return to Political Culture," in Larry Diamond, ed., *Political Culture and Democracy*, pp. ix-xii. Among early works on political culture are: *Political Culture and Political Development*, Lucien W. Pye and Sidney Verba, eds. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965); *Becoming Modern: Individual Change in Six Developing Nations*, by Alex Inkeles and David Smith (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974); Robert Putnam, *The Beliefs of Politicians* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973).

¹¹² Putnam, *Making Democracy Work*, p. 124.

¹¹³ Tarrow, "Making Social Science Work," pp.389-397. Selection of time period is crucial: too short a period does not allow the necessary perspective for observing shifts in behavior patterns and too long a period presents the challenge of maintaining a viable thread over time.

¹¹⁴ Diamond, *Political Culture and Democracy*, p. 7.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p. 230.

¹¹⁶ Pye and Verba, *Political Culture*, p.7.

¹¹⁷ Pye, *Asian Power*, p. 20.

¹¹⁸ The idea of political culture as process was first forwarded by Welch, *Concept of Political Culture*, p. 164.

¹¹⁹ Prunier, "Benign Neglect," pp. 39-40.

¹²⁰ The full quote is "Rather, visible elements of a particular reality may signal that other, more discrete factors could be at work." A. Samatar, *The Somali Challenge*, p. 99.

¹²¹ Pye, *Asian Power*, p. 21.

¹²² Inglehart, "The Renaissance of Political Culture", p. 1207. For commentary and critique, see for example Inglehart and Welzel, "Political Culture and Democracy, pp. 61-79; Seligson, "The Renaissance of Political Culture", pp. 273-292; Jackman and Miller, "The Poverty of Political Culture", pp. 697-716; Jackman and Miller, "A Renaissance of Political Culture?", pp. 632-659; Chilton, "Defining Political Culture", pp. 419-445; Sharkansky, "The Utility of Elazar's Political Culture", pp. 66-83.

¹²³ Pye and Verba, pp. 21-23. The other two pairs were trust/distrust and particular/general identification. Harry Eckstein also further developed the concept; see Eckstein, pp. 790-791.

¹²⁴ Ceaser points out that Tocqueville believed “the spreading social condition of equality” was one of the factors of a democratic political culture; see Ceaser, p. 657.

¹²⁵ Historically Somali was unwritten and events were recorded orally. It was not until well after the coup of Siad Barre and his impressive literacy campaign in the early 1970s that Somali became a written language. Before then, educated Somalis expressed themselves through Arabic or a European language, or information was passed down through oral traditions.

¹²⁶ This would also be considered rudimentary process tracing or what Alexander George referred to as following a “stream of behaviour through time.” It was first introduced as a research method in “Case Studies and Organizational Decision Making”, by Alexander L. George and T. J. McKeown in Lee S. Sproull and Patrick D. Larkey, eds., *Advances in Information Processing in Organizations* (Greenwich; JAI Press Inc., 1985), Vol. 2, pp. 21-58. Wider applications have since been developed, beginning with Alexander George, “The Role of Congruence Method for Case Study Research”, paper presented at MacArthur Workshop for Case Study Methods, Harvard University, Oct. 17-19, 1997.

¹²⁷ Walls and Kibble, “Beyond Polarity,” p. 32.

¹²⁸ Ibid, p. 40.

¹²⁹ Although there is some temptation to include Putnam’s work on social capital within the above discussion and to assess Somalia’s social capital as an additional indicator of political culture, the problem is that social capital is still an indeterminate concept which might be even more difficult to apply to a case like Somalia, and so requires a separate discussion. Similar to political culture, it is afflicted with a number of scholarly definitions, and it might be wise to keep this preliminary venture into tracing political culture as simple as possible. See, for example, Tristan Claridge’s excellent coverage of the problem of this concept at www.socialcapitalresearch.com, where the author provides thorough discussions on several aspects of the topic

¹³⁰ Claims have been made that there is overlap between the two, though actual examples are rare. For a fuller discussion of the tension between these two major divisions in social science research, see M. Q. Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (London; Sage Publications, 1990), second edition, especially his discussion pp. 36-48; see also M. B. Miles and A. M. Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook* (London: Sage Publications, 1994), second edition. A case might be made for a historical archaeology approach as well, and with similar reasoning to not take that approach; see Peter R. Schmidt and Jonathan R. Walz, “Re-Representing African Pasts through Historical Archaeology”, *American Antiquity*, Vol. 72, No. 1 (Jan., 2007), pp. 53-70.

¹³¹ Reese, *Renewers*, p. 33.

¹³² Indeed, of the many forwarded explanations for the ongoing conflict in the south, few to none of them, when reversed and applied to the two northern areas, do little to explain Somaliland’s notable efforts, nor Puntland’s stubbornly repeated attempts towards representative political organization.

¹³³ The Digil and Mirifle sub-clans from the far south speak a dialect quite distinct from the rest of the Somalis and are often referred to as “May-speaking.”

¹³⁴ Abdullahi, *Culture and Customs*, p. 141.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Hess, *Italian Colonialism*, p. 194

¹³⁷ Sylvia E. Pankhurst, *Ex-Italian Somaliland*, pp. 225-226.