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EAST AFRICAN PASTORALISM AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT: AN INTRODUCTION

Leif Manger

1. THE EAST AFRICAN PASTORAL CRISIS

It is a long established fact in studies on East African pastoralists that an understanding of pastoral adaptations cannot be limited to a man/land relationship in isolation, i.e., a focus on the direct relationship between the natural environment and human adaptation. We know that contemporary East African pastoralism is also affected by factors outside such immediate ecological relationships. Also, an understanding of this complexity needs a perspective based on broad socio-economic causes as they are interlined with factors like demographic growth, agricultural impasse, incorporation of pastoral economies into the market economy, general insecurity arising from civil wars and conflicts, faulty national and international policies as well as factors arising from climate and ecology. These processes have led to rapid sedentarisation and urbanisation, a breakdown of traditional cultures, transformation of gender relations, degradation of natural resources and growing vulnerability of groups to ecological and economic stress.

Instead of a general acceptance of such complexities, the past history of planning and contact between public authorities and East African pastoralism has been one of misunderstanding as well as more or less conscious policies of marginalisation based on simplistic assumptions. The most common of these are the widespread generalisations that accuse pastoralists of creating desertification, of managing their stock according to irrational economic principles and of being technically stagnant and backward, of wandering about destroying nature, and of adhering to conservative social structures and cultural notions, i.e., being against development.

Similarly, states have tried to control pastoralists, condemning their lifestyle, forcing them into rigid administrative structures and imposing upon them national identities. Such notions have led to harmful interventions by governments and donors alike. Development programmes characterised by technical weaknesses, lack of understanding of social systems and inadequate politico-administrative framework have not been uncommon. Lack of co-operation on the part of pastoralists has been explained by resistance to change and inherent conservatism. The pastoralists themselves have often responded to such developments with distrust, resistance and violence.

At the same time pastoral societies have undergone great transformations during their contact with such state structures. Animal health, water policies, sedentarisation schemes, land tenure reforms are all key words that indicate areas of public policies that have brought about profound changes in pastoral adaptations. Not all of them have been detrimental to African pastoralism, nor have pastoralists shied away from involving themselves in all of them.

But the history of East African pastoral development cannot be limited to one of intended and unintended effects of public policies. And we would be ill-advised if we looked at East African pastoralists as isolated societies, as only victims of public policies, as representing a "past" and as withdrawing from the public arenas. Rather, what we actually we find on the ground is a dynamic picture in which pastoralists pursue their interests, participating when they see benefits, withdrawing when they feel threatened.

Certainly, the general tendency is clear and indicates that pastoralists are at the losing end of such developments. However, this is not a game in which all pastoralists are similarly affected. Nor were all pastoralists equal in the past. On the contrary, pastoral societies have at all times been characterised by *inequality*. Historically, such inequality grew out of internal dynamics within the pastoral society itself. Today, it is also combined with unequal access to external resources. Thus, by participating in the public spheres certain elite groups among pastoralists have advanced and improved their positions, including within their own pastoral societies. For the poorer strata of pastoralists, such links to the external world, through politics and through the market, have a different type of effect. Rather than benefiting from them, they find themselves in a double-bind situation in which they are more and more dependent on he market, for their own survival, but at the same time occupying a peripheral position in that system.

The effect of this type of structural position is dramatised in times of crisis, particularly the periods of *drought and famine*. During such periods pastoralists are badly hit by the price fluctuations in the markets, by falling animal prices and rising grain prices. In many cases it is this type of unfavourable terms of trade relationship, rather than the drought itself, that lead to the loss of animals through unfavourable exchange. Ironically, the richer groups of pastoralists may stand to gain from this situation, as they make up part of the buyers of such animals, alongside traders and civil servants. "Losers" and "winners" become two distinct categories.

The predicament of the East African pastoralists is, therefore, not dependent solely on the state of the range on which they live, and on the quality of their animals, but rather on a series of dynamics that reaches far beyond the limits of the pastoral communities themselves. But at the same time, local factors, range and animals alike, make up important premises for the continuation of pastoralism as a particular mode of adaptation. The challenge we are faced with is, therefore, to see the various interrelationships between the local factors and various types of external factors that *together* shape the contemporary reality of East African pastoralists.

2. BASIC FEATURES OF EAST AFRICAN PASTORALISM

· The natural environment in East Africa is a varied one, with variations in altitude, rainfall patterns in dry and wet seasons, river systems, soil types and vegetation cover. This varied pattern has in basic ways affected the distribution of settlements and population movements, and the distribution of productive activities such as cultivation and grazing.

· The human responses to this variation have been to develop adaptive patterns that have been flexible enough to cope with the variation and to minimise risk. This coping has been characterised by movements across zones in different seasons and by a combination of many types of activities - cultivation and animal herding; hunting and gathering; wage labour, etc. Such a mixed economy puts demands on the labour power of economic units, their patterns of development, and knowledge and organisational capacity.

· Cultural and political boundaries are also affected by this type of adaptational game. Population movements, historically as well as contemporarily, can be understood in this context. Such movements and adaptations have also forged links between groups: violent ones such as cattle rustling and raids, peaceful ones such as marriages, reciprocal relationships built on sharing of animals, and collaborative ones such as creating labour networks. Regional markets and trading centres as well as towns were important meeting places that further added to the development of relationships. The same goes for the development of various power centres. East African states can historically be viewed as an interaction between different ecological zones, and hence different adaptations (e.g., the highland/lowland dimension in Ethiopia and Eritrea, the Nile Valley/savannah dimension in the Sudan, etc. The state centres were in the highlands and the Nile Valley, but the exploitation of lowlands and savannah areas were basic mechanisms in maintaining the viability of the states).

· Returning to the issue of resource management, then, a broad perspective as the one outlined above allows us to link many developments in East Africa. It facilitates an understanding of the distribution of groups, and makes visible the migration of the Nilotic, Bantu and Cushitic peoples around the region. We can see how adaptive processes, such as coping with drought, shifts between agriculture and pastoralism, etc., also lead to concomitant shifts in identities. And we can see how such links affect the borders between groups, making them fluid rather than fixed, and how the groups, seen as "moral communities", might not coincide with the boundaries of ethnic groups or eco-zones. Furthermore, it allows us to see the development of the contemporary states in a wider perspective, seeing how national boundaries have interfered with existing links between groups, how problems between groups on the borders become nation-state problems, and how commercialisation and general modernisation shape the adaptive responses of groups. We also see innovative processes becoming important strategies for people living on the borderland. Similarly, the arming of the states as well as local groups precipitate many problems. Applying the perspective will also show that the groups have not been static entities, captured within their own "traditions". There has always been differentiation between people who succeed and people who fail. Poor people are vulnerable during droughts; rich people might benefit from the same drought. We are also able to question simple

evolutionary perspectives about the relationships between agriculture and pastoralism, and can see them as adaptive consequences of different contexts of systemic interdependencies and management frames.

3. PERSPECTIVE ON RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

What appears, then, is a situation in which East African adaptations and the way various socio-cultural practices are tied to resource management, necessitate a broad range discussion of dynamics that are not necessarily within the immediate field of resource management. Although a focus on the environment is important, a narrowly defined conceptualisation of environment as "ecology only" would not catch these complexities. Natural environment also mediates social relations, relations that need not be in harmony. Rather, such a situation dramatises the general point that access to resources is best seen as linked to entitlement relations that extend from the social to the political arenas, not fixed but continuously challenged and realigned. Furthermore, entitlements may be obtained at the local level, the national level or international level, involving complex processes with a variety of actors. Rather than seeing entitlement issues as clear-cut and based on individual ownership of assets and resources, we see a fuzziness that also invites a broader perspective. Thus the task should be to understand the complexity and seek conceptual tools for dealing with such a complexity, rather than start with preconceived notions and concepts and then "reduce" complexity to make it fit these notions.

A major conclusion must be that it is important not to narrow down discussions about resource management and entitlements to one about legalities and classification forms. Rather, *entitlement* should be seen as "how they are used", thus making any clear-cut distinction between them impossible. This also dramatises the issue of *power*, i.e., who, in the various discourses around resource use, has the power to define whose interest should get priority, and also the *redefined* entitlements in the contexts of resource competition.

Instead of restricted exercises in definition there seems to be a need for a cultural history approach through which specific adaptations are seen in nature as well as against other groups in order to uncover continuities and change. Also, one needs to grasp processes on different levels of scale.

4. THE STATE/SOCIETY RELATIONSHIP IN EAST AFRICA

4.1 The Role of Government

When considering the governments' ability to respond to some of the problems we have outlined above, the situation looks bleak indeed. First, many governments focus on "technical solutions" with a view to effects on macroeconomics and general policy frameworks. Their basic perspective seems to be that pastoralists contribute little to national economies, and that pastoral management is irrational and potentially destructive for the environment. Hence, technical solutions like ranches, grazing schemes, etc., are resorted to in order to "improve" such management. Such assumptions are followed by strategies that aim to increase the volume of livestock in *formal* markets, introducing new technologies and worrying about carrying capacity and stocking rates. Concerning the overall agenda of national governments, they have been characterised by the political imperatives of providing inexpensive meat for urban populations and earning hard currency through export of animals, and the issue of political control of pastoral populations, particularly through policies of sedentarisation.

Secondly, in most countries the public structures are in serious crisis and are developing away from the local and regional matters they are meant to serve. This development can be seen on many levels. First of all, the local government, and the various technical departments or field agencies that deal with pastoralists are in a crisis. This relates to a general process of centralisation within the government structures. Major sources of revenue in various regions are controlled by the centre or by parastatals which are under the direct control of the centre. Revenue flows directly to the central ministries, the regions getting back little through their development budgets. Furthermore, available resources are primarily spent on social services, and mainly on salaries. The pattern is a situation in which the lion's share of the budget goes to the maintenance of people employed, and to the maintenance of ongoing activities. Very few resources are allocated to investments in development, and offices providing agricultural services, soil conservation, range and pastoral management are hardly operative.

4.2 The NGO Alternative

The NGOs have a more positive view of pastoralists, but may vary in their strategies. They may go in for restoring the pastoral systems, for instance, after droughts. Such a strategy normally means various forms of restocking. Or they may acknowledge the demographic problems in such areas and go for packages that develop alternative employment opportunities. Although NGOs are also "technical" in their basic strategic thinking, they stress the importance of "appropriate technology" and "enabling environment", the necessity of small-scale inputs, and the need to involve local communities. Much of this is actually a general strategy that is formulated primarily to avoid getting bogged down in the problems with the strategies described above as "Government". Actually, NGOs try to circumvent public structures and deal with what they prefer to call "civil society". A particular element with NGOs is, of course, that they often come in through relief operations, but remain on the scene as active development agencies. Such NGOs often have international linkage, and cover a wide range of purposes: from humanitarian to religious ones (both Christian and Islamic).

International NGOs have been in the region for decades, and for many of them this long-term development work was a continuation of relief efforts that have been taking place since the early 1970s. Such development work was necessarily related to how different agencies saw the future of pastoralism in the area, and also to how they saw the role of government structures in such developments. Since they have many of the resources that governments lacked, it is interesting to see how the international NGOs have functioned.

Many NGOs saw the solutions to the problems of pastoralism *outside* the pastoral sector, i.e., that people should be given alternative income opportunities. Various alternatives, from local handicraft to improvements in local cultivation, have been tried. Such systematic attempts to create alternatives to the pastoral system are clearly based on the belief that the pastoral system and the pastoral adaptation constituted a problem in East Africa. Other agencies would focus on activities within the pastoral sector, such as the maintenance of wells, veterinary services and restocking. This was done based on the understanding that pastoralism constituted the only way out for the long-term existence of people in such marginal areas.

However, no matter how different organisations looked at the origin of the problems, they all seemed to design strategies in which *development projects* constituted the main mechanism through which such problems could be addressed. Such projects were *small-scale* and *community-based*, with emphasis on "participation" and "appropriate technology". This was, and still is, a reflection of NGO ideology, and many efforts were put into such project work. However, the definition of viable groups and types of organisation which can deal with resource management or local development is not an easy task. Rather, we may easily fall into the trap of creating groups on the ground that they do not function in the traditional system we are eager to protect. Various food aid periods have shown how local people have manipulated organisational principles in order to obtain the highly wanted food.

Secondly, the "local focus" may also be a problem. If East African pastoralists depend on distant pastures, and are affected by policies taken in far away places for quite different reasons than the well being of the pastoralists, how can a local perspective deal with this? Few agencies have addressed such issues, nor have they been willing to support government services that might improve *their* capacity to work. Rather, the situation has been one of *bypassing* (Abdel Ati 1993).

I am not arguing here that there are no positive results of NGO projects, nor do I wish to dispute the importance of their humanitarian efforts. I am merely trying to reflect on the basic role such organisations seem to play in the overall planning dilemmas in the East African region. In a contemporary setting we should not turn our backs at the ways NGOs have been able to mediate between pastoralists and government systems. This role of advocate and mediator may be a very significant one, and should certainly be developed further, particularly in the present political context in East African countries.

5. THE RE-EMERGENCE OF "THE LOCAL"

The above debate relates not just to the level of pastoral planning. In many ways, it also reflects a basic type of contemporary developmental thinking in which the "state/society" dichotomy is taking on increased significance. NGOs are definitely part of the new focus on "society", as is "civil society", a concept perhaps replacing in a modernised language the old term "the local". James Ferguson puts it nicely:

> Where political scientists have been understandably eager to leave behind their cold-war paradigms for livelier topics such as democratisation, social movements, and public spheres, the modal anthropology student heading for Africa today will likely be on the lookout not for an intriguing culture or a promising village, but for an interesting NGO (Ferguson 1998, 45).

Ferguson argues convincingly about how the "state" - in the modernisation, nation-building perspective - was earlier seen as a modernising force, and "traditional society" as being backward, trapped in tribalism, lineage politics, etc. Hence, nation-building assumed the withering away of such traditional elements, as is evident for instance in Fortes and Evans-Prichard's book on "The African Political Systems". The central idea of that book was that a decline in lineages would be an essential factor in advancing the state. But things were to work out differently. The contemporary African state is rarely a modernising force, but rather despotic, privatised, and undemocratic. Hope is now put on "civil society" (the public sphere of Habermas), i.e., the popular field which is supposed to take us out of the grip of the state. No longer is the local "primordial"; the focus is on voluntary associations, grassroots initiatives, etc., in which local people work for their own interests against the state. The issue is not how to build a state, but how to get rid of the existing one. The role of the international society has also changed. The international community is now less a supporter of the state, but a controller of the same state, through structural adjustment packages, and by forwarding NGOs to interact with the civil society.

On the conceptual level, therefore, Ferguson argues that the old concept of "nation-building" through the developing of state structures, and the more recent concept of "development" through developing civil society signify similar types of processes, and the failure of both is the continuing existence of primordial forces. With "civil society" we have rediscovered "the local".

But what is this divide? I feel this type of rhetoric actually hides important empirical dynamics. Is there really such a strong divide between states and NGOs? Today, still insisting on classification, we use terms like "BONGOs" (Bank-Organised NGOs) or "GONGO"s (Government-Organised NGOs). However, rather than classification, perhaps our starting point should be empirical processes, and we should look at what Jane Guyer found to be "obvious", that "civil society is largely made up of international organisations" (Guyer 1994, 223). If this is true we have a lot of mapping to do, mapping of the various ways in which different actors are neither "state" nor "society", but linked together in global networks in which resources, people and ideas travel.

6. THE PAPERS

6.1 The Future of East African Pastoralists and of Pastoralism

Johan Helland's paper discusses the Borana pastoral society of southern Ethiopia, and asks questions about the long-term viability of such communities in the context of various development efforts. Helland contrasts the views of those who argue that the tragic effects of recurrent droughts and famines serve as proof that pastoralism is no longer possible, and of those who see such crises as critical events that pastoralists have always faced and therefore must be part of an understanding of the pastoral adaptation itself. Focussing on the problem of growth within pastoral communities, Helland is able to show how traditional Borana mechanisms for regulating resource use have functioned better than modern development inputs. One example is the availability of and organisation of water points, through well councils based on the Gada system. The erosion of such management structures serves as an example, not of improved resource management but of its decline. Similarly rangelands are shrinking through privatisation of resources. Access is no longer based on "being a Borana", but on private ownership of pasture enclosures. The contemporary Borana are unable to exist as pastoralists, and Helland reminds us that food

distribution in one form or another has taken place in Borana every year since 1973. Institutional erosion is a result both of the contact the Borana have with government agencies and also international NGOs. Helland notes that in spite of the presence of aid agencies for such a long period, with their rhetorical focus on "the local", none of them really focus on the existing Borana structures to find out to what extent development inputs can be attached to them.

Boku Tache's paper is also on the Borana. The paper raises many of the issues pointed out above, but does so through greater ethnographic detail of both the social organisation of the Borana and the ILCA/CARE-introduced water cisterns in the area as well as cases of the ongoing establishment of private enclosures.

Assefa Tolera's paper on the Karrayu also shows how a pastoral group is being marginalised through government interventions like the introduction of mechanised farming of a sugar plantation in the area, and the establishment of national parks along the Awash River. But the Karrayu are also put under pressure by the neighbouring Afar, Argobba, Itu and Arssi groups' taking away important dry season areas. As a consequence of all these, conflicts have increased in number; herds are getting smaller, leading to processes of impoverishment and affecting social relationships that are based on the exchange of animals. This has led the Karrayu to use adaptive strategies that have further repercussions, like the selling of immature animals and cutting forest trees for charcoal. The process of marginalisation also has a socio-cultural dimension. Assefa Tolera indicates areas of tension between what can be labelled a traditional Karrayu Oromo culture and the presence of Muslim Karrayu converts, Muslim Itu, Christian townsmen, and plantation workers.

Salah Shazali's paper is a general overview of pastoral developments in Eastern Sudan. He relates his discussion to the paradox in which, from 1975 until 1985, the country moved from being a "breadbasket of the Middle East" to a famine-struck country. After the end of the drought of the 1980s, rehabilitation started and the number of international aid agencies increased tremendously. Most of the agencies focused on introducing productivity enhancing elements into the subsistence agriculture and income generating schemes (particularly for women). However, all this intervention did not seem to help. Salah Shazali argues that this was because the communities have not been understood adequately. What is needed is a proper understanding of the agro-pastoralist adaptation. One common misconception is that the nomad/sedentary link is much more dynamic than is normally conceived, thus leading to a distorted understanding of realities and the production of unreliable statistics. The famine is being produced, not by an absolute decline in the availability of food, but by a reduction of food accessibility. Hence, food shortages can only be understood as part of a general marginalisation of producers through their involvement in large-scale structures. An important part of this involvement is generated by the links to the market. The paper presents a historical overview of the major dynamics leading to a structural dependency of local producers on market-generated dynamics.

Omer Egeimi presents a kind of a "counter-case" to Salah Shazali. Also focussing on a Sudanese agro-pastroal group, his paper on the Bishariyyn Beja of Eastern Sudan shows how a group which, for various reasons, has been marginally involved in the dynamics discussed by Shazali generally seems to fare better than other groups in the Red Sea Hills. The Hadendowa and Atman, who are closer to the urban centre of Port Sudan and hence have been more penetrated by market forces, seem to suffer more of the effects pointed out by Salah Shazali than do the Bisharyyn in spite of the fact that Omer Egeimi points out that they have been affected by their relations to animal markets in Egypt.

6.2 Pastoralist Resistance

Frank Muhereza's paper focuses on pastoralists and squatters within the territories of Ankole ranches in Uganda. The paper discusses both the history behind the establishment of the ranches as well as an incident in 1990 in which there were riots involving the squatters (Banyankole, Bahima and Ruwandese pastoralists) were involved. The overall context for the ranches in a state policy aimed at reducing nomadic pastoralism as a way of life, but in the actual establishment of ranches a group of absentee owners emerged. These did not see it in their interest to develop the ranches but rather tried to exploit groups of encroaching squatters by forcing them to pay for access to grazing areas and water. The ranches failed to get rid of pastoralism, but their presence did lead to violent clashes. The case of violent resistance from 1990 is presented and analysed by Frank Muhereza, who shows how the general politicisation of the squatters by the new Museveni regime established in 1986 led to a new squatter consciousness,

and also how the President was indebted to the squatters for the support they gave him in his fight against the Obote regime.

Astrid Blystad, too, focuses on resistance. Her starting point is also the marginalisation of a pastoral group, the Datooga (Barabyiig) of Tanzania, who in their dealings with government as well as neighbouring groups are stigmatised as being primitive, war-like, etc., and who suffer encroachment on their resources by various inputs deemed necessary to "develop" the Datooga away from their primitive past. Discussing the case of two individuals, from their childhood period and school days, through marriage, divorce and life as single individuals again, Blystad is able to show how a number of factors have affected the Datooga, and, more importantly, how such factors are felt and interpreted at the level of individual persons. Some outside factors relate to colonial and missionary activities, others to Tanzanian nation-building dynamics like villagisation (*ujama'a*), and yet others are global, like the Canadian Wheat Project. Through the discussion of the impact of all these factors, Astrid Blystad is able to make the important point that we should understand the effect of large-scale processes on local people, not through simple dichotomies like local/global or micro/macro types of conceptualisations, but as events that affect real people. The outcomes and reactions are not given, but depend on a number of local and individual factors, and one such factor that we see clearly in the paper is gender. In order to carry out this type of analysis Astrid Blystad argues for the need for a historical and a narrative approach, and urges us to be aware that experiences vary not only between cultures and communities, but also between individuals.

Yusuf Lawi's paper from the Irawq people of Tanzania adds to the discussion of narratives, but as seen from the point of view of a historian. Drawing on oral sources from the Irawq people (who are neighbours of the Datooga) and analysing memorised traditions (prayers), formalised speeches (epic) and narratives, he is able to derive information about earlier conditions in the area relating both to general living conditions as well as environmental conditions. Yusuf Lawi's paper shows in an interesting way how oral testimonies, lore, etc., taken together with ethnographic descriptions of pastoral populations in travellers' accounts, documents produced by colonial and national authorities, etc., can assist in getting a more complete picture of pastoral realities. To demonstrate, he extensively presents a traditional litany and a mythical narrative from the Irawq.

6.3 Traditions in the Making

Sharif Harir discusses a case from among his own people, the Zaghawa of Western Sudan. His starting point is a traditional situation in which different Zaghawa groups have access to pastoral resources throughout Zaghawa territory, and that such rights are mediated by tribal customs. However, the contemporary Zahgawa have been split into those living on the Sudanese side of the border, and those on the Chadian side of the border. The Chadian war as well as political unrest and drought in the Sudan are all factors that have affected the Zaghgawa on both sides and made them relate to each other in new ways. However, they do no longer relate as Zaghawa only, but also as members of their nation-states, although clans are still mixed on the ground on both sides of the border. The incident discussed by Sharif Harir shows how in a situation of conflict between two factions of Zaghawa, one from each country, gives a new dynamic to the conflict itself. Rather than dealing with the issue as a traditional case between two Zaghawa groups, making use of customary conflict resolution measures, the Chadian president, Idris Debei, who is also a Zaghawa, intervened directly and reinvented the traditional position of "emissary" to follow the various Zaghawa grazing groups in order to avoid conflict. The case also shows that, by necessity, pastoralists in Africa have to be marginal to the state. The central position of the Zaghawa in the present Chadian state is in no way a case of marginalisation of pastoralists, but rather of how a sympathetic state structure can intervene positively in pastoral affairs.

Frode Storaas also discusses a fluid tribal situation. His paper on the Turkana in northern Kenya is about how to understand the tribal relationships and identities among the Nilotic groups in South Sudan, Uganda and Kenya (Karamojong, Turkana, Toposa, Dodoth, Jie). Storaas' point is that trying to reify such groups is not very helpful. His case shows that what appear as "tribes" today might have a common "origin" within the Karamojong Cluster, but that clans, groups, etc., with the same name are not identical, but may be at different levels of social organisation. Groups are also loosely defined since genealogies are not remembered for more than three to four generations. Rather than being essential groups, clans and sections are constituted by people showing membership by adhering to ritual practices, by different ways of slaughtering animals, by what parts are eaten, etc. It is clear,

then, that people may "choose" identities based on evaluations. One major factor affecting which group/s to belong to is the access to grazing resources. The whole system is thus characterised by fluidity and can hardly be defined by clear-cut rules, be they language, geography or different origins. Rather the whole system of relationships, both within tribal groups and between the regional groups, is "in the making". Raiding, for example, will not take place along clear-cut tribal boundaries, and the solutions to such conflicts can, consequently, not be sought in essentialist realities that are not there. Rather than assume a dynamic to lie in units such as tribe, clan, etc., Storaas suggests for instance that we ask what "resource management" means to different members, and what such processes of resource management mean for the constitution of groups.

6.4 Understanding Nature: Western Science versus Indigenous Knowledge

Mustafa Babiker focuses on the tension between a Western, scientific, type of soil classification and an indigenous one. Whereas Western soil scientists characterise most of the land in Dar Hamar, Western Sudan, as sandy soil, *qoz*, with some patches of clay soil, the local Hamar categories divide the land into three: *qoz, jurraba, qardud*. Similarly the Western soil descriptions are based on clear-cut categorisations derived from geological principles whereas the Hamar differentiation is "dynamic". Local people would not operate with any clear-cut boundaries between the different soil types (for instance, both *qoz* and *jurraba* would be included in *qoz*) and soil types would be decided not on the basis of geological processes but on processes related to appearance, what grows on the land and on general notions of health (hot and cold, etc.,). Mustafa Babiker assesses the categories, but he does not develop how such agro-ecological concepts make sense within a broader canvas of socio-cultural contexts, nor provide a broader discussion of land use (see, Babiker 1987). Nor does he develop, through references to classics like those of Netting and Conklin, the comparative potential of how people classify nature. But the case raises the important issue of how to understand agro-ecological knowledge among African farmers, and also the need to be aware of the sophistication of such indigenous systems. Related to this is also the issue about whether such systems are based on different root assumptions in Western science.

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INSTITUTIONAL EROSION IN THE DRYLANDS: THE CASE OF THE BORANA PASTORALISTS

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1. INTRODUCTION

Pastoral development projects in the African drylands were initially concerned with manipulating biological factors such as the availability of water and pasture, disease, the genetic composition of animal populations, reproductive and growth rates, with the aim of increasing pastoral production and integrating it into the national economy. By and large, these approaches were failures and did not achieve what they set out to do. Some development inputs were eagerly accepted by pastoralists as convenient and efficient solutions to concrete problems (in particular veterinary services, very often also water) while other development components, such as attempts to regulate stocking rates, migration routes or grazing patterns, or increase commercialisation and marketed off-take, were contemptuously rejected. Other inputs again have created as many problems as they solved. This has in particular been the case with water development.

Water is of course in short supply in most pastoral settings and water development projects were initially eagerly accepted by pastoralaists. But as experience has been gained and the management issues involved in water development projects have become apparent, many pastoralists have become wary of the problems associated with water development. In many cases water development has turned out to be destructive of the environment as well as of social relations and has contributed to increase the vulnerability of the pastoralists to events such as drought.

After the devastating droughts of the 1970s and the 1980s, which in unprecedented ways revealed how vulnerable pastoral societies in the African drylands had become, pastoral development strategies began to change. Pastoral societies had apparently lost their ability to handle droughts, or were at least facing much lower thresholds to famine and destitution. Pastoral societies which formerly were able to handle one or two failed seasons (with hardship, but successfully, in terms of carrying people and livestock through to the next good season) now face utter destitution if only one rainy season fails. The definition of the threshold to famine and destitution is a complex matter, not least in terms of the political considerations which go into it, but the net effect across the African drylands has been that an increasingly large number of people in a number of pastoral societies have come to rely on the regular supply of free famine relief food for their survival.

In the aftermath of these experiences, the outlook on pastoral development has changed, from one of mobilising pastoral resources as a contribution to the national economy, to a strategy aimed at restoring the capacity of pastoral societies to feed them. Rather than manipulating pastoral production variables, the emphasis of development projects has now changed to a concern with behavioural and social aspects. While in the first perspective on pastoral development pastoralists must be controlled, the pastoralists must now take charge of their own problems and become more self-reliant! Development projects have therefore become more concerned with issues such as fostering popular participation (which often takes on the aspect of resurrecting organisational capacities undermined or denied by administrative subjugation in earlier times). Local groups are to a large extent made responsible for their own welfare, including the delivery of public services which the government can no longer afford or is incapable of delivering, e.g., human and animal health services, education, water, roads, etc.

The earlier approach to pastoral development usually entailed considerable public investments, with projects being implemented by one or more government agencies with statutory responsibilities for the pastoralists. The new approaches are much less clearly focused, far less technical in nature and are often seen as being marginal to the range of responsibilities which governments want to assume in the pastoral areas. These are not usually the objects of government investment. Government agencies previously charged with responsibility for pastoral development are thus being scaled back. A notable change, which has taken place concurrently with the acceptance of new

perspectives on pastoral development, is the replacement of government agencies by voluntary and non-government groups.

Borana is one of the many pastoral societies in the African drylands which has followed this general trajectory in the last few decades. Borana moved from a situation of loose administration and little interference from central government, through a period with a large, classical pastoral development project (involving water development, demarcation of ranches and feed-lost, directed range management, veterinary services, marketing), concurrently with intensification of government control. In today's situation the Borana find themselves more or less on their own in facing the consequences of a failed development approach. Government development services have been retrenched and to a large extent been replaced by NGOs. But NGOs are neither willing nor able to fill the gaps left by government.

2. THE BORANA OF ETHIOPIA

In the Ethiopian context, Borana has been given much more attention than is usually the case for a pastoral society, whether in terms of development work, famine relief campaigns or research projects. More is probably known about Borana than about any other pastoral society in Ethiopia, but that has not helped to bring about a solution to some of the fundamental problems with which the Borana have to contend. Some of these problems are clearly shared with other pastoral societies, while others are particular to the Borana and the situation in which the Borana find themselves.

This account of the contemporary situation in Borana will not attempt to summarise every thing, which is known about the Borana. It will, however, highlight some important features of the situation in Borana, as these will be significant for an appreciation of the issues discussed in this paper. A short introduction to the Borana will serve to demonstrate the complexities of the issues at hand and how they are linked to a number of other important questions, both within the Borana district and even further afield.

First, the Borana are one of the many Oromo groups found in Ethiopia. In Oromo myths of origin the Borana are accorded a particularly senior position,[1] being thought of as the `*angafa*' or first-born of the Oromo nation. Well-known indicators of this particular status were the Oromo pilgrimages to Borana. Up until quite recent times, Oromo pilgrims from all over Ethiopia would travel to Borana to attend the `*muda*' ceremony, at which the senior Borana `*Kallu*'[1] receives gifts of cattle from the participants, in exchange for blessings. Another indicator is that in many of the other Oromo societies elsewhere in Ethiopia, the ritually most senior clans are designated as `*Borana*' clans.

Partly related to this position of seniority, but also due to their relative isolation in the borderlands of the Ethiopian nation-state, the Borana have also been regarded by other Oromo groups as the custodians of `original' Oromo culture. The Borana were among the last groups to be incorporated into the Ethiopian empire of Emperor Menelik II, towards the end of the last century and were thus able to maintain their customs and social institutions longer than most of the other Oromo groups. Furthermore, the Borana offered little resistance to Menelik's colonisation, and the administrative system which was set up (based on a form of indirect rule) allowed the Borana to a large extent to continue their own way of life. The notions that the culture of the Borana has remained unchanged, that it represents fundamental Oromo values and that it provides a glance at ancient Oromo social institutions and an `uncontaminated' culture have been ideologically important to all the Oromo in Ethiopia.[1]

The Borana very quickly succumbed to the firearms of Menelik's army. Particularly in the initial phase of the Ethiopian colonisation of Borana, the taxation levels were high (with feudal retainers trying to extract as much as possible out of the Borana) but the pastoral production system of the Borana was productive enough to meet this additional burden. The state appointed local *balabbat's* who were responsible for tax collection and keeping the peace. In the Borana case these were appointed from the family of the *Kallu's*. There were Ethiopian garrisons in Borana, but they played only a minor role in local affairs and were primarily directed at external perils, initially the British in Kenya, later the threat of Somali irredentism. The system of indirect rule remained in place at the lowest level of administration up to the advent of the Ethiopian revolution and the implementation of the Land Reform Proclamation in 1975.

In spite of their incorporation into the Ethiopian state, the Borana were able to maintain social institutions which in other Oromo societies had succumbed to the joint onslaught of the Ethiopian state and proselytising religious institutions such as the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Islam and Protestant missions. This was probably due as much to the remoteness and relative isolation of Borana (the first all-weather road into Borana was constructed in the 1970s) as the benign neglect, which characterised the Ethiopian administration of these outlying areas. The Borana have therefore been able to preserve more or less intact the centrepiece of all Oromo institutions known as the *Gada*, which in most other Oromo societies have been weakened, curtailed and changed to the point of disappearance.

The Borana *Gada* is a complex, elaborate and all-embracing social institution, which at first sight is concerned with the relations within and between the generations, but which, more fundamentally, is about how the Borana should live their lives. The *Gada* therefore has important ritual, political and judicial aspects attached to it. It consists of a series of individual celebrations as well as a cycle of large-scale public rites, both of which require considerable economic resources for their proper performance. Succeeding set of men are selected to represent their respective generations and carry public responsibilities over an 8-year period for the proper unfolding and celebration of the *Gada*. These *Gada* councils, headed by the *Abba Gada*, do not have direct political responsibilities, but participation in a *Gada* council is an indispensable platform for those who later build individual political careers and assume positions of leadership in Borana. The Borana have throughout been able to provide the resources needed to maintain the *Gada* and there is no doubt that the *Gada* has continued to be important to the Borana at both an individual and a societal level.

The importance to the Borana of the *Gada* in political terms, however, has probably been reduced in step with the increasing integration of the Borana into the Ethiopian State. In terms of contemporary development issues the survival of the *Gada* as a ritual and ideological system may be perceived as being secondary to the survival of a number of other Borana institutions with a far more pragmatic outlook, e.g., councils for the resolution of conflict and the maintenance of peace, institutions for the management of natural resources and institutions for mutual assistance and redistribution of wealth. It is important to keep in mind that the *Gada* subsumes all these other institutions in an integrated Borana world view and infuses these more pragmatic institutions with, the authority and legitimacy, which they require to be effective. Hence, it is hardly likely, that these other institutions will survive without the *Gada*, nor that the *Gada* will retain its importance in their absence or in a situation where they are seriously weakened or made irrelevant.

The second important point to keep in mind is that Borana is a pastoral society. Livestock husbandry is the economic mainstay of the area and the welfare of the Borana is still primarily determined by events in the livestock economy. There are pockets of land within Borana where crop production is possible, but the Borana themselves have not developed an agricultural tradition. Agriculture was introduced to the Borana areas in the wake of the Ethiopian colonisation, when soldiers/settlers were given land grants in the area, often in conjunction with the small garrison towns established at that time. Many of the farmers in Borana today are the descendants of these settlers. Farming is also practised by the descendants of other immigrants from neighbouring groups, such as the Burji, many of whom originally came to Borana as agricultural serfs of the soldier/settlers, or the Konso, the main trading partners of the Borana. The Konso have traditionally been the principal source of the agricultural commodities needed by the Borana. A number of Konso artisans such as blacksmiths and potters also settled among the Borana.

Until quite recent times (most people would indicate the 1984/85 drought as the point when this started to change), the local economic specialisation into herders and farmers more or less followed ethnic lines, with next to no Borana being involved in farming and only the Borana and their clients being allowed access to the pastoral resources. Today, there are a number of Borana who have taken up agriculture. Agricultural expansion into the most favourable parts of the rangelands is a salient feature of the current situation, even though there is little precise information about its extent or rate of increase from year to year. An important aspect of this agricultural expansion, however, is that individuals can now gain exclusive rights to land resources in Borana, through the expedient of declaring a patch of land as farmland and paying agricultural land tax for it. In contrast, the state does not recognise the collective rights of the Borana to the pastoral rangelands.

Even if economic activity in Borana is far more diversified than was the case only a short time ago, the economic mainstay of the area is still pastoralism and livestock production.

On the one hand this means that the Borana are exposed to the same sorts of problems and risks as other pastoral societies in Ethiopia, in terms of safeguarding access to resources, maintaining security, exposure to drought and diseases, as well as to the ecological processes involved in pastoral adaptation, most significantly the danger of over-exploitation of resources. On the other hand, Borana pastoralism has arrived at a number of adaptations to counter at least some of these problems. Some adaptations have been highly successful and have enabled the pastoral system of the Borana to survive droughts and famines for several hundred years, even if they have not always sheltered individuals and individual families from such calamities. Many features may be seen as having contributed to the historical sustainability of Borana pastoralism. Perhaps the most famous and spectacular feature of the Borana pastoral adaptation are the deep wells in Borana, and the concomitant complex social organisation which underlies construction, access, usage and maintenance of these impressive structures. The wells are at the same time a vital resource, without which dry-season access to the Borana ranges would be impossible, and an expression of the capacity of the Borana social organisation to undertake and operate large-scale, public endeavours over long periods of time.

This paper will concentrate primarily on the pastoralists, partly because they still represent the large majority of the population in Borana, partly because events in the pastoral sector predominantly determine a major issue such as food security, and partly because the dynamic changes taking place in the pastoral sector in Borana and elsewhere are poorly understood and often quite simply overlooked.

3. THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS

The large majority of the people living in the Borana areas of Ethiopia are pastoralists, deriving their income and sustenance from rearing livestock. The pastoral economy is fundamental to the welfare of the population of Borana and problems in the pastoral economy quickly translate into crises for the population as a whole. Pastoralism is a way of life, which is well suited to the arid and semi-arid parts of Africa, and it is an adaptation, which, as far as we know, is very old. The simple fact that pastoralism still exists bears testimony to the fact that this adaptation has solved a number of problems related to making a living in the drylands. In fact, there are few alternatives to pastoralism in these settings. Although crop production is now taking place in Borana, the potential for agriculture on a regular basis is limited and restricted to only the most favourable parts of the area. Agriculture can definitely not sustain the number of people which today obtain their livelihood from pastoralism.

There are, however, certain aspects of the pastoral adaptation, which are troublesome and costly. At the most general level, the drylands of Africa are, and have been, politically unstable, characterised by unrest and confrontation between competing groups. This has to a certain extent also been the case in Borana and is obviously a matter of concern to national governments with a jurisdiction over the area.

Furthermore, the drylands have also been characterised by frequent droughts, with high animal mortality rates, followed by famine, starvation and high death rates in the human population as well. Since the great Sahel drought of the early 1970s, these features have been given great prominence in pastoral development policy as well as in the general perception of conditions in the drylands. There can be no doubt, however, that these characteristics are closely related to the pastoral adaptation itself. There is far less agreement on the explanations of the causes behind these features.

4. UNDERSTANDING PASTORALISM

To many, these features of pastoralism (livestock losses and famine arising from droughts) are symptoms of deep crises and the collapse of pastoralism as a sustainable adaptation. To others, these features are necessary and integral aspects of the pastoral adaptation itself. The latter view assumes that pastoralism is only a successful adaptation to a difficult, unpredictable and inclement environment under certain specific conditions, and that these characteristics, distressing as they may be, are actually necessary conditions for continued pastoral production in the drylands. It is proposed, for instance, that sustainable pastoralism in the African drylands is only possible under conditions of moderate to low population density. In this perspective it is possible to see the effects of drought and famine as an important aspect of pastoral adaptation (i.e., as a way of adjusting the population density), rather than as a symptom indicating that pastoralism is no longer possible.

Explanations of the first kind (assuming that pastoralism as a way of living is becoming impossible) have for a long time dominated the thinking about development in the African drylands. Explanations of confrontation and competition, poverty, famine and disaster have been tied to assumed deficiencies in the way pastoralists manage and utilise the natural resources. In this outlook, on the one hand, the pastoral systems fail to provide the populations which they contain with sufficient food and income, and on the other hand, they entail misuse and destruction of the natural resource base which pastoralists depend on by encouraging people to keep too many animals on the pastures. A very common assumption in development planning has therefore been that pastoral adaptation in the African drylands causes starvation and destroys the resources on which the future of pastoralists depends. Any solution to the development problems of the drylands thus came to rely on bringing these destructive aspects of pastoralism under control. A solution to the problem of over-grazing has in particular been seen as a major precondition to any development works in the drylands.

5. THE DYNAMICS OF BORANA PASTORALISM

Compared to other pastoral areas in East Africa with similar natural conditions (primarily in terms of soils and rainfall) the Borana rangelands have usually been assessed to be exceptionally good. Given that the Borana have occupied these areas for at least four hundred years, the implication is that the Borana pastoral production system contains (or at least has contained up to quite recently) a mechanism to solve the "problem of growth" which is implied in all pastoral societies.

This problem is the result of the tendency to growth which is a characteristic of all biological populations; hence, a cattle herd normally grow, unless something specifically stops the growth, e.g., the removal of reproductive animals through disease, sale or consumption. In a pastoral situation, it is obvious that a large livestock population can become a problem unless there are similar increases in the availability of the other factors of production as well, which are primarily land (or pasture), water and labour.

Although a considerable research effort has been expended on the Borana, it is not clear exactly how the `problem of growth' is solved in Borana. What seems to be clear, however, is that this problem is becoming more acute, perhaps indicating that previous regulation mechanisms are no longer effective. I have earlier argued (Helland 1982) that the limited number of permanent wells in Borana, with the capacity to water only a limited number of animals in the normal three-day cycle in the dry season, have kept animal numbers at levels which were well below the limits set by the amount of fodder available at most times. Since the wells were the only reliable source of water in the dry season, animals in excess of the watering capacity of the wells would weaken and be the first to die or would have to be eliminated! In other words, animals would perish from thirst rather than from lack of feed. Hence, as long as the capacity of the wells was lower than the capacity of the ranges, herd growth would be restricted and only cause limited damage around the wells. Occasionally, however, drought years (or rather, a succession of failed rainy seasons) would reduce the availability of fodder as well, in which case there would be events of mass cattle mortality. But in most years the fodder reserves (standing hay, brows, etc.) would be kept at a level well above the limits imposed by watering capacity.

It seems likely, therefore, that the ceiling on the number of animals set by the traditionally restricted availability of stock water was maintained by the inability of the Borana to significantly increase the supply of water in the dry season. This could have been caused by difficulties in mobilising the necessary resources (in terms of manpower and supplies) to dig new wells or re-excavate collapsed ones. Although it is known that collapsed wells have occasionally been re-excavated, even this was a major undertaking, requiring considerable resources over long periods of time, and hence one may assume that this was a comparatively rare event. For practical purposes the number of wells available to the Borana was probably more or less constant.

Furthermore, a ceiling on the number of animals which could be watered would clearly imply a limit on the number of people who could be maintained in a pastoral adaptation. It is not clear, however, how such a ceiling affected individual households, but it is unlikely that the effects were evenly distributed. Some households would most likely be better off and manage better than others, e.g., controlling a more robust mix of animals (according to species, sex and age), holding greater reserves and buffers, having a more favourable ratio of producers to consumers in the

household or choosing more favourable husbandry strategies (in terms of distributing animals in social networks as well as grazing circuits). Some households could simply be more lucky than others.

The resources needed to participate in the politics of the well council and in the operation and maintenance of the wells in short to gain access to water played an important role. Households with sufficient resources to successfully compete and gain secure access to water did well, while households without these resources failed. Those households which fell below the threshold of active participation would enter a downward spiral of poverty, clientship and destitution, eventually being forced out of pastoralism as independent units. There is not enough information available, however, to demonstrate empirically a regulatory mechanism in Borana pastoralism which depends on population density, i.e., which becomes effective when the population density reaches a certain level. It is important to note that the critical threshold is not defined by animals in relation to pasture, but by animals in relation to water. It is also important to note that the regulatory mechanism involved here does not operate through direct biotic feedback but is a mechanism mediated by the social organisation in which is embedded the management of the critical water resources.

An argument supporting the notion of density-dependent controls of Borana pastoralism does not deny that there were additional regulatory factors, which did not depend on density. Animal and human disease epidemics have restrained growth rates and have no doubt occasionally reduced the populations significantly. Insecurity and raiding from neighbouring groups have also taken their toll, but it is not known if the Borana overall have lost or gained livestock through the mutual raiding which is a feature of the region. Furthermore, the Borana rangelands are susceptible to drought, even if regular rainfall patterns are quite generous compared to most other pastoral areas.

There is no doubt that drought has been (and still is) a prominent factor in Borana pastoralism. Drought does not depend directly on density, of course, and in former times failed rains would primarily affect Borana pastoralism through shortfall in fodder. This is probably still the main linkage, but with the considerable expansion of water resources through the digging of surface run-off ponds which has taken place, poor rainfall will also affect Borana pastoralsim through a shortfall in water. The impact of drought can therefore be considerable. In 1984-85, for instance, drought contributed to depressing animal population growth, primarily by driving the calf mortality rate as high as 90% and reducing calving rates in the year following a drought (Cossins and Upton 1988b, 123). The death due to drought of 45% of all mature cows over an 18-month period has been recorded (Coppock 1993, 52; Donaldson 1986, 38). The impact of drought on the animal population would therefore have been profound. The human population would face starvation, particularly before markets and imported grain became easily accessible, following the infrastructure developments after 1974.

6. CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN BORANA

Today, although Borana is still a predominantly pastoral society, it seems that very few people are able to subsist directly from the products of their herds. People have increasingly come to rely on favourable market exchange rates between pastoral products and cheap grain to maintain food security. This means that in addition to the traditional risks which Borana pastoralism always has had to face, such as the climate, disease and the security situation, an increasingly large part of the population is becoming exposed to the effects of a volatile market. Market prices and exchange rates react to events far outside Borana, and additionally, within Borana prices react to both climatic and security conditions. In a drought situation the exchange rate typically becomes unfavourable to the pastoralist, to the extent that the effects of drought on food security are exacerbated rather than alleviated by a strategy of market integration.

Another aspect of this strategy of market integration is that even in normal times, in comparison with better off people, poor people have to sell proportionally more of their herd products to obtain the food they need, and even more so in a drought situation. This accelerates processes of economic differentiation within Borana, since it allows the rich to re-invest more of their herd production in herd growth. The ongoing market integration thus makes the rich richer and the poor poorer!

The Borana still produce a significant surplus from their livestock holdings, which are still substantial, although livestock wealth seems to have become more unevenly distributed in the population over the past few decades.

Borana pastoralism also seems to have become more vulnerable to drought in this same period. In the past, the Borana pastoral system could easily handle one failed season, but this no longer seems to be the case. Most explanations of this reduced capacity to handle drought relate the current problems of Borana pastoralism to increased densities of people and animals.

7. POPULATION GROWTH

Development inputs have contributed to increase both the human and the animal population. Precise figures are not available for either population, but the best possible estimates indicate that the human population is now growing at a rate of approximately 3% per annum, which is probably much faster than before. The causes of this probable increase are not well understood, but may be related to food security and health services. Both factors may in turn be related to the improvements in infrastructure and communications, which have occurred over the past two decades. Improved food security is directly linked to the provision of famine relief, food-for-work projects and other ways of subsidising local production, which points to increased integration within the Ethiopian nation-state (through which famine relief and other development inputs have to a large extent been mediated) as a major factor to be considered. Improved communications have no doubt influenced trade patterns, and food security has been improved by the exchange rates between grain and livestock products, which generally have been favourable to the Borana pastoralists.

Improved food security must therefore be seen in relation to the closer integration of Borana with the Ethiopian State. Famine relief is now a permanent feature of Borana, something that the Borana can count on in the event of a major crisis. Similarly, major health threats, such as epidemics, whether human or animal, are also likely to be met by official counter-measures. Famine relief is a major theme in the operations of the NGOs in the areas, and the utilisation of food aid in productive ways, through so-called EGS - Employment Generating Schemes (formerly known as FFW - Food For Work) - is a major preoccupation also of the local administration. Large-scale famine relief operations have been organised in Borana in 1973-75, 1984-85 and 1991-92, and several minor crises in-between have been met by distributions of free food. *Food distributions in one form or other have taken place in Borana every year since 1973.* Considering that no free food was ever distributed before this time, this must have had a significant impact. Although the precise effects of famine relief on the growth rates of the Borana population are not well documented, it is clear that the Borana population is no longer subject to mass starvation and death in the event of a drought.

Famine relief and favourable market exchange rates have also influenced the growth of the livestock herds. Since both factors contribute to improved food security, both reduce the need for sale or consumption of animals. As has been pointed in a number of contexts previously, due to the particular nature of pastoral production, all savings in terms of reduced consumption are **automatically** re-invested in herd growth. Only positive decisions to remove animals from the herd put a brake on `the problem of growth'. Again, there is no precise information on how improved food security has contributed to herd growth. There have been drought events in Borana in the last couple of decades, which have reduced the animal population severely. Even so, the general assessment is that the Borana rangelands are now used to capacity.

8. BORANA RANGELANDS

The rangelands of the Borana, on their part, are shrinking. Even if large areas in the west which previously were only accessible in the wet season have been opened up to perennial use through recent water development schemes, large areas to the east have been lost to the Somali. This process of Somali expansion into the lands of the Borana has a long history which now seems to culminate with the new administrative arrangements recently introduced, under which contested areas and contested sources have been put under the jurisdiction of the Somali Regional Government.

Although most of the areas, which have been lost, were only accessible to the Borana cattle herders in the wet season, the effect of denied access has been to concentrate herds in the remaining area. Here, the significant increase in the availability of water through a number of water development projects has, for all practical purposes, erased

the distinction formerly maintained between wet-season and dry-season pastures. At present, high rates of utilisation of the available forage are maintained throughout the year.

Within the rangelands remaining under Borana control, productivity is therefore being reduced through a process of degradation particularly associated with bush encroachment, as well as through the expansion of agriculture into the best parts of the rangelands. Estimates indicate that bush encroachment affects almost half the rangelands in Borana, but neither the extent of cultivation nor the rate of agricultural expansion is known.

9. PRIVATISATION OF RESOURCES

Within the remaining rangelands enclosures, the reaction to intensified resource competition and resource shrinkage has been to individualise and privatise resources which up to now have been held in common. Access to the natural resources of Borana was a birth-right of anyone born into Borana society, a central aspect of *Boranuma*, and the quality of being Borana. This is gradually changing and both pasture and water are affected.

The creation of private pasture closures (known as *kalloo*[4]) seems to be a recent phenomenon but one which is rapidly gaining popularity as well as acceptance. Borana jurisprudence allows the setting aside of pasture reserves for calves in the vicinity of villages and these were generally respected by others. The difference today is that enclosures have become much larger (sometimes very much larger) and that they are frequently physically fenced. This may be an indication that the new enclosures are not accepted on a par with the calf reserves of former times and that they are not protected by traditional jurisprudence. But if a pasture enclosure is combined with an agricultural field, e.g., organised as paddocks within the same perimeter fence, secure individual tenure can be safeguarded under national Ethiopian law, by the simple expedient of paying agricultural land tax for the cultivated field.

The other crucial resource is water. Significant efforts and money are expended locally to secure additional water supplies. The construction of private water tanks in the rangelands (to collect surface run-off, and more recently, to be refilled by water tankers) has introduced a new dimension to Borana pastoralism. This technology, which has been introduced and promoted in Borana by development agencies, involves quite substantial investments by local standards. Initially tanks were constructed on behalf of groups, but these days it is quite common to find individuals investing their own money in private tanks. Private water tanks in turn engender arrangements for security of tenure, so that they are often found in combination with agricultural fields/pasture enclosures. Furthermore, private investors obviously seek to recover some of the costs, and the sale of water from private tanks in the rangelands has started to occur. Up to now, the outright sale of water has been anathema to the Borana sense of propriety, so this commercialisation of water represents a major change.

Private pasture enclosures, private water tanks and the expansion of agriculture all seem to contribute to greater sedentarisation of the Borana population, at least in some parts of the area. The effects of this process of sedentarisation on resource use, resource tenure, economic differentiation and general welfare are still at an emergent stage.

10. POPULATION DENSITY

A major unresolved question is how droughts would have affected the animal and human populations of the area if population densities had been lower. Although precise and reliable figures are not available, most observers, including the Borana themselves, agree that the human population has increased significantly over the last three decades, and that the animal population has followed suit. Several development efforts seem to contribute to maintaining a high animal population in Borana. Vaccination campaigns have reduced mortality from disease. Water has become much more widely available, making available pasture resources, which previously were only accessible in the wet season. Famine relief has allowed livestock owners to reduce sale or consumption of animals. Comparatively favourable food grain prices have also allowed people to sell less animal products to obtain the same amount of food.

One possible effect of the high animal population is that the composition of the vegetation is changing in the direction of an increasing density of unpalatable species, resulting in bush encroachment. Bush encroachment is today recognised as an important problem in Borana pastoralism. The exact relationship between land use and bush encroachment is not entirely clear, however. In the Borana context it is known that bush encroachment primarily affects areas which today are heavily used after they have become accessible through water development schemes within the last three decades. It is also known, however, that the traditional practice of range burning every 3-4 years, and which seemingly has been effective in controlling the density of bush in many African savannah environments, was banned by the authorities at about the same time as the affected areas came under heavy use. But even if the precise causes of bush encroachment may be debated, it is positively known that bush encroachment is reducing the forage value of large areas (may be up to 50%) of rangeland in Borana. It is also known that bush encroachment is a difficult problem to deal with, with no easy and cheap technological solutions readily available.

It is generally assumed, and there is nothing in the Borana environment to indicate the contrary, that sustainable pastoralism in the drylands depends on moderate to low population densities. Development interventions (including famine relief), which by design or by implication maintain a growing population in the drylands will achieve the opposite of sustainable development. It is crucial to realise that many pastoral societies, particularly in the drylands, have been able to sustain themselves through history because *parts of the population are pushed out of pastoralism. This is an integral and crucially important feature of the pastoral system and is not a defect, which must be corrected in a development project!*

A development strategy which aims at retaining people in pastoralism, or at assisting them to return to patoralism, will therefore be self-defeating. Non-pastoral opportunities are a major precondition for pastoral development in terms of increasing human welfare in pastoral societies. There will always be a limit to the size of the population, which can be accommodated in pastoralism, and opportunities must be created outside pastoralism for what in these terms must be seen as an excess population.

11. INSTITUTIONAL EROSION

It is obviously not an accident that Borana pastoralism has done so well. It has been a highly productive adaptation, as evidenced *inter alia* by the substantial surplus which was regularly made available to maintain the *Gada*, and an adaptation which has sustained itself over a considerable length of time. According to *Gada* chronology, the Borana have been occupying the central parts of their present-day territory for at least some four centuries. For a substantial part of this period the Borana controlled a much larger territory, to the south and east of their present location, imposing their presence on a number of subjugated peoples. This history of success, which will only be very briefly sketched out here, must be related to social institutions and how these have governed Borana relations with their neighbours, as well as how social institutions have ordered internal relations in Borana.

The Borana were the regional hegemonic power for perhaps two centuries, from the middle of the 17th century onwards. Several groups in present-day Northern Kenya still maintain a ritual relationship of allegiance and homage to the two senior Borana *Kallu*s. Since the middle of the last century, however, when the Somali crossed the Juba River on their way south, the Borana have been continuously pushed back towards the west. The last, but possibly not the final event in this process of expansion, was the inclusion in the newly formed Somali Region in Ethiopia, rather than in the Oromo Region, of territories which have been bitterly contested by the Borana and the Somali since World War II.

In the middle of the last century the Borana apparently introduced some changes in their military organisation. A system of age-grade classes which cut across the generation-based *Gada* classes came into being, opening up for the creation of age regiments. Why this change was introduced is not known; e.g., it is not clear if this was a reaction to the Somali expansion, or a feature introduced for other reasons (e.g., to correct demographic imbalances created by the dynamics of the *Gada*). Whatever the case may be, it seems evident that the Borana military organisation since the middle of the last century, which even today is cumbersome and slow to activate, was no match against the segmentary lineage structure of the expanding Somali.

Close on the heels of the Somali advances followed the occupation of the Borana lands by Ethiopian forces. It is now approximately a century since Borana was colonised by Menlik's armies and incorporated into the Ethiopian State. The conquest of Borana was not primarily a matter of capturing the resources of Borana, or meeting the Somali expansion although this became an issue at a later stage). It was rather a political move in the colonial scramble for Africa, by which Menelik blocked the further northward expansion of the British in East Africa.

The first administrative system, which was set up in Borana by the Ethiopian State, had a number of garrison towns as a basis. Outside these small towns, a variation of the Ethiopian system of indirect rule was set up, in which Borana *balabbat's* were appointed to act as intermediaries between the Ethiopian state and the Borana. The *balabbat* was responsible for maintaining the peace and for the collection of taxes and had a number of local representatives, or assistants, known as *qoro's,* distributed throughout the Borana lands for this purpose. A notable feature of the *balabbat* system in Borana was that there were two *balabbat*s within each territorial unit in Borana, while other areas only had one. This was due to the fact that the first *balabbat*s appointed were from the families of the two senior *Kallu*s in Borana, each representing their own moiety. In fact, these offices became semi-hereditary during imperial times in Ethiopia, as the two *balabbat*s in Borana belonged to the lineage of the *Kallu* up to the Ethiopian Revolution.

Some land grants were made to soldier/settlers in the most favourable areas of Borana, but the scope for agriculture was even then limited. Since the land grants were for land that was not previously cultivated, the Borana pastoralists were able to avoid agricultural serfdom. The Borana were not indentured and avoided the exploitative share-cropping contracts which were a common feature in similar situations elsewhere in Ethiopia at the time. Agricultural labour therefore had to be imported from neighbouring areas, in particular from Burji. The Borana were taxed, however, according to a feudal model, whereby they were obliged to deliver livestock and livestock products (in particular butter) and forest products such as honey, to the feudal retainers to which each individual Borana family was attached, in addition to providing corvée labour for a determined number of days per year. Many Borana found the taxation levels onerous and escaped across the border to Kenya, but in retrospect it seems that the total tax burden was not exploitative, at least not to the extent of threatening the overall productivity of Borana pastoralism.

This feudal system of administration remained more or less intact, as a layer imposed on top of the Borana political system, up to the time of the Italian occupation of Ethiopia. The Italians maintained a military administration, which interacted only to a moderate extent with the Borana. According to Borana informants, the main problem with the Italian occupation was various kinds of harassment (and sometimes atrocities) committed by the Somali `*banda*'.[5] In general, it seems the Borana got on well with the Italians and were not particularly eager to be `liberated' by the British[6].

12. THE BORANA POLITICAL SYSTEM

Although the *Gada* system is often represented as a democratic political system, it is more fruitful to think about it rather in terms of an ideological superstructure on top of a political system. The *Gada* and the political system proper are closely related but for analytical purposes it is useful to keep them distinct.

The political system in Borana is made up of a number of assemblies - *kora* - which are usually convened on the basis of lineages and clans or subdivisions of these - *kora gosaa*. Sometimes assemblies are convened on the basis of territory - *kora deedaa* - or on the basis of the user group in a well - *kora eelaa*. The most important assemblies are probably those called on the basis of lineage, as decisions reached here can bind lineage members as none of the other assemblies can. In practical terms, clan decisions are even more binding, and can be more easily enforced than decisions reached in the famous *gumi Gayo*, the pan-Borana assembly which meets once every eight years in the presence of the incumbent as well as all living, retired *abba Gada*, to promulgate the laws of the Borana[7]. The clans in Borana are not localised and clan members may be dispersed over the whole territory. Within each clan, however, there are several convenors that hold the power of convocation over clan members living within a roughly defined geographical area. Anybody with business he wishes to bring before the clan, including conflicts with members of other clans, must seek out the local convenor (known as *abba qaee* - father/owner of the meeting place) of his clan and ask for a meeting to be called.

The relationship of this structure of assemblies to the *Gada* is interesting. As mentioned above, within each generation in Borana, a group of men are selected to be in charge of the proper unfolding and celebration of the *Gada*. These men are not selected for their personal qualities[8], but as representatives of propitious lineages. When these lineage representatives, known as *hayu*s, are preparing to `take office' they appoint a number of advisers or assistants known as *jallabu*[9], who **are** known for their personal qualities. Some of these *jallabu* later become convenors, while the *hayu*s, after they have discharged their *Gada* obligations, build personal careers as legal experts and influential men who are familiar with all aspects of *aada-seera* Borana - the customs and the laws of Borana.

The *hayu*s travel widely in Borana, to whereever there are clan members living, to attend assemblies, listen to discussions and offer opinions and advice. Because they travel so much they are collectively known as the *licho* - or horsewhips, of Borana, and the horsewhip is the symbol of their authority. The *licho* are expected to participate actively in all public affairs, to counsel, arbitrate and help settle disputes. The authority of an old, well-established *hayu* extends throughout his own clan, but is also effective within the general area in which he happens to reside. It is important to notice that this influence does not derive directly from the *Gada* but depends on the time-consuming and gradual process of gaining a personal reputation.

A *hayu* will very rarely and very reluctantly, and only after many assurances that all parties will accept his decision as final, decide on a case or a matter in the manner of a judge. But an experienced *hayu* will try, at several junctures in the course of an assembly meeting, to formulate a consensus on how the assembly sees the matter at hand in relation to the laws and customs of the Borana.

The ideology of *boraantitti*[10] demands that all conflicts between Borana should be solved peacefully and the maintenance of internal peace is a strongly expressed ideal in Borana public life. Public assemblies, reaching decisions by consensus, are well suited to resolve conflicts between individuals or groups of individuals. In Borana, the public assemblies are also able to make collective management decisions, most significantly with respect to water. Water is a scarce resource and thus a major controlling factor as far as the fortunes of the Borana herds are concerned. Meetings to discuss water distribution and watering schedules in the wells and operational issues such as labour requirements and contributions to well maintenance are called regularly. The well council meetings depend on the same procedures and the same sense of legitimacy as a meeting called to discuss any other specific issue. The well council in effect distributes resources which are of crucial importance to individual pastoralists. Furthermore, the operation and maintenance of the wells depend entirely on the orderly decision-making process in the well councils and the acceptance by all responsible Borana of these decisions as legitimate expressions of Borana jurisprudence.

The Borana political system thus rests on the firm foundation of the *aada-seera* Borana, with a strong ideological commitment to the orderly resolution of conflict, to the maintenance of internal peace and with a heavy emphasis on pan-Borana solidarity. Furthermore, the political system bolsters the capability of Borana society to undertake large-scale projects, whether these are of a practical nature (such as the re-excavation of a collapsed well or the collection and redistribution of animals within a clan) or of ritual significance, such as the celebration of a ritual in the *Gada* cycle.

13. RELATIONS WITH THE STATE

Strangely enough, this political system has not been engaged in the relations of the Borana to the Ethiopian State. The two *balabbat*s used the influential position of the *Kallu* lineages to reinforce both their own positions within Borana society and in the exercise of their duties as agents of the State. Their position was hardly political in a Borana perspective and it seems that the indirect rule of the *balabbat*s was possible only because the Ethiopian state had very limited ambitions in Borana, being content with a maintenance of the peace and the regular collection of taxes. Beyond this, the Borana were, during imperial times, to a very large extent left to manage their own affairs. Although there were considerable changes in the administrative structure of Ethiopia (from a feudal one before the Italian occupation to a bureaucratic one after the war), these changes did not percolate down to the lowest levels. The most noticeable change was that taxes had to be paid with money rather than in kind, and to many Borana this forced commercialisation and involvement with the market was apparently more onerous than the taxes themselves.

Ethiopia's first Five-Year Development Plan was published in 1959 but apart from some initiatives in disease control, the pastoral areas of Ethiopia were not put on the development agenda until the IBRD Livestock Sector Review in 1973. In Borana there had been a small-scale pilot project to develop range management methods, which could be replicated elsewhere in Ethiopia. This pilot scheme involved the digging of stock ponds, the demarcation of grazing paddocks, rotational grazing, controlled burning, and experiments with controlled stocking rates. It did not involve a great deal of land or affect the Borana directly. The first major development project involving Borana pastoralists did not start until 1975.

The SORDU project (Southern Rangelands Development Unit) was implemented with World Bank funding from 1975 onwards. It was a large-scale pastoral development project covering 95,000 square kilometres. Within this area a number of projects (demarcation of ranches, digging of surface stockponds, provision of veterinary services, marketing services) attempting to integrate Borana livestock production in a national, stratified livestock industry, in which Borana was allocated the role of providing feedstock for fattening and finishing in the highlands. Although SORDU provided considerable employment and contributed to the development of infrastructure, it did not succeed in what it set out to do, viz, to increase ranegland productivity, increase off-take and increase export earnings.

The Ethiopian government continued to fund SORDU after external funding had come to an end, and obtained World Bank funding for a pilot project to experiment with participatory approaches to delivering services in pastoral areas, through the creation of service co-operatives. This project, too, was unsuccessful in terms of its own objectives, failing to deliver services and failing to establish viable structures for popular participation.

Government involvement in pastoral development in Borana has not been a success, and the NGOs which have been working in the area since 1973 have been reluctant to involve themselves in pastoral development. The kind of pastoral development which dominated the outlook in the 1970s, of which SORDU is a prime example, involved intervention on a large scale and of a kind which is scarcely the strong point of NGOs.

The Ethiopian Revolution brought major changes to the relationship between the Borana and the Ethiopian State. The first, and perhaps most significant of these was the implementation of the Land Reform of 1975. Although it was primarily directed at the farming areas, it granted user rights over the pastoral resources to pastoral associations. These were to be created and were to be structurally similar to the peasant associations in the farming areas. Both types of associations contained new structures for local administration. In Borana, as elsewhere, the implementation of the land reform meant the end of the *balabbat*s.

14. ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

The Land Reform Proclamation was implemented through the `Development through Co-operation' campaign of 1975/76 in which enthusiastic university and secondary school students set about to transform the old order and the oppressive administrative arrangements of the imperial era. A neatly hierarchical, territorially based structure of local administration based on newly created pastoralist associations (PAs) was introduced to replace the *balabbat*s and their representatives. The pastoralist associations consisted of the people who happened to be residing within the territorial units defined by the students. These, in turn, were based on vaguely defined Borana units of land with a permanent water source at its centre. However, the Borana political system was based on clans, not territorial units. As far as the Land Reform was concerned, this was not important because the pastoralist associations were given a leadership which was drawn from the `educated' class, typically secondary school leavers and drop-outs, rather than from the existing Borana political leadership, which was regarded as corrupt, backward and feudal.

The introduction of the pastoralist associations in Borana implied an unprecedented measure of state control. Particularly in the initial stages, the administrative structures of the PAs attempted to take over all functions from the existing Borana institutions, including management of the wells. At one stage, Borana pastoralists even had to obtain official permission to move across association boundaries! Capacity problems soon forced the PAs to abandon the most extreme regulations. Although famine relief was distributed through the PA structures, the control aspects dominated and the associations became efficient structures for extracting taxes, `voluntary' contributions and delivery quotas for commodities such as livestock or recruits to the army. The associations were also meant to be the basic structures, for example, for resource management and service delivery as well as for all kinds of participatory

development activities. Apart from being distribution outlets for scarce government-controlled commodities such as sugar the pastoralist associations achieved very little in terms of service delivery or other kinds of development.

An important event at a quite early stage in the formation of the pastoralists associations in Borana was the Somali war of 1977-78. The main battlefront of this war was, of course, in the Ogaden, but the century-old Somali pressure against the eastern border of Borana received a new impetus. The Somali, supported by troops from Somalia, made great advances, pushing the Borana westwards yet another 100 kilometres or so, in the first phase of the war. At a later stage the Ethiopian army, together with militia recruited in the pastoralist associations, reversed the Somali gains, in effect recovering the areas which the Borana were on the verge of losing.

One should also note that during the famine of 1984-85, a large amount of famine relief was distributed in Borana. Although most of this originated from NGOs, and was distributed by NGOs, the distribution had to rely on the association structure. In fact, a major propaganda effort at the time went into presenting the famine relief as government famine relief.

Thus, even if the PA structure in general failed to deliver the services and the development it promised, from the Borana point of view the fact of generous famine relief, and perhaps more importantly, effective protection from further Somali encroachment were mitigating factors of great importance. And, as the PA leadership found out, pastoral populations are difficult to control. There is no doubt that the Borana found the taxation levels oppressive and in particular the forcible recruitment of young men to the army very distressing, but the Borana were able to evade many of the restrictions and burdens which the PA attempted to impose on them.

A final factor which shaped the relationship between the Borana and the revolutionary *Derg* regime in Ethiopia was the administrative reforms introduced with the establishment of the Peoples Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in 1987. New administrative regions were created and the former administrative sub-divisions were restructured. Borana became a separate administrative region and the number of *awraja* sub-regions was increased from two to six. This reform created a number of new opportunities for educated Borana, and ethnic Borana assumed positions of leadership at all levels in the regions, including the top administrative post as well as the top party post. Although there was no explicit policy of favouring ethnic Borana in manning the new structures, there is no doubt that the regional administration was dominated by Borana, from top to bottom. Obviously a large number of these belonged to the Party.

In a strange way, the *Derg* regime had been good for the Borana, although this was hardly by design. The traditional enemy, the Somali, had been well defeated and contained, unprecedented amounts of famine relief were pouring into the area and there were plenty of salaried and more or less influential jobs for the sons of the land. At one stage. SORDU, for example, employed over 3,000 people. The oppressive policies and practices of a totalitarian regime remained, of course, but their impact on a pastoral society such as Borana was considerably smaller than in the agricultural communities further north.

15. THE NEW REGIME

When the *Derg* regime fell in 1991, there was again a period of military administration before the new administrative structures of the ethnically based regional states were introduced. The Borana Administrative Region was restructured into the Borana Administrative Zone, with parts of the territorial base of the former being transferred to the Somali Region, and parts of the *Guji* population to the north of Borana being incorporated in the new structure.

The main change, however, has been at the lower levels. The former PAs were consolidated into larger units and the former *awrajas* were `demoted' to *weredas*.[11] The former dual structure of the party and the civil administration, which replicated each other at all levels, has been replaced by administrative committees at the various levels elected on a party ticket. Except in the technical line ministries, there are no professional bureaucrats in the administration.

A second major development, however, is that most of the Borana who staffed the administrative structures under the *Derg* regime, immediately became politically suspect. The chief administrator of the former Borana Administrative Region declared that he would fight the new regime, at the same time as Somali groups declared their loyalty to it. The uprising against the new regime never came to anything and the chief administrator was soon assassinated, but large parts of the Borana educated class became discredited for one reason or another. Since the Somali were quick to declare their loyalty to the Oromo party within the EPRDF,[12] the Borana became associated with the opposition Oromo Liberation Front. The administrative committees at all levels are elected on a party ticket (OPDO has invariably won these elections since 1992). So few Borana take part in the administration of their own communities. The change of government has thus implied the downfall of the Borana educated elite, which was formed during the *Derg* years and which for several years dominated the administration of Borana. The current government has meant the ascension of the ethnic minorities living within Borana, as well as Borana who, for various reasons, were marginalised by the former regime.

16. CAN INSTITUTIONS BE REVITALISED?

All the development agencies working in Borana, whether government agencies or NGOs are eager to support popular participation and promote institutions for popular participation. It is very surprising, therefore, that none of these have been able to relate to the Borana institutions which exist for this very purpose. The political system of the Borana is almost completely ignored. In some cases this is no doubt intended, as when the `Development through Co-operation Campaign' set out to dismantle and replace `backward and oppressive' structures. Later, as the control aspect came to dominate the agenda, there was less need to involve local structures. But there seems to be a widespread reluctance also within the NGOs to hand over control or responsibility to traditional structures of authority and leadership, partly because these are seen as corrupt and inefficient, partly because they are illiterate, uneducated, in the sense of formal schooling, or preoccupied with other business.

The participation expected from the Borana as far as the outside agencies are concerned therefore seems to be limited to doing what the various agencies want them to do. The chances of external agencies involving themselves in projects which the Borana think of as important or worthwhile therefore become poor, as long as there are so few situations where views can be exchanged and where the likely consequences for the Borana can be discussed.

Borana communities have been capable of working out and solving practical and organisational tasks of considerable complexity in the past, and have had to live with the consequences of their choices. These days, however, the Borana leadership has become irrelevant, or has at best become a second-rate parallel structure with little influence over the major issues in their own society. Governmental and non-governmental development agencies seem to prefer to communicate with the Borana communities through their own development agents on the basis of their own agenda and their own technical insights, even if the issues at hand are in the main non-technical. This denial of influence and voice to the legitimate political system of the Borana has no doubt exacerbated the strong trend towards increasing dependency and clientship which has been created by agencies operating on behalf of the Borana communities.

17. CONCLUSION

Pastoral development is difficult, and the experience from Borana seems to be no exception. The main initiative in this respect has been the SORDU project, which was a classical, large-scale livestock development project with well-known inputs, with the various NGOs operating in Borana offering only minor interventions of relevance to the pastoralist. The opinion is unanimous that the SORDU approach to pastoral development has failed, but it has not been replaced by anything else. In the face of the difficulties experienced in the pastoral development projects, national governments in many African countries, including Ethiopia, have restricted their presence in the pastoral areas to the barest minimum, most typically annual vaccination campaigns.

The development initiative in the pastoral areas now seems to have shifted to the NGOs who are promoting the various non-technical approaches typically promoted by NGOs. The aims are now to change organisational and behavioural features of pastoral societies rather than productivity and production patterns in the rangelands. The presence of NGOs has grown out of famine relief operations, and the development strategies promoted are clearly

preoccupied with improving local food security and providing better services, in terms of health and education in particular. Approaches have changed from transplanting known technologies related to range management and livestock production to one emphasising popular participation, local institution-building and local capacity-building in open-ended programmes primarily aimed at self-sufficiency and sustainability.

The most worrying aspect of the current situation in Borana is not that previous development initiatives have failed, that well-intentioned interventions like famine relief have produced unintended consequences like dependency on continued famine relief, that attempts to expand the resource base through water development have set in motion processes of ecological degradation, that the promotion of trade now creates a larger gap between the poor and the rich or that attempts to involve Borana institutions in the development process have failed. The most worrying aspect is that non-government and public agencies alike now seem to be on the verge of giving up and assigning areas like Borana to permanent destitution.

It is true that the problems of the pastoral societies seem intractable, but pastoralism still seems the only viable alternative for large groups of people in the arid and semi-arid parts of Africa. It is therefore necessary to maintain an organised effort to come to grips with the small and the large problems of pastoralism, to assist the Borana in putting the development issues outlined here back on the agenda and to continue to look for solutions and alternatives.

The issues are of different orders and the solutions require different approaches. There is a question mark about agencies doing things on behalf of the Borana. These are issues which affect the future of the Borana, and only the Borana can do anything substantial about them. The Borana must be allowed to assume responsibility for the condition of their own society, even if they still need assistance to work their way through a number of very difficult problems. Many of the problems need large-scale solutions and large-scale co-ordination of efforts. In many cases it is necessary to involve institutions with authority over large areas and large numbers of people. It is necessary to strengthen effective institutions with the resources and skills necessary to face these problems. Although the Borana political system does not contain the technical skills required to do something about such problems as bush encroachment, it holds the equally important skills of organising and mobilising people, to discuss alternatives and reach viable and realistic decisions. Only a political system based on the legitimacy given to it by Borana culture can ensure the implementation of these decisions.

The only way to restore the political system of the Borana is to allow it to function and involve it in facing the future of Borana.

NOTES

[1] Ranking by (ritual) seniority is an important organising principle in Oromo societies.

[2] Often translated `high priest', the *Kallu*s are the ritual custodians of the two moieties, named *Sabbo* and *Gona*, into which the Borana are organised.

[3] On closer examination, these notions are of course very difficult to uphold.

[4] It is claimed locally that this term is imported, together with the actual practice, from the Gujji Oromo just north of Borana. The Borana used to declare lush patches near the village *seera jabbilee* or calf reserves, but these were not fenced.

[5] Native troops from the Italian colonies.

[6] Mostly Nigerian and South African troops.

[7] The most senior living *abba Gada* is known as *abba seera*, father of the law.

[8] The selection takes place many years before this group assumes responsibility for the *Gada*, when these men are still young boys.

[9] In the literature the *jallaba* are often referred to as assistants, but they must be clearly distinguished from the *makalla* assistants which each lineage must provide to help the *hayu* with all kinds of practical and menial tasks.

[10] The moral obligations arising from being Borana.

[11] A *wereda* used to be a sub-division under the *awraja*.

[12] Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front - the coalition of forces, under the direction of the Tigray People's Liberation Front, which toppled the *Derg* regime in 1991. EPRDF contains a number of ethnically based parties, one of which is the Oromo People's Democratic Organisation.

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CHANGING PATTERNS OF RESOURCE CONTROL AMONG THE BORANA PASTORALISTS OF SOUTHERN ETHIOPIA: A LESSON FOR DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

Boku Tache

1. Introduction

This paper is an attempt to examine the changing patterns of resource control among the Borana pastoralists of Southern Ethiopia, with the main focus being on the growing practice of enclosing a portion of the common grazing land by and for individual pastoralists, and the introduction of private water cisterns. I argue that change is a fact of life and, if planned well in advance, it might facilitate progress but should never be damaging to the basic social fabric. I also argue that the ages long misconception of pastoral conservatism and reluctance to accept change is no longer a reality in today's world of rapid change.

Every human society has been seeking and will continue to seek change: an endeavour to adjust itself to the real world phenomena. I will demonstrate this by taking the example of Borana pastoralists and show how they discuss things among themselves at different levels of territorial set-up to accept or reject change. Change is gradual; so is community reaction. The community does not decide overnight to accept or reject foreign norms. They are circulated and digested first informally. I argue further that the Borana laws are not too rigid to accommodate changes. Rather, they are flexible enough to enable the people to respond to change. The data used to produce this paper was collected through a three-month fieldwork undertaken between November 1996 and January 1997, sponsored by CDS, University of Bergen and OSSREA.[1]

2. THE ISSUE

A number of sources indicate that African pastoralism is undergoing changes with respect to property rights. The transformation seems to be manifesting itself in the form of "transition" from communal to private ownership of resources. This is evident from the experiences of Botswana, Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia (Behnke 1985; Mirreh 1977; Takele, Bashir and Bashir 1994). While individual property rights existed in some countries such as Botswana even before colonialism (Mazonde 1990, 182), private ownership of water and grazing land was introduced among the Borana only recently. Individual ownership of water resource began with the introduction of the cement-walled water cisterns when the ILCA-CARE joint project initiated it, whereas land enclosure for individual grazing purpose was a result of two major causes: the rapidly expanding farming economy and the growing need to have a private pastureland in parallel with private water. This is evident in Goorile PA of Dirree District.

The common denominator to both private pasture and private water is that both were introduced and owned mostly by rich pastoralists who enjoyed dual residence (urban and rural) and who ran more diversified economic activities such as pastoralism, farming[2] and trade. Rich stockowners invested a lot of money in the cistern. Surface run-off was collected into it through the long catchment ditches. Some of the cistern owners use the water for tackling domestic water problems, i.e., cistern water for consumption by humans and small stock. On the contrary, others sell water to their neighbouring households. The fear is that once the idea of selling water is inculcated into people's mind, there is a danger of turning this into an abuse of traditional wells and/or ponds, and this might eventually undermine the whole fabric of water management which will be disastrous to Borana social life.

Although the objective of the development programme was to reach the poorest of the poor, the approach pursued in this particular intervention was biased towards the rich. It failed to consider the resource poor households. There is a need to reverse from capital intensive to labour intensive and from a rich-centred to poor-centred approach.

In line with private ownership of water, spontaneous pastureland enclosing activities have been widely practised. Certain families whose domestic water requirement had been met through cistern construction were enclosing part

of the common grazingland for their own private use. This has already encouraged competition to enclose good pastureland.

3. The concept of common Property Rights

It is important to consider some linguistic bases of a common property regime as language expresses thought. Among the Borana, the philosophy of common property precedes that of private property and is manifested in daily conversations. Words such as "we" and "our" feature prominently in Borana conversations, expressing the philosophy of collective ownership. Perhaps the fact that a Borana herd owner utters "our calves, our cattle, etc." while referring to his/her own herd, and that a woman says "our house" when talking of her house shows us how the Borana social life has been revolving around collective ownership, influencing and reflecting itself from the language. It can be said that the community is more important in Borana philosophy than the individual.

4. General Features of Indigenous Resource Management

Grass and water are the two most important resources for the Borana, with different but interrelated principles that govern their utilisation. The general principle underlying the traditional land tenure system states that *Laftii Boranaa Boranaa kutaa hin qabdu* meaning, "there is no grazing boundary for the Borana in Borana land." In view of this, all Boranas have got a free access right to graze their stock in any part of the Borana land they wish to. This principle reflects to us that the land belongs to the entire Borana people and not just to any specific clan, household, or individual.[3]

This may also be conceived as a typical feature of pastoralism which distinguishes the Borana from other pastoral groups of the region such as the Somali and Afar, among whom a specific clan controls resources within a specific geographic area as these groups are based on clan territoriality.

There is no such thing as a territory of clan x among the Borana. A typical Borana village can be composed of households affiliated to different clans but in their day to day life they pool their labour. The traditional resource management practice is more understood when we look into the underlying principles. The indigenous principles pertaining to land tenure not only uphold the communal landholding system but, at the same time, restrict and regulate access to the communal pastureland.

5. Principles governing Pasture

5.1 Matta Tikaa

In a normal dry season when water is adequate, the cattle are watered every third day. The watering day is called *obaa*; the first day *dhabsuu*; the second day *limaallima*. Watering frequency might extend up to the fourth day depending on the performance of the wells.

A given village has got a grazing zone "restricted" to grazing on *dhabsuu* and *limaallima* days. This zone is known as *mataa tikaa,* literally "the head of grazing", as it is the head of all accessible grazing areas in terms of range abundance, i.e., the best grazing area. *ardaa*, a cluster of villages that make up a geographic unit, is forbidden for settlement in order to prevent grazing at their *mataa*, the head. This is absorbed into the daily life and becomes a common norm with which everybody is expected to comply.

5.2 Karaa Obaa

Karaa literally means a road, path, route, way; *obaa* - the day of watering animals. *Karaa obaa* is, therefore, the route leading to a water point where the herd get watered. There is always a route that leads to a well or pond for watering livestock in a dry season. On their way to the water point and back

home, the stock obviously need some grass. Hence grazing along this route is controlled so that the herd will have enough to graze on the *obaa*.

To this effect, the same territorial unit (i.e., *ardaa*) to preserve it for the *obaa* preserves vegetation along the watering route. Here, too, settlement between a given village and the nearest perennial water point is forbidden. On top of this, the existing villages themselves are forbidden to graze their stock along this route except on the *obaa*. On *dhabsuu* and *limaallima*, the stock are grazed at *mattaa tikaa*[4]

5.3 Kaloo

Of the principles that establish a restricted access to the communal pasture among the *Borana* is *kaloo* - a reservation of part of the grazingland for later use. According to oral reports, the Borana learned *kaloo* per se from the Gujii, the neighbouring highland Oromo clan occupying the northern part of the present day Borana Zone. While the term *kaloo* connotes private ownership and entails physical segregation i.e., fencing out, the Borana have generally adapted it to their own system.

The Borana pastoralists put restriction on a particular grazing area at *Kora ardaa* (meeting of the *ardaa*)[5] in order to reserve a portion of the communal pastureland - usually part of the foot of a mountain or valley often demarcated by a footpath. The restricted area was called *seera* before its replacement by the term *kaloo*. The reserved land is meant for later grazing by the most drought-vulnerable sections of livestock (such as calves, weak and sick animals) at the time when pasture resource is scarce. This restriction is made at the beginning of the rainy season, and the restricted land is left fallow throughout the growing season until the *ardaa* opens it up during the next dry season. When opened up, the land is accessible to all the nearby villages.[6]

If, however, the villages are physically scattered, each village will be allowed (by the *ardaa*) to make its own *kaloo* depending on the size of the village and the distance between his and the next close village. For *kaloo* making, therefore, small villages join big villages and a new village joins old villages. This is aimed at avoiding physical fragmentation of *kaloo* since, otherwise, other sections of livestock will face shortage of grass/browse.

Besides, local reports indicate that the community prefers the restriction of a single area big enough to support all the close villages to fragmented *kaloo*.[7]

According to Borana law, not only should a village appeal to *ardaa* to make its own *kaloo,* but also, under normal circumstances, a new village should consult the elders of that particular *ardaa* before settling there. Normally, villages send scouts to assess the availability of resources and to check whether or not the intended site is safe in terms of security and health. This practice is known as *abuuruu*. The *abuuruu* personnel must negotiate with the *ardaa* and get approval for the proposed settlement so that spontaneous encampment at *kaloo*, *mataa tikaa* and/or *karaa obaa* of the old villages can be avoided. This implies that village mobility among the Borana pastoralists is highly systematised and resource management is sophisticated with legal provisions applying to daily life at all territorial levels. *Ardaa* is the most effective and legitimate lower territorial unit to determine and settle issues pertaining to resource management in general. A village is the minimal territorial unit entitled to make and "own" *kaloo*. Until recently, fencing had never been used to restrict the land. Oral delimitations at the *ardaa* meeting used to suffice. The decision made at the *ardaa* level was communicated to each constituent village, and the latter would effect it.

It is worth mentioning here that *kaloo* used to be temporary in space. People shifted places for *kaloo* so that overgrazing and the resultant infertility of a particular area can be avoided. In the areas like Diida Haraa, where the villages have been sedentarised due to concentrated water cistern and currently flourishing mechanised farming, fenced *kaloo* has become a sustained practice resulting in ecological degradation due to overgrazing.[8]

Permanent settlement and grazing at Diida Haraa was reportedly made possible only during the last two decades, following the digging of big ponds by Southern Rangelands Development Unit (SORDU) in the 1970s. Prior to this, people used to migrate to the adjacent areas with permanent wells once the rain-availed flood and hand-dug small ponds had dried up, and return during the next rainy season.

6. Principles Governing Water

Helland (1997, 128) identifies three basic water sources for the Borana: occasional water, temporary water and dry season wells. Ponds (*haroo*) and perennial wells (*eela*) respectively come under the categories of the second and third major sources. Highlighting the laws governing these two water sources is of a special interest to us because it might help to understand the current changes in water ownership and utilisation. Some cistern owners seem to have incorporated the laws pertaining to pond water into their private water holdings.

Laws regulating traditional wells and traditional ponds are different. First and foremost, traditional pond water serves domestic purposes. Second, while ownership right and administrative responsibility to run the wells require clan identity, i.e., social organisation, management of a pond is by and large based on territorial organisation. Third, whereas clan resources are mobilised for excavation and administration of a traditional well, and the clan affiliates have the right to claim it, village and then *ardaa* resources are mobilised to develop a pond; these affiliates retain equal right in using it with, of course, regular labour supplies expected from them for the proper maintenance of the pond.[10]

In both cases, *konfii*, there is a ritual responsibility for the upkeep of the well and pond (Helland 1997, 78). The man in charge of the pond, along with other important elders of the *ardaa*, decides who is physically close enough to use the *haroo* and who is not; the kind of punishment a person should bear for the improper utilisation of water on his *obaa*; labour input required to water the herd of calves; the category of stock to be watered at the ponds, etc. This depends on the size of the pond. If the pond is big enough to support human as well as livestock consumption, as in the case of the machine-dug SORDU ponds, all sorts of livestock can be watered there. If, on the other hand, the pond is small, it will be restricted to consumption by humans and small stock only, i.e., for domestic service.

7. CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

While the above principles underlie the indigenous resource management among the Borana, since recently, however, changes are occurring in the ownership and utilisation of the two resources which are vital for the survival and maintenance of the Borana livestock economy.

8. WATER CISTERNS

The International Livestock Centre for Africa (ILCA)-CARE joint project introduced in-ground cisterns to the area initially for demonstrating grain storage. CARE pursued the project after ILCA had evacuated the area in 1990(?). Farming practice being almost non-existent or scattered only in the form of insignificant patches, people eventually resorted to shifting the aim of the cistern from grain storage to water tank by filling it with flood during the rainy season. Capacity- wise, that type of "well" ranged from 4,000 to 6,000 litres. The cisterns were very small at the time. Besides, they were of so poor quality that cracking was the major problem faced by the owners. CARE then replaced them with the technologically improved and reinforced big cisterns with a capacity ranging from 25,000-177,000 litres.

The ILCA-CARE joint project recruited and trained masons mostly from the nearby small towns such as Dubulugi-Soodda, and sedentarised villages such as Qabbanaawa of Dhoqqolle PA. A person wishing to get the cistern constructed had to cover a small part of the expense incurred in the cistern investment - cement supplied below cost price and accommodation for the masons. The cost incurred on the part of the client this time was small.

As the technology had been "socialised", the need for the cisterns increased. This then led CARE to recruit the community masons from various villages in different PAs, instead of from towns. The masons were physically dispersed into the community; this encouraged and facilitated the quick spread of the innovation in the two districts. With the increased demand for the cisterns, a big share of the investment cost had to be covered by the client while the organisation gave support in the form of subsidy. As a result, 73.67% of the total cost had to go to the client, and the remaining 26.33% was CARE's subsidy. The minimum average cost the client had to cover was 8,000 Birr. So far, the highest total cost incurred in a single cistern was 21,376.7 Birr (see table 1).

8.1 Table 1. A sample of the cost incurred for building a cistern

Owner's code	Locality	Total cost	Owner's expense	Organisational subsidy
1.	Dida Haraa	16,376.9	15,315.9	1061.0
2.	Magadoo	21376.7	14,355.5	7,021.2
3.	Gayo	19,785.6	13,500.0	6,285.6
4.	Dida Haraa	10,981.1	9,997.9	983.2
5.	Utallo	9,442.0	7,494.5	1,947.5
6.	Harweyyu	14,156.5	10,239.7	3,916.8
7.	Magadoo	17,113.8	9,569.8	7,544.0

SOURCE*:* CARE-Borana office.

The introduction of the cistern was spontaneous as it was not based on any empirical study. The initial objective of introducing a costly grain storage in an environment where farming is difficult and limited to a subsistent level and where villages are mobile was also inappropriate.

9. OWNERSHIP

The ownership of cisterns is predominately individual in other areas while in Dida Haraa it appears that `group' ownership outweighs individual ownership. In any case, however, the cisterns are private property owned by different units. Out of 28 cisterns constructed in Dida Haraa so far, 10 (35.71%) are owned individually whereas the remaining 18 (64.29%) are owned by a group of households.

10. CONSUMPTION

Investment and utility usually go hand-in-hand. Nevertheless, when we closely examine the consumption pattern of the cistern water in the study area, we see two different types of emphasis put by the owners. Some of the owners emphasised economic benefit in which water has become a marketable commodity, while others emphasised social benefit. In Falle, Magaadoo and Harweyyu PAs, the owners sell water to their neighbouring households, the practice the community labelled *aad-malee* ("out of Borana way/custom"). The community, too, complained about the unreasonably high price charged, i.e., 2 Birr for 18 litres of water or to water one calf, with the possibility of a rise when the need increases during a prolonged dry season.

Owners under this category forward the justification that as they have built the cisterns at their own expense they have the right to sell their property.

In Dida Haraa, not a single case of water sale was reported. I have observed the private water owners providing water to the non-owner households on such important social events as naming ceremonies, weddings, births, and funerals. They value the Borana custom of resource sharing and social concern. In Madhacho, as illustrated in CASE

II below, the owner households seemed to have incorporated the principles of traditional pond management into private ownership of water.

CASE 1. Economic rationale for cistern ownership: Falle

First of all the cisterns in Falle were constructed at Gooroo Daadaa by the ILCA-CARE joint project with a view to demonstrating to the people of the area a cement-walled in-ground grain storage. There was an extremely poor man who possessed not a single head of animal. He used to look after his brother's herd. In the meantime, he got an employment opportunity in the project as a daily labourer.

Towards the project phase out period, ILCA gave the cistern to this poor labourer. He then started to sell the collected run-off water. Out of this, he gradually stocked himself by buying livestock. A few years later, he constructed a sand-roofed house typical in small towns and recently formed sedentary villages in the region. He accumulated wealth through the sale of water and the "gifts" he received from the community members. The "gifts" were both in kind and in cash.

Every dry season he sold water. The price of 18 litres of water was initially one Birr, and those who used the cistern for their small stock had to pay 2 Birr per calf/goat; the price rose with the increased demand. At present he owns hundreds of heads of different livestock: cattle, camels, goats, sheep. The ownership and sale of cistern water has enabled him to establish a family, and cultivate a huge plot of land. Furthermore, wealth in stock and financial capability has enabled him to construct another water tank. Similar cases were reported in the Gaalee cluster of Falle, Dida Jaarsaa and Magaadoo PAs.

CASE II. Social rationale for cistern ownership: Boorale, Madhacho

A totally different cistern ownership and management system is found in the Booralee cluster of Madhacho PA, Dirree District. It is different from the way the cisterns are owned in other areas, but similar to the way traditional ponds are managed.

The owners of the cistern were an extended family that moved to the area from Dhoqqolle PA in 1988. The area was rich in terms of availability of rangeland but short of water resource. The nearest perennial wells were the well complex in Madhacho crater located 20 km away from the village. The villagers and their livestock had to travel a distance of nearly 40 km on each *obaa*. This was a great distance and too arduous especially for women to fetch water, and for the small stock (calves, goats, sheep) to be watered. In the prolonged dry seasons and drought years, the distance from the wells usually aggravated calf mortality in the area. Moreover, the crater well water was too salty for human consumption. Therefore, the new owners had to fetch water from Dubuluqi, 30 km away, before they constructed their cistern.

The extended family members decided to have a water cistern with a view to tackling domestic water problem and so they pooled their resources together to build one. Similarly, the villagers as well as people in the nearby villages put together their resources: the economically stronger households contributed livestock whereas the resource poor contributed labour. The *waata,* the stockless hunter-gatherer section of the community, participated by providing labour.

The most fascinating aspect about this cistern was the fact that both the rich and poor households had equal use-right. The well was run by a group of elders recruited from the nearby villages.

They agreed among themselves that:

1 As a unit, a household gets 20 litres of water every third day regardless of its wealth and social position.

2. The weak, the pregnant and the mother with a new baby should get priority in fetching water.

3. The consumers (the *ardaa* people) should render the necessary help, when the need arose, with the maintenance of the cistern.

4. Big households and those who do not posses a pack animal can get water every second day.

For purposes of payment, the cattle *kraal* was considered as a unit and a hut as another consumption unit. Usually, a typical Borana village comprises several *kraals*, and several households may join their *kraals* to form one unit. If, therefore, one household (from the *kraal)* pays the *kraal*'s fees, the rest will enjoy the equal use-right in the cistern water.

11. Cistern Owners' Access to Traditional Waters

Surface run off and natural pools (*dambalaa*) are open access water sources with little or no restriction because they are quite periodical and can thus be consumed on the spot. Similarly, pond water is open to the nearby villages with, however, utilisation being conditional on supply of labour for removing silt and keeping the pond clean. On the other hand, access to traditional wells requires clan affiliation or kinship such as *sunsuma*. Therefore, access to wells is much more restricted. As a result, one's position in the community regarding access to water is defined by access to wells.

Almost all of the cistern owners have a good access to traditional wells. For example, all the 10 cistern owners in Falle, have a direct access to the nearby clan wells of Dubuluqi and Falle. They are either the well-runners (*konfii*) themselves, in which case they have a *qara* (priority), or they have a one-day access (*guyyaa gosaa*) (see table 2). The same is true for Madhacho, Harweeyyu and Goorile. In Dida Haraa, however, there is no permanent water well. Villages depend on SORDU ponds. It was hence difficult to determine the owners' access .

12. The Community'S REACTION

The way the community perceives the innovation depends on how the owners manage their water. The consumption pattern differs from place to place and from owners to owners. Thus there is no uniform community attitude as such. People in Dida Haraa see nothing wrong with doing whatever the owners wish to since it is a private investment.

Table 2. Type of private cistern owners' access to clan wells

Owner's code	Type of owner's access	Well's name & site
1.	Guyyaa gosaa	Dukkalle, Dubuluqi
2.	Konfii	
3.	Konfii, Guyyaa Gosaa	One in Dubuluqi and Falle
4.	Konfii, Guyaa Gosaa	Eela Dulalacha Godaanna, Haroo Guchii - Dubuluqi
5.	Same as in no. 4	Same as in no. 4
6.	Guyyaa gosaa	Baddaa, Dubuluqi
7.	Konfii, guyyaa gosaa	Ela Shakee, Darratoo
8.	Konfii	Gaadulticha, Dubuluqi
9.	Guyyaa gosaa	Elwaaqi, Dubuluqi
10.	Konfii	Ela Baambaa, Dubuluqi

SOURCE: Interview with cistern owners.

Those in Falle and Harweyyu areas strongly accused some of the cistern owners of abusing water. One elder reported the following:

It is our *aadaa* and tradition to sell livestock which are the result of pasture and water. By selling our livestock we buy grain and clothes for our family. We do not and should not sell grass and water. Because it is not our *aadaa*, because they are God given. Water sale is a practice we saw town people do. I have a cistern of my own. I got it constructed in order to alleviate the problem of water shortage during the dry season. But I have never sold a drop of water and never shall do so. If I sell water I know that I will damage my reputation. To whichever part of Borana land I may move, people will deny my cattle access to water saying "He is the one who sells water to the Borana in his area." I am afraid of this!

In Goorile, cistern construction has resulted in village fragmentation. Respondents in Dida Haraa said that villages were no longer mobile. Mobility was one of the stress aversion mechanisms. They now rotated around their cisterns, and this has had an adverse effect on the environment.

13. WHICH WAY TO GO?

There is nothing wrong with introducing the technology of cisterns. But the issue is how to organise it at the grassroots level in a manner that is sensitive to the indigenous water holding system. Some of the CARE staff openly denied the sale of water; others argued, "for how long can the community cling to the traditional way?" As I have already indicated, the current water development approach introduced by CARE has undeniably neglected the resource poor. True, water scarcity is one of the major problems in the region and in principle, CARE's initiative was timely. But the issue is how can the technology be organised in a manner sensitive to the indigenous system? What is the best approach that makes access open to all - on clan basis or at village level? Should one continue with the current approach? These questions are open for discussion.

14. PRIVATIZATION OF RANGELANDS

Rangeland privatisation takes three major forms. The first is in the form of farm plots. The second one takes the form of private grazing land in association with the private water cisterns while the third one, as at least one case was encountered during the field work, takes the form of privatised pasture in association with "private" pond ownership.

15. FARMING

The Borana were dependent on their livestock for subsistence. According to oral tradition, livestock productivity gradually declined until this made dependency on livestock unreliable. Some of the reasons provided for the decline were: frequent raids by the neighbouring hostile clans; recurrent drought which together with the former affected the livestock population and made several households destitute; bush encroachment, which severely affected the growth of grass and reduced livestock productivity and resistance to hardship; loss of livestock and livestock products due to unfavourable trading terms during the dry season, etc. (Tache 1996a).

Since the late 70s, the strategy drawn by the government was the introduction of resettlement villages with a view to rehabilitating destitute families. To my knowledge little or no attempt was made to restock these families to rehabilitate them back to their pastoralist way of life. The selection of the resettlement site considered, among other things, soil conditions to see whether or not they suited farming. Valley bottoms were chosen; the resettlers were supplied with seeds, oxen and other farm implements.

With recurring drought, dependence on livestock declined; resettlement "villages" and farming expanded. In other words, as regional food security and livestock productivity decreased, a supplementary non-pastoral pursuit, i.e., farming, began to expand despite unsuitable climatic conditions.

With farming came a new concept, *My Land*, which was alien to the communal land ownership philosophy of the Borana. On top of this, the Borana could not cope with the disputes related to private lands as they did not have indigenous rules designed for dealing with private land issues (Oba 1990, 41).

Currently large plots of land are being enclosed in the name of a farmland. As one may observe in Dida Haraa, for example, an individual household fences quite a large area for "farming". The centre of the plot is ploughed, whereas the wider surrounding area remains fenced and well protected. Land was fenced ostensibly for protecting the crop inside, but actually it was to reserve the vegetation inside. Farming is thus establishing a new property right in pastureland in its strict sense.

Land fencing has not only led to the shrinkage of the size of free grazing land but also introduced new elements that have led to shifts in property rights. What was going on in the study area was similar to the experience of the *Obbuu* Borana on the Kenyan side, as is evident from the following statement.

> These developments (framing practices and land enclosure) have eroded land as communal property and led to parcelization of the best communal pasture so that livestock performance has been seriously affected (Oba 1990, 41)

16. CISTERN-CENTRED ENCLOSURES

In most (if not all) cases, cisterns have been found to be a reason for enclosing communal rangelands. In Dida Haraa, for instance, all villages had a fenced dry season grass reserve which was commonly utilised by the whole villagers for small stock. In addition to what was commonly owned, however, cistern owning households had a well fenced and strictly protected pasture around their (private) cisterns. Animals belonging to someone else were never allowed into the pasture. The pasture inside the fenced plot is claimed to be for ensuring "the hygiene of the cistern", but it also became the private property of the cistern owner like the pasture inside the farmyard. This actually contradicts what I encountered in the farming community of Coloqaasa resettlement area. Here, access to farm plots was open to others soon after the cultivator had collected his or her harvest. Vegetation inside the fenced farm plot and crop residue were communal property, and this implies that the farming household's entitlement to the land was confined to a temporary use-right.

CASE III. Irreessa Daawwee

Irreessa Daawwee is an area located at about 25 km to the southeast of Mega town in Dirree District. There was a high concentration of less mobile villages engaged in agro-pastoral activities. The villages had an agreed upon land-use plan designed for withstanding the easy depletion of pasture resource brought about by the semi-permanent settlement (*teessoo*). Accordingly, grazing lands and farmlands were categorise valley bottoms were earmarked for farming. Common *kaloo* were fenced, and a proportionally vast area was left as a *mataa tikaa* for grazing by the adult stock. Suddenly, a rich man residing in one of the villages detached his four-house family and settled 2 km away from his original village. The new site was situated between the village and the village's *mataa tikaa*. Both the pull-out from his old village and settlement at the new site were carried out without the knowledge of the villagers.[11]

In no time, this family enclosed a large grazing land for their own calves. The villagers called the head of that family to a meeting to express their dissatisfaction with what the family had done. The villagers were not concerned so much about the fact that the family enclosed a *kaloo*, although they were not happy even with this as the new village was too close to the previous village to make its own *kallo*, but more importantly about the size of the enclosed land and the spontaneous pull-out from the previous village.

The man "admitted" that he was wrong to have left the old village without the consent of the villagers. So he apologised. The participants then demanded the total dismantling of or reduction of the size of the enclosure. He said that he would beg his fellow villagers to allow him to `own' and use the land he had already enclosed. The case could not be settled on that day. They agreed to meet again in a week's time. But the man started to play around - he disappeared on the meeting day and subsequently, giving different excuses. As a result, no further meetings could be

held. In the meantime, he started to construct a private water cistern. After the cistern had been completed, he doubled the size of the disputed land. [12]

He was repeatedly called to a meeting but he failed to show up. Later, he arrogantly told the villagers that he retained the full right to make and own a *kaloo* like any other village. "If you are dissatisfied with my deeds, you can go and accuse me wherever you like," said he.

17. POND-ASSOCIATED ENCLOSURE

I encountered a large fenced land in one of the areas I visited. Inside that large enclosure was a big pond initially hand-dug but later machine-improved. The history of that *kaloo* and pond is not clear from what the respondents told me. Some said that the land had been enclosed with their consent, while others said that they were not consulted at all. The owner, the richest man in the area, reported that he had made the enclosure with permission from the local people. In another interview, however, he said that the people around had refused to co-operate in fencing it as they failed to see its future importance.

Whatever the case, the *kaloo* turned into a "private property" of the man from the way it was utilised. True, the pond around the grass reserve, named after the reserve owner, was accessible to all as far as human and small stock consumption is concerned. The owner's consumption of the pond water was not confined to small stock and humans. Having been watered at the pond, the calves and the *warraa* cattle (composed of 44 cows and 10 oxen) belonging to the pond owner grazed at the adjacent *kaloo* until sunset. If another person's stock entered the *kaloo*, the fine was 50 Birr per head of animal. This money was used to reinforce the fences of the pond or the *kaloo*. To this end, the *kaloo* was constantly supervised. Differences in pond utilisation arose from the amount invested in it. To get the pond dug with a machine, among other things, a total of 39 goats were slaughtered for the workers. Out of these, only 14 were contributed by the *ardaa* people. The rest were the "owner's".

Stock division by territory and type has been a feature of Borana pastoralism (Baxter 1966, 120). Dry stock are moved to more resource-endowed areas while the milch stock graze around the main encampment, i.e., *warra guddaa*. This partial physical mobility serves two major purposes. First, it is an efficient resource management strategy through which the more stress-prone livestock sections (the *warra* stock) get enough pasture to feed on during critical times. Second, it has reduced the degree of physical mobility of *warra guddaa* where infants and the infirm are found.

This strategy is being threatened currently. The Peasant Association (i.e., Kebele) administrative structure was introduced by the last regime and is still operational. The system converted the traditional *madda* into kebeles (PAs), the lowest unit of local government. PA members are literally chasing away those herders who come to their areas due to different pressures such as drought. For example, on December 3, 1996, dry stock herders (*foora*) from Dubuluqi encamped between Dikaalehill and Dida Haraa around 5.00 p.m. The news of the *foora* encampment was circulated within a short period of time. By 9.00 p.m. all the surrounding villagers had discussed the issue among themselves and agreed to make the drought-driven herders leave the area. The new conscripts and armed local militia (*tataqi*) were sent to the temporary camp early in the morning and forced them out on the same day. The camp was then moved to northeast Dida Hara, a sensitive area where the Borana and Gujii usually disputed over grazing.

This is just one example, but the problem is much more complex than that. Local reports indicate that the PA is instituting land alienation against herders who come from other PAs. According to concerned elders, this is a gross violation of the customary law that underlies the indigenous land tenure system of communal land ownership.

18. THE COMMUNITY'S REACTION

Enclosure and private ownership of communal rangelands have legal implications. In addition to private grumbles of discontent and discussion at lower geographic units (such as village, compound villages, etc.), the issue

attracted attention at the highest indigenous administrative level. It was an agenda for discussion presented at the pan-Borana assembly, *Gumii Gaayoo*, held in August 1996.

The participants identified farming as one of the primary factors leading to the private ownership of rangeland and its wider expansion almost throughout the Boranaland. The fact that people began farming was seen as a mechanism for coping with the increasingly declining food security and this was accepted by the participants. Nevertheless, that farming was expanding at the expense of rangelands, and that the practitioners had enclosed and turned into private property the communal grazingland was a point which provoked a hot discussion among the participants. Eventually, they reached a consensus and passed the following resolution.

> 1. The land belongs to the society as a whole. Nobody can legitimately own the rangeland as a private property. To this effect, vegetation inside the farmyard must be open to all after collection of the harvest.
>
> 2. No private *kaloo* is recognised.
>
> 3. Any farm plot which blocks the passage of the livestock to and from the grazing field can be dismantled and left open for grazing.

During the meeting, one of the participants got up and explained that it was the rich herd owners who were denying the livestock access to the grazingland. He brought to the attention of the assembly that one rich person in this locality enclosed a large *kaloo* which became accessible only to his herds. The accused person then responded by making an appeal to the assembly to investigate the case brought against him. He defended himself and then accused the accuser in turn. This is how the accused defended himself:

> I am not the only person engaged in farming. Thousands of Borana are engaged in cultivation these days. *Gumii Gaayoo* is the supreme body with all participants from the whole Boranaland, and even outside. My accuser did not accuse me in my place before bringing the case to this assembly. All that he has said is false! He is only black-painting my name in order to make the Borana grass and water bitter [i.e., inaccessible] to me. Here now I appeal to this multitude to investigate the matter and see whether I am really an offender or if this man is just defaming my name...
>
> The case had a procedural problem. Hence, the assembly referred the case to the relevant locality, i.e., *madda*, of the parties in dispute, as it should have been raised at the lower level before it was brought to the general assembly. Meetings after meetings were held at the *madda* level. The accuser-turned-accused denied making any false accusations against an "innocent" person. Then the clan members and the associates of the previously accused man demanded for a separate meeting and decided to ostracise the first accuser. He was declared *persona non grata* to their clan, which meant that he could not even enter any village belonging to those clans let alone to have access to their resources. The man then made an appeal to a retired but still very important *abbaa gadaa* (father of the *gadaa*) as he was *abbaa seeraa* i.e., father of the law. This traditional leader being himself a member of the ostracising clans turned the man away with the following statement: "If so and so clans have made you an outcast, am I not also a member of so and so clans? Go away!"

The case had in fact a procedural problem as already pointed out. Nevertheless, the respondents blamed the accuser for not raising the matter at the *madda* level initially and that the case was settled in favour of the accused due to the overwhelming influence of that important man, i.e., the previously accused.

19. CONCLUSION

The Borana are in the process of change as initiated by both internal and external factors (Tache 1996b). While the indigenous laws are not inherently unreceptive to change, the externally induced change is undermining the indigenous system.

A change such as farming is dictated by the need to supply the increasing population with food, which the livestock sector alone could hardly support. However, external efforts to mechanise the farming are inappropriate except may be in the case of the farm-dependent areas such as resettlement sites.

Though not yet eroded altogether, the mutual concern institutions are declining as reflected in the changing patterns of resource control. Moreover, it must be understood that any element of change which undermines indigenous institutions will have a far-reaching consequence on the life of the people targeted for development. It is observable that the recently introduced water cisterns had three major advantages: 1) they have tremendously minimised women's domestic workload for the owner households; 2) they have significantly reduced calf mortality for the owners; 3) they can encourage the local pastoralists to undertake investment in non-pastoral sectors. Nevertheless, they have reduced village mobility which has, in turn, contributed to an easy depletion of communal pasture. Above all, the new elements coming into the Borana water holding system may be destructive to the system itself.

Therefore, a future development programme has to be fully participatory and should take community practice as a starting point if it is to succeed.

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[2] The introduction of a hired tractor to plough farmlands has led to grabbing large tracts of land in Dida Haraa.

[3] Interview with Boruu Goollisoo, Diida Haraa, November 29, 1996.

[4] In both cases a word of mouth just sufficed to restrict access to the grazing lands and to enforce the decision. Otherwise, fencing was never practised in the past.

[5] See *Bassi* (1996) for various assemblies at various levels of decision making among the Borana.

[6] See Obaa (1990) for the Kenyan side of the *Borana.*

[7] In Diida Haraa, fragmented *kaloo* was common.

[8] Apart from the introduction of cistern water and farming, fencing was due to declining norms because individual herders were disrespectful to societal norms.

[9] See Helland (1997) for detailed information on water control among the Borana.

[10] The improper utilisation of the pond included watering the stock without erecting the temporary watering trough, locally known as *Meerii*. In such a case, the person may be made do extra work, i.e., cleaning and fencing the pond, as a punishment. A watering trough at permanent wells is called *naanniga*.

[11] By customary law one has to get the approval from villagers to join and/or leave a village. He begs his villages for permission to leave, and requests the new village to allow his family to settle among them. People in the sending village bless the departing family and load the pack animals for them. The receiving villagers unload the pack animals, provide the new settlers with water and necessary labour for making a cattle enclosure and building a house. The settling family invite the villagers to a coffee ceremony for prayer and socialisation.

[12] At the time this information was obtained, his village comprised 11 houses, all being his kinsmen and extended family members. The case was still pending as he stopped giving attention to the *ardaa*'s demand.

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PROBLEMS OF SUSTAINABLE RESOURCES USE AMONG PASTORALIST SOCIETIES: THE INFLUENCE OF STATE INTERVENTION ON THE PASTORAL LIFE OF THE KARRAYYA

Assefa Tolera

1. Introduction

Modern states and pastoral societies are divided by a deep gulf to bridge. A multitude of cultural and psychological as well as political factors come between the state elite and pastoralists, rendering communication and dialogue difficult, if not impossible (NOPA 1992, viii).

Pastoralism is a mode of production which depends on natural forage. In an arid region this requires constant movement in search of pasture, a factor that differentiates this form of livestock production from those practised by farmers and ranchers (NOPA, 1). The best protection against the unreliability of rainfall is access to extensive territory, preferably containing a regular supply of water (NOPA, 1).

African pastoral societies are deeply affected by the general social, economic, political and ecological crises of the continent, and are subject to forces which have an increasing influence on their eco-systems and that lead to more vulnerability (NOPA 1992, vii). Despite the fact that they are subject to the complex and changing forces, pastoral societies show resistance and adaptation in their strivings for survival. In most cases, pastoralists have been marginalised politically and economically, and treated as minorities ethnically in the arid and semi-arid regions of West and East Africa. No matter how close the pastoralists are to the seats of the central government, they have always been excluded from the development agenda as pastoralists who had for generations made effective exploitation of the arid lands and harsh environment. If at all they were recognised, it was as a deterrent to development and their land was sought for development as mechanised commercial farms owned by the private sector. A good case in point was the irrigation schemes started by foreign investors in various parts of the Awash Valley, displacing thousands of Oromo and Afar households.

Pastoralists are usually regarded as a threat to the central government and are accused of causing desertification, of being technically stagnant and primitive, of exhibiting conservative and retrogressive social structures and cultural values, and of opposing conservation and wildlife (NOPA 1992: viii). Consequently, any rational measure to be taken by the government, according to the official and dominant view, is either to make the pastoralists hand over the responsibility of taking care of the land and other natural resources, through the state, to non-pastoralist communities, or to sedentarise the pastoralists themselves. The following statement rephrased from the preface to the book *`Awash Valley Authority 1966-1971'* by the General Manager of the AVA clearly demonstrates the attitude of the government towards the land under pastoral economies. Awash Valley Authority, similar to the Tennessee Valley Authority in the United States and the Gezira Scheme in the Sudan, is engaged in programmes involving the harnessing of river waters for irrigation and power development, and the development of formerly *undeveloped* (emphasis mine) lands for commercial farms and settlement schemes (AVA 1971, 12).

Every step that has been taken by most states in sub-Saharan African countries either leased the land to the private companies for irrigation, settled pastoralists under state sponsored settlement schemes, or demarcated National Parks for the conservation of wildlife, as deemed necessary. In no country have such arrangements been found to be beneficial to the pastoralists; rather they made the relationship between the human populations, livestock and natural resources more shaky and unreliable.

The Horn of Africa is home to the largest remaining aggregation of traditional livestock producers in the world. Ethiopia stands fifth in the world in terms of pastoralist population size. About 52 per cent of Ethiopia's territory is pastoralist habitat (Markakis 1993, 1).

The Karrayyu are one of the many Oromo groups who happened to be the leading victims of the introduction of mechanised farms in the riverbanks of the Awash. The Jille and Arssi Oromos and the Afar have lost all the dry-season grazing land as well as the fresh water to the various irrigation schemes. The consequences of these schemes on the livestock and the human population have attracted little, if any, attention from the government. Only a few foreign scholars have documented the loss in human and animal population when drought struck this country in the 1980s and 1970s. The ecological consequence of the irrigation schemes on the Karrayyu was devastating. The pastoralists forced to retreat to the foothills of the Fantale Mountain had to use the rainy-season grazing lands, both during the dry and rainy seasons, more intensively thereby precipitating the environmental degradation. The high population pressure from the agricultural groups, such as the Itu, Argobba and Arssi, also created a shortage of land, which has had a devastating consequence on the Karrayyu.

2. The Karrayyu and Their Economic Life

2.1 Karrayyuland and Relations to the Oromos

The Karrayyu are a group of Oromos who inhabited the Upper Valley of the Awash River (*Hawas*, as it is called by the Oromos), bounded by the Afar in the north, the Argobba in the west, the Jille and the Arssi Oromos in the east and the Cora Oromos in the south (Bizuwork 1985, iii). Karrayyu elders claim that it was on livestock and the Hawas [Awash] River that their livelihood depended. They are one of the "indigenous" peoples earning their livelihood predominately from livestock production in the banks of the Awash. Wilding (1972) reported that the Oromo (the Karrayyu in this particular case) came to the Fantale Mountain from the highland areas to the west about 200 years ago. Although it is not possible to establish for how long the Karrayyu lived in the area, it is not a matter of dispute that they are indigenous to the area. The Karrayyu live particularly in the "savannah land between Kessem [the Karrayyu call it Bulga] and the Awash river" (Kloos 1982, 1982, 26), which "ranges in altitude from 780 to 1500 meters" (Bizuwork 1985, iii), and where the temperature is hot and water is scarce (Fecadu 1984, 14-19). According to my Karrayyu informants, Karrayyuland is between Kessem (Bulga) in the north and Hawas in the south, Dagaga Hawas (the present Awash National Park) in the east, and Hora Samaa (Dooni town in Bosat *woreda*) in the west.

In the literary sources about the Oromo, the Karrayyu are grouped genealogically among the Barentu (Bartuma) and culturally and territorially among the Boran(a) (Bairu 1978, 13; Braukamper 1980, 27). According to our informants, the Karrayyu, being genealogically related directly to the Barentu Oromo, are divided into two main sub-groups known as Dulacha and Baaso. The former occupy Karrayyuland to the north of Hara River and the latter to the south of it. This river is very close to Matahara town and it has now been converted into Basaqa Lake, which got its name, according to oral sources, because of the diversion of the Awash due to the irrigation schemes.

2.2 The Karrayyu Economy

The Karrayyu are pastoralists (Facadu pt. II, 15; pt. III, 13) although some writers consider them as sedentary rather than nomadic because "they seldom move more than fifty kms away from their watering places" (Haberson 1978, 478-499). They were seasonally semi-nomadic, moving all possessions to two distinctly separate seasonal residence sites. The maximum distance possible in any one direction was no greater than 40 km, a distance which any healthy herd could cross in just one or two weeks (Jacobs and Schloeder 1993, 242). This has changed today mainly because they had to trek up to Shashamane, Ziway and Debre Zeit towns with their camels.

Despite the fact that many people regard the Karrayu as predominantly camel herders, my Karrayyu informants clearly reported that there is more cattle population than the camel population in the Karrayyuland. Although there is a lesser camel population in Karrayyuland, its economic significance is outstripping that of the cattle these days. There is a high demand (by foreigners) for camel milk, and also the sale of a big camel brings a large amount of money, 1200 - 1300 Birr, to the family.

Diminishing pastureland and watering points caused a reduction in cattle population. The fact that camels stay longer without water and also move a long distance in search of pasture and water contributed to the growing size of camel stock and gradually the Karrayyu's dependence on camels for their subsistence.

In the economic life of the Karrayyu, small stocks, such as goats and sheep, also play a very important role. Quite a number of my consultants concurred with a certain Abba Roba's saying which clearly revealed the importance of keeping small stocks for the maintenance of large herds, especially cattle. The saying goes: "*Re'en dallaa Loonti*" (goats are the kraals of the cattle). Kraals protect the cattle from getting attacked by wild beasts. Likewise, goats are sold to cover miscellaneous, but important, family expenses such as the purchase of food crops, clothes, drugs, and for the payment of government taxes, small debts, etc., which otherwise would have required the sale of cattle. Small stocks are also slaughtered for a guest. Nimair (1991, 2) makes a similar observation on most pastoralists in this regard. "... African sheep and goats are not kept primarily for their milk but for their meat, their liquidity', and to a lesser extent, their hair which some groups such as the Twareg weave into carpets and blankets".

In all pastoral societies, the possession of animal capital constitutes the central element of the social, economic, and religious life of each individual. They always try to diversify their livestock to meet their needs and to adapt to the environment (Niamir 1991, 2). "Livestock are invested with multiple value: as insurance, social links, bride price, inheritance and ritual objects" (NOPA 1992, 24). The Karrayyu keep large herds of cattle and camel although the cattle population outnumbers that of the camels. They are raised for their milk, for their status (cattle), as a bank account and a security against mishaps in life. Bondestam, writing about the Afar pastoralists, has the following description of all pastoralists.

The tendency to hedge against drought by maintaining the maximum number of animals, known as `precautionary motive', is common among all pastoralists untouched by governmental veterinary services let alone improved pastures with water ponds and wells - and the Afar constitute no exception to this `rule' (1974, 426).

Niamir's (1991, 2) observation concurs with the above statement: "Large animals (cattle and camels) are raised not so much for their meat as for their milk, but they are also the `bank account' and `security deposit' of the pastoralist". Their staple food is predominantly milk supported by maize and millet (especially during the dry season when the milk cows also dry). Maize and millet are obtained from the market, predominantly from the Cora Oromo of the Welencciti area. In the past, i.e., before the penetration of modern currency, they bartered milk products with food crops. In addition to herding livestock, a few Karrayyu households have recently started cultivating vegetables (tomatoes, pepper and cabbage) on a small-scale in irrigated fields on the banks of the Awash River.

During the dry seasons the pastoralists move their livestock, mainly camels, to an area where pasture and water are available. In the past, such areas tended to become a bone of contention for everyone who wanted to have full control over the land. If one had already occupied it, he should be ready to defend it (Wondwossen 1987, 14). Today, the Karrayyu move their camels as far as 250 km away from Karrayyuland to another Oromoland since the camels can travel without water a longer distance than any other domestic animal. Their cattle rarely move more than between 30 - 50 km away from their villages. During the rainy season, they return to their villages, where their wives, children and elderly people stay - mostly for several years *at a time* - together with goats and sheep and some of the milch herds.

2.3 The Value of Cattle versus That of the Camel

The Karrayyu count their wealth in terms of cattle and camels. To a large extent, they bank on camels since the camels play a great role in their livelihood. The camels provide them with food and transport in the harsh environment. It seems that the Karrayyu are caught between pincers, namely, they wish to have as large herds of cattle as they could, because it is a symbol of status. However, due to an extended dry season, diminishing pasturelands and the high price the camels attract, both in terms of their sale and the sale of their milk, the Karrayyu would go for having more camels than cattle.

To many people, social status, which used to be measured in terms of the heads of cattle one owns, is no more important than one's survival. Survival is becoming a more crucial issue than social status, and therefore, their sort

of emotional attachment to cattle seems to have been progressively eroded. The value people attach to certain things related to their life varies, depending on the kind of situation they find themselves in. It is true that the Karrayyu attach great importance to cattle herding, not only because it is a symbol of status, but also because they have depended for their survival largely on their cattle for centuries. This was the case in the good old days, when there was enough pasture and water for cattle production. But now, with the diminishing pastureland and depleted water resources, the size of their cattle herd is decreasing by the day. Fortunately enough, they have started camel herding, adopting it from their Afar neighbours, and camels can survive for a relatively longer period without water than the cattle and they can also travel a longer distance in search of water and pasture. Unlike the cattle who graze, camels browse and all these factors make camel herding a more adaptive strategy in areas such as Karrayyuland where both water and pasture are scarce not because they are naturally deprived of these resources, but because it is an imposed scarcity. Since their survival is at risk, the Karrayyu started raising large herds of camel as a survival strategy, although they still feel that having large herds of cattle earns high social status than an equal number of camels. (In the market, camels attract large amounts of money than the cattle). In fact from what people say and from some reports, there are still more cattle than camels in Karrayyuland. The ratio of livestock reported by Jacobs and Schloeder (1993, 241) was 3:6:1 for cattle, sheep and goats, and camels and donkeys, respectively.

The fact that the camel is becoming economically more important among the Karrayyu does not at all mean that it gives a high social status to someone who has a large herd of camels than to another person who has a lesser herd of cattle. If someone has more herds of camels than cattle, the village is called "*qe'e warra gaalaa*" (literally, the village of camel herders). If, on the other hand, he owns more cattle, it is called "*qe'e warra abaluu*" (literally, so and so's village, i.e., takes the name of *abba warra*). The Karrayyu believe that cattle have always been with them and adopted camel herding within living memory, not more than five generations back. Baxter (1990, vi) once commente "cattle have genealogies as well as pedigrees". Showing the value of cattle as a symbol of high social status, elders reported that the kraal of the cattle is always located in front of the house while that of the camel is at the back of the house. This means that ownership of camel herds is not worth exhibiting. They reported that camel herding started with the raid of Adal camels.

3. Factors Influencing Economic and Social Life

3.1 Influence of Neighbouring Communities

Because of continuous expansion of the neighbouring communities, such as the Afar, Argobba, Itu and Arssi Oromos, into the Karrayyu territory, their land has become smaller today. As it was stated elsewhere in this paper, Karrayyuland was between Kessem in the north and Awash in the south, Daggaga Hawas in the east and Hora Sama in the west. This has now been reduced to between Awash in the south (excluding all the floodplains of the Awash, which are held by State Enterprises) and Fantale Mountain in the north, Tulu Diimtu in the west and Gooda Suummaa (Awash National Park, with the exclusion of the Park) in the east. Although the Karrayyu claim their land extends to Awash in the south, in effect, they do not have access to all the river-watered areas of the Awash Bank. Not only that, the ever expanding Matahara town has taken a substantial part of their land. In other words, every new house constructed by the townsmen is on the land of the forcefully displaced Karrayyu. So they have retreated to the foothills of the Fantale Mountain.

Another source of threat to the Karrayyu is the Afar and Argobba encroachment. Both communities very often raid Karrayyu livestock on the pretext that the latter intruded into their territory. According to my Karrayyu consultants, the regionalisation policy of the present Ethiopian government sliced off a not insignificant part of Karrayyuland and gave it to the Afar Regional State.

Quite an extensive pastureland on the northern side of Fantale Mountain, historically Karrayyuland, has now been given to the Afar. Although it is not being used by the pastoralists, the Awash National Park area was also historically Karrayyuland. But most part of it is now defined as Afarland. The government supports Afar claims to Karrayyu land. One of my Karrayyu consultants said "*motummanillee akun jaraa farrissu barbaba*" (literally, the Government also wants to be an evil spirit to them). The essence of this statement is that the Afar make illegitimate claims to the Karrayyuland; that is what the Karrayyu labelled as `evil spirit' and the Government is endorsing their claim. The Argobba have also taken Karrayyu territory on the west, and are now bounded with the Arssi.

The Argobba and the Afar in particular are the most effective in steadily claiming lands which the Kereyu used to move upon. Both have been responsible for several deaths just within the last few years, and the theft of valuable livestock (in particular camels). They are also responsible for the steady loss of grazing lands, since the Kereyu's response to these attacks has been to slowly withdraw from areas, both seasonally and permanently (Jacobs and Schloeder 1993, 245).

Informants reported that in the past, there used to be Karrayyu territory between Arssi and Argobba.

3.2 Modernisation or Impoverishment?

There is a sort of general understanding that all historians and government planners in Eastern Africa, in most part of the world for that matter, associate pastoralism with violence, oppression of women, cruelty, poverty, famine and harsh living conditions (Wilding 1983, 2). Pastoralists are regarded as a threat to the peace-loving, productive and civilised farmers. Wilding (1983, 2) has observed the attitudes of the historians and the planners who, according to him, came from the peasant communities themselves, towards pastoralism:

Pastoralism is categorised as a successor to hunting and gathering and a primitive and undesirable predecessor of agriculture (Sahlins and Srivce: 1960). From such a standpoint it is natural to press pastoralists into the next stage of development, namely agriculture before taking serious account of the ecological and economic viability of such a move.

The whole problem of state intervention in the economic life of the pastoralist societies is a reflection of the bias towards the interest and experience of the peasants. Ethiopia cannot be an exception since all government planners and historians, to date, have been drawn from the highland, Christian communities of peasants.

The Karrayyu have a very serious problem of pasture and water shortage for their livestock. Shrinking pastureland, unusually long dry seasons, and various types of animal diseases have rendered livestock production precarious among the Karrayyu. Shrinking land resources are attributed, to a large extent, to the establishment of state-sponsored enterprises, namely, Matahara Sugar Plantation, Nure Era State Farm and the Awash National Park. Each of these activities have contributed to a decline in the Karrayyu's landholdings, have failed to include them in the development decisions and to effectively compensate them for their losses (Jacobs and Schloeder 1993, 243). Equally important was the expansion of Matahara town and the ever-increasing size of the Basaqa Lake. In the past, the Karrayyu wholly depended on the river-watered pasture for their cattle and on the Awash River to water their livestock. "The Kereyu did not cultivate the soil until the 1950s, migrating instead with cattle between the dry-season villages on the Awash floodplains at Abadir and Matahara" (Kloos 1982, 26). The establishment of mechanised farms and of the Awash National Park denied the Karrayyu access to the Awash River. "The result has been that the Kereyu are worse off today, socially, economically, politically and culturally, than they were 40 years ago" (Jacobs and Schloeder 1993, 243).

The problem of pastureland was exacerbated by the settlement of the Itu on the already overstocked lands of the Karrayyu.

The displaced Ittu settled on already overstocked lands of the Kereyu, who had lost all their floodplain pastures to the Matahara and Abadir schemes, and their best dry-season areas to the 80,000 hectare Awash National Park (Kloos 1982, 32-3).

In the early 1950s, the Itu crossed the Awash River, after receiving the consent of the Karrayyu, primarily in search of a place where they did not have to fear being attacked by the Issa (Somali). The Karrayyu gave their consent because initially they thought that there was enough land and grass for their livestock. However, with the development of the Sugar Plantation and the subsequent loss of the floodplain grazing areas as well as with more Itu migrations, the Karrayyu soon came to regret their decision. The Karrayyu felt the pressure badly when the National Park was established and they were asked to move from the land demarcated as National Park and Game Reserve (Jacobs and Schloeder 1993, 244).

Oral sources reveal that there was a resistance by the Karrayyu to the establishment of modern farms and the park. The resistance was, however, crushed by two mutually non-exclusive acts of the Imperial Regime, namely, false promises and coercion. For instance, various documents of the Awash Valley Authority (established in 1962) mention here and there that in addition to involving the local inhabitants in the various development programmes, AVA will also ensure that the benefits of the development are shared with the pastoralists (AVA 1971, 12). The Karrayyu gradually lost their important grazing land to the state-sponsored enterprises.

When the Karrayyu resisted the establishment of the modern farms, the Emperor intervened and promised to give them land in replacement. Regassa (1993, 36-7) reports the situation as follows:

At the inauguration of the Matahara Sugar Estate, Emperor Haile Selassie I was present, and the Karrayu took this opportunity to appeal to the Emperor on the loss of their land without compensation. Thus the Emperor granted 200 gasha (8000 hectares) from Nura-Era region as compensation and he also ordered the Itu and Issa to return to their former areas.

In addition to this, the elders and youth were promised social security in old age and employment opportunity, respectively. They were also promised health and education services. Government officials also proposed that the Itu and Isa who had moved into the Karrayyu territory should leave the area in order to enable the latter to return to their previous places in the east, to a place the Karrayyu called Dagaga Hawas (where the Awash National Park is now located). Even then they resisted. The following translation of an Amharic letter, dated October 18, 1974, from the Fantale *Woreda* Administrator to Yerer and Karrayyu *Awaraja* Administrator clearly indicates the seriousness of the Karrayyu resistance and their demand for obtaining the land which the Imperial Government promised to give them in replacement of the land which they lost to the commercial farm.

The Karrayyu complained `the Government did not yet hand over the land which it promised us as a replacement for the land taken away from us; unless they give us all our land, we will fight." ... they are determined to fight to death not to leave the area. Rather than fighting with them every now and then, I think it is advisable to give them the land which they were promised before asking them to leave the demarcated area.

However, the resistance did not change the situation since the government employed deceptive mechanisms and/or punitive measures, as deemed necessary.

Although it was not possible to trace where the copy of the agreement was kept, oral sources indicate that there was an agreement reached between the Karrayyu representative and the Government for the latter to deliver what it had promised. But what is surprising is that what the elders were told verbally does not exist in the agreement document which the representatives of the Karrayyu were made to sign. This reminds one of the Wechale Treaty of May 1889 between Ethiopia and Italy in which the Italian version and the Amharic version differed in substantial meanings. The Italian version of Article XVII bounded Menelik to make all foreign contacts through the agency of Italy, whereas the Amharic version made the use of the services of Italy optional (Bahru 1991, 75). Likewise, the agreement signed between the representatives of the Karrayyu and that of the government does not state what the former were told verbally.

As a result of all the measures employed, "the Karrayu left the plain and inhabited the surrounding dry hills from where they observed the flourishing sugar plantation in Matahara plain which used to sustain their cattle for years" (Regassa, 1993, 37). This has affected the Karrayyu's access to the floodplain pastures and Awash River, in short, their livestock from Gelcha pond supplied with waste water from the Merti Factory and also from a stagnant water of Basaqa, infested with waste coming both from the plantation and the town. "Irrigation of several old dry season foraging sites for sugar production has increased the salinity of the soils over the years to such a level that it is now affecting the quality of ground water in many locales" (Jacobs and Schloeder 1993, 71). Their livestock are affected by diseases for which there is no medicine. There were no modern veterinary services and medicine is too unaffordable for the pastoralists. Schlee, writing about the Gabbra of northern Kenya, which in many respects resemble the Karrayyu, comments "pastoral mobility is reduced as a consequence of land theft for national parks or for settler colonies, by police measures and border controls" (1990, 46).

When the idea of the establishment of the Awash National Park was brought to the Karrayyu, i.e., when they saw large tracts of their land fenced and reserved for the national park, they were so bitter about the deceptive mechanism employed by the government that they strongly opposed it. It was after repeated meetings between the government representatives and the Karrayyu that a conditional agreement was reached between the two, namely, for the government to resettle the Itu back south across the river. Although some Itu were resettled back across the Awash River, the Itu immediately fled back to the Fantale area in response to the attack by the Isa (Somali), the 1973-74 drought and famine, and also the Derg's announcement of the policy of free and equal land access to all. Since then, the Itu have continuously crossed the Awash River and settled in Karrayyu territory, pushed by drought and attracted by the floodplains of the Awash River.

The attitude of the Ethiopian State towards pastoralists and their rights to the land has always been negative. In Ethiopia there was a dominant assumption that legal rights to the land are secured if one has paid tax for it.

Consequently, the land of shifting cultivators and pastoralists, for which no such tax was paid, could be confiscated without compensation and granted to foreign or domestic companies who `developed' the area by establishing large-scale plantations for export crops (Hultin 1990, 95).

Gamaledin, discussing the problem the Afar people have experienced as a result of the introduction of mechanised large-scale cotton plantations, commente "For the Ethiopian state, nomadic people had no right to the land, and this was enshrined in its constitution of 1954 which nationalised all nomadic lands" (1993, 55).

The beneficiaries of the employment opportunity created were the highlanders, who used to regard, before the 1950s, the Awash Valley as malaria infested, uninhabitable and economically useless (Regasssa 9187, 10; Kloos 1982, 29). "Perhaps fifty per cent of the Middle and Lower Awash Valley population consisted of people from the highland areas of the country who had migrated there because of population pressure in the highlands and in search of economic opportunities" (Regassa 1993, 25). Unlike what it used to be in the past, governments in the Horn and highland peasants are changing their attitude towards the arid zones. This change of attitude is not the result of mere chance, but a result of necessity, namely, the problem of population explosion which forced both the government and the peasants in the highlands to consider the potential use of the arid lands for cultivation. Markakis writes "Explosive population rates of growth (Sudan, 2.8; Somalia, 3; Ethiopia, 3.1; Kenya, 4 per cent) are forcing regimes in the Horn of Africa to consider the potential uses of land in the arid zone where pastoralists now roam" (1993, 11).

The introduction of cash crop production to the 70,000 km^2 of land, about six per cent of the total area of Ethiopia (Bondestam 1974, 424), victimised the four main pastoralist groups, namely, the Karrayyu, Afar, Arssi and Jille, who were indigenous to the area. Bondestam writes about the Afar as follows:

> With the introduction of cash crop production, some of the Afar were forced to leave their river-watered pasture - where they had lived more or less permanently since the 16^{th} and 17^{th} centuries - to become increasingly dependent on the availability of rain. This has led to a relative over-population of the less fertile areas to which they had to move, with consequent over-grazing and livestock starvation, followed by diminishing herds and malnutrition (1974, 429).

A brief but precise observation of the effect of the Wonji Sugar Estate on the Jille reads: "for the Jille community [the development of the Wonji Sugar Estate] meant complete eviction - leaving their centuries old ancestral land without compensation" (Bizuwork 1985, 49). Irrigation in the Awash Valley has displaced an estimated 20,000 pastoralists (Kloos 1982, 32). The following observation of Kloos reveals the devastating effect of the irrigation schemes on the four pastoralist groups.

> Development of the Awash floodplains during the ten years prior to that drought [1973-74], in addition to upsetting the rational adaptation of pastoralists to their semi-arid environment and reducing the rangelands of the Afar, Kereyu, Arsi and Jile, provided few appropriate economic alternatives to them. As a result, they came into the slow but unrelenting grip of an ever-deepening crisis of impoverishment, hunger and environmental degradation (1982, 40).

Of all the displaced pastoralists, the displacement of the Karrayyu and the Itu Oromo seems more severe (Wondwossen 1987, 32). Irrigation by the Matahara Sugar Plantation on the north side of the Awash River has denied the Karrayyu and Itu access to critical watering points along the river banks (Jacobs and Schloeder 1993, 71). Karrayu elders regret the loss of the fertile plain which had sufficient grass for their cattle, especially during the dry season. "The situation resulted in the decrease of livestock population and the consequent impoverishment of the Karrayu" (Regassa 1993, 37).

3.3 Poverty and Vulnerability to Famine

The establishment of various mechanised farms and parks which extend from Upper to Lower Awash Valley has a devastating effect on the economic life and social fabric of the pastoral groups of these areas. This is particularly true in times of drought and livestock epidemics. Gamaledin has critically observed the effect of the Tendaho Cotton Plantation on the Afar during the 1973-74 drought.

> When the 1973-74 famine struck, the Afar pastoralists who were denied access to the Awash River and its immediate environs were decimated. Lars Bondestam (1974, 423-39) suggested that almost 30 per cent of the Afar population of the Awash perished. Irrigation and the government's centralisation policy interacting with prolonged drought were mainly responsible for this catastrophe (1993, 56).

The Karrayu of the conservation area were estimated to be around 27,457 in 1990 and the animal population about 106, 301. Jabobs and Schloeder (1993, 239) commente

They are a small population of simple and non-aggressive people, who unknowingly and unwillingly have been caught up in the everyday political and economic struggles which plague many developing countries. And like most pastoralists in Africa, they as a group have received few benefits from these struggles and could be said to instead have suffered greatly as a result of them.

The Karrayyu lost every thing - land, livestock, family members and opportunities - in the struggle to develop Ethiopia and will continue to do so unless measures are taken to abate the situation and protect their individual and community rights (Jabobs and Schloeder 1993, 239).

Baxter describes the same situation in northern Kenya among the Boran and Sakuye following the resettlement in the townships and the establishment of agricultural centres on their land.

> The alienation of the crucial dry season water has totally disrupted many annual grazing circuits. Wells which have been vital links in the grazing cycle have not been, because they usually could not be, replaced. In effect, many pastoralists have had their livelihood stolen from them (1993, 149).

3.4 Reduced Herd Size and Breeding Rate of the Livestock

Because of the pressures, their herd size has substantially declined and the breeding rate of all their livestock reduced. "Elders report that the number of cattle today is only half of what it once was" (Jacobs and Schloeder 1993, 241). The data in the table below is generated from the discussion with my Karrayyu consultants at Xuxuxi village on the 27th of January 1997.

Table 1. Comparison of the herd size of the rich and the poor households in the past and the present

Wealth status	Type of livestock					
	Past			Current		
	Cattle	Camel	Small ruminants	Cattle	Camel	Small ruminants
Rich	100	15	200	30-40	40-50	70-80
Poor	15	-	15-20	5	2-3	5

N.B. (a) The data given above for the cattle and the camels refers only to the milk cows and milch camels, locally called *gur'o* (derived from an Oromo word *gur'u* (udder). Calves, bullocks, heifers and oxen are not included. The explanation was that the Karrayyu count milk cows and animals because they live on milk

(b) Past and Current refer to times before and after the introduction of the mechanised farms in the Awash Valley.

Studies from many Sub-Saharan countries support the data obtained on Karrayyu pastoralists. The studies documented that there is a progressive impoverishment of pastoral societies. "Individual herds of hundreds or thousands of head are a thing of the past (if ever they existed). All surveys and investigations are unanimous in reporting the reduction in the numbers of animals held by the majority of pastoral groups" (NOPA 1992, 26).

The data obtained on the breeding rate of the livestock is as follows.

Table 2. Comparison of the fecundity rate of the livestock, past and present

Type of livestock	Fecundity rate	
	Past	Current
Cattle	12 - 13	6 - 7
Camel	15	8 - 9
Goat	Three times/year	Twice a year

N.B. In the table above, I have put together two different sets of information. The figure given for the big stocks is the fecundity rate while the one for the goats is the annual breeding rate.

The explanations given for the above data are two: (a) the time between consecutive pregnancies has substantially increased; and (b) the life expectancy of the livestock has fallen.

3.5 Poverty and Its Effect on Social Relationships

It is widely believed that the successful herd management of the pastoralists involves more than water and grazing. It also requires the establishment and maintenance of supportive social relationships both within and beyond the community. Reciprocal exchanges of stock and gifts of such items as tobacco and coffee create social ties and establish networks of support on which individuals and households may rely in time of need (Waller and Sobania 1994, 53).

> The fact of being a pastoralist coincides with the fact of being owner and herder of livestock: it is through the possession of animals that the full personality of a human being, from birth to death, is realised. Without herds, an individual is lost, has no special status, no power, and cannot support a family; without herds, the pastoral society is dislocated, will wither and die (NOPA 1992, 24).

Poverty has adversely affected their economic life and social relationships. "...animals play a prominent role in social relations in many postoralist societies, so much so that in the eyes of many observers of these societies this role tends to obscure their value in economic terms" (Markakis 1993, 1). Commenting on the role the animals play in the social relationships of the Pokot of northwestern Kenya and northeastern Uganda, Dietz writes:

> Every household had animals, and animal husbandry clearly was most important in the cultural ideology of the people, playing an important role in ceremonies, as a bride price, and in cementing an extensive social network, covering the whole Pokot area (1993, 86).

Among the Karrayyu, the amount of livestock transferred from the groom's family to the bride's family as *gabbara* (bride wealth) and vice-versa, namely, *tirmaa* (dowry), has fallen very much. In the good old days, the bride wealth was six heads of cattle plus a *sabboqa* (large home-made cotton blanket) each for the mother, father and the uncle of the bride. The dowry, depending on the economic status of the bride's family, may range from eight to ten heads of cattle. Now, the *gabbara* rarely exceeds 3-4 heads of cattle and from four to five for *tirmaa*. Hawas Qullo regretably commented "*Akkuymaa bultin gadi deemteen, gabbarif tirmmaanilee gadi deemte. Maal godhan, gadadooti nama qabatee*" (literally, *gabbara* and *tirmma* decreased following the fall of living standards. Nothing can be done, people fell into the grips of destitution). Poverty thus often meant a-sociality (Sobania 1988a, 1990). "Herds are an integral part of social life and ideological values, guaranteeing both the survival of individuals and the continuity of institutions (NOPA 1992, 24). Waller and Sobania (1994, 49) commente

The family tends the herd, which in return guarantees its subsistence and social reproduction. Continued survival as a pastoralist depends on the successful management of both the herd and household...; the consequences of poor management are destitution or even death.

One of my consultants, Hawas Qullo, 58, reported that traditionally every Karrayyu had an obligation to share risks with his brethren. There is no private grazing land because whatever private property belonging to a particular family today is theoretically the property of all Karrayyu. Kelly (1990, 82) observed the same situation among the Orma pastoralists of Kenya and reported "All who can claim descent as *ilm Oromo*, in folk theory, hold some property rights in common". "In the past" Hawas added, "we used to share risks by redistributing properties, in livestock and household equipment, depending on the damage the household had encountered". He did accept that the practice is still there, but the amount contributed to compensate for the loss is far less than what it used to be in the past, and also peoples' commitment to participate in the redistributive mechanisms has been eroded. This is due to the deepening destitution, on the one hand, and the steadily developing feeling of individualism, on the other. Writing about Orma redistributive mechanism and the use of each others' grazing and watering resources, Kelly commente "In practice, this does not always work out smoothly" (1990, 82).

The essence of the pastoral system is mobility, which is a rational response to the scarcity, scatteredness, and seasonality of the resource base. "As a complex social and ecological process, mobility aims at re-establishing the balance between human populations, livestock and natural resources, in the flexible and dynamic fashion" (NOPA 1992:27). Mobility makes possible the optimal exploitation of resources scattered in time and space. "Territorial rights and the freedom to move are among the most sensitive issues of pastoral development" (Schlee 1990, 46). A pastoral economy deprived of these two conditions is a lost case. Markakis writes:

Every herd must have access to dispersed, ecologically specialised and seasonally varied grazing lands and watering holes, in order to provide for the varied foraging needs of different livestock species, and to afford a margin of safety against the vagaries of rainfall (Markakis 1993, 1).

4. Responses to Disturbed Eco-System

4.1 Adoption of Supplementary Sources of Income

It seems that the miserable living condition the Karrayyu are experiencing is forcing them to adopt modes of life which were alien, and in some cases culturally disapproved, to the Karrayyu. These include the sale of fuelwood and the burning and sale of charcoal. "Today, almost all Kerayu women sell firewood in the market, either on a weekly or daily basis... Some men are also involved in selling firewood, ...along the main highway instead" (Jacobs and Schloeder 1993, 243). Markakis (1993, 1) states that pastoralists engage in supplementary economic activities such as cultivation and trade. Discussing the trend in which these supplementary activities are becoming important in the lives of the pastoralists, he writes:

Increasingly, and out of necessity, pastoralists in the Horn are becoming dependent on such supplementary activities, particularly cultivation, and many of them can be said to be involved in a mixed agro-pastoral economy. However, unlike peasants, pastoralists tend to accommodate such supplementary activities to the demands that animal husbandry makes, because in the long run, it is pastoralism which makes their economies viable (Holy 1990, 214).

4.2 Sale of Immature Animals as a Survival Strategy

The degree of destitution the Karrayyu have gradually experienced has forced them to sell immature and emaciated stocks. During the dry-season, they do not get either enough milk or food crops for family consumption. Consequently, they take this economically `unwise' step. Had it not been because of the immediate need of feeding their family, they would have sold their herds during the wet season when their stocks were in prime condition, i.e., fat, and fetched better prices. I have seen and talked to many Karrayyu in the market while they were negotiating with the townsmen to sell heifers and bullocks. The townsmen keep the heifers for milk and fatten the bullocks for sale. Most of the big traders of the Matahara town keep milk cows, and fatten, using molasses from the Matahara Sugar Plantation, stocks for sale. Arssi Oromos in the Munessa-Shashamane State Forest areas were forced to practise culturally disapproved, what they call *teeds*, means of earning livelihood as a result of the poverty they are experiencing following the expansion of the State Forest area (Assefa 1996).

4.3 Karrayyu and Itu Relationship in Karrayyuland

Karrayyu elders are worried about the pressure from various religious groups, namely, the Muslim Itu and Arssi and the Christian (Orthodox and Protestant) townsmen and plantation workers. Most of my consultants said that their biggest headaches are the Muslim converts who would like to destroy Oromo socio-political (*Gadaa*) and religious (belief in *Waaqa*, God) systems. Despite the conversion of some Karrayyu to Islam, the Karrayyu distinguish themselves from other Muslim Oromos (Itu and Arssi) in that the former attach themselves to the Karrayyuland following the prayers of their ancestors "Hora Samaa gad, Dagaga Hawasi oli, biyya biyyuma tiya na godhi" (literally, Hora Samaa downwards and Dagaga Hawas upwards, make the country my country).

The Karrayyu also complain about the influx of the Itu Oromo from Harar. Their complaint is primarily related to their problem of pasture- land for their livestock. The Karrayyu and Itu follow two different modes of earning a livelihood - pastoralism and crop production, respectively. According to my Karrayyu informants, all the remaining (from projects) dry-season pasturelands are settled on by the Itu and are used for crop production. The Itu live on crop production with only a few livestock, namely, plough animals and a few small ruminants. I have visited one of the Itu villages, Gaara Diimtu, near Nura Era State Farm (established in July 1983 on 1153 hectares). Although most Itu villages in Karrayyuland were established following the 1973-74 drought and famine, Garaa Dimtu was established by the Itus who were displaced from Asebot, Harar, following the 1984-85 drought and famine. Garaa Dimtu was established by the Itus who were displaced from Asebot, Harar, following the 1984-85 drought. A fifty-five year old Muslim man was settled there only four years back to join his eldest son who came to the area in 1985.

This village was established in 1985 by a few households, but now there are over 200 households. There are many similar Itu villages in the southern parts of Karrayyuland.

The main crops the Itus grow include *chat*, maize, tomatoes and very little *teff*. My Itu informant reported that the Itu and the Karrayyu have always been friends. He added "the Arssi and the State Farm did not like our settlement. Had it not been for the backing we have had from the Government, they would have destroyed us long ago".

The Karrayyuland does not get enough rain suitable for crop production. It is, therefore, mandatory for one to use the Awash River if one is to produce crops. What is unfortunate is that Awash is fully controlled by State projects and the local people are denied access to the water. An Itu old man whom I talked to while he was feeding his oxen near his tomato field bitterly made the following comment on why the State Farm denied them access to the water.

Hawas is a big river in this country, with a capacity to irrigate the whole of Shawa, Arssi and Harar. But since the State Farm does not want to have an economically independent farming community, because this deprives it of getting cheap labour, it does not want us to share the water.

The second complaint of the Karrayyu about the settlement of the Itu in Karrayyuland is related to the spread of Islam among the Karrayyu. My Karrayyu informants sai

Islam is against all cultural practices of the Oromo, particularly the Gada system. Gada is our heritage, which is **genuinely** practised only by the Karrayyu and the Borana Oromo. The Arssi, the Itu and the Tulama do not practice it. We are neither Muslims nor Christians, but true Oromos governed by the rule of *Waaqaa* (God).

This is what the Karrayyu thought is more threatening to their identity, than the Itu settlement on their land. The Karrayyu seem to have been worried about the pressure both from the Muslim Itu and the Christian (Orthodox and Protestant) townsmen and the plantation workers. Everybody is pulling the Karrayyu to its own side.

Although most Baasoo group of the Karrayyu are said to have been converted to Islam, they still do practice the Gada ceremonies with their non-Muslim fellow Karrayyus. The same is true with the very few Karrayyu who recently adopted Christianity. One of my Karrayyu consultants, from Dulacha group, who was converted to Christianity only four years ago along with his 12- and 10-year old sons reported that he is still practising all the traditional Karrayyu cultural practices and belief systems, including the Gada. He said "I am a Christian in the town and a Karrayyu in my village".

This reminds one of what Schlee once reported about the Gabbra of northern Kenya, saying: "one elder once explained to me that in town they are Muslims and in the bush they are Gabbra""(1990, 45). My consultant claims that he is not obliged to observe all the rules of Orthodox Christianity to which he was converted. To him it is more meaningful to practice traditional Oromo belief systems, through which his identity is realised. For the Oromo, the supreme power lies in *Waaqa Guracha;* they revere this almighty being.

5. Conclusion

As reported at the beginning of this paper, the main objective of the AVA was to engage in various activities that would harness river waters for irrigation and power development and the utilisation of formerly **undeveloped** lands for commercial farm and settlement schemes. What is surprising is that this same document which referred to the "underdevelopment" of the area and recommended the establishment of commercial farms stated that there were between 250,000 and 300,000 heads of livestock (cattle, sheep, goats and camels) in the Awash Valley.

It is contradictory for a state, which claims to have rich livestock resources, to devise at the same time a mechanism to destroy the existing livestock under the pretext of "development". Livestock breeding is the main occupation of the people who inhabit the Awash Valley because the condition of rainfall is not good for agriculture. Unlike what most people like to think, the pastoralists keep livestock not because of their affection for large herds of livestock or

love of open space, but because it is the only alternative to achieve a regular food supply of milk and meat, or to trade wool, hides, and livestock so as to obtain food (Fratkin et al. 1994, 3).

Usually, pastoralists are seen as unwise and irrational communities by those who come from a peasant background. That is why ecological degradations and famine are attributed to the pastoralists' "backward" economic system. But for someone who very closely examines their system of resource use and their adaptation to the harsh environment, they are the wisest and most rational people on earth. By moving from place to place they ensure that the eco-system is not disturbed by the imposition of state ideologies and the philosophy of development as seen by the highland farmers. For the highlanders whose definition of development is sedentary crop cultivation and permanent tukuls, the land which is not regularly cultivated and not permanently settled on is empty and undeveloped. Challenging this assumption, Wilding (1983, 4) writes:

> The land, though empty to the eye of a farmer, was occupied and part of a complex and efficient economic system, which in modified form still provides an important (though as yet unquantified) part of the survival pattern...Thus the notion of vast empty plains impassable and unpassed is an assumption in secondary literature which may need to be challenged.

One other established belief is the one which regards the state as the sole proprietor of the land and other natural resources but this has been challenged in many instances. In South Africa, the local inhabitants took the apartheid regime to court and defeated the state because the latter incorporated their land into the National Reserve without the consent of the local people. Sharp (1997, 9) comments:

> Inhabitants of the Northern Richtersveld reserve, a great [part] of whose land was incorporated into the New National Park (because the state, rather than the local inhabitants, owned the reserve) took the state to court and won the right to be included in the process of negotiating and planning the Park's existence.

Another assumption which, according to the state, entitles the local people the right to own land was paying taxes for the land they use. It, therefore, becomes automatic for the government to take the land, as state property, for which tax is not paid because paying tax for a plot of land is believed to legally entitle one to own the land. What happened in apartheid South Africa, not only once but repeatedly, was a disproof of this assumption since the court decided in favour of the Nama people in Namaqualand areas. Boonzaier and Sharp (1994, 412) commented the following on the importance of the retention of land as a common property among the Nama of Namaqualand.

> Retention of their land as common property is of fundamental importance to them. This is not only because of its material significance - its contribution to their livelihoods - which would be lost if the systems of communal tenure were replaced by individual ownership. It is also because the fact of communal rights of land occupation has long given rise to a sense of community, of identity with those who share the **certainty** of knowing who they are and where they belong.

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EFFECTING DEVELOPMENT: REFLECTIONS ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF AGRO-PASTORAL PRODUCTION SYSTEMS IN EASTERN SUDAN

Salah Shazali

1. The Context

In 1975, the Sudan was hailed as the potential breadbasket to feed the Arab world, and Eastern Sudan was characterised as the "granary of Sudan". By 1985, however, millions of Sudanese failed to access food. Widespread famine conditions prevailed in many parts of the country, and the problem of food accessibility was the severest in Eastern and Western Sudan. The international humanitarian community launched a massive famine relief operation between 1985 and 1987, and have since then continued interventions in Eastern Sudan.

By 1988, the worst of the famine seemed over, and donors supported the shift of their interventions from "relief " to "development". The last decade thus witnessed the emergence and proliferation of grassroots projects aiming at promoting the "rehabilitation" and "development" of the famine-affected communities. The Eastern Region (which now comprises the three States of Kassala, Gedarif and Red Sea) was given special consideration as its problems were aggravated by the influx of Ethiopian and Eritrean refugees. Funding of interventions came from all sources: governmental (particularly by the Soil Conservation Administration, SCLUWPA), bilateral (Dutch, Finnish, Danish, Japanese, German and American), multilateral (notably UNHCR, UNDP, FAO, IFAD and UNSO) and non-governmental (Oxfam UK/I ACCORD, Norcross, Dancross, Sudanese Red Crescent, ICRC, SCF/USA, SCF/UK, Okenden Venture, Plan Sudan, CARE-Sudan and Community Aid Abroad, among others). Notwithstanding the fact that since 1989 Sudan has become subject to consistently widening sanctions, Eastern Sudan continues to receive support. The UNDP and the Sudan government are currently set to launch their new programme, the ARS (Area Rehabilitation Schemes), which succeeds the Area Development Schemes (ADS) launched over a decade ago. Eastern Sudan shared in the ADS Programme (Butana), and now the population of Sinkat Province (the Red Sea State) seems invigorated by being selected as a site for an ARS.

Over a decade of grassroots interventions in Eastern Sudan have thus elapsed. Most projects aimed at consolidating the food security of famine victims. Extended assistance consisted of a "standard package" of promotion of productivity of subsistence cultivation and income-generation schemes (particularly for women). Additional support included limited restocking and promotion of small-scale horticulture. However, little tangible results are observed regarding the conditions of the intended beneficiaries. Vulnerability to famine (officially renamed "food gap" during the 1990s) in Eastern Sudan has generally persisted. Virtually not a single year has passed since 1988 without a relief operation in one or more districts of Eastern Sudan. Though the rate of displacement to urban areas has slowed compared to the 1980s, the process continues towards a depopulation of rural areas in some parts (particularly the Red Sea Hills).

Varied and complex factors at various levels obviously interplayed to the detriment of the objectives of interventions. In the immediate project context, failure is partly attributed to the interception of benefits by elements of the local power structure. In some cases, the resources committed sometimes simply did not reach the intended beneficiary communities (inclusive of their power structure). A good case in point is the South Kassala Agriculture Programme (SKAP), in which the larger part of funding was drained by expensive technical personnel and high-tech methods of drawing maps for investments which are irrelevant to the local population. Macro-economic policies also had an adverse impact on performance and effectiveness, and interventions could not extricate themselves from the straight jacket of escalating crises in the Sudan as a whole. Many would also point to environmental and political factors in explaining failure. But all the factors pointed relate to processes often beyond the control of the planners and implementers of interventions. However, failure may also be partly traced to the very concept and design of interventions which did manage to reach the beneficiaries. Failure at this level concerns misconceptions of the constitution of the production systems adopted by the beneficiaries. In the process, the issue of the extent to which vulnerability is an innate feature of these production processes is generally glossed over.

This paper reflects on aspects of the transformations that generated the vulnerability characteristic of domestic agro-pastoral production in Eastern Sudan. The reflections are based on a synthesis of research material collected from various parts of Sudan (mainly Eastern Sudan). Instead of the standard (ethnographic, chronological) presentation of findings, which cannot be detailed within the scope of a workshop paper, the reflections are pursued at a relatively high level of abstraction. It starts with a description of the vulnerable communities and then turns to reflect on the causes of famine. Since vulnerability is identified as a dynamic of famine, the paper turns to reflections on the relations between domestic production and the market. Concluding remarks are finally presented by recapitulating the main findings.

2. A Profile of Beneficiary Communities

Rather than dealing with all sectors of the population in Eastern Sudan, the focus in this action will be limited to the vulnerable communities, which consist of small agro-pastoralists (including those among them who were displaced to urban centres). These consist of communities of small agro-pastoralists. Although dependence on rudimentary forms of wage employment has emerged in recent decades, small-scale agro-pastoral production depends first and foremost on domestic (family) labour. It is to emphasise the predominance of this form of labour that we characterise such systems as the domestic form of agro-pastoral production.

The mass of domestic agro-pastoral producers in Eastern Sudan is commonly viewed as consisting of two groups: sedentary cultivators and nomadic pastoralists. The distinction between the two groups is often over-emphasised to the extent of viewing them as constituting two distinct societies bearing different cultures, forms of political organisation, etc. Such a view is usually adopted in compilation of population statistics.

The Economic Survey 1996 (Republic of Sudan 1997) thus classifies the population of Sudan into three categories: Urban (25.2%), Sedentary Rural (66.2%) and Nomadic (8.5%). Each is said to be endowed with a growth rate of its own (4%, 1.6% and 0.6%, respectively).

The dichotomous conception and the statistics based on it are both controversial and problematic. Rather than aiding understanding, they tend to distort the realities of interdependence between sedentary cultivation and pastoral nomadism in Sudan in general and Eastern Sudan in particular. Firstly, in any part of Eastern Sudan the sedentary and nomadic sections of the population usually belong to one and the same ethnic group. The distinction between the two is simply possession of animals (which continues to be the most important vehicle for capital accumulation for domestic agro-pastoral producers in rural Sudan). Secondly, sedentary and nomadic lives constitute "ideal types" or pure forms, which do not correspond to the situation of either of the two groups. Virtually all those defined as nomads settle for part of the year and engage in farming (at least of food crops), while many villagers owning small herds may find it necessary to move out during a part of the year in search of pasture and/or water for their animals. Thirdly, and following from the first two points, processes of `nomadisation" and "sedentarisation" are taking place all the time. Upon building sizeable herds, rich "farmers" would adopt a nomadic life, while impoverished "pastoral nomads" would tend to settle as sedentary farmers and/or wage workers. In recent years, settlement has also emerged as a new strategy in Eastern Sudan by which relatively affluent nomads would consolidate their pastoral activities. Particularly among the Rashaida of Kassala Province, voluntary settlement in villages where they dug private wells has proved an effective method of solving the chronic water shortage. But herds continue to move out during the rainy season.

Population statistics should thus be approached with caution, as the proportion of population classified as "nomads" would vary according to the season of enumeration. A more illuminating conception is to view the domestic producers of the Eastern Region as engaged in both pastoralism and farming. Compared to small-scale cultivation, pastoralism was both historically and currently a more secured form of investment in a region characterised by rainfall variability (spatially, within season and over years) leading to frequent crop failures. The mobility of animals would mitigate the climatic constraints in any one district. Moreover, given the level of technology in agriculture, pastoralism is regarded more attractive as it is less labour-intensive, offering a higher return per unit of labour.

The beneficiary communities thus engage in domestic agro-pastoral production, where some members in each community are more intensively engaged in pastoralism than others. The degree of pastoral involvement entails forms of seasonal migration varying in distance according to the characteristics of the particular area as well as the type of animal.

3. The Causes of Famine

In earlier contributions (Salah 1988, 1993a, 1993b) I have discussed widespread misconceptions regarding the nature and causes of the famine that hit Eastern Sudan in the 1980s. Taking the case of South Kassala, I agreed that the famine resulted from food inaccessibility rather than from a fall in aggregate supply. As such it was, first and foremost, a result of vulnerability generated by the impoverishment of domestic producers. The dynamic of impoverishment rested with state policy, which both actively and passively served to marginalise agro-pastoralists (Salah 1993a). The unfettered expansion of large-scale irrigated and rain-fed schemes have cut out rich grazing areas, disrupted nomadic corridors and obstructed access to watering points. The marginalisation of agro-pastoralists in the national polity (change in the system of election, the weakening of local government structures and their inability to provide services, and abolition of native administration) further eroded the viability of domestic agro-pastoral production. The result was the weakening of centuries-old adaptations to an otherwise predictable spell of drought in two successive years.

My analysis of the causes of famine was focused on the refutation of the extra-social explanations (God, Nature and victims) in order to put into perspective the role of state policy in setting into motion and aggravating impoverishment. What that analysis omitted to state clearly, however, is the nature of vulnerability and how it has become an integral aspect of domestic agro-pastoral production. At issue are the transformations that agro-pastoral production systems underwent since the establishment of British colonial rule at the turn of the century. The pillar of these transformations has been the mode in which these systems were integrated into the (domestic and international) markets.

4. Domestic Production and the Market

At the turn of the 19th century, domestic producers in rural Sudan worked with a logic of subsistence. Interaction with the market was exceptional, effected only at times of crop failure or extreme surpluses (Salah 1985). In the case of the failure, domestic producers used to tap gum or hunt ostriches (for feather and eggs) to surrender to traders in return for sorghum brought from other regions. In cases of extreme surplus, part of the bumper harvest was bartered for luxury items (razors, beads, etc.) brought by traders. Otherwise, domestic producers had as their primary objective the strengthening of their ability to cope with the fluctuations from floods to droughts common in their unstable environment (Salah 1985). To all intents and purposes, the interaction was voluntary and transient and served to consolidate the viability of domestic production systems.

The 19th Century was a period of general instability to the Sudanese. By 1821 the Turco-Egyptian troops were invading the country, obstructing nation-building processes operating in the various small kingdoms that were brought together to create the Sudan, and taxing the population to the limits of their endurance. The reaction to the excesses of the colonial government was the Mahdist revolution, which established a state ridden by instability. In both the Turco-Egyptian and Mahdist periods, however, no change was introduced to the nature and logic of interaction between domestic production systems and the market. It was not until the establishment of the British colonial administration at the turn of the 20th Century that dramatic changes were effected.

The colonial design to transform Sudan into a source of cheap primary products is banal (Barnett 1974; Abdel Mohsin 1975; Fatima 1985). But documentation of that design focused mainly on the story of cotton cultivation and the large-scale `modern" agricultural sector associated with it (the Gezira Scheme, the Zande Scheme and the numerous smaller pump schemes). Little attention was accorded to the point that domestic producers contributed substantially to the realisation of the colonial design. This may readily be appreciated when account is taken of the point that, with the exception of cotton, all the other exports of colonial Sudan came from domestic production (livestock, gum, oil-seeds, senna, etc.).

Throughout the British colonial period, it was basic government policy to maintain conditions conducive to the sustenance of domestic agricultural production. In all regions brought under colonial rule, taxes to be paid in cash were levied and this resulted in the emergence of primary export production (cash-cropping) as an integral aspect of domestic production in rural Sudan. The type of agricultural produce converted to cash crop from among the products for which there was a demand elsewhere was decided by merchants.

Monetarisation through taxation achieved the incorporation of agro-pastoral domestic producers into the orbit of the world market. It also set a new logic to the interaction of producers with traders. The interaction has since become permanent and worked to the detriment of their domestic production systems. This was so due to the money tax levied. Producers had to secure cash in order to avert the risks associated with punitive colonial patrols. The traders knew of the predicament of the producers, and responded by paying the lowest possible price. It was this predicament that explains how the volume of gum being exported from Sudan at the turn of the century was increasing despite the fall in price (Fatima 1985). But rather than characterising that interaction as being "unequal exchange", it may be better understood as "forced exchange" (Salah 1980).

Since the turn of the century, the voluntary aspect of the interaction between domestic producers and traders was eliminated. Irrespective of whether or not there are crop failures or surpluses, the producers had to sell crops and animals for cash to pay taxes. The incorporation of domestic producers, moreover, was partial and not thorough, since they were integrated as producers and not as consumers. The market was, and continues, to provide only a small portion of the consumption requirements of domestic producers - as small as the proceeds from cash crops and sale of animals. The bulk of the consumption requirements was (and continues to be) met by the "subsistence sector" of domestic production.

The so-called "traditional sector" is thus the subsistence sphere of the (market-integrated) domestic form of agricultural production. It can only be "traditional" in the sense that it continues to meet the consumption requirements of producers as it did centuries ago, despite the present engagement of the producers in cash cropping and sale of animals (and labour power). The proceeds (crop and animal prices and wages) are thus more of an incentive to intensify primary export production, which they have to engage in anyway. The domestic form of agro-pastoral production thus unravels its character as a system in which labour is self-reproduced.

The incorporation into the market thus did not avail a significant purchasing power in the hands of the domestic producers. Insofar as poverty is a state of lack of money, domestic producers became chronically poor by virtue of integration into the world economy. They were simply not meant to have money, and famine would be their fate the day they fail to meet their consumption requirements from "own resources". Throughout the British colonial period, however, the government was keen to guarantee the viability of domestic agricultural production through what I characterised as "stabilisation policies" (Salah 1985, 1993a).) It was for the successive national governments to abandon the stabilisation policies by various measures marginalising domestic production and impoverishing domestic producers. It was these measures which I stressed in earlier contributions as the role of state policy in exposing and aggravating (the already latent) vulnerability.

The impoverishment processes are still operating, and the viability of domestic production continues to be eroded. The displaced population is a consequence of the decomposition of domestic production systems. Any interventions aiming at restoring pre-famine modes of production may thus be a futile exercise. The committed resources would only serve to postpone (as opposed to avert) decomposition and displacement. Unless relations of domestic producers to the market are restructured, Sudan would cease to be a source of primary exports. Effecting development thus presupposes restructuring. Neither government, nor donors have contemplated, at least to date, such an intervention.

5. Concluding Remarks

Following the famine of the 1980s, government and donors sought to support famine victims. A shift from "relief" to "development" was effected, and numerous projects were launched to assist the rehabilitation and development of local communities. The primary objective of interventions seems restoration of pre-famine adaptations. But after a

decade of interventions seems restoration of pre-famine adaptations. But after a decade of interventions, vulnerability seems to persist.

In this paper I sought to reflect on the nature and origin of the vulnerability of domestic agro-pastoral producers. I traced it back to the mode of interaction between the producers and the market, from which the former are excluded as consumers. Exclusion was made possible by the persistence of the "subsistence sphere" of domestic production. The subsistence sphere unravels its contradictory character as the source of both resilience and vulnerability of domestic production. With nation-wide processes of marginalisation and impoverishment, the viability of the subsistence sphere (and that of domestic production as a whole) has been subjected to a consistent process of erosion manifested in accelerated displacement. Restoration of pre-famine adaptations is thus an untenable objective precisely because those past adaptations were undermined to the extent of generating famine. Effecting development thus requires serious efforts to find alternatives to the subsistence mode of production. The main task is to rethink the reformulation of relations to the market.

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DRYLAND PASTORALISM AMONG THE NORHTERN BISHARIEN OF THE RED SEA HILLS, SUDAN

Omer A. Egemi

1. Introduction

One of the realities of our time is that traditional pastoralism in Africa, as elsewhere in the world, is declining. The pastoralists exist as a marginalised and repressed group in the post-colonial African State. Overwhelming odds work against them and contribute to their marginality. Prominent among these factors are: the impacts of modernisation (Watts 1983), encroachment on grazing lands (Egemi 1994; Freudenberger 1993), centralisation of resource management decisions, neglect, and prevalence of anti-normal morality (Horowitz and Little 1987), and the transition to market economy and the high possibility of herd decapitalisation. The transition to market economy, according to Rigby (1985, 20) is "not only weakening in the ability of the social formation to reproduce itself but also a deterioration [*sic*] in the forces of production themselves".

As a consequence, traditional pastoralism has been seriously disrupted, both as a production system and a way of life. Sedentarisation through impoverisation, as Barth (1961) calls it, has been a steadily growing process and scores of people are being pushed out of the pastoral economy. This has gained momentum recently due to drought and political conflicts. Most of these conflicts are occurring in pastoral areas and involve pastoralists pushed by the feelings of neglect, marginalisaiton and repression (Bonfiglioli 1992).

The situation of postoralists in East Africa made Dietz (1987, 13) to wonder "whether there is any chance of survival for a pastoral way of life". The question was most pessimistically answered by Dyson-Hudson and Dyson-Hudson (1982, 213) who stated that:

> The collective future of traditional pastoralist is at risk in East Africa. By the end of the century they may belong merely to memory, as traditional African hunter-gatherer population already do.

> Drawing on empirical evidence from the Northern Red Sea Area - the case of the Bisharien pastoralists - this paper takes issue with the pessimistic impressions suggested by the above quotations. It seeks to demonstrate that traditional pastoralism did not disappear, and argues that there are situations where traditional pastoralists who, in spite of their apparent poverty and crushing blows of marginalisation, still exist and maintain some of their distinct life styles and cultural characteristics.

2. The Context of the Study

The geographical context of this study is Wadi Di-ib area in Halaib Province, which constitutes the northern part of the Red Sea State (Fig.1). The centre of the wadi, Sufayya settlement, lies in the inland area at about 120 km to the west of the Red Sea coast and 310 km to the northwest of Port Sudan.

2.1 Physical Aspects

The area constitutes an ecologically marginal environment dominated by the Red Sea Hills and the rigid relief associated with it.

Perennial streams are completely absent and the geological formation is dominated by the non-water-bearing basement complex rocks. The climate is extremely arid with its characteristic low amount of rainfall that varies enormously over both space and time. The average annual rainfall amounts to about 50mm. The bulk of this rain is received during summer (Aug. - Sept.) with few showers during the winter (Nov. - Jan.).

This physical limitation of climate and the hilly nature of the terrain impose similar limitations on the natural resources base and man's economic activity. The distribution of available natural resources is determined by the drainage system and the seasonal watercourses that flow down the hillslopes as khors or wadis. The most important of these is Wadi Di-ib. The wadi constitutes a major watercourse that runs for 210 km from south to north until it reaches the coastal plain of the Red Sea. The wadi has a defined course that varies in width from 0.5 to 1.5 km. No gauging of the wadi flow has so far been carried out. A rough calculation, however, indicates a high potential flow (Mohammadi n.d.).

The soils of the wadi vary from the silty clay loam suitable for agriculture and easily worked by the traditional tools, to the silty clay with hard pan unused for agriculture. Estimates (SLUWPA 1987) suggest that 68,000 feddans of land could be potentially exploited for agriculture.

The wadi supports a relatively dense tree cover, especially along its edges. The dominant trees are acacias. Perennial grasses are *Panicum turgidum* and the salty bush of *Suaeda morica*, which is browsed by camels. The wadi is the main focus of human activity and settlement distribution.

2.2 Human Population

The inhabitants of the area are Bisharien, one of the three main Beja groups of the Red Sea Hills; the other two are the Hedendawa in the southern part of the hills and Atman in the middle. The Beja are ethnically and culturally different from other ethnic groups in the Sudan. Their language, Tu-bedawi, is a cushitic non-written language (Roper 1927; Hjort and Dahl 1991). The Beja have a highly developed sense of territory, with a great cultural and emotional attachment to land.

The total number of people directly linked to Wadi Di-ib was estimated at 33,000 persons (5,300 families) representing about 90% of the total population of Halaib province. The population's association with the wadi could be detected through:

· ownership of the wadi land as a tribal domain

· utilisation of its grazing resources

· presence of nomadic encampments

· practice of flood cultivation.

Ownership of the wadi resources, including land for cultivation is the main determining factor of population identification with the wadi. Pastoral groups may be living many kilo meters away (up to 50+) but they still descend to the wadi mainly for grazing while a few also cultivate.

Table 1. Users of Wadi Di-ib

Area	Sub-tribe	Estimated population
Downstream	Shanterab	40.0%
Midstream	Shanterab/Hannar	15.0%
Upstream	Mansourab	45.0%
Total		33000

The population is generally widely scattered with an average population density of 1.3 person/km^2. The typical residential pattern is a nomadic camp of 2 - 3 tents. There are four important factors conditioning the distribution of

population. These are: grazing resources; availability of agricultural land; presence of wells and marketing centres. Sufayya settlement (24 tents) is the main settlement and trading centre along the khor.

2.3 Social Organisation and Land Tenure

Similar to other Beja groups, the Bisharien are a highly segmented society. They are divided into two main sections: Bisharien Umm Ali, occupying the coastal plain of the Red Sea; and Bisharein Umm Nagi, occupying the hinterland from the Egyptian border to the Atbara River. Each of these two is further sub-divided into smaller units. These are:

· Umma Ali: Shanterab, Hamadorab, Aliab, Hannar and Amrab

· Umm Nagi: Hamdab, Mansourab, Ariab, Nafab, Umm Nagi and Kimeilab

These are further sub-divided into smaller sub-units known as diwabs. The diwab is the basic land owing unit, and its membership is, by definition, a relationship to a specific piece of land. The dwiab land is owned and administered collectively by the diwab members. Within this collectivism, however, individual rights to cultivable land, wells and residential sites are recognised, clearly delineated and could be inherited by the males, but with no power to alienate land from the ownership of the diwab. Non-diwab members, on the other hand, could get temporary rights to graze and water their animals, cultivate and pitch camps on the land of other diwabs with the payment of a symbolic token known as gwadab. Hence, most of the households frequently make use of common land and individual rights, simultaneously. Access to land and resources and conflicts over these are regulated and settled through a traditional customary law known as O'slif.

3. The Bisharien Pastoral Economy

3.1 Animal Raising

The Bisharien identify themselves as pastoral nomads who depend on livestock as the main source of living. Official estimates (Halaib Province authorities) classify 92% of the total population as nomadic. Crop cultivation and wage labour are supporting activities.

Regarding their livestock wealth, there are no figures on the exact numbers owned. The Bisharien themselves, however, distinguish between the rich and the poor on the bases of herd size and its composition. They gave the following figures:

· Rich: 6 - 10 camels;

30 - 40 small stock (sheep: goats);

· Poor: 2 - 3 camels;

10 - 15 sheep and goats.

The majority of the people were said to belong to the second category. The importance of livestock in the area stems from the following:

· It is the main provider of food and cash for the population.

· It stands as the main asset around which the Bisharien pastoral life and culture are built.

· It represents a source of employment.

· It gives the individual social status in the community.

· It is the most adapted form of exploitation of this arid part of the country.

Pastoral mobility over both space and time is a characteristic feature of the Bisharien pastoralism and their main response to the tempo-spatial variations in the natural resources. Generally, three patterns of movement can be distinguished in relation to three distinct seasons: the winter (October - March), the hot dry summer (March - June) and autumn (July - September). These correspond to three grazing grounds in the hills.

1) The Gunub or winter grazing along the coast where one received rains; all movements are usually for short distances of 60 - 100 km.

2) The hot summer grazing along khor Dib and its tributaries where hand-dug wells exist.

3) The Tumarab or Kharif grazing to the west and the southwest of the hills, toward the Nile and Atbara Rivers. This is mainly a camel grazing ground.

The onset and direction of both winter and kharif movements are usually based on the hearing of accurate news (Skanab) of rains (Morton 1988). Table 2 shows the yearly cycle in Sufayya area, Wadi Di-ib.

Table 2. Yearly cycle in the Sufayya area (Wadi Di-ib)

Month	August	September	October	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July
Beja Season	T'hobe	---	---	Imai	---	Owi	---	Bahasi	---	Omhagai	---	---
Climate	Rains to southwest; hot and dry around Sufayya	Rains around Sufayya	Ature falls	Cold weather begins	---	Cold	---	Aturerises		Hot and dry weather		
Cultivation	---	Clearing and planting		---	Weeding and guarding		Harvesting		---	---		
Herding	· Camels and some sheep to southwest (Tumarab) if rains there are good. · Goats in home area · Camels and sheep at Di-ib if rains in the SW are poor · Browse and shaking of Acacia trees.			· To gunub (the coast) grazing if rains are good. · To Wadi Di-ib and surrounding Khors if rains are poor; shaking and cutting of Acacia foliage.					· Return to home areas · Browsing and shaking of Acacia flowers. · Grazing on Durra stalks · Exceptional good rains bring ground vegetation			

SOURCE: Adapted from Morton (1992).

Paid labour in herding and cultivation is common among Bisharien pastoralists, and approved by tradition. However, goats are generally herded by the family. So the two important forms of paid herding are of camels and sheep. The hired labourer, mostly a relative, is usually paid in kind in addition to the provision of food and clothing. The annual payment is one camel yearling per herd (10 - 30 camels).

Until very recently camels were sold in upper Egypt at Aswan and Drau markets. A camel fetched 3,000 - 5,000 Egyptian pounds (40,000 Sudanese Pounds) in the 1992 prices. These traditional markets are abandoned at present due to political instability along the borders with Egypt. Sheep are sold in Port Sudan. Animals are usually collected from a group of relatives and marketed by one or two persons. The December 1997 price of a head of male sheep was in the range of 50 - 60 thousand Sudanese pounds. The price of one sack of durra was 31 thousand pounds at that time.

3.2 Cultivation

Crop cultivation, practised by some households, is of a secondary status in the Bisharien pastoral economy. The kind of agricultural practice is of a subsistence type, geared mainly towards the production of sorghum as a staple grain crop. Watermelon is grown inter-cropped with sorghum. Sorghum production depends on the seasonal flooding of the wadi-Dib system. A traditional water harvesting method known as Karrab (earth bund) is used for the diversion and distribution of the khor waters. Two crops of sorghum may be grown annually on the winter and summer flood waters, all depending on the intensity of the rains and wadi flood. However, in most years, only one cropping is practised. The farming community is small, 412 households distributed unevenly over 6 sites along the wadi course (table 3). The total area cultivated by the total number of farmers in the wadi is estimated at 2000 feddans; this gives an average farm size of 4.8 feddans.

Table 3. Household distribution along the Wadi course

Site	Ethnic group	No. of Households
Swarait	Shanterab	40
Kaibiaf	"	105
Oberg	"	35
Mafdeib	"	85
Oko	Mansairab	107
Dcirurb	"	40
Total		412

Agricultural labour is provided mainly by the grown up male members of the household. Children rarely contribute to farm labour while women are only engaged in winnowing operations.

Sorghum yields are about 3 to 5 sacks (270 - 450 kg per feddans).

3.3 Place of Farming in the Pastoral Economy

Sorghum is a major constituent in the food of the Bisharien. It is taken with milk (fresh or sour) in the form of porridge in all seasons of the year. Working on an estimate of 1.25 sacks of sorghum (112.5 kg) per head per annum, an average family of 6 persons requires 7.5 sacks (675 kg) annually. This amount is adequately produced by the households (412 farmers) presently cultivating in the Di-ib. However, the 412 farmers only make up 7.8% of the pastoral households linked to the wadi. The rest (92.2%) depend on dura purchased from the market. Presently the Bisharien obtain their grain requirements from Port Sudan and the urban centres along the Nile in Northern Sudan. On the other hand, dura cultivation provides an important source of animal fodder, especially during the long dry

season. This is particularly important since the Bisharien cultivators, according to local tradition, do not cut dura stalks after the harvest of the crop. They usually say "we do not cut it, but leave it as a tribute (karama)".

3.4 Labour Migration

Migration as wage labour is an important aspect of life in the Wadi Di-ib area. It involves seasonal wage labour migration to agricultural areas along the Nile and migration to towns, namely, Port Sudan. Labour migration is a male activity practised by the young men and it is usually a short-time (2-3 month) migration. Migration by whole families is said to be very limited and, according to Morton (1992), some families were even returning to the hills as there were good chances for cultivation since the late 1980s. Labour migration provides a good contribution to the household budget through the generation of cash income.

4. Conclusion

Contrary to the impression one gets from the literature which tended to dramatise the predicament of the East African pastoralists and predicted their disappearance by the end of this century, the case of the Bisharien indicates that their pastoral system is still exists and is smoothly functioning. Field investigations suggest that the Besharien pastoralists are still maintaining some of their resilience to drought and fluctuations in food availability, and at the same time maintaining their distinct life styles and cultural characteristics.

According to my informants, the Besharien, unlike their other Beja kins (Hadendowa and Atman), were the least affected by the famine disaster of 1983-84 and that very few households were hit. Investigation of the sources of Besharien resilience suggests the following:

1) The flexibility of the pastoral adaptation system and their operational and conceptual preparedness for drought and fluctuations of resource availability.

2) Remoteness from urban centres and the harsh nature of the terrain; this has significantly curtailed the possibilities for the penetration of agri-business and urban capital, and its encroachment on pastoral resources.

3) The rich pastures of Wadi Di-ib and its suitability for agriculture; this is related to the fact that the wadi adapts to rainfall regime, the summer and winter rains.

4) Proximity to the Egyptian borders, which ensures the supply of food stuffs.

5) Use of the Red Sea as a source of food and cash by some groups living along the coast.

6) Out-migration adds to the resilience of the system through the generation of cash income and the maintenance of the balance between population and natural resources.

The study, however, recognises that the Besharien do not live in an isolated world and, therefore, does not deny the impact of external influences, particularly the transition to market economy, on their pastoral system. Some elements of change are certainly taking place, especially the growing concern with agriculture. This makes it more sensible to talk about pastoral transformation rather than disappearance of the Besharien pastoralism.

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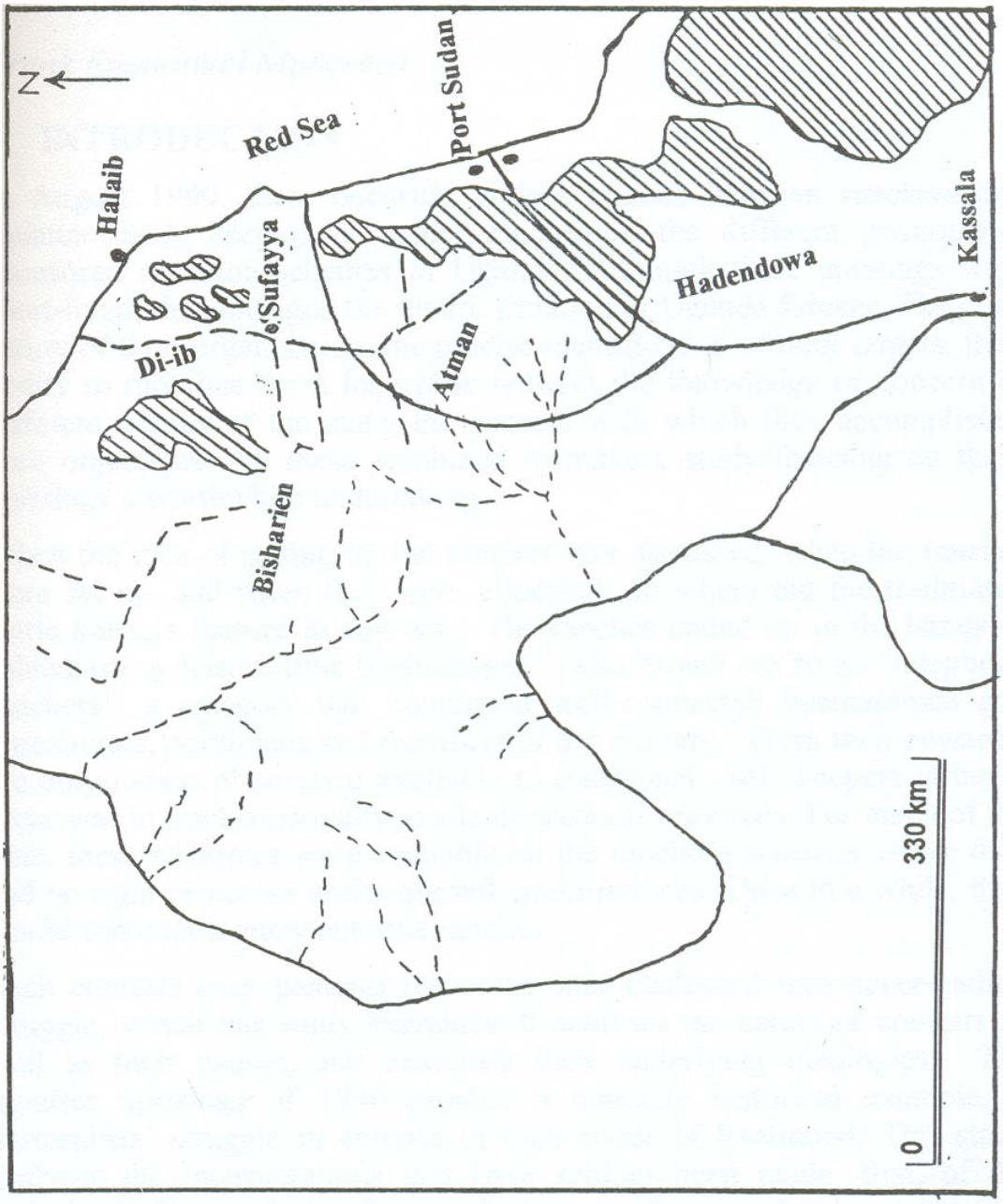
Figure 1. The Study Area



The Struggle for land Rights and the 1990 Squatter Uprisings in the Former Government Ranching Schemes of Uganda

Frank Emmanuel Muhereza

1. Introduction

In August 1990, there occurred violent clashes between ranchers and squatter cattle keepers on many ranches in the different government sponsored ranching schemes of Uganda. Although these uprisings were short-lived, they changed the tenure situation in Uganda forever. The crisp nature of their organisation, the precise identification of their targets, their ability to mobilise for a long time without the knowledge or concern of different organs of the state, the success with which they accomplished their objectives. All these combined to make a study focusing on these uprisings a worthwhile undertaking.

When the idea of setting up the ranches was discussed, when the ranches were set up, and when they were allocated, no where did the traditional cattle keepers feature in any way. The ranches ended up in the hands of subsidiary or leisure time businessmen,[1] who turned out to be "telephone ranchers", a category that comprised well-connected businessmen and bureaucrats, politicians and members of the military.[1] From then onwards, the only means of survival available to traditional cattle keepers in many areas was to track seasonally available pastoral resources. For much of the time, these resources were available on the ranching schemes where they had no right of access under normal circumstances. Once in a while, they would force their entry onto the ranches.

Such contests over pastoral resources later coalesced into never-ending struggle, which this study examines. It analyses the nature of contests as well as their causes, and examines their underlying ideologies. The squatter uprisings of 1990 provide a concrete historical example of pastoralists' struggle in defence of their mode of livelihood. This study analyses the interpretations that have seldom been made, first, of the underlying factors that influence the nature of pastoralists' responses to conditions of marginalisation, and secondly, its subsequent outcomes in terms of pastoral survival strategies.

The paper is divided into six sections. The first section is the introduction. The second section is a review of the underlying themes of `declining pastoralism' in the context of pastoral struggle. The third section analyses the causes of the squatter uprisings of 1990. The fourth section examines the events leading up to the outbreak of violence in August 1990, and also analyses the nature of organisation and mobilisation of the squatters immediately before, during and after the uprisings. The fifth section delves into the potential and implications of the uprisings; the last section gives the concluding remarks.

2. Squatter Uprisings in the Context of Declining PastoRalism

2.1 The Notion of Declining Pastoralism

Recent research on pastoralism in the East African drylands has been dominated by themes about the "decline of pastoralism". Basically this thesis underscores the effects which the increasing scarcity of pastoral resources is having on pastoralism as a form of production. This condition itself results from varying combinations of the following: the ever worsening environmental conditions; increasing pressures on scarce resources from effects of demographic changes, technological improvements and commercialisation; and the political instability that has engulfed the region. All of these have led to increased competition over scarce pastoral resources, culminating in never-ending conflicts over pastoral resource use. The net result is a `decline of pastoralism'.

It has been observed that pastoralism as a form of production requires regular tracking of seasonally available resources; access to dispersed, ecologically specialised and seasonally varied grazing lands; and watering holes which fulfils foraging needs of different livestock species kept by the cattle keepers. Pastoralism would, therefore,

require access to extensive territory as a protection against the highly unpredictable physical environment (Markakis 1993). The constriction of the territory pastoralists have access to, constraints to their seasonal tracking of variable resources, such as privatisation or violent conflicts over these resources, etc., are conditions that lead to a `decline of pastoralism'.

In the literature on pastoralism, where inferences have been made to this thesis of `declining pastoralism', many scholars have concerned themselves with the supposed role of the state. In the first argument, the state has been seen as having adopted policies intended to promote the decline of what is referred to as `traditional pastoralism'. This is in order to, on one hand, promote a positive transformation of traditional pastoralism into a commercialised form of pastoralism, which is the case with the establishment of government sponsored ranching schemes in Uganda during the 1960s and 1970s, and their subsequent restructuring starting in early 1990.

On the other hand, some states have been seen to adopt policies intended to undermine pastoralism as a form of production. Where such policies have been adopted, the state has been openly antagonistic to pastoral peoples or their organisations. States adopt overly anti-pastoralist policies for as many reasons as there are these different states. The colonial government adopted a pastoral `pacification' policy because it considered the cattle keepers as militant, and therefore a challenge to the establishment of law and order. Their form of production is divergent from their objectives of growing cash crops, for they are badly needed industries back at home. Where the state has been viewed as dominated by politicians of non-pastoral backgrounds, the lack of comprehension of the type of challenges and problems faced by cattle keepers have led to hostility to pastoralists, and to organisations formed to foster development in these largely backward and politically neglected areas.

In the second argument, pastoralism has been seen as being incapable of sustaining itself under the changing environmental, political and socio-economic conditions. Pastoralism is portrayed as being in decline, because of diminishing survival options available to cattle keepers living in a very highly unpredictable physical environment (Dyson-Hudson 1985). This takes place in processes variously described as leading to the `sedentarisation' of cattle keepers, a process through which cattle keepers have been forced to abandon different aspects of the pastoralism and its resource utilisation strategy, on the historical journey to becoming sedentary cultivators.

The various contributions in the volume edited by Prof. John Markakis (1993) are, for example, in agreement with Dyson-Hudson's (1985, 174) thesis. This states that `the pastoral strategy so successful in the past is no longer possible' because wide-ranging policies and measures adopted since the colonial period have led to the constriction of pastoralists' habitat. They have also increasingly resulted in the degradation of environmental resources in pastoral areas. In sum, the pastoralists have been portrayed as victims who have not fought back and their mode of livelihood has largely become threatened by both internal and external pressures, and therefore needs to be protected.

2.2 The Struggle by Pastoralists

The decline of pastoralism is evident from a regional or national context. In Uganda's former government ranching schemes, the displacement of traditional pastoralists when the ranches were set up, and the subsequent difficulties which the pastoralists had to endure, did not exactly lead to an end to nomadism, or rather a total decline of pastoralism. Nor did it put the pastoralists in a position which they did not have occasion to either challenge or respond to, and usually from a vantage point of strength. In fact nomadism, albeit the numerous constraints (e.g., the payment of rents for pastures and water, the constant mobility to avoid rents or disease epidemics, track seasonally available resources, etc.) flourished to even greater heights. This was greater than that of the commercial livestock production sector, a factor which has been underlined in the government report by the Commission of Inquiry on the functioning of the ranching schemes (see Republic of Uganda 1988).

There have been numerous struggle in defence of land rights in the different government ranching schemes. Such struggle cannot be mistaken for a defence of the old order. Neither can they be described as innocuous, uncoordinated struggle by cattle keepers and landless cultivators representing individual, self-help oriented, spontaneous action, and secondly, because land owners have also been involved in struggle to defend their own interests, the interests at stake cannot be taken to have been homogenous. The economic and political contradictions

between the interests of the different categories of the resource users are sustained ideologically. The success with which this is done is related to the form/content of the mobilising discourse, which focuses on the presentation/projection of issues and identities in a non-class manner. This study analyses the nature of the different forms of struggle in the ranching schemes.

3. An Analysis of the Causes of The 1990 Squatter Uprisings

There were both underlying and immediate causes for the 1990 uprisings. The underlying factors included the following: the failure of the ranching model to lead to an end to nomadism; the failure of the government ranching project; the unfair relations of production that the cattle keepers entered into with the owners of ranches. Among the immediate causes of the 1990 squatter uprisings is the politicisation of the cattle keepers. The publication of the report of the Commission of Inquiry into the functioning of government sponsored ranching schemes politicised the squatters. The manner in which government officials handled this report sent different signals to cattle keepers who had already settled on the ranches. Below, we examine these in greater detail.

3.1 Shortcomings of the Ranching Enterprise

3.1.1 Nomadism

The most significant limitation of the ranching model has been the persistence of nomadism.[3] Having been excluded from the allocation of ranches, the traditional cattle keepers were forced to adopt very opportunistic grazing systems in which they roamed the entire stretch of the country's savannah as if it were a very big grazing ground. From Ankole, nomads moved up to Apac, Lira in the north, Soroti, and Mukono districts in the east, tracking pastoral resources where they could find them. In most cases, the alienation of grazing lands in one place affected pastoral relations in all other cattle keeping areas in the form of intensified migrations in search of the now scarce resources. Increased mobility led to increased incidences of animal diseases, and once there was an outbreak of an epidemic, the cattle keepers simply moved on.

The phenomenon of squatting by cattle keepers is as old as the former ranching schemes themselves. Cattle keepers began squatting because of different conditions. Amongst the cattle keepers who were squatting on the ranching schemes, a few were essentially transhumants who had never had any thought of acquiring land. These formed only a small fraction. Others were migrants who had been displaced during the 1979 liberation war. These were mainly cattle keepers who came from areas bordering Northern Tanzania. The majority settled in Luwero, Singo and Buruli areas. There were also cattle keepers originally settled in the Lake Muburo areas and Rwandese settlers in Bushenyi, both of whom where evicted during the Obote II regime by the then head of Internal Security, Chris Rwakasisi. The former were evicted to create the Mburo National Park and the latter were evicted because they were accused of being accomplices to Museveni's then guerrilla army that was fighting the Obtoe II government.

Many of the nomads were of Rwandese origin. There were also Banyankole and Bahima cattle keepers. The majority of the Rwandese cattle keepers had come during the 1950s either as political refugees or as economic refugees who were searching for manual jobs in coffee plantations in different parts Buganda. Many of them were farm labourers in Ankole and Masaka. Many inter-married, while others used their wages to build stocks of cattle. Having a pastoralist background predisposed them to raise livestock, which drew them into a strong culture of nomadism. Survival of their herds was all they looked to. They would move their cattle wherever it was considered favourable for their survival and multiplication. They traversed the entire savannah grasslands across much of Uganda as if was one big grazing area.

Both human and animal populations continued to grow. Among the displaced indigenous cattle keepers, there was always persistent disgruntlement against losing their traditional grazing when the ranching schemes were created. After the establishment of the ranching scheme the people became squatters wherever they went. The ranching schemes created landlessness for the traditional nomads. For other cattle keepers, periods of scarcity caused by drought were usually very difficult times during which they saw their plight as resulting directly from their lack of access to natural pastures and water points enclosed either in national parks or on individual ranches. Successive

governments in the 1970s and 1980s failed to take any steps to institute appropriate land use policies. The cattle keepers could only gain access to resources by encroaching on them.[4] The contest between ranchers and the squatters had become so serious that by 1990, the cattle industry was greatly paralysed. The squatters forced their way onto the ranches and introduced ticks since many did not follow regular husbandry practices. Many of the ranches had been undeveloped.

3.1.2 The Failure of Government Ranching Schemes

The stagnation of the ranches led directly or indirectly to the invasion of the ranching schemes by cattle keepers who had originally been excluded from the ranches. The ranches stagnated because of economic mismanagement, which reached its peak during the Idi Amin regime. At the height of Amin's economic war, the relationship with the American donors who had funded the establishment of the ranching schemes went sour. The Kuwait Found later secured to replace it could not take off due to the liberation war of 1979, and all the materials that had been procured to develop these ranches were looted at field stations.

During the 1979 liberation war, a lot of cattle were stolen; some crossed to Tanzania, others were eaten by soldiers, and the rest died because of break down of disease control facilities. A fluctuation in the figures from the data available at field stations clearly indicates the impact of the war on livestock size, not to mention the infrastructure on the farms. As the ranches were beginning to pick up, there came the 1980-86 protracted guerrilla war waged by Museveni's NRA against the Obote II government. Virtually all the ranch infrastructure was destroyed.

3.2 Constraints of Relations of Production

3.2.1 Rancher-Landlordism

Although pastoralists were required to vacate the areas where the ranches were created, in reality most of them either moved into the areas adjacent to the ranches or developed their ranches, and the number of squatting pastoralists rose tremendously. The ranchers, on their part, demanded rents for pastures from pastoralists who wished to stay. The traditional pastoralists who were squatting on the ranches became `tenants' (`tenant pastoralists'). The ranch owners, on the other hand, turned themselves into `rancher landlords'. There were a few resident ranch owners. The majority were `absentee'' ranch owners.

3.2.2 Squatter Pastoralism

The arrangements entered into between the squatting pastoralists-turned-tenants, and ranch owners-turned-landlords varied. In the majority of cases, the arrangements involved payment of rents. Rents were sometimes in cash, but mostly in the form of cattle. The number of cattle paid for rents varied. It ranged between one and fifty per cattle-keeper per year, depending on the number of animals one owned.[5] Where the ranchers were absentees, a custodian delegated for the purpose collected the rents for the ranch owners. These custodians were either relatives of the ranch owners or ranch managers. Initially, the pastoralists determined the number of animals to give to the ranchers for rent. Over time, the ranch owners not only selected the animals which the pastoralists were to pay for rents, but also refused to accept bulls. They wanted cows. The higher the number of squatters on the ranches, the higher the animals collected as rents. In order to safeguard against the possibility of the pastoralists' evading rents, the ranch owners staggered these rents over a period of time. Sometimes they would came to collect rents as early as 6.00 o'clock in the morning.

There were both direct and indirect forms of exploitation in the form of rents collected from the squatters; the rents got transformed both qualitatively and quantitatively to the disadvantage of the landless cattle keepers. Rents were initially charged on pastures and only during the dry season were rents charged on water. When the drought intensified, rents on water not only became institutionalised, but they also changed qualitatively. The rancher-landlords increasingly started determining how many animals were to be paid as rents, how regularly the rents were to be paid, and what types of animals were to be paid as rent.

Rents sometimes differed depending either, on how long one had stayed on the ranch, or the relationship with the ranch owners. For those who were not required to pay rents either in cash or in the form of animals, rents were disguised in the form of labour obligations to the ranch owners. These ranged included protecting the ranch from other pastoralists. In this case, such pastoralists were allowed to build kraals at strategic points in the periphery of the ranch. Sometime these pastoralists were required to manage the ranch on behalf of the ranch owners. Even on very well developed ranches, such as the Marumba Co-operatives ranch number 39, there was a squatter who had lived there for a very long time. No rent was collected from this squatter, although the ranch owners required of him certain labour obligations.

Squatters who lived in the areas before ranches were established were usually indignant about having to pay rents, while those who came in after the ranches were created thought it was the norm. Because of the soaring rents, pastoralists sometimes pulled their herds in order to reduce rental obligations. When pastoralists paid rents for pastures, they would not allow a ranch owner to attract more pastoralists than they thought were the right numbers. If they failed to reach a compromise with the ranch owners over rents, the pastoralists would simply move on to another ranch.

In Luwero, a ranch that belonged to the Departed Asians Custodian Board (DAPCB), which had nothing to do with ranching and therefore absentee ranchers, was being rented by a group of six pastoralists. Pastoralists who never wanted anything to do with paying rents lived with their herds in portions of land in between the ranches (or firebreaks), or in areas adjacent to the ranches. They would invade the ranches anytime they had an opportunity of doing so.

3.2.3 Water-Lordism

In normal years water was free. Only pastures were rented. Over time, as drought periods became severe partly as a result of serious degradation of the environment in the cattle keeping areas, ranch owners began restricting the pastoralists' use of water on the ranches. This was followed by the introduction of water rents, in addition to the pasture rents. The pastoralists then began moving their animals to the natural water points. When the pastoralists got an opportunity to use these water points for which they were required to pay rents at certain times of the year, many times they never used watering troughs, which led to siltation of the valley tanks. A major underlying cause of the rancher-squatter confrontation was the lack of adequate water supplies for the cattle. Most of the available water was on the ranchland. The squatters gave a certain number of cattle to the ranchers as rent paid for accessing water and pastures.

Some of the dips and dams on the ranches were built from the proceeds obtained by selling squatter animals paid in the form of rents. Paying rents for water and pasture was suspended by the NRM government. The then government had constructed valley dams and tanks, which were enclosed in the ranches when these ranches were set up. Many pastoralists were prohibited from using the water on the ranches, unless they paid with cattle or gave their services towards developing the ranches for the owners. This was the situation on ranch no. 1 owned by Sembabule Balunzi Kwegata Co-operative Society. The ranch was allocated in 1968 and for the past 10 years, squatters had been developing the 200 ha land.

The prolonged drought conditions of 1989/90 that hit the whole country, especially the cattle keeping areas, created a lot of discontent among the cattle keeping communities in the drought affected areas. The drought had led to the shortage of grazing and watering areas. All the available water sources dried up. Water was left only on those ranches which had very big valley dams and valley tanks. The ranch owners, on their part, used the drought to increase the rents they charge cattle keepers watering their animals, thereby further alienating the cattle keepers.

3.3 The Politicisation of the Masses

3.3.1 Building a Squatter Consciousness

When the NRM came to power, it introduced political education courses called *Chaka Mchaka*. In these courses, part of the curriculum involved understanding the causes of Uganda's political crises in a historical and dialectical perspective. A basic military course was also included as a way of demystifying the gun. When the demand for such courses became overwhelming, districts started organising local political education courses at the sub-country level. This decentralisation of *Chaka Mchaka* courses revolutionarised the whole idea of political education. The history of Uganda's political [changes] in the context of the concrete and lived local experiences, as well as Marxist paradigms of oppression, exploitation, and marginalisation were transfused into an excitable population that put itself in the position of the 19th century *Third Estate* in France.

It is as a result of this nation-wide politicisation after the advent of the NRM administration that the squatters realised that although they had been in the area for over twenty years they virtually owned nothing. As a result of this education, a squatter consciousness distinct from that of the ranch owners was built. Once this was done, it became easy for the cattle keepers to fight for their land access rights. This was why it was argued that the squatters needed no exciting or instigation by the state. The squatters were a breed of cattle keepers with a new mentality and were a bit more powerful and armed.

3.3.2 Instigation by the State

It has been argued that the squatter crisis was politically instigated by the NRM government. The following arguments have been advanced to show that the uprisings were state-inspire

a) No single person was ever made to answer to the crimes committed during the uprisings. Ranches were attacked and vandalised by cattle keepers wielding guns and other weapons of terror. If these were not members of the NRA or Police, who are the only official agents that carry guns, then the cattle keepers must have been carrying these guns illegally. None was, however, arrested and charged for at least the offence of being in unlawful possession of guns.

b) The NRM administration failed to take a legal stand on issues that were clearly illegal. The squatter crisis became political and much more complicated. The ranchers had not developed their ranches, and therefore had broken the covenant they had with government. The government could have used the legal means to repossess the ranches. The President himself said that there was a very strong lobby everywhere in the government circles supporting the ranchers, which would have frustrated legal means; "hence some political work was needed" and that a legalistic approach to solve the rancher-squatter issue had already proved very difficult.[6]

c) During the uprising, some NRA officers were directly involved in the clashes. The army forbade the Resistance Councils, Police and Judiciary from intervening in the conflict.[7] There was a heavy presence of the army in the area at the time of the clashes,[8] which prompted President Museveni to caution the NRA soldiers against getting involved in the issues pertaining to the ranchers and squatters.[9]

d) The government was slow to handle the squatter uprising even when skirmishes started in different parts of the ranching schemes. Instead, squatters were told by the government not to move, and yet they could not find adequate water for their animals. Tinyefuza expressed disappointment at how the squatters had been treated so far, "explaining that many of them had contributed towards the NRA war."[10]

It has been further argued that the government instigated the uprisings in the ranches in Mawogola, Kabula, and Lwemiyaga in order to achieve a number of objectives including the following:

· The uprising was allegedly intended to displace the Baganda from the ranches and replace them with Banyankole and Bahiima cattle keepers. It was alleged that the violence by squatters was instigated and

attacks on ranches were directed at those who were non-Banyankole. During our study, we established that all ranches were affected irrespective of the nationality of their owners.

· It was also argued that the uprisings were stage-managed to act as a mechanism through which land would be granted to cattle keepers who had helped the NRA during the bush war. It was alleged that the squatters were promised a settlement at one time.

· Immediately after the clashes, the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, Prof. Mondo Kagonyera, said that the government could not continue to remain oblivious of the problems of squatters. The pastoralists contributed very significantly to the country's economy more than the ranchers did. He also said that the allocation of the ranches in the 1960s and 1970s was based on narrow, parochial lines. In some cases cunning ranchers presented the cattle that belonged to so- called squatters to obtain title deeds. Hence, the measure was intended to correct historical injustices.

· When the ranching schemes were established, the conditions set for their acquisition were disadvantageous to the squatters. The whole thing started from a position of injustice. In some instances, ranchers would manipulate the `squatters' and join their cattle with the others' and thus fulfil the target number required for one to be allocated a ranch. The ranches were not established on uninhabited land, otherwise the question of compensation would never have arisen.[11]

3.3.3 The Commission of Inquiry

The plight of squatters became an issue only after the NRM came to power in 1986. The first organised resistance to rancher-landlords was reported in the Bunyoro Ranching Scheme in November 1986, following an attempt by the NRA to evict some squatters from a ranch in order to start an NRA ranch.[12] The squatters blocked the road and refused to allow an army truck from proceeding to its final destination. Attempts by the army to occupy a heavily settled ranch were successfully resisted. It was then that it was announced that the government was in the process of reviewing all government ranching schemes. In the meantime the squatters were told to stay wherever they were.

At the beginning of 1987, the government set up a Commission of Inquiry to investigate into the setting up, management and operation of government sponsored ranching schemes with a view to effecting reforms and improving their efficiency. The Commission recommended, among others things, that the ranches be individually scrutinised in order to find land to settle the squatters. The Commission earmarked 55, 200 hectares of land on which the squatters should be settled, and recommended that the government repossess 53 of the 96 ranches from individuals, companies and co-operatives societies in Ankole, Masaka, Buruli, Singo and Bunyoro. The Commission found out that 3 ranches in Ankole, 19 in Masaka, 9 in Singo, 2 in Buruli and 20 in Bunyoro had failed to comply with the conditions set for them by the government during the initial allocation of the ranches (Republic of Uganda 1988). These conditions included, among others: installing and using tick control equipment, crushes, pumps and spray races as prescribed by the Commissioner of Veterinary Services. The owners of these 53 ranches had become "telephone ranchers" owning large pieces of undeveloped land. Some of them had acquired the ranches fraudulently. A total of 43 ranches were identified as having shown minimal development but due to genuine problems of past instabilities could not achieve anything better. These ranches were to be given 12 months to show concrete improvement. 13 of these ranches were in Masaka.[13]

The Commission's recommendation to repossess only those ranches which had performed poorly had originally was upheld by the government. At that time it was found out that only three farms were to be reduced in Nyabushozi, while more were to be reduced in Masaka. Ranchers from Masaka and other ranching schemes said that the government was discriminating; that was why it was reducing only three ranches in Nyabushozi. The issue of ranches was put to the NRC because there were some cabinet members who sympathised with the point of view of the Masaka ranchers. The NRC recommended that the ranches be reduced to three, two or one square mile(s) depending on the level of development on the respective ranches. On 25 January 1990, the government announced that it had re-possessed 62 ranches in Ankole, Masaka, Singo, Buruli and Bunyoro.[14]

The same people again complained that the first decision had been better. A series of high-level government meetings were convened. The National Executive Council (NEC) met on 14 July and 15 July 1990 to review the recommendation of the government's Commission of Inquiry, and decided to uphold the policy. A ministerial statement was issued to that effect. It was barely a month after it was issued that widespread squatter uprisings occurred on ranches in Masaka, Ankole and Singo.

The release of the report of the Commission of Inquiry is associated with the outbreak of violence in the ranching schemes because of the following:

· The publication of the Commission's report led to a lot of speculation from both squatters and the ranchers. Certain recommendations were made in the report, which led to rumours to the effect that the government had acted discriminatorily by repossessing ranches in Buganda and leaving those in Ankole.

· There was also speculation by the squatters that they were about to be allocated land. This precipitated an influx of squatters from neighbouring districts and as far as the border from Tanzania to Masaka, thereby intensifying overcrowding in the area.[15]

4. THE NATURE OF THE 1990 SQUATTER UPRISINGS

4.1 Understanding Rural Mobilisation and Protests

In the debates about rural mobilisation and protests, cattle keepers are sometimes identified as being conservative, irrational and apolitical. Their struggle are depicted as parochial, defensive, and spontaneous `outbursts of anger', with little or no linkage between them, and which for much of the time are not designed to change the existing social structure. The relationships that exist, for example, between tenant cattle-keepers and landlord-cum-ranch-owners are considered as symbiotic because of the manner in which the landless tenants (cattle keepers) are said to regard their landlords (ranch owners). Any struggle by squatter pastoralists are seen as attempts to restore the status quo. Abstracted in terms of political action, such arguments view the landless cattle-keeping tenants simply as devoid of agency. This variant of the modernisationist argument contends that the ideas, beliefs, values - in sum, the ideology - of the dominant classes permeate the consciousness of the people in the subordinate groups, thereby shaping in the process their thinking, and leading them to accept or legitimatise the existing distribution of power and resources. While they may attempt to modify the prevailing order, whatever alterations may result merely perpetuates the system (Kerkvliet 1993).

The `hegemony thesis', which allows for the subordinate landless classes' rejection of the dominant order, has two versions. In the first version, it is argued that the oppressed landless cattle-keeping tenants might dislike the prevailing order but are, nevertheless, ideologically dominated in the sense that they see their conditions as inevitable. They may harbour grievances, but they have learnt or have been taught to be resigned to the way the things are and see them as being inevitable. The ideas of the dominant land owning classes smother alternative ideas; the landless classes cannot imagine alternatives because hegemony has defined for them what is possible and conceivable. Overt opposition from below is extremely rare, perhaps even impossible, unless stimulated or led by outsider intellectuals or disgruntled renegades from the dominant classes.

The second version acknowledges that the under-privileged can act in ways that challenge the current distribution of resources, thereby sometimes even forcing the dominant classes to grant them limited concessions. But in the realm of ideas, they remain products of the reigning hegemony. The beliefs that they articulate are borrowed from the dominant classes. Whatever protests they do are done unconsciously. Their actions are not capable of fundamentally altering the status quo. This variant grants the landless categories greater agency, and hence an element of revolutionary potential, but this potential is used only defensively - the struggle to remain the same. The struggle are reducible to a primordial subsistence ethic, what has been variously described as peasant essentialism (Walker 1993; Brass 1991). Such arguments ignore the extent to which the landless cattle keepers regard themselves as marginalised due to these production relations. They also ignore their consciousness which results from a particular

mobilising ideology proclaiming a common squatter identity, and, therefore, serving to obscure socio-economic divisions specific to squatters participating in protests.

Parallel to these interpretations is the second perspective. The Marxist approach underscores the proactive role of the struggle by the landless rural poor, focusing on the nature of the production relations. This perspective points to an overbearing and powerful class of landowners (in this case ranch owners turned rancher-landlords). Their control over the most important means of production (land) exposes different categories of landless cattle keepers (turned tenant-pastoralists) to wide-raging forms of exploitation. This exploitation coalesces into relations of antagonism. The class character of the ensuing struggle for land rights by landless cattle-keepers, which shapes the values of the subordinate classes (the squatters) and in turn influences their consciousness, enables the subordinate classes to have sufficient grounds for disputing the claims of the dominate classes.

However, the exclusive emphasis on class dimensions inevitably ignores other major values around which the struggle by the squatter pastoralists were predisposed to, for example, the gender and ethnic dimensions, as well as the struggle internal to the specific socio-economic categories. In so doing, all the above perspectives conflate and obfuscate important differences internal to peasant struggle based on such other identities as ethnicity, political orientation, religious beliefs, etc. (Omvedt 1994; Samira 1994; Walker 1993).

4.2 The Outbreak of the Squatter Violence

Accounts by ranch owners and cattle keepers in Mawogola, Singo and Buruli areas indicated that by the end of July 1990, tension between ranchers and squatters was already high. The first clashes were reported on 5 August, 1990, when squatters armed with guns, spears and machetes stormed a number of ranches in the Mawogola areas and seized them by force. By 13 August, Lyatonde Police Station had reported 12 cases of clashes on the ranches in the Lyantonde areas, on which all the cows, goats, sheep and buildings were destroyed. Squatters invaded ranches, claiming that they had the right to do so. Others claimed that they had been told to do so. "One was heard to remark: `if your cattle have no grazing grass or water, and you are starving, should you wait to ask?'"[16]

The squatters/ranchers relationships had worsened in a short period of time mainly due to a statement by the PS, Lands and Survey and a Joint District Administrator (DA) Masaka/President's Office Task Force. This team toured Masaka Ranching Scheme to investigate the squatters' problems. The tour was interpreted by the squatters as a license to stay on the ranches on which they were squatting at the time. Ranchers tried to deny the squatters water for their animals. At one time a rancher opened fire at a squatter. He blamed some ranchers for having sparked off the clash by arming himself and shooting at the squatters.

Attempts were made by government officials to diffuse these tensions, to redeem their credibility as leaders from these areas, and in a way show how they were capable of handling crises. Among other people who took initiatives were members of the National Resistance Council (NRC), Cabinet Ministers and Senior Army officers. Some of these government officials played down the gravity of the situation. On 7 August 1990, an announcement was carried in the State-owned *New Vision* that the then Minister of State for Defence, Major General David Tinyefuza, himself a rancher in Mawogola, would hold rallies and meetings in Sembabule sub-district with ranchers and civil servants in the area starting from 8 August. The meeting was intended to clear the allegations of tribalism and mounting resentment on the part of all those concerned.

Around mid-August 1990, the government was finalising arrangements for the possible return to Rwanda of Rwandese refugees.[17] We were not able to establish the exact connection between the government's planned repatriation of Rwandese refugees, their alleged involvement in military training and subsequent clashes in the ranching schemes, and the subsequent Rwanda invasion in October 1990. However, it was alleged in the NRC by the Council member for Mawogola county, Masaka, that squatters in Mawogola were being given military training. The Council member for Kyaka County in Kabarole District also alleged that in the Kyaka refugee settlement scheme, the number of refugees had gone down from 39,000 to 10,000, and that 20,000 had been recruited into the army. Knowledge of any recruitment into the army of Rwandese refugees was denied at all levels of government, just as much as the alleged training in Mawogola of the Rwandese. It was said that the people who were being trained were Local Defence Forces (LDFs).[18]

Isolated incidents of clashes continued to be reported in mid-August 1990 in different ranching schemes. From Wednesday 22 August to Friday 24 August 1990, a special session of the National Resistance Council (NRC) chaired by President Museveni met to discuss the issue of the ranches. On 23 August 1990, the NRC resolved that a Ranches Restructuring Board (RRB) should be established by the President on the advice of the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries to implement the new government policy on the ranches.

4.3 Ranch Owners' Response to the Squatter Uprisings

When the clashes broke out, there were numerous attempts by ranchers to diffuse the situation, although to their own advantage. At the end of the first week of August 1990, Mawogola ranchers prepared a memorandum which they wanted to present to the President outlining their grievances, mainly relating to the problem of lack of water and the influx of squatters looking for water and land. On 8 August 1990, President Museveni met with members of MALIFA at State House and discussed with them strategies that can be adopted as the best means for livestock production in the country.

On 13 August 1990, another delegation of ranchers from Masaka and Kabula appealed to President Museveni to rescind the government's proposal to subdivide ranches in order to accommodate landless squatters. They appealed to the President to let the current holders of the 5 sq. mile ranches to continue and assured him that they would not complain if they were kicked out for failure to fulfil the ranch covenant they signed on allocation. They also appealed to him to step in quickly and settle the Sembabule problem before the squatter question became explosive.

This opportunity was seized by the government. In a response to their demands, President Museveni told the ranchers that with diligent and frugal land use, they would not need as much as five square miles to make a profitable ranching business.[19] The President went ahead to issue new directives. On 14 August 1990, while addressing squatters at Nyakashassara sub-county headquarters, President Museveni announced measures taken by the government as preliminary steps aimed at the eventual solution of the rancher-squatter problem. He directed that cattle keepers who were not genuine squatters be given a period of one month, effective from 13 August 1990 to leave the ranches and game parks. The two groups affected by this directive were: those who in the last twenty years had transferred their excessive herds of cattle from wherever they were into the ranches; those who had sold their pieces of land and opted to take their families and properties to areas that cover the ranching scheme in Nyabushozi, Mawogola and Kabulasoke. These people were to go back to their former places, or buy other pieces of land. The President asked the District Administrator of Mbarara to ensure that this directive of one month-quit notice was complied with within his district. This would leave the government only with the problem of resettling genuine squatters who, in the last twenty years or so, had never owned any piece of land but had been leading a nomadic life.[20]

On 15 August 1990, a three-man ministerial team made a fact-finding tour of Sembabule sub-district, amid reports that conflicts between ranchers and squatters in the areas had become explosive. The team comprised the Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Kintu Musoke, that of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, Prof. Mondo Kagonyera, and that of Lands and Survey, Ben Okello Luwum. The atmosphere at Sembabule on Wednesday morning was tense and expectant. Although it was claimed that the situation had calmed down, the mutual resentment between ranch workers and squatters was high. Groups of either faction were seen milling about in front of shops and stalls, discussing the issue.

Some ranchers had been speculating that the government was planning to reallocate pieces of land on which squatters were settled. These started chasing away the squatters who put up resistance. The ranchers had a very strong lobby. Many argued that they should be compensated, even those who had not developed their ranch or those who had been politically allocated ranches, which they had not developed. There were also those in political circles that felt that ranchers who had appropriately developed their ranches should not be affected by the restructuring. Unfortunately, the majority of the latter category were in Ankole. An opposition politician started arguing that the government was sub-dividing ranches outside Ankole to give land to the Banyakole. The government decided thereafter that all ranches should be sub-divided. A prominent opposition politician and chairman of the Democratic Party was affected. He took the government to court for allegedly grabbing his ranch:

"Museveni gave part of [the] 5 square mile wide ranch, which I started in 1959, to Rwandese squatters in July 1990. They beat me up, tried to take me to a military detach at Sanga, but I stood my ground. These Rwandese hold guns as walking sticks, because of Museveni's support." Byanyima's ranch is at Muyongoma, Ntojo, Nyabushozi, and Mbarara.[21]

In Masaka ranching scheme, a ministerial fact-finding team that was sent to Mawogola areas in August 1990 to assess the situation following initial tensions between ranchers and squatters discovered that some ranchers had decided to fence off ranches following the government's decision to sub-divide and re-allocate the ranches. The ranchers had armed themselves. Others had hired security guards and deployed them on the ranches.[22]

In fact, the army men had been sent to those areas to counter a campaign of insurgency by the ranch owners. When the ranchers learnt that the government was moving in to subdivide some ranches in Mawogola and Kabula, they organised a campaign of terror to get rid of squatters. They went around telling the squatters that those areas were to become war zones. This was meant to create terror so that the squatters would flee the area. The move was also to convince the government that there were no squatters and, therefore, no need to subdivide the ranches in these areas.

President Museveni talked to a group of people who had organised terrorism in the area with political motives and were opposed to the NRM. The gang was said to have killed five squatters on a market day, robbed a bank at Butenga and disarmed a policeman at Mpugwe. Tinyefuza said that some leaflets meant to incite squatters were dropped in the area. Following that, a battalion was deployed in the area and squatters were convinced to stay. The RCs left the matter because they could not adjudicate against the government's decision which had ordered ranchers to let squatters get water from the ranches for their animals, but which the ranchers defied.[23]

4.4 The Mobilisation of the Squatters

It has been rightly argued that the squatters were highly organised in their uprisings. There were very few communal water points in the schemes. Watering was done in afternoons. In any one afternoon, there would be several herds at one water point. Originally these were moments when they discussed about where to find more water and pastures. During preparations for these uprisings, strategies were discussed there. This made co-ordination easy. In mobs, the squatters attacked ranches, cut down perimeter fences, and grazed and watered their animals. Instead of watering their animals in the afternoon, they started watering them in the mornings. They would take ranch owners by surprise by attacking ranches at dawn. Reports indicated that the herdsmen received help, being assisted and armed by their sons or relatives in the NRA, to attack and seize by force the ranches lawfully owned by large-scale ranchers who had occupied them since the 1960s.

When strong resistance was expected from ranchers who were known to possess guns, the squatters would split into several groups to divert the attention of the ranchers from water points and to disarm the ranchers, while the other groups watered their animals. The latter groups comprised mostly young girls and old men. All squatters affected by the water crisis participated irrespective of their ethnic group. Actual fighting was done by the youth. The old inspired the fighting spirits in their youths by recounting to them how much suffering they had endured under the ranch owners.

The fencing off of ranches by ranchers forced the squatters to cut through the fences in search of water for their animals. Security guards who had been deployed by ranchers were usually overwhelmed by squatter numbers. The squatters were said to have captured a total of ten guns. In most cases, the ranchers were able to offer little resistance. They simply fled. At some point it was even alleged that the squatters had undergone some basic military training in the period preceding the uprisings. After a ranch was overrun, the squatters would then proceed to another. Because they expected reinforcements from the ranchers, the squatters sealed off captured areas by putting up road barricades. The squatters carried spears, pangas, clubs and sometimes guns.

4.5 The Scale of Violence

The magnitude of the violence varied from ranch to ranch. It was the highest in Masaka ranches and almost non-existent in the Bunyoro ranches. The degree of violence also varied between individual ranches within the particular ranching schemes affected. The variation in the level of violence depended on the following:

· the level of government infrastructural development prior to allocation of the ranches

· the kind of relationships that had emerged between squatters and ranch owners

· the availability of water in the areas surrounding the ranches

· how developed water and pastures resources were on particular ranches.

How much the squatters believed that the ranch owners had accumulated their wealth by exploiting them was reflected in the nature and extent of damage inflicted on the properties of the ranch owners. The losses are not easily quantifiable in monetary terms. But the following complaints contained in a memorandum from Marumba Ranching Co-operative on Ranch number 39 in Ankole gives a picture of the extent of damages. Writing to the concerned minister, the Chairman of Marumba Co-operatives said squatter invasion between 17 August 1990 and January 1991 had led to:

Excessive ticks and tick-borne diseases, as new comers were neither dipping nor spraying; interdiction of diseases hitherto unknown on the ranch, e.g. CBPP, Lumpy skin, eye diseases, udder diseases; scramble for water and pastures; clogging of valley tanks since cattle were walked into the water; cutting of the perimeter fences to allow their easy entry onto the ranch from all angles; vandalisation of infrastructure in order to force the ranch owner out; adulterating acaricides in dip tanks by adding excess water which led to loss of cattle due to ECF despite dipping thrice instead of twice a week; losing heifer calves; theft of bananas; in August 1193, workers were chased away by RCs and security personnel; for over a week, during which period the ranch headquarters [were] broken into and animal drugs, equipment, cash and other items stolen.[24]

The squatters vented out their anger in different ways. There was a uniform pattern of destruction of property. Doors and windows were destroyed, and in some instances movable property was taken out of the houses and set ablaze. However, no human life was lost according to the findings of the delegation.[25]

Take the following examples: on ranch no. 9 of Masaka Growers' co-operative Union was attacked on 6 August, 1990, and the following were destroye huts were set on fire, manager's houses, offices, stores were broken into and all facilities including files for the last 22 years were set on fire. Barbed wires and fences were damaged. The dip tank's side-roof was destroyed and acaricides poured outside and soil and stones all thrown into the dip. The number of stolen or killed animals could not be established due to security reasons.[26] In the same report, it was reported that on ranch number 14, all the buildings, including all household items, were destroyed. Literature, drugs, acaricides were set on fire. Some parts of the water engine were dismantled and taken. Diesel in the store was used to burn the property. All the glasses in the doors and windows were smashed. Animals started dying. Four calves had already died, and 10 others were evidently sick.[27]

On ranch no. 15, herdsmen's huts were set on fire. An engine was destroyed. In the manager's house, all furniture, records, drugs, bedding were set on fire. On this ranch, many squatters could be seen grazing and watering their animals immediately after the violence. On ranch no. 47, the main house was attacked, and bullets smashed through the windows. A new engine, 10 rolls of barbed wire were missing. All household property was destroyed. Over 20 goats were slaughtered and eaten. On this ranch, a gang of raiders was still camped and the remaining herdsmen were warned to leave the ranch at once or they would be killed.[28]

The following ranches were also attacked in a similar manner: Nos. 11, 12 (belonging to Haji Katongole); 13 of Gubaala Ranchers Ltd.; 17 and 18 of Lugobe; 19 of Mr. Y.N.N. Ssenkungu; 20 of Mrs. Kayemba (widowed); 21 of

M/s Kugumikiriza Ranchers; 22 and 23 of Masaka Co-operative Union; 26 of Aniyaliamanyi Ranchers; 28 of Gerald Ssemogerere; 36 of Michael Mulindwa; 37 of Kabunduguza and Sons; 42 of Gregory Kalutebwa, 45 of Mr. Kasujja and 58 of M/s Kisambwa Ranchers Ltd. What was amazing, in all these events, was that "the RCs, DA's Police and Military were told not to intervene so that the warring parties could sort out their differences even when property secured under government loans was being dismantled".[29]

Between August and December 1990, there was an unprecedented increase in the number of cattle thefts from the troubled ranching schemes. On 4 September, a man was arrested at the city abattoir with 12 heads of cattle, bearing marks for INCAFEX Ranchers, in Masaka, which were stolen.[30]

5. AFTERMATH OF THE SQUATTER UPRISINGS

The uprisings played into the hands of the government. The crisis provided the government with "an opportunity to recast this whole policy for the better and remove, [once] and for all, the friction between the ranchers and the squatters, as well as ensuring the introduction of uniform disease eradication methods for all the cattle in these areas."[31] The NRM government publicly criticised previous governments for having created the ranching schemes without thoroughly understanding the consequences of the policies on all sections of the population and the economy. President Museveni himself has been a front-runner in the struggle to eliminate nomadism among his own Bahiima people. Starting in 1966, after completing high school, Museveni, together with several colleagues (most of them now dead), led a struggle to educate nomads about modern husbandry practices and to resist being displaced from the land to establish ranches (Musveni 1997).

In his struggle against Idi Amin and Obote II, Museveni enlisted the support of marginalised cattle-keeping communities. When he became President in 1986, using the newly acquired state power, President Museveni spear-headed initiatives that were designed to bring an end to nomadism. One of the first tasks of the NRM administration was to resettle displaced persons. In 1987, a Commission of Inquiry into the establishment of ranching schemes was set up. Its 1990 report recommended the subdivision of the ranches to be allocated to landless cattle-keepers, the vision of the government being that of bringing an end to nomadism. For quite sometime, the government had been nursing the idea of making it a criminal offence to engage in nomadism.[32] A Minister of State for Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries, and also in charge of Anti-Nomadism and Water Development, was appointed in December 1994, and served until the May 1996 Presidential Election, after which the cabinet positions were restructured.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Pastoralists are continually involved in both covert and overt forms of struggle to survive. Sometimes, the struggle involve the young, the old, and women. At the highest level, the issue of squatters has become a serious electoral issue. In Nyabushozi, aspiring candidates levelled accusations that one of their colleagues was sponsored by rancher interests to get the candidate into parliament so as to fight squatters and protect the interest of non-squatters.[33]

In the struggle by the cattle keepers, the state has usually been an interested party. It has had a significant role in influencing the direction of these struggle. Despite their marginalisation in society, disadvantaged pastoralists and other land users have continually challenged the conditions of their existence through forms of associative activities and relationships. These struggle have taken several forms and have been specific to particular social formations. The greatest achievement of the 1990 squatter uprisings is that it led to reforms in the tenure policy which were designed to benefit mostly the former squatters. What might have happened thereafter is beyond the scope of the present study.

NOTES

See Republic of Uganda (1988:25).

[2] A total of 207 ranches were established in five government-sponsored ranching schemes. In phase one (1962 to 1969), 57 ranches were established - 40 in Ankole and 17 in Masaka. In phase two (1970 to 1975), new ranches were established in addition to the two already existing ones, including 34 ranches in Singo, 27 ranches in Buruli, 37 ranches in Bunyoro. 10 ranches were added to the Ankole scheme, while 42 were added to the Masaka scheme (see Republic of Uganda 1988: 22).

[3] Our review of secondary data indicates that the contest between prospective land owners and nomadic cattle keepers existed even before the start of ranching schemes. In Ankole, for example, the enclosure of land for cattle keeping or agricultural purposes was already an issue of great concern by 1963, which prompted the Ankole Kingdom Land Board to instruct all saza chiefs to stop land enclosures until the Kingdom Land Board approved it by issuing a certificate of occupation (see Letter from the Chairman, Ankole Kingdom Land Board", of 8 October 1963, to all saza chiefs, in File Lan 8: Land Policy - Minutes of meetings and correspondences from Ministry Headquarters, opened October 8, 1963, District Administration Archives, Mbarara.

[4] "The Problem of Squatters in Ranches", *Financial Times*, 6 August 1990.

[5] Aurthur Kiiza Amooti, Deputy Minister of Industry (then CM for Burahya County, Kabarole District), told Parliament during a debate on the squatter crisis that in Madu, Gomba, squatters were required to pay two cows out of every 20 as rent for using facilities on the ranches (see Frank Muhereza, "Ranches Crisis Presented before Political Organ", *The STAR*, 23 August 1990).

[6] Frank Muhereza, "Minister Accused of Manipulating President", *The Star*, 24 August, 1990.

[7] "Telephone Ranchers Stand to Lose Most", *Weekly Topic*, 24-31 August 1990.

[8] "NRC Holds Special Session on Ranches", *New Vision*, 23 August 1990.

[9] The directive was given by President Museveni while addressing a public rally at Nyakashashara sub-county headquarters (see "Ranchers Row to End", *New Vision*, 15 August 1990).

[10] "Ranches: Tinyefuza Defends Army", *New Vision*, 24 August 1990.

[11] "Ranchers Policy Was Child of Injustice", *Weekly Topic*, 24-31 August 1990.

[12] This information is contained in a memorandum from squatters to the Chairman of the Bunyoro Ranches Restructuring Committee, of 20 November 1990. The information was corroborated during an interview with the LC3 chairman, Jonathan Bigirwa, of Kiryandongo sub-county, Kibanda County, Masindi District, who was one of the key people advocating the rights of the squatters.

[13] In A Report on Ranching Development in Uganda, December 1990, Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries (MAAIF), Entebbe.

[14] See, "62 Ranches to Be Divided and Sold", *New Vision*, 26 January, 1990.

[15] "Telephone Ranchers Stand to Lose Most", *Weekly Topic*, August 24-31,1990.

[16] "Ministers Visit Troubled Ranches", *New Vision*, 17 August 1990.

[17] "Refugee Talks Progress", *New Vision* 14 August 1990.

[18] See, "Minister Accused of Manipulating President", *The Star*, 24 August 1990, and "Ranches: Tinyefuza Defends Army", *New Vision*, 24 August 1990.

[19] "Museveni Meets Masaka Ranchers", *New Vision*, 14 August 1990.

[20] "Ranchers Row to End", *New Vision*, 15 August 1990.

[21] "Byanyima Wants IPFC to Boycott May Elections", 25-27 March *Monitor*, 1996.

[22] Proceedings of the NRC Special Session on Ranches, Parliamentary Hansards, 23 August 1990.

[23] "Ranches: Tinyefuza Defends Army", *New Vision*, 24 August 1990.

[24] Memorandum from V. K. Kafureka, Chairman, Marumba Ranching Co-operative Society, 19 April 1995, to the Minister of State for Agriculture in Charge of Ranching, Anti-Nomadism, and Water Development, ref. MRC/RR/R39 - RE: "Losses on Ranch 39 - Nyabushozi during the period 1990-1994".

[25] "NRC Holds Special Session on Ranches", *New Vision*, 23 August 1990.

[26] This is contained in a report titled "Property Worth Millions Destroyed by `Squatters'," prepared by E. K. Kawoya, an official of Masaka Livestock Foundation (MALIFA), dated 13 August 1990.

[27] *Ibid*.

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] *Ibid*.

[30] "Stolen Cattle Impounded in City", *New Vision*, 5 September 1990.

[31] This policy statement was a directive by President Yoweri Museveni to Minister of Animal Industry and Fisheries, Kampala (Ref. PO.5, dated 6/8/1990, in File Lan/10, Vol. 4, Land Matters, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, Luwero).

[32] In February 1992, President Museveni told two public rallies in Masaka District that the government would soon come up with a law prohibiting nomadism because it leads to the spread of cattle diseases and to overstocking and overgrazing. See "Nomadism Will Be Outlawed - Museveni", in *New Vision*, 18 February 1992. During the 1992 May-day address in Mabarara, President Museveni warned that: "...government will not tolerate the practice of nomadism anymore ... those who will be found continuing with the habit after the demarcation of the government ranches, will be arrested and prosecuted .. "(See `Museveni Warns Nomads", *New Vision*, 4 May 1992*)*.

[33] See "Karuhanga Abandons Meet", *New Vision*, 18 June 1996.

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Challenging Encounters: Datoga Lives in Independent Tanzania

Astrid Blystad

During the initial months of my first fieldwork among the pastoral Datoga of Tanzania[1] I was struck by what I perceived as quite extraordinary examples of encounters between modern properties and features of `traditional' Datoga life. Men armed with spears and shields who were climbing onto busses or local plains, heavily scarred youth taking pictures, or leather dressed women walking through fields where giant combine harvesters were harvesting wheat for national and international markets, were to me quite astonishing sights. In the course of the subsequent years I was to learn that such sights were hardly extraordinary in this area of Tanzania. Encounters or confrontations between features and forces of greatly differing scale and character were parts of everyday life for many people in this part of Tanzania in the 1980's and 90's. That the `outside world' increasingly impinges upon peoples' lives obviously holds true not only for the Datoga pastoralists of Tanzania, but for East Africans in general, and indeed, for people all around the world. Media, markets, consumer goods, books, bureaucracies and the consequences of the directives of politicians and bureaucrats for the regulation of human lives, are to some degree experienced everywhere.

In a reflective paper on human adaptation in East Africa drylands Manger (1996, 20) calls for the necessity of situating the pastoral adaptation within wider contexts of regional, national and international factors that operate and have effects on the system under discussion. His concern gains a particular significance in pastoral studies since, on the one hand, pastoral societies have until quite recently been stereotyped as `local', in the sense that outside forces have supposedly, only to a very limited degree, influenced their lives, that pastoral peoples have tended to stick to themselves, etc., and on the other hand, since recent studies forcefully document how pastoralists have in fact never been isolated and `local'. It has, moreover, increasingly been documented that pastoralists often are quite dramatically influenced by the world that surrounds them. To return to the pastoral Datoga of Tanzania, whose lives I shall draw extensively upon in the course of this paper, a great many of their encounters with the outside world are harsh and offensive, dramatic and violent. During the course of my fieldwork I encountered numerous examples of stigmatisation and discrimination of the Datoga, e.g., members of neighbouring ethnic groups holding their noses when a Datoga passed by, Datoga individuals being spitted at in markets, kicked off buses, beaten and harassed by tax-collectors, cheated in shops, at offices and in courts, and being randomly imprisoned. People often spoke of the `Mangati'[1] or the `Barabaig' as dirty, primitive and dangerous. My first fieldwork was delayed for several months due to the fact that bureaucrats in Dar es Salaam and Arusha perceived it as risky to carry out research among Barabaig killers (*wauaji*, Swahili). I encountered the expression used by politicians and bureaucrats from the national down to the local level that the Datoga are not human beings (*hawa siyo watu*). Datoga accounts of experiences of humiliation and discrimination were many. Some of my informants had many such stories of harassment and humiliation to tell, whereas others apparently had been able to avoid the most tormenting offences in their meetings with the `outside'. The character of Datoga encounters with the outside was heterogeneous and people's accounts were complex and ambiguous. But evidence of the perplexing task the Datoga had of making sense of and acting upon highly conflicting demands from diverging life-worlds was there for everyone to see and hear about.

Anthropologists have today come to recognise that the days of the pure local subject are definitely over (Appadurai 1991; Appadurai 1995; Fardon 1995; Friedman 1990; Herzfeld 1995; Kearney 1995). To paraphrase Appadurai (1991, 198-9), ethnographers can no longer be content with the `thickness' they bring to the local and the particular, nor can they assume that as they approach the local, they approach something more elementary, more contingent, and thus more `real' than life in large-scale perspectives. That pastoral lives are today embedded in a world culture is hence no longer questioned. The question is how to methodologically and analytically deal with it. Appadurai (1991, 196) writes: `The task of ethnography now becomes the unravelling of a conundrum: what is the nature of locality, as a lived experience, in a globalized, deterritorialized world?' The homogenisation argument linked up with processes of Americanisation, Westernisation and commoditisation have given way to more subtle analysis of globalisation processes. The Comaroffs (1993, xi) phrase it this way:

In the late twentieth century... grand European teleologies that hold `Western hegemony as human destiny' (Sahlins 1992, 2) seem strangely out of date. Markets, money, and mechanical media extend across the planet. Transnational

cultural movements burgeon. But, *pace* the predictions of modernization theory and historical materialism, not to mention the efforts of CNN and Sony, the world has not been reduced to sameness. Nor does it promise to be, at least no imminently. It remains, in the words of (MacNeice 1973, 394), `incorrigibly plural'.

The challenge is to search for techniques that can improve our fragmented comprehension of the dynamics at work in the encounters between cultures of differing scale, and their consequences for people's lives, without reverting to banal `globalism'.

Dualisms such as local/global, micro/macro, centre/periphery, ruler/ruled, tradition/modernity, metropolis/margins, small-scale/large- scale, that we frequently operate with in order to account for the complex worlds people make sense of and act upon, increasingly appear unsatisfactory. Such binary contrasts reduce complex continuities and contradictions to the aesthetics of nice oppositions to paraphrase the Comaroffs (1993, xii). Featherstone (1990, 2) adds to the list the mutually exclusive terms of homogeneity/heterogeneity, integration/disintegration, unity/diversity. But how do we treat dialectical processes between centre and periphery, processes which may often be similar, but which nonetheless may have highly diverging content? There is a call for approaches which recognise the plurality of local discourses which oppose and respond to global processes in a rich and diverse manner, discourses that may very well introduce new dichotomies which operate creatively in local settings.

This paper will, in a very modest manner, attempt to confront the representational issues spelled out above. More than a fear of dualisms it seems to me to be significant to operate with categories which are appropriate locally, whether dichotomies or not, and see how these relate to the life experiences of people. We shall enter the lives of two Datogas, one man and one woman, who for some 12 years were married to each other, and who with varying degrees of success have struggled to make sense of and act upon a complexity of internal and external impulses. By combining historical and narrative approaches I wish to describe the interplay, the dynamic and dialectical workings between transitional and national processes of change in Tanzania since independence, and their more locally or individually confined mediations in the Datoga community. Narrative approaches, which have gained increasing importance in anthropological studies during the last 15 years or so[1], have revealed a fruitful shift of level from general processes to particular instances, from broad typologies to embodied, local historical cases which allow for the more complicated pathways of human practice. With a parallel presentation of transnational and national features and forces that have characterised Tanzanian modern history and the life histories of individual human beings, I shall attempt to confront the division between ethnography and historiography in order to show the interconnectedness between cultural meanings and political economy.

1. CATTLE PEOPLE IN THE NEW NATION: THE LIVES OF UDAMEHE AND GIDAMUHALED[1]

1.1 Childhoo Becoming Christian Cattle Herders

Udamehe and Gidamuhaled were both born into fairly wealthy cattle holding families, in Hanang and Mbulu Districts, respectively, in the mid-50s. They both came from powerful Barabaig healing clans. Like most Datoga children, they grew up in homes where the lives centred around the rearing of cattle; milking, herding, and moving with the herds in search for water and pasture were central aspects of their lives. Udamehe's family happened to live close to Nangwa at the time when the colonial leadership accepted a mission hospital to be built there, and her parents were in the coming years to become increasingly affiliated with the missionaries and their work. Both parents eventually converted to Christianity, although the conversion did not have any immediate and dramatic consequences for the way they lived their lives. Gidamuhaled's parents did not become Christians although they were introduced to the Catholic mission, the mission which has made up the second major external religious movement in this area of Tanzania this century. Gidamuhaled and two of his siblings were, however, baptised during their late childhood.

Both Gidamuhaled and Udamehe can remember adults talk of TANU (Tanganyika African National Union) and its dreams of independence from the colonial power, the creation of the Tanzanian state, and of President Nyerere's vision of national unity and political consciousness. They recall the uncertainty with which the news was received. When it gradually became clear that the leaders of the new state, in an entirely different manner than the colonialists, intended to and were able to reach every corner of the country with their `Swahilisation', villagisation, and education policies, scepticism soon replaced the careful initial expectations. The non-compromising and rigorous manner in which the policies were eventually implemented soon caused distrust and fear far beyond the Datoga community. Gidamuhaled recalls how his parents soon after independence started to romanticise the colonialists they had earlier highly detested. The opposition against colonial labour conscription, taxation, de-stocking, and not the least their active support of agricultural people's movements into Datoga grazing areas, were soon replaced by talk of how the British had supplied them with dips, new water sources, veterinary services and food aid in years of hardships. The substantial interest in the Mbulu area as major supplier of meat for the large sisal plantations and coffee estates elsewhere in Tanganyika, had instigated more investments in this area than was the case in regions less economically significant for the colonial export endeavour (Kjærby 1989, 29).

1.2 Schooling: Official Enthusiasm - Pastoral Scepticism

Mass literacy campaigns were a key feature of Nyerere's vision for the new and independent state. Education was to contribute to the liberation of the individual and of society from oppression and exploitation, and `Education for Self-Reliance' became the catch term (Nyerere 1968). Education soon recorded greater achievements than any other sector after independence (Havnevik et al. 1988, 162). In 1960 only 25% of the total school age population were enrolled in Primary schools and 10% were literate. In 1987 the literacy rate had risen to the amazing 85% (ibid.). Datoga children were, however, rarely sent to school in these first years after independence. Official education was experienced by most Datoga as irrelevant and as almost incompatible with their life as cattle herders, in which physical movement and children's herding capacities were vital. There was, moreover, a fear of `losing' school children, particularly school girls, since educated girls would tend not to wear the *hanangweanda*, a leather skirt worn by married women, which the Datoga think ensures successful female fertility. Hence, school girls would later not enhance Datoga fertility. Furthermore, the notion of school girls becoming pregnant prior to marriage strongly contributed to an anti-school sentiment, and the Datoga largely avoided the primary schools that popped up in their vicinity.

There were, however, exceptions to this scenario; many young Datogas were increasingly becoming curious about the new institution. Udamehe and Gidamuhaled were two cases in point. The reason why these two children were allowed to enter school are many, the most significant being the substantial pressure from local bureaucrats, their families' positive encounters with foreign missionaries, as well as these children's junior status in the sibling group (being late born by third wives). Neither Udamehe nor Gidamuhaled were enrolled in the boarding schools that were constructed primarily for pastoral children, but were sent to schools which were dominated by children from the Iraqw, Nyaturu and Iramba populations, ethnic neighbours to the north, south and west respectively.

1.3 Stigmatisation of `Primitive Pastoralists' in the Era of `Maendeleo' (Development)

Largely due to the presence of members of the Nyaturu and Iramba ethnic groups, who, for as long as people can recall, have been on non-friendly terms with the Datoga, Gidamuhaled and Udamehe did already at primary school experience offensive statements related to their pastoral background and Barabaig identity. Even a couple of teachers took part in the humiliation of the Datoga who were enrolled. Regardless of actual affiliation they were all referred to as `Barabaig' or `Mangati'. The problem became worse as they grew older, and were fully confronted with the harsh realities of the Barabaig stigma in Tanzania. There were two main factors which contributed to the negative image of the Barabaig. Firstly, the Barabaig were linked up with a ritual killing tradition, and secondly, as pastoralists, the Barabaig were not perceived to adapt to modern life in an acceptable manner.[1] Gidamuhaled and Udamehe were seriously confronted with the denunciation of both.

1.4 Lilicht: Horrors of Traditional Killings vs. Life-giving Deaths

In contrast to many other African countries, which have used warrior traditions as an instrument and symbol in the political struggle, the warrior image was perceived as wholly inappropriate to Tanzania, a state with serious socialist goals during the first decades after independence. Southall (1977) writes:

In Tanzania...it is equally plain that there was no continuity in the warrior tradition through the colonial to the *uhuru* period, nor was there any attempt to resuscitate it. On the contrary, it was precisely those people who had some claim to genuine warrior tradition ... who presented Julius Nyerere with the most delicate problem of incorporation (168).

Not making the Datoga vantage point much better, the warrior tradition, particularly of the Barabaig subsection, was connected to the institution *lilicht*, a ritual hunt in which human enemies as well as certain wild animals have traditionally been prey. After a successful killing of an enemy who is perceived to threaten a Datoga life, the young hunters are given gifts of livestock, anointed with butter, and hailed as `women who have given birth' in dress and convalescence related restrictions.[1] There were, and still are, endless speculations about the horrors of this waning tradition in the surrounding society. There are many largely erroneous and exaggerated accounts of the barbaric `Barabaig' custom of killings. Descriptions of the frequency and the pleasure with which the Barabaig commit murder flourish in both oral and written sources (Faust 1969, 3; Perham 1976, 103; Fouquer 1955). The discourses surrounding the *lilicht* establish for everyone that with the `Barabaig', Tanzania is burdened with a savage people - dangerous, murderous and bloodthirsty.[1] Throughout their modern history the Datoga had for more than one time experienced collective punishment for killings the `Barabaig' had supposedly carried out.[1] With the lack of ability on the part of the Datoga to counter the misleading and erroneous statements, the stereotypes led a life of their own, and established uncertainty about and fear of the `Barabaig' as a group.

The official discourse was building on a colonial heritage which had long since created and established dualisms such as developed/ underdeveloped, civilised/savage, modern/primitive in their efforts to ensure progress. Nonetheless, it should be mentioned that the ethnic hostility which surfaced so strongly in connection with the `Barabaig' was rare in a post-independent Tanzanian context, as the attempts to create a sense of Tanzanian community, peaceful co-residence and a common language where ethnic differences were under-communicated were largely successful. But the continuation of a perceived irrational affinity of pastoralists to roaming about the country together with their livestock, i.e., their semi-nomadism, and the tendency of many Datogas to voluntarily remain illiterate, to continue to wear their leather dress, and to adhere to `traditional' religion, ritual and knowledge, not only was met by a lack of understanding in their surroundings, but deeply troubled the government as it was perceived to be undermining the Tanzanian struggle towards development and inter-ethnic brotherhood (Lutwaza 1984).

During their primary school years, Udamehe and Gidamuhaled got accustomed to the torment by schoolmates shouting at them `savages' and `killers'. The harassment did, however, lessen somewhat with the exceptional school performances of the two pupils, and fellow pupils and, indeed, many teachers stood back in admiration when it was announced that the two were given the chance of entering secondary schools. Secondary education did not see the same spur as primary education in independent Tanzania, and being accepted at secondary schools was perceived as quite extraordinary in the 1970s.

Since Udamehe and Gidamuhaled were sent to schools located hundreds of miles away from their home areas, they managed during the initial period in Secondary School to escape the daunting stigmatisation by manipulating their ethnic belonging. Their `Barabaig'/`Mangati' identity was successfully hidden by the use of clan labels or other ethnic labels such as `Datoga' which were largely unknown to outsiders. Udamehe recalls however that with the onset of `Operation Barabaig', the major government attempt to relocate the Datoga pastoralists in villages, she had to go to great lengths to fake her identity either by saying that she was Iraqw, or, in encounters with others from the immediate area, Gisamjanga or Ishmijeega, other Datoga subsections less known and less stigmatised than the `Barabaig'. `Operation Barabaig' which coincided with the prime years of Secondary School for the two young Datoga students

not only gave new dimensions to the Barabaig stigma, but confronted Udamehe and Gidamuhaled with the immense suffering of their own relatives as a consequence of it.

1.5 Ujamaa Policies: Visions of Prosperity, Experiences of Deprivation

Since independence the main focus of the Tanzanian government's policy of agricultural production and rural development was village formation through concentration of the country's scattered population. Its primary objectives were to supply improved water, education and health service for all, extend economic and agricultural support services, and to transform the organisation of production and labour in a manner that would create a viable resource base for the nation and its people (Havnevik et al. 1988, 40). After the Arusha Declaration in 1967 the government committed itself to the Ujamaa village approach[1] as a means of achieving rural socialism, and in 1973 villagisation became compulsory.

With the immense emphasis on `*maendeleo'* (development, Swahili) and villagisation which followed independence, the Datoga herders were bound to be losers. National political rhetoric continued to argue that nomadism was inefficient as well as bad for the environment (Lutwaza 1984, 53). Moreover, the notion that pastoral life was practically closed to outside influence was prominent, and this perceived isolation was thought to facilitate a continuation of dubious practices, which appeared as an assault against national development. It was envisaged that these problems could be solved by settling the Barabaig in permanent villages where they would more easily be reached and controlled.

Several villagisation attempts were made among the Datoga. Two `Barabaig' villages, Dirma and Gehandu, had already been established in 1968 with little success (Kjærby 1980). The second attempt, Operation Hanang (1974-75), which was part of a major campaign to relocate 70-80% of the Tanzanian population in 8000 villages between 1973 and 1976 was not much more successful than the first, and led to increased governmental frustration with the failure of villagisation among these people. Partly in response to the Kihonda killings in 1976, where Datoga youth killed 21 Nyaturu after a period of serious border conflicts[1], Operation Barbaig was launched in 1978, signifying the attempt at mass resettlement of the `Barabaig' in villages (Lutwaza 1984). Previous `operations' had been termed `Operation Rufiji', `Operation Dodoma', `Operation Kigoma', etc., relating to particular geographical locations, but was in this case for the first time directly linked to an ethnic group.

The `operation' among the Datoga appeared in stark contrast to the villagisation among the agricultural people of Hanang which was generally characterised by smooth transformation, largely due to the fairly successful redistribution of previously privatised land (Kjærby 1989). `Operation Barabaig', however, became a dramatic encounter between the Datoga and state employees who forcefully removed Datoga from their homes and relocated them in villages. Despite the difficulty of acquiring accurate figures, and the large numbers of `Barbaig' in the four relevant regions that seem to be unaccounted for, the District Development Director's Report on the Implementation of `Operation Barbaig' indicates the scale of the operation; 4,413 families with 21,503 `Barbaig' individuals had, according to the report, been resettled in 14 villages by April 1979. The report comments on lack of figures from three more named villages (Gehandu, Mogitu and Mwanja) and from a concentration of more villages ... observed in Barbaig Division (Lutwaza 1984, 39). In the course of the Operation, the methods for resettlement became unimportant (ibid., 32), and the continuous emphasis on persuasion, gradualism and co-operative production in connection with villagisation soon became empty phrases.

The forced movements were perceived as disastrous by the Datoga since they failed to take into account herders' need to capitalise on water and grazing opportunities in larger areas, and the danger of epidemics when people and livestock are gathered in a small location.[1] The major contradiction of how to concentrate a large population and at the same time secure a sufficient resource base as well as dispersal of the herds to avoid overgrazing remained unresolved. Moreover, despite the official emphasis on the provision of physical facilities such as dispensaries, dips, classrooms, veterinary centres, etc., in order to make the results immediate, visible and tangible, facilities and services largely remained an illusion (Kjærby 1980, 6; Lutwaza 1984, 45; Havnevik et al. 1988). To these conditions was added the fact that most of the villages the Datoga were moved into were already populated by Nyaturu and Iraqw cultivators. Together, these conditions created not merely villages that were unpleasant to live in for the Datoga, but in Datoga experience, created areas simply unfit for pastoral life.[1]

Gidamuhaled recalls how his family was taken by surprise by the government's brutal conduct. He tells that despite the fact that his father obviously knew very well that the party and the government despised the Datoga, and treated them far more harshly than other peoples, he had not expected that this sentiment would surface so fully in actual practice as during the `operation'. According to Gidamuhaled, his father and his father's brothers were treated like dogs during the most intense weeks. Their houses were burnt, and human and bovine residents were chased away without any belongings. Ritual sticks, huge calabashes for brewing honey mead, leather dress, all core items for securing fruitful bonds to the spirit world, and hence for ensuring the safe reproduction of Datoga life, were burnt with the houses. Upon arrival in the villages the cultivators made life almost unbearable for them, and the continuous harassment in combination with shortage of grazing land and water for the cattle soon made life impossible there. His father could not sit and watch his cattle die, so he and many herders with him moved out of the village.

Lutwaza (1984, 15) refers to the stereotypes surrounding the unsuccessful villagisation of the `Barbaig' in this way: ... it is felt by Government officials (extension officers inclusive) that the Barbaig are too conservative, too poor mentally, or too confused to adopt the required innovations. Clearly this latter point is a fallacy, but one that has been and continues to be of great consequence. He further writes that the government effort to resettle the Barbaig permanently in villages could as well be seen as an attempt to cure a headache which refuses to go away (Ibid., 3)

Gidamuhaled and Udamehe's secondary school years were severely coloured by the circumstances surrounding the distress of their families these years. Both talked of the pain it caused to see parents and siblings suffer from maltreatment when they returned home on school holidays. They felt that they ran away from their relatives at a time when their presence could possibly have made a difference. Udamehe and Gidamuhaled were moreover as students to some extent held responsible for the harassment of the Datoga, and continuously found themselves trying to defend the importance of development and even villagisation when with their close relatives at home. It felt like a deception. This feeling was even stronger when fear of the unpleasant consequences prevented them from confronting the Barabaig stigma, and defending a pastoral way of life in non-Datoga environments. In both instances they felt like deceivers, as cowards without the courage to fight for the fundamental rights of their people.

1.6 Premarital Birth: Shame from without and Within

Young Datoga women in schools also faced another major hazar pregnancy and births out of wedlock. Upon discovery, pregnant girls are immediately expelled from Tanzanian schools, and Udamehe who became pregnant in her final year at secondary school had to face the embarrassment and the harsh fact that she would not be able to take the final exam. But even more difficult than to be confronted with the discrediting comments from schoolmates and educated Tanzanians was to face the verdict of the Datoga. Pregnancies before marriage are greatly condemned and indeed feared among the Datoga. A child being `born in its maternal grandfather's home' is a `clan-less child' simply because it has no father to whose clan it can belong. Without a clan a person cannot contribute to the creation of alliances at marriage, and cannot in an ordinary manner reproduce his/her lineage and clan. Indeed, he/she will always remain an awkward manifestation of unproductive procreation which is thought to potentially affect the fertility of human and bovine populations at large. Not only during childhood, but throughout life, the `fatherless' person and his mother will be stigmatised, and they will commonly have to endure years of relative isolation.

The close contact between Udamehe's parents and the mission, who, despite the similar Christian condemnation of premarital pregnancies, preached against the tradition of isolation, contributed to a situation where the circumstances surrounding Udamehe's unfortunate state were somewhat under-communicated. But the new mother and her child as well as the entire family could, despite their Christian adherence, not escape the stigma, the partial avoidance and isolation the next years. For some two years, Udamehe was placed to live with educated Christian relatives, and her son was later brought to his maternal grandparents. His name was rarely mentioned in her new home after she got married and had other children.

1.7 Calamity Strikes: Socio-economic Crisis vs. Signs from the Spirits

Unlike the 60s, the 70s was a period of emerging socio-economic crisis in Tanzania. The crisis did not, however, appear to have an immediate impact on the expansion of the social infrastructure.[1] The expansion which increasingly relied on foreign aid flows into the country gave some credibility to the Ujamaa philosophy during these years.[1]

The adverse economic development in Tanzania since the mid-1970s was the result of a combination of a number of internal and external factors. The liberation struggles of Mozambique, Angola, Southern Rhodesia, Namibia and South Africa, which were all supported by the Government of Tanzania, intensified in the early 1970s. In 1977 the East African Community collapsed; in November 1978 the war with Uganda broke out, foreign aid was subjected to increasing cuts. Oil prices went up in 1973/74 and doubled in 1978/79. Combined, these dramatic external factors triggered off the acute balance of payment crisis around 1980. The external hostile environment, however, coincided with internal socio-economic crisis primarily related to the declining volume of exports in the wake of villagisation.[1] A number of successive national economic survival programmes were launched to meet the crisis.[1] The lack of foreign exchange led to an acute shortage of basic consumer goods, which again spurred a lively private and black market (Kjærby 1989, 52-53). Business gave very high trading profits even when dealing with small quantities of commodities.

Udamehe and Gidamuhaled married in 1980, and Gidamuhaled started to sell veterinary drugs to the Datoga community the same year. In a short period of time he earned substantial amounts of money, which was gradually manifested in his life style. He constructed a large cement house with corrugated iron sheets, and started to join the central educated men who spent the evenings drinking bottled beer at local pubs. The initial business success, however, soon declined, and after several incidences of theft and a road accident which nearly cost him his life,[1] he decided to quit business altogether. The calamities that had suddenly struck frightened Gidamuhaled as he read them as a reminder from his lineage spirits that he had seriously neglected them for a number of years. He had continuously been reminded of this fact by his relatives. The fact that Udamehe had by now given birth to four daughters and no sons was seen as a further indication that something had to be done. When he was offered a position as Ward Chairman[1] at the border area between the Datoga and the Nyaturu in 1988, he decided to make a major move. He gathered his cattle which his `brothers' had tended, constructed a Datoga compound, and moved his wife and children from Nangwa village to the Getanwas area located in the Datoga lands in the west. From here he biked to work.

The long physical transition by bike back and forth between the Datoga compound and his office can be seen as symbolising Gidamuhaled's life the coming years, as he daily shifted back and forth between worlds which indeed were far apart. The move to Getanwas implied a transition which was to confront Gidamuhaled and Udamehe with hitherto unknown obstacles both from within the Datoga community itself and from outside it.

1.8 Land as State or *Aseeta* Property

The village where Gidamuhaled moved into with his family was one of the few which had a Datoga leadership,[1] a leadership who presented Gidamuhaled with some delicate problems in connection with his vision of getting access to substantial areas of land. There were several dimensions to the challenges that confronted him. The Village and Ujamaa act of 1975 had established the village as the basic unit of power and a legal political and economic entity. Through a Village Assembly, consisting of all adult members of the village, and a Village Council with executive powers, the village inhabitants could control village land. The Datoga leadership in Getanwas was, however, under continuous pressure from various sides. Firstly from the government, which after independence declared that `land is wealth/ property' (*ardhi ni mali*, Swahili), and argued that land should not lie idle (as pasture), but should be farmed productively. Every citizen could claim land for farming, preferably with a surplus for sale. Secondly, the village leadership experienced pressure from Datoga norms which link land up with *Aseeta*, the Datoga deity, more than with individual human beings. There is hence, in Datoga thought, great reluctance to personally claim control over land beyond the immediate compound area and a small area reserved for the dry season grazing of calves. Thirdly, there was increasing pressure from expanding cultivators, Iraqw, Nyaturu, and Iramba, who requested land for

cultivation. Fourthly, there was pressure from former estate labourers, from Arusha, of diverse ethnic origins, and from commercial cultivators who requested vast areas of land for mechanised farming.

The issue of cultivator encroachment on Datoga land was hardly new, but had been central issues since the colonial times when cultivators started to take advantage of the favourable colonial policies. Datoga pasture had steadily shrunk due to population influx from Iraqw of Mbulu District to the north, Nyaturu and Iramba from neighbouring Singida Region to the southwest, and a number of other ethnic groups coming from neighbouring Kondoa District in Dodoma Region to the southeast. The border conflicts and conflicts over land between the Nyaturu and the Datoga had become increasingly fierce whereas the Iraqw move had taken place in a fairly peaceful manner, despite the fact that the Iraqw expansion had been the single most important factor in the dramatic shrinkage of Datoga territory during this century. [1] To add to this already complex picture, the rapid expansion of state-subsidised cash crop cultivation in the region after World War II continued unabated after independence, and the problem of land shortage was magnified. Datoga land was again dramatically reduced when the Tanzania-Canada Wheat Project was provided some 100,000 acres for large-scale mechanised wheat farming at the Bassotu plains in the 70s and 80s. According to Lane (1996, 155) the area seized by the wheat project amounts to as much as 50% of the area that was once available to Barabaig herds for grazing

The conflicting pressures put on the Datoga Village leadership in connection with the appropriation of land, both from inside the Datoga community and from outside it, made it extremely difficult for the Village government to meet Gidamuhaled's demand for some 30 acres of land. Since it was the concept of a large piece of cultivated land Gidamuhaled had envisaged as the key to a continuation of his family's privileged economic situation, since the job as Ward Secretary contributed to little more than local prestige, it was not an insignificant defeat Gidamuhaled suffered when his fellow Datoga turned down his application.

1.9 A Life of Conflicting Demands

For Udamehe, the days suddenly became filled with the time-consuming tasks of fetching firewood and collecting water, the last implying a 10 km daily walk. At Nangwa, a village water pump and purchase of firewood had made these tasks simple. Moreover, health facilities, which had earlier been located close to their home, were now in far away locations, and the only health service was a monthly Mother and Child Health (MCH) mobile clinic which reached an area some 10 km to the north. Udamehe was, moreover, lonely. She missed her friends at Nangwa, and as she made no move to take part in the many religious and political gatherings or other socialising activity of the neighbouring Datoga women, she remained by herself concentrating on attending to the enormous task of providing for the growing household. Even more challenging was the fact that she suddenly had to share Gidamuhaled and the compound with another woman; Gidamuhaled had, despite his official Catholic adherence, decided to take a second wife. His official reason for marrying an additional wife was to assist Udamehe with her heavy work burden, but Udamehe knew that Gidamuhaled was also concerned about her five daughters. These daughters would never reproduce his lineage and hence give him the prestige Datoga men yearned for. They would, moreover, cost him vast amounts of wealth at the time of their marriages. Gidamuhaled was also concerned about living in accordance with Datoga ideals, which implied that significant and wealthy men would strive to marry several wives.

Gidamuhaled indeed became increasingly preoccupied with the challenge of trying to please both the people at the frontier, where he had his job, largely Nyaturu and Iramba farmers, and the Datoga of the area to which he had moved. He would go to official meetings and public gatherings wearing trousers and shirts, engaging in discourse on party and policy matters, and later in the day shift his garments to the Datoga cloak, brew honey mead in the men's house, and chant Datoga cattle songs with his neighbours and relatives. The fusion of the two, however, proved to be more than stressful, and conflicts arose both at work and at home. The conflict between Gidamuhaled and the traditional leadership of elders of the area came to a peak during the autumn of 1989:

The members of the household were woken up before dawn by an intense sound which gradually turned into a fervently sung `oh hoooo', `oh hooooo'. Udamehe was apprehensive. She peaked through a hole in the mud wall of the house and in the dim light discerned several hundred men surrounding the compound. Just their spears, shields and cloak-covered heads were visible. As they performed their call they jumped rhythmically up and down,

throwing their spears in the air. Their conduct did not appear very inviting, and there was anxious whispering among the adults. The uneasiness was strengthened by the fact that Gidamuhaled was away on a journey.

As the call increased in strength, Udamehe went outside and confronted the men at the gate. The men were all of Gidamuhaled's clan. She was immediately presented with the cause of their mission: Gidamuhaled had not attended the second mandatory stage of his father's brother's funeral, and had also failed to provide the required amount of honey for the occasion. Udamehe replied that her husband had been aware of his duty, but that the same day he had had to attend an official ward meeting. The men laughed at her excuse, and confronted her with their verdict: a large black bull, a rare and most cherished animal, was demanded. Udamehe went to the cattle enclosures, but was met with contemptuous laughter when the men saw the small, one-eyed bull she returned with. Another small bull was brought forward, but was met with the same scornful response. Finally it was agreed upon that the clan brothers would have to wait upon Gidamuhaled's return to get the animal they requested, as they agreed that Udamehe could not offer them other animals. One week later the household's finest black bull was sacrificed before Gidamuhaled's deceased uncles' tomb, and was consumed jointly by Gidamuhaled and his clan brothers. The coming years Gidamuhaled continuously visited the tomb with gifts of tobacco and honey mead.

With an increasingly pressed economy at home, and conflicts looming high in every direction Gidamuhaled started to consume increasing amounts of alcohol. He became more aggressive and beat his first wife and children excessively when he was drunk. Moreover, the relationship between the two wives got steadily worse. In 1992, after Udamehe finally gave birth to a son, she left her husband fully determined never to return.

1.10 Searching for Meaning

Udamehe left without the children. This despite the fact that she, according to the official Tanzanian legal system, could have taken the children under 7 years of age with her.[1] She did not dare to provoke more anger than she had already done in her husband, and acted in accordance with Datoga custom as she feared the consequences for both herself and for the children who would have to remain with him. Hence, she left the seven children in the care of the second wife who by now had two small children of her own, and was pregnant with a third. Udamehe missed her children immensely. Living with her parents she made a meagre living from cultivation, the sale of vegetables at the market in Katesh, and from the periodic assistance of researchers in the area.

In 1998, she talked with bitterness about the circumstances past and present which she felt have led her to her destitute condition. She expressed anger towards the state and its policies, towards Datoga custom, and towards her ex-husband. The years of humiliation at school which had not benefited her later life, the merciless laws which kicked pregnant girls out of school, the no less merciless Datoga isolation practice related to premarital births, her husband who moved her away from Nangwa, who took a second wife, and led their lives into a mess which finally forced her to leave her children. Udamehe had been bereaved of what was most important to her, and was left with an endless struggle to make sense of it all. In 1996 she joined a Pentecostal community, and spent the nights singing and praying intensely in the company of other serious devotees. In 1997 two of her daughters finally came to live with her.

Gidamuhaled's fate was not much more fortunate. Soon after the divorce he lost his official job as Ward Secretary due to corruption charges by earlier Nyaturu collegues, charges which even his worst Datoga enemies agreed were false. Again his `Barabaig' identity had caught up with him in confrontation with the larger system. His life became filled with alcohol and court cases. He made some fresh attempts to build up relationships with his Datoga neighbours, and even engaged in the religious ritual *ghadoweeda*, the central Datoga gathering for prayer in which women come to call upon the spirits for remedy in times of hardships. But the gatherings rarely drew people, and once he even experienced the shocking event of seeing one of the huge sacred calabashes exploding in his home when he was making honey mead, a most dubious occurrence which required serious address in the form of purification and gift giving. He was confident that the spirits were still angrily responding to his earlier negligence.

2. Concluding remarks

This paper is one small attempt at meeting the overt representational challenge related to making sense of individual lives embedded in increasingly complex realities. More concretely, I have sought to explore how two Datoga individuals have tried to make sense of and act upon a range of potencies and pressures that have confronted them after independence in Tanzania. The pressures related to the conflicting demands brought upon them from diverse sources was immense, and in these particular cases became increasingly difficult to handle. Traumatic events from past and present alike today shatter the life histories of these two individuals.

The accounts of Udamehe and Gidamuhaled's lives have revealed some of the contingencies, challenges, dilemmas and difficulties Datoga may be confronted with when they seek to move and manoeuvre between the more locally confined Datoga world and the larger Tanzania society. Their life histories possibly indicate, at a more general level, some of the malice the Datoga encounter when they make attempts to benefit from the services that independent Tanzania seeks to offer to its citizens. An emphasis on unequal distribution of power is highly relevant in the analysis. But a sole focus on general processes of marginalisation and power deprivation would not lead us to understand the different ways in which the forces of Tanzanian history have had different impacts on different individuals.

As was made clear in this paper, the lives of Gidamuhaled and Udamehe are not `typical' in the sense that they, to a much larger degree than most Datoga, become directly involved in the overall Tanzanian society, and hence in a particular manner are confronted with the extreme challenges that encounters between the Datoga and the surrounding world can produce. Our brief encounter with Gidamuhaled's father's experience of maltreatment during the Operation, as a sudden harsh assault for example, must be understood as a physical manifestation of the same stigma the two students were confronted with Nonetheless, it implies a different experience with different consequences than the continuous verbal harassment Udamehe and Gidamuhaled encountered. There were also differences between Udamehe's and Bayanga's experiences, and obviously many more than I was able to account for in this brief sketch, differences which surfaced in connection with Udamehe's pregnancy out of wedlock, as well as in connection with how the two handled the adversity that they became enmeshed in. Gidamuhaled tended to make sense of and act upon the perils in a manner which was more closely linked to Datoga thought than what Udamehe did. His fear of spirit retribution in connection with his failing business, the road accident, the stream of daughters that his wife bore him, etc., were not paralleled by similar notions on the part of Udamehe. Udamehe was more upset with Tanzanian policies and Datoga custom than afraid of pollution and angered spirits after her misfortunes of premarital pregnancy and the loss of her children. Whereas Gidamuhaled engaged in gift giving to the spirits, prayer meetings, and in the brewing of honey mead to appease spirit aggression, Udamehe wholly kept away from the neighbouring Datoga women's political and religious meetings, and finally became involved in a Pentecostal community. This variance is linked up with a complex set of differences of which their families' exposure to non-Datoga knowledge and beliefs and gender differences are merely two aspects.

Even the exploration of two life histories such as those of Udamehe and Gidamuhaled gives a small indication of the manner in which differently situated Datoga will necessarily be confronted with, experience, and shape their meetings with the `larger' `non-Datoga' society in diverging ways. The point I wish to emphasise is the manner in which `foreign' and possibly `large-scale' realities are embedded in concrete life worlds where existing experiences, knowledge and beliefs vary between *individuals*, and not just between *cultures* and *communities*. Through the elicitation of two Datoga lives I have hence sought to reveal not only how interwoven history is in the lives of individuals, but how largely similar forces impart to distinct Datoga individuals their own particular histories.

NOTES

I carried out fieldwork among the Datoga, classified as Southern Nilotic pastoralists, for some 24 months between 1989 and 1998. The Datoga category is made up of some 13 subsections among which Barabaig is the largest. The majority of the population, around 50,000, probably still live in Hanang and Mbulu Districts of Tanzania, but large numbers of the population reside in other areas of Tanzania, partly due to earlier separation of the Datoga subsections, and partly due to recent movements related to shortage of land in Hanang and Mbulu Districts. `Datoga'

and `Barabayiig' are spelled in a large variety of ways in the literature, but I will here use the spelling used in standard Swahili spelling, and not the one proposed by a Bible translation project located in Bassotu in the 90s.

[2] `Mang'ati', a term which frequently has negative connotations, is often used by outsiders to refer to the Datoga or the Barabaig.

[3] See Somers & Gibson (1994) for an overview of these attempts.

[4] I base the following on information received from two Datoga individuals I have known well for some 10 years. The personal and geographical names used in the paper are pseudonyms. The Datoga operate with a number of different personal names. To simplify the reading, I will stick here to the childhood names despite the fact that, from a Datoga point of view, these will appear awkward in certain contexts. I have also made a couple of minor empirical adjustments for the sake of confidentiality.

[5] Talle (1974, 68) writes that the Barabaig are for the Tanzanian authorities synonymous with cattle thieves, and that the Barabaig youth are invariably accused of murders occurring in the area, yet without proof that they are the perpetrators.

[6] The *lilicht* deeply troubled the British who hired a government sociologist to reveal its hidden meanings and manifestations. If the custom had troubled the British, it did not create less concern in the early administration of independent Tanzania.

[7] See Blystad (forthcoming Ph.D. thesis) for a critical look at the *lilicht* tradition.

[8] Kjærby (1979, 28) argues that the punishment meted out to the Barabaig as a group ... reinforced the `tribalism' the government worked to diminish, and has created grievances, frustration and suspicion against the government.

[9] `Ujamaa' was based on `traditional' communal principles of `familyhood', and its renewed status implied a rejection of foreign models as well as an attempt to assert Tanzanian identity.

[10] For a review of the circumstances surrounding the Kihonda murders, see Blystad (forthcoming Ph.D. thesis).

[11] Little attention was, moreover, paid to the fact that a decision had been reached to allow a maximum of 150 families to live in each village in the pastoral area; 300-400 families per village were soon recorded (Kjærby 1980, 20).

[12] A decree had been made which allowed for 1/3 of all households in `Barbaig' villages to be of `non-Barbaig' origin (Kjærby 1980, 19).

[13] Universal Primary Education, Mass Literacy Campaigns, as well as the provision of clean water and health for all were making tremendous progress, especially in building up the physical infrastructure (Havnevik et al. 1988, 96)

[14] Within 11 years the total foreign aid increased almost 14 fold (Havnevik et al. 1988, 123).

[15] There was a reduction in the purchasing power of Tanzania exports by 58% between 1973 and 1982 (Havnevik et al. 1988, #1835:113-119).

[16] The National Economic Survival Programme (NESP 1981-82), the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP 1982-85), and the Economic Recovery Programme (ERP 1986-89) (Havnevik et al. 1988, 151-155) to name some major attempts.

[17] There was a severe deterioration of the physical infrastructure in the 80s. The share of transportation in GDP declined by 19% between 1980 and 1983 alone. The feeder road system had in fact received minimal attention in the post-independence period, making it increasingly difficult to travel in the rural areas (Havnevik et al. 1988, 146).

[18] Through the decentralisation policy implemented in 1972, a rigorous system had been built up with regional, district, division, ward, village and down to `10 cell' (i.e., 10 household) level. Extending the regional government administration and party machinery to ward level implied increased party control and state intervention in the rural areas.

[19] The term `village' in this instance refers more to a demarcated area than to a place with the provision of services and a higher than average population density. In 1989, all that indicated the coming village status was a thatched roof village office.

[20] The population growth and the territorial expansion of the Iraqw have been the most spectacular features of the general development of this region (See Mitchell 1932, 7; Schultz 1971; Snyder 1996, 318; Southall 1961, 161; Winter & Molyneaux 1963). Perhaps the most striking feature of this expansion is that it has occurred at the expense of neighbouring peoples stereotyped as both aggressive and militarily strong, without having prompted any large-scale retaliation or conflict (Rekdal & Blystad 1998).

[21] There are at present three different and parallel legal systems at work in Tanzania: the parliamentary, the Islamic and the traditional (Havnevik et al. 1988:183]. The traditional system is often the system locally functioning in practice, and in cases of divorce or death, a Datoga woman will commonly find herself bereaved by both children and property.

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ORAL TRADITIONS AND PAST HUMAN USES OF NATURAL RESOURCES: THE CASE OF IRAQW'AR DA/AW, NORTH-CENTRAL TANZANIA

Yusufu Q. Lawi

1. Oral Texts as Source Materials for Historical Research

There is no doubt that many social scientists and historians today consider oral texts to be important source materials for their research. This is especially true for researchers working among non-literate societies, such as those of rural Africa. Here, as in other places where literacy has a shorter history, oral texts have been found indispensable, as they provide "information otherwise entirely lost from historical record" as well as "a view from inside as particular society" (Quirin 1993, 306). Yet, even in places where literacy levels are considerable, the need to use oral accounts, testimonies and traditions has been ever present.

On the other hand, the use of oral texts as source materials has been a subject of extended methodological debates, especially among historians. In these discussions questions have been raised about the reliability of oral sources as evidence for history reconstruction, while some of the scholars have endeavoured to suggest ways and means of overcoming or minimising such shortcomings. In brief, there is a general agreement in the fact that due to inevitable dimming of human memory with time, oral sources are particularly unreliable when one is dealing with the more distant past. Difficulty in maintaining correct chronological order of events is another challenge in using oral sources.

A note has also been taken of the fact that oral accounts and traditions often provide only the dominant elitist view (Stapleton 1995, 336), and that information gathered through interviews, even from a single informant, may vary considerably between one recording and another (Willis 1996, 320). Above all, oral texts are necessarily "personal constructions, and not `documents' created in the past and replicated again..." (Wright 1982, 320). Such constructions and reconstruction are obviously influenced by the informants' social and political standing in relation to the issues under discussion (Diwara 1995, 123), and, as Rekdal (1998, 17-38) clearly describes, new information gathered from written sources may be added to older oral texts to assert significantly new '`acts".

Except for the problems related to the gradual loss of memory, however, all the shortcomings mentioned above have to do with subjectivity on the part of the informants. It is worth noting that social scientists are now generally agreed on the point that the subjective element cannot possibly be avoided altogether. It goes without saying that although the methodological problems of oral texts are in many ways unique they are widely shared by other data sources typically consulted in social science research. This is to say that if used with the usual scepticism and interrogative attitude, oral sources may, within the limits set by their nature as orally transmitted information, prove to be no less useful than any other source. Just as one would treat a written source, for example, the strength of any oral text can be tested by evaluating its internal coherence, by considering the social circumstances under which it was produced, and by evaluating the extent to which it is corroborated by evidence from other sources.

2. Oral Testimonies and Oral Traditions

It is important to distinguish between oral testimonies and oral traditions, as these distinctions have profound methodological and practical implications. In his oft-quoted volume *Oral Tradition as History*, Jan Vansina specifies oral testimonies as statements made by people about events and situations that took place in "their life time". These include eyewitness accounts, reminiscences, and hear say (Vansina 1995, 12), typically collected though interviews or by listening to oral accounts. In contrast, "oral tradition" refers to information or messages transmitted orally "beyond the generation which gave rise to them" (Vansina 1985, 13). These exist in several different forms, including "memorised traditions" such as prayers, and "formalised speeches", such as epic and standardised narratives. Among the latter, fictional narratives such as tales, sayings and proverbs, are distinct from the narratives that claim factuality.

While the two types of oral texts generally share in the strengths and weaknesses outlined above they obviously differ in terms of how far they can delve into the past. Besides, using oral testimonies and traditions entails different strategies and approaches, both in collecting and analysing research materials. Suffice it to note, for the moment, that while in working with oral testimonies one is centrally concerned with the common problems of `factuality' and `verifiability', in dealing with traditions the tasks are more complicated, and the strategies far less familiar to the traditional historian.

It should be noted that the use of oral traditions in historical reconstruction is not new in East Africa. Most works on the subject of environmental history have, however, tended to be over-dependent on written sources, largely ignoring the rich treasure of traditions, and the immense opportunities for gaining insights into the environmental history of the region from these sources. In the following sections I shall make an attempt to use oral texts to reconstruct past human uses of natural resources in a particular area in Tanzania.

3. Oral Traditions and Past Human Uses of Natural Resources: The Case of Iraqw'ar Da/aw, North-Central Tanzania

3.1 The Context

Iraww'ar Da/aw, the focus area for this discussion, is located in the north central part of Tanzania. Forming part of the plateau rising from the western side of the great African Rift Valley, this area overlooks Lake Manyara to the north-east and constitutes the eastern, more elevated and wetter part of the larger Mbulu plateau.[1] The latter extends southward and southwestward from the Ngorongoro highland area, gently sloping westward until it reaches Lake Eyasi.

The present inhabitants of Iraqw'ar Da/aw, namely, the Iraqw, have been in the area since the beginning of the 18th century.[1] By 1950, when the first systematic socio-economic survey of the area was taken, these people had continuously lived in the area for at least ten generations (Fosbrooke 1955, 18). While the first settlers only comprised of some three patriarchal families[1] arriving on the plateau from below the Rift Valley in the south, the bulk of the present population variably trace their origins to neighbouring Bantu, Nilotic, KHOISAN, and Cushitic groups. All these now fully identify themselves as Iraqw. The ethnic identity of these people was therefore constructed in the course of their interaction in Iraqw'ar Da/aw.

Accordingly, it makes sense to consider many of the traditions passing as Iraqw traditions today to have initially been constructed in Iraqw'ar Da/aw. It is also obvious that even those proven to have an external origin will certainly have been adopted to the physical and social realties of Iraqw'ar Da/aw. Here lies the justification for relating these traditions to past human uses of natural resources in the area.

3.2 Glimpses at the Early Landscape Images

In attempting a reconstruction of Iraqw'ar Da/aw environmental history one needs to consider the general landscape changes, particularly in regard to vegetation cover and surface water distribution. Precise scientific methods and techniques for dealing with such questions exist, for instance, within the disciplines of archaeology and geography. However, the question here is whether oral traditions can help reveal anything in a situation whereby such data is not readily available and the generation of new ones proves too expensive for the moment. A consideration of scenarios relating to available Iraqw oral traditions may shed some light in this respect.

Certain widely known ethno-caricatures about the early inhabitants of Iraqw'ar Da/aw give the impression that the environment was characterised by a landscape dominated by ferns, there being only a few scattered clumps of bush. Among these are narratives depicting poor cooking on account of lack of proper wood fuel, as a result of which only ferns and grain stalk were used for cooking. This in turn resulted in regular stomach problems among the inhabitants, especially when people ate maize that had been half-roasted on fern fire.[1]

More details of this image appear in another narrative, namely, the prophecies of Saigilo. The latter was a famous epic figure often referred to in Iraqw history, a great Datooga diviner who encountered the Iraqw at Wa/ama sometime in the late 18th century.[1] His interaction with the Iraqw resulted in his acceptance by the latter as one of their greatest diviners, while in turn he made several prophecies about the destiny of these people as well as about the future of his own lineage.[1] One of his prophecies touched on the future changes in vegetation cover and the availability firewood in the Iraqw land. He asserted that the country would be dominated by bush to the extent that women would not have to go far away from homes to find firewood. In addition, he said that tall trees akin to those found in Nou and Marang forests[1] would come to dominate the landscape in the settled area.

It turns out that for nearly three decades now the landscape in Iraqw'ar Da/aw has been dominated by exotic tree plantations, mostly of black wattle and eucalyptus. This was a result of reforestation campaigns undertaken first by the British colonial government in the 1940s and 1950s, and later by the post-independence government. While the apparent realisation of Saigilo's prophecies in this case arouses curiosity, the important point of the present discussion is that the image they portray of the landscape in Iraqw'ar Da/aw in those old days closely compares to that portrayed by the narratives mentioned earlier.

The sociologist Henry Fosbrooke (1955, 3) mentions "some clumps of high forest retained as sacred groves" as part of the landscape.[1] Then, using a deductive approach he adds:

When the Iraqw started infiltrating into the Murray area [Iraqw'ar Da/aw] some 250 years ago they found an uninhabited country of bush and forest. The country they chose cannot have been an unbroken thicket as the first Iraqw are said to have come with their cattle and the country would only have attracted them if the bush and trees were frequently interspersed with open grass glades (Fosbrooke 1955, 70).

This early description of the landscape by an outside observer emphasises the presence of glades of significant sizes, as well as of forest and thicket vegetation. It does not, however, give any indication as to the extent of forest and thicket cover in the area settled by people, even as late as the time of its writing. Neither does it show the pattern of distribution of these forests and thickets in relation to human settlement. The two oral sources cited above locate the existing forest completely outside of the settled area and, while mentioning nothing in particular regarding the presence (or absence) of thicket or bush, they clearly imply that such vegetation types were at some point in time rather uncommon on the landscape. Such scenery can be assumed to have lasted from the period of early Iraqw occupation of this plateau to the time of the colonial afforestation campaigns.

It is notable that in this case, the two types of sources have tended to complement rather than contradict and other. Needless to say, in such cases as the present, conclusions are easier to arrive at than when the sources prove to be contradictory in what they reveal. In light of this, it seems reasonable to assert that at the time of its occupation by the Iraqw, Iraqw'ar Da/aw was more of an open grassland than a forested or thicket-covered country. It also seems that 250 years after the arrival of the Iraqw such a of vegetation cover had not changed "to any marked extent" (Fosbrooke 1955, 3). This image stands in sharp contrast with the `received wisdom' in the African environmental discourse, which has tended to portray African environmental resources as being in perpetual and rapid depletion.[1]

3.3 Highlights on Ecological Problems and Adaptations

Environmental history is by definition an account of human experiences in the face of changing ecological conditions in their respective environments. As in the case of general landscape changes, here too there may exist more precise information that may help in reconstructing these experiences and adaptations. Yet, the question of what role can be played by oral traditions in highlighting such experiences in important; firstly because these are an important source in their own right, and, secondly, the alternative sources are often not readily available.

The Iraqw *sluufaay*, a memorised text recited at important ritual gatherings,[1] provides examples of how oral traditions can be used in reconstructing the ecological history of Iraqw'ar Da/aw. Let it be mentioned at the outset that although the leading performer enjoys, while reciting this text a considerable degree of flexibility in his diction

and a poetic rhythm, the themes and basic concerns have largely remained the same over the years. Newly introduced themes are easy to identify because they come after intervals of a long period. An additional advantage is that this is a tradition mainly constructed by the Iraqw within Iraqw'ar Da/aw.[1] It, therefore, relates directly to the experiences of the Iraqw as they interacted with their environment in past times. Shohei Wada, a leading figure in Iraqw ethnography, once made the following remark on the quality of this text as a cultural expression:

Sluufaay ...is an oral tradition deeply rooted in the Iraqw culture. Since it exhibits literary qualities in both form and content it is more that an example of a religious ritual, and can be considered to have a place as a genre of oral literature. This prayer chant, which is an expression of Iraqw's most refined thought and feeling, can be regarded as one of the most valuable literary products passed down from the ancestors (Wada 1978, 37).

A repeated theme in this prayer is the quest for a dramatic multiplication of human and livestock populations. Looa, a feminine spirit, is begged to grant her ointment (di/i) so that the people and their stock can multiply not only to fill Iraqw'ar Da/aw but also to overflow and spread to neighbouring Maasai and Tattoo territories. A review of the most commonly repeated lines[1] in this respect may serve as illustration;

First, there are lines emphasising fertility, both of humankind and of their stock:

In this house[1] of ours Let

there be two kinds of births:

births in the *tla/afi*(human births) an births in the matl'/angw (livestock births).[1]

Then, in a typical metaphoric language, the quest for a rapid multiplication of human population is expressed in the strongest terms.

May the women's skirts be perpetually wet with infants' excretions

And the old women of our house, let them continuously be exhausted by infant nursing

Let the births in our house count to a thousand

Let us reach a thousand births like the spider, like the dog

May we beat the spider.

A similar emphasis is put on the fertility of domestic animals. Here, images of a wealthy household and a cattle-rich village are portrayed in metaphoric terms:

The herdsmen of our house

May they come carrying newly born calves when bringing the stock home from the pastures

There, at home:

May the women of the house compete with calve and cats over milk

Let them compete with cats over milk

Let the edges of our cattle's water ponds be broken [by hoofs]

Like the paths of our cattle deepen

Like those [of the cattle] of our forefathers

Like those of the Sule[1] cattle.

The desires expressed in these lines shed some light on certain historical experiences and fundamental environmental concerns among the people who constructed or adapted this text. It stands to reason that such concerns would have had to do with a prevalent need for more people and livestock than existed at the time. While the text strongly suggests the intensity of this need, it does not provide us with any explanation as to why such a need existed in the first place. However, useful insights in this regard can be gained by referring to other sources.

Narratives on Iraqw origins[1] consistently recount that the first Iraqw settlers in Iraqw'ar Da/aw were survivors of a series of wars between the Iraqw and Datooga groups. The first major war was fought in Ma/angwatay, an area invariably located by oral tradition in the Rift Valley, Southwest of Mount Hanang'. Repeated attacks by the same adversaries forced the Iraqw out of Giting and Guse, where they had apparently taken refuge upon defeat in Ma/angwatay. In the course of these wars the Iraqw lost most of their cattle. Since cattle were the mainstays of their economy, this loss can be considered to have been a significant loss in economic well being and status.

One can therefore assume that the first among these victims of war to escape into the mountainous region of Iraqw'ar Da/aw were numerically, militarily and economically weak. They brought some cattle with them, but these were very few. Subsequent cattle raiding by the Maasai and recurrent livestock diseases kept the cattle population down for a long time.[1] Agriculture seems to have been a very difficult undertaking for them at first; due to lack of iron implements, they used on digging sticks (about 7 feet long) and wooden hoes.[1] Later adoption of vermin and paste control methods, including `smearing' of young crops with fresh cow dung (made fluid by mixing it with water)[1] suggest that there were notable ecological problems that hindered agricultural development. This view is reinforced by a famous tale about *Simbooya*, a boy who suffers abandonment (by his father) in the depth of the wilderness on account of his unwelcome act of releasing an elephant from his father's trap.[1] According to one version of the story, the boy's father had dug a deep hole at a strategic point on the edge of his farm, with the aim of trapping the game that had proved impossible to keep out of this farm by other means.

Given these hints it is not surprising that the desire for increased human and livestock populations would receive such a strong cultural expression as shown above. Although causal relations are difficult to establish, it would be logical to relate this desire to the concrete historical experiences of the Iraqw people, which undoubtedly included an ecological squeeze in the face of predator abundance, crude agricultural technology, as well as hostile from human neighbours. The implicit need for numerical superiority under these conditions is further suggested by some of the old traditional sayings, an example of which is *xooro a sare/a*; literally translated as "The multitude is like a giant buffalo". The thrust of the intended message in this saying is that the larger countrywide human communities are to be respected and feared for their collective power. The point, in other words, is that numbers do matter a lot. Similar deductions can also be made with respect to the importance attached to livestock. The fact that cattle and small stock had been important as sources of food and an exchange article, even within the not-so-suitable ecology of Iraqw'ar Da/aw, has been sufficiently documented. (Fosbrooke 1955, 35-49). In addition, oral traditions strongly suggest that livestock played a much greater role among the Iraqw in the days before their migration into the Mbulu highlands (Fosbrooke 1955, 35-49; Thronton 1980). If this was indeed the case, it would be conceivable that a symbolic significance had previously been attached to them, and that elements of the related values passed down through generations remained strong even after the economic importance of cattle had declined considerably.

Other images deriving from *sluufaay* give important indications about the general ecological dynamics and the place of human population in Iraqw'ar Da/aw. Some of the lines refer to possible dangers to the well being of livestock when taken out in to the pastures. First, a general sense of insecurity is implicit in this formulation:

Now our cattle have set out to graze

Let them dwell on a good `*getu*' (the gentle, lower slope of a hill or ridge)

And let them return home by a nice *`getu'* too.

The expression `good/nice ridge slope' symbolises safe pastures in all senses. As Wada (1978, 44) notes, the possible dangers facing the herdsmen included raiding by Maasai or Datooga, and contracting a disease or falling in a ditch and breaking bones. Having said that the leading performer then goes on to caution against some of these dangers, metaphoric style being maintained throughout:

The bitter grass (*gitisimir qaraar*)

May they leave it out there in the bush

As for the sweet grass (*gitsimir nuqnuuq*)

Let them bring it home.

Several types of freely growing grass were considered harmful to livestock. Hence safe grazing was not be taken for granted. Yet, since the pastures in question were of free range type, the herdsmen hardly had anything to do other than avoiding taking cattle to places known to be particularly infested by such grass. Evidence from oral traditions indicates that two generations ago men often engaged themselves in uprooting such kinds of grass in private or common pastures.[1] The best known example of these harmful grasses is a species locally known as *tat/ani,* which according to elders' testimony causes instant death to cattle, goats and sheep.[1]

Sluufaay recitations also make regular reference to certain carnivorous animals as a source of danger to domestic animals, especially when accidentally left outdoors at night:

> The herdsman of our house
>
> Let him be cautioned by the patrol bird[1]
>
> The lost animal of our house
>
> Let it arrive home before dark
>
> As for the one left in the bush.
>
> May the firewood-fetching women bring it home
>
> May the thicket-dwelling hyena be overcome by fear,
>
> May it hurriedly return to its hiding place
>
> And the cave-dwelling *mao* (cat) [1]
>
> Let it return to its home
>
> May the eyes of the wild animals turn blind.

In their totality, these lines describe in broad terms the conditions surrounding the pastoral activities that clearly preoccupied the inhabitants of Iraqw'ar Da/aw. Apart from mapping out the kinds of environmental constraints faced by these people in raising livestock the descriptions also confirm the image gained from previously cited lines of the *sluufaay*. They portray an image of a considerably difficult ecological setting.

The latter image was apparently as clear in respect of livestock keeping as it was for crop production. In addition to the constraints already mentioned above, cultivators here are also faced with challenges from *sumpa* (cutworms) and *nanaga* (stalk borers), and accordingly the *sluufaay* prayer includes verses wishing that the mouths of these pastes "be cooled", Further-more, older people give revealing accounts of a cumbersome activity engaged in by maize farmers at the point of germination and early growth, which involved manually catching and killing the cutworms![1].

The extent to which the above situation has changed is beyond the scope of this essay. One hint is, however, worth mentioning. A type of bird locally known *as /alay* is mentioned in *sluufaay* prayer as the herdsmen's `helper' in the tedious work of removing ticks from cattle bodies. Oral sources have invariably indicated that while these birds existed in large numbers in Iraqw'ar Da/aw two generations ago, they are now extremely difficult to come by. What happened to them is still a matter of speculation. But there is much sense in the explanation often given by local people, namely, that the birds have been `finished' by cattle dipping. This tick control measure was first introduced into the area during the mid- 1950s.[1]

3.4 Aspects of Land Use Patterns

Similar insights can be gained from oral traditions with regard to past patterns of land use in Iraqw'ar Da/aw. The first settlers, as we have seen, occupied open, mostly grass-covered land, their economic activities consisting mainly of livestock keeping and crop production. The terrain, as seen today, consists of narrow ridges divided by numerous narrow valleys and permanent streams. How and to what extent this land was used in the past is a question worth attempting by reference to oral traditions.

Parts of the ridges were obviously occupied by huts, and according to elders' accounts these existed either singly or in clusters.[1] That the huts usually occupied the upper slopes of the ridges is suggested first by the current patterns and secondly by oral accounts. The latter emphasise that in choosing a building site the prospective occupant considered three factors: wind direction and strength, potential dangers from dampness in the extreme lower slopes, and the history of the site. Regarding the latter factor, prospective occupants gave particular attention to possible incidences of lightning striking and/or previous abandonment due to an epidemic outbreak or an unidentified cause of repeated incidents of human and stock deaths.[1]

Farming, on the other hand, seems to have been confined to the lower slopes and parts of the valleys. While fields in the lower slopes seem to have been used during both the rainy and dry seasons, the valley bottoms were used only in dry seasons. There are indications that this seasonal variation in land use is an old practice. For instance, local exchange relations dating back to the 18th century have left an imprint in the cattle naming system, where cow exchanged with maize from the valley bottom was invariably named */Idó*, while the one obtained in exchange for the rainy-season maize was named *tsahhamè*. The two words */Idó* and *tsahhamè* refer to "maize from the valley-bottom" and "maize grain removed from the cob", respectively. The fact that the former names are specific in character while the latter is rather generic suggests that valley-bottom cultivation was a more specialised and somewhat rare practice than the rainy-season cultivation. These cattle names are still common today although they are now acquired by virtue of descent from a cow with a similar name rather than from the type of maize used in exchange. The point to note is that from current cattle names one may gain some insights into past land use patterns in Iraqw'ar Da/aw.

Equally important anecdotal evidence comes from one of the earliest recorded Iraqw oral texts, and ethno-caricature about a section of the tribe called the *Hhay-Qongo*. This is a clan within Iraq'ar Da/aw who were famed for certain of their acts akin to mentally retarded persons. The relevant narrative recounts that once the Datooga were invading Iraqw'ar Da/aw, and one of the *Hhay-Qongo* men managed to capture a Datooga. The Datooga sai "*baruur baba*", meaning "Please, do not kill me, my lord!" But the *Hhay-Qongo* man, mistaking the Tatooo word *baruur* for a different Iraqw word *burururu*, understood him to mean, "Please, may I have some `left-over' maize cobs my lord?" So he said to the Tattoo: "If you really want `left-over' maize cobs, go get some from my father who is collecting them in the little field near our house". The Datooga then left for his home believing that his plea for mercy had been accepted.[1]

The hint on the presence of fields higher up near the houses is confirmed by oral testimony from elders, who explain that it was common for smaller, not-so-important gardens to be established nearer to the homesteads. Maize is

planted on these plots in the beginning of May every year. This primarily serves as calf feed, but in `good' years considerable maize crop is harvested for human use as well. Even in ordinary years scattered cobs are often available for harvesting towards the end of the dry season, hence the term *buruuru*.

A common feature in Iraqw'ar Da/aw at present is extensive cultivation of valley bottoms. Most of the major valleys are completely covered by maize and bean fields. Oral accounts testify that the situation was different only three decades ago. Regulations put in place by the British colonial administrators in Mbulu, and before that the collective authority of the local elders, prohibited cultivation of the marshy areas and of land closer to the riverbanks.[1] The objective, on the part of the local elders at least, was to protect the reeds that naturally grew in the swampy valleys, these being the only material depended on for thatching houses. In addition, each individual household kept what is traditionally known as *hindiwtá gwe `edá qaymo*, literally "the reserve pasture at the bottom of the crop field". Such reserves hardly exist in most places today, nor is the expression commonly known among the younger generations. However elders explain that three decades ago these reserves were common almost everywhere, and were used to feed the calves and cows which were too weak to accompany other cattle to the ordinary pastures.

This takes us to another aspect of land use, specifically to the question of where the ordinary pastures were located in relation to houses and crop fields. Here we need to review some of the lines of *sluufaay* already mentioned above:

Now our cattle have set out to graze

Let them dwell on a good `*getu*' (the gentle, lower slope of a hill or ridge)

And let them return home by a nice `*getu*' too

From these lines we get the impression that the main pastures were located at a considerable distance from homesteads and fields. The image is reinforced by the reference made to dangers posed by predators to grazing livestock, since wild animals could not have been living in the heart of the settled land. In addition, two old vocabulary items in the Iraqw language, *mamo/o* and *tleesi*, distinguish two activities related to the care of livestock in daytime. The former refers to the task of overseeing livestock grazing around homesteads, usually by children or women. *Tleesi*, in contrast, refers to the task, usually undertaken by adult men, of taking stock to more distant pastures. Oral accounts testify that elders closed some of these distant pastures during the rainy season so as to reserve grass for the dry season. In village establishments nearer to dark forests the task involved taking cattle to glades located inside the forests.

Put together, these pieces of evidence portray an image of sparsely settled, a landscape with crop fields scattered here and there, and pastures available both closer to homesteads and further away. Fosbrooke (1955, 69-73) used genealogical series and history of clan land holdings to take our imagination in this regard further into the past. His technique leads him to the conclusion, that by mid 18th century the settlement was so sparse that sections of the Sule, an agro-pastoral ethnic group, were able to establish themselves in the middle of Iraqw territory without causing antagonistic relations between the two groups.

4. Concluding Remarks

This discussion has shown examples of important insights to be gained by using oral traditions as source materials for environmental history. From these examples a number of lessons regarding the value and effective use of these sources reveal themselves. It is clear, first of all, that if carefully used in combination with other sources oral texts can lead to considerable improvement in the depth of historical narratives and accuracy in analyses. Documentary evidence and archaeological sources often leave wide gaps in their descriptions of historical phenomena. Detailed cultural studies of the people concerned may reveal traditions of great significance in bridging some of these gaps.

Just to give an example, in the 1940s the British colonial administration in Mbulu experienced a miserable failure in a ghee production project that was designed to utilise surplus milk from Iraqw farmers. The District Commissioner explained this failure in terms of poor supply of milk, but stopped short of specifying the reasons for the shortage. It

turns out that for the Iraqw milk was supplied only to persons whose ritual condition is known to be free from `pollution',[1] which obviously is difficult to establish in the circumstances of the colonial ghee project. Such, then, is the context in which oral traditions may prove indispensable.

It has also become clear that evidence from oral traditions is seldom directly recognisable. Often times one has to take stock of the broader cultural context to be able to effectively use information drawn from oral texts. Meanings in such texts may be difficult to decode, either because words are not used in their literal sense, or the key words/expressions in a particular text are no longer used in ordinary communication. Quick collection of material and subjecting them to professional translations may therefore prove futile.

Finally, one of the greatest challenges in using oral traditions as historical source materials is establishing accurate dates and correct chronological orders. However, as shown in this discussion, a great deal of this problem can be overcome by use of other sources, such as oral testimonies, documentary evidence and archaeological data. It should be noted that the problem of chronology is much less challenging when the scope of inquiry is limited to the last two or three generations.

Notes

The elevation of the Mbulu plateau ranges from 1000 meters in the Eyasi basin to 2400 meters in the Eastern Highlands.

[2] The exact date of arrival of these people in the area is not known for sure. However, Henry Forsbrooke's estimation using genealogical accounts puts Irqaw arrival in Iraqw'ar Da/aw in about 1700 AD.

[3] The descendants of these families today belong to the Hhay-Tipe, Haha-Duway and Hhay-Bu/ay clans. The rest of the clans trace their origins to neighbouring ethnic groups.

[4] Personal recollections from many encounters with versions of these narratives.

[5] This area lies about ten miles north of the present town of Mbulu, which is located just outside Iraqw'ar Da/aw in the northwestern direction.

[6] Many Iraqw believe that Saiigilo's prophecies came true in most cases.

[7] These two forests flank the Iraqw'ar Da/aw landscape, Nou on the west and southwest, and Marang on the northwest. They have been under government conservation since the days of German colonial rule.

[8] Several of these sacred groves can be seen in Iraqw'ar Da/aw even today.

[9] For deeper analyses of the origins and basic tenets of this dictum see the collection of essays edited by Melissa Leach and Robin Means (1996).

[10] Most important among these is the thanks-giving rite performed in individual homes at the beginning of the harvesting season. Other occasions include the inauguration of a new house, and purification of a person encountering an injury involving a broken bone.

[11] This is clear not only from its contents but also from the fact that the version of *sluufay* recited by the Gorowa, the last cushitic group to split off from the Iraqw before the latter came to settle in Irqwar Da/aw in about 1700, has significantly different features compared to the one developed in Iraqw'ar Da/aw.

[12] These lines have been drawn from more than 20 recordings, some dating back to 1978 and others as recent as 1998.

[13] "House" here refers to both the house in which the ritual is carried out and, symbolically, to the entire tribal land. Until the establishment of the German colonial rule during the first decade of this century, the tribal land was confined to what is now called Iraqw'ar Da/aw.

[14] The two Iraqw terms *tla/afi* and *matl'/angw* refer to distinct spaces in the traditional Irawq house. The former is the inner space where women stay most of the time and give birth, and the latter refers to the space where livestock, both cattle and small stock, are kept during the night.

[15] The Sule are a pastoral group now fully assimilated into the Iraqw cultural group. In the 18th and 19th centuries they occupied the semi-arid areas west of Iraqw'ar Da/aw. Iraqw traditions indicate that they used to have a lot more cattle than the Iraqw.

[16] Several versions of this narrative exist. While there are significant differences among them there is a remarkable agreement in Iraqw oral traditions on the issue of the wars with the Daatoga both in Ma/angwatay and afterwards. See for example Snyder (1993, 319); Thornton (1980, 486, 205-206); Nordbustad (1978, 370, 7-15); Berger (1935, 110-113).

[17] A seventy year old informant told me that in his youth days, most households had between three and eight cattle. Based on his field survey, Henry Fosbrooke (1955, 35) notes that no household seemed to exceed twenty in terms of the number of cattle kept.

[18] According to tradition, the first iron hoes were obtained from the Mbugwe. This is a Bantu group living below the Rift Valley and who came to develop strong economic ties with the Iraqw upon their migration Iraqw'a Da/aw.

[19] Informants could not date this practice, but they all agreed that it is an old one. However, it did not come to government notice until 1856 when the agricultural officer for Mbulu wrote: "The Iraqw and Wagorowa tribes have an effective method of countering the depredation of dik dik".

[20] For an earlier recording of this and related Iraqw tales see Hans-Egil Hauge (1981).

[21] Yame Amna/ay Ingi, Interviewed in Mbulu, November 1997.

[22] First recorded by Wada (1979, 44), the testimony was repeated to this author by Ak'o Gwandu /Awaki, Kwermusl, January 1998.

[23] Reference is here made to certain birds that make distinct noises at seeing certain dangerous wild animals such as leopards, large snakes, wild dogs, etc.

[24] This refers to leopards, which, according to oral accounts, were particularly feared because of their attacks on small stock and calves.

[25] Shauri Akona/ay, interviewed in Kwermusl, December 1997.

[26] In line with the current government policy, cattle keepers in Iraqw'ar Da/aw today spray their cattle at home using veterinary drug bought from Mbulu town. There are, however, many individuals who cannot afford to buy these supplies on account of their forbidding prices.

[27] This is true even today although the number of houses in individual clusters may have growth considerably due to population increase. The latter point must, however, not be overemphasised considering the fact that outward migration from this area has been very significant.

[28] Elders' accounts consistently mention that in the past houses were often moved from one site to another on account of recurrent illness both among human beings and livestock. The new site didn't have to be far away from

the old one, except in cases where divination has specified that the problem has to do with a condition affecting the whole ridge or the entire valley from which water for the particular house hold is drawn.

[29] This text was first recorded by Paul Berger in 1935, and is now included in a comprehensive collection of Iraqw oral texts translated, revised and edited by Roland Kiessling (1995).

[30] Mzee Gabriel Tlemai, Interviewed in Murray (1998).

[31] For a detailed analysis of Iraqw cultural practices relating to the use of milk and milk products see Reckdal (1996)

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EMISSARIES FOR PEACE, ENVOYS FOR MANAGEMENT: EXTRNAL RELATIONS AND DRYLANDS MANAGEMENT IN THE ZAGHAWA

Sharif Harir

1. Introduction

It is, by now, a proven truism that no tribal range in the drylands of the African Sahel is big enough to sustain the livestock holdings of a given tribe over a time span of many years on row. There has always been a need to venture out of the core territory of the tribe to reach out into territories of other tribes to safeguard the well being of herds in periods of prolonged droughts whose cyclical occurrence has been abundantly documented in the drylands of the African Sahel. The historical and contemporary long-range migrations of long-horned Fulani cattle from as far as Nigeria and Senegal across the poor savannah into the Sudan and Eritrea are a case in point. Such long-range migrations of pastoralists did not only entail crossing many nation-state boundaries but also intruding on the pasture grounds and water resources of a multitude of tribal groups with all the political problems this involved. The security of members of the group and their livestock, negotiating access to water in alien territories, managing new relations of coexistence, finding pastoral niches which are not realised by the already existing groups, adjusting to traditions of local management of natural resources, etc., are some among a complex of things to be attended to. Furthermore, dealing with agents of the political authority in each country which a group passes through or stays in is also an area of management which has to be attended to diligently.

Even within one country when pastoral groups have to move out of their territories into other groups' territories, they have to negotiate a lot of things in that order. This is the case with many pastoral groups in the Sudan. The various Baggara groups, e.g., Hawazma, Rezaiqat, Missiriya, and other nomads such as the Rufa'a el Hoi, Kababish and the northern Camel Rezaitqat of Dar Fur, cover in their migrations, from the fringes of the desert in the north to the rich savannah in the south, considerable distances and pass through the tribal territories of other groups. Some of these "other" groups are also pastoral nomads while others are settled agriculturalists. In both cases, complex political, administrative and range management issues arise and have to be negotiated and settled to provide wider frames of reference to pre-empt and settle conflicts when they arise.

For those groups who move with their tribal authorities such as the Rufa'a and a number of Rezaiqat groups, these negotiations and relations resulting therefrom are managed by the two authorities, i.e., that of the mobile group and those of the territories the former group enters. However, for groups whose tribal authority is settled and as such left back home arrangements such as accredited emissaries or roving envoys must be made before hand, prior to the entry by such a group into another tribe's territory. These are done either on a permanent basis such as appointment of a guarantor (Dhamin) in market areas or renewed each year by the appointment of an envoy (Mandoub) to accompany such mobile groups for one season at a time.

The Zaghawa of Sudan/Chad border fall in this category. The purpose of this paper is to elucidate processes related to the management of inter-tribal group relations that have direct bearing on dryland resources' management. Intra-tribal, i.e., within Dar Zaghawa, resource management entails seasonal movements with a defined tribal territory, elaborate codes of behaviour of how to treat certain spaces with their grazing and water resources, cods of tenure of resource along descent lines organised through kinship relations and local administrative legislation relating to tree-cutting and fire-lines which are supposed to preserve range against the hazards of bush fires. An elaborate and consensually produced corpus of codification that may cater for conflict resolution without very much outside interference, i.e. district government authority, would most likely accompany management arrangements. Intra-tribal arrangements take cognisance of the fact that a tribal group consists of several units which are the building blocks of that society with shared culture and societal traditions encoded with rules of behaviour whether socially predicated or conceived as nature given. Such a system exists within a system of administrative and judicial regulation which relates to the process of government and political authority that builds upwards from the district to the centre of political power within a nation-state to which the tribal group claim citizen-ship collectively, but mostly severally.

An inter-tribal situation is one in which shared culture and common codes of behaviour are absent and have to be negotiated. Such a situation becomes acute when one tribal group of a sizeable number moves temporarily into the territories of another tribal group. Here is not only the question of general public peace that becomes pressing, but questions defining resources and their access and conflict settlement mechanisms become so important and a common group have to be created. This is because the behavioural codes of the ground involved might not be commensurate. Though the receiving group has sovereignty (theoretically) over the resources in its territory, it cannot practically (legally) exclude the incoming group because both of them are nationals of the same country. As such the incoming group has the legal right to be where it goes and the receiving group cannot exclude it from its territory even if it wanted to do so. The Fur and the pastoral Arab war of 1988/89 show the difficulty of excluding an incoming group form the Fur territory. Hence negotiations of a common frame of reference and a joint definition of the situation are the best way to insure peaceful coexistence. The case of the Zaghawa shows that very clearly. Using research material from the Sudan/Chad border this paper intends to shed some light on this process.

2. The Zaghawa of Sudan/Chad Border: An Overview

The Sudan/Chad border area of Dar Zaghawa is defined geographically by the Wadi Howar basin and the tributaries that run into it. On the Sudan side Wadis of Hilaliya, Karnoi, Furawaya, Karo and Musbat run in a north direction into Wadi Howar. On the Chad side Wadis of Ndjeres, Bahai, Bardaba and Turta-me run into Wadi Howar.

All these Wadis (including Wadi Howar) run seasonally, from July to October, but Wadi Howar retains water in big water pools up to November for many years. It also provides extensive grazing areas even in the dry season (November - July). The other Wadis (tributaries of Wadi Howar) provide the permanent water points in terms of wells bored in the Wadi beds throughout the dry season. As such livestock populations are normally spread over a wide space during the rainy season because of the availability of water in the various pools, but they are concentrated in the dry season because of the limited well fields.

Climatically, this area shows poor savannah tendencies in the southern fringes of it and semi-arid shrubland characteristics in the northern reaches of it. The direction of movement of stocks is in a vertical south to north and vice versa. The area is a camel and sheep country although some families in the southern parts of this area hold some cattle and goats.

Socially, the Zaghawa of this area are organised in patrilineal descent groups, the structurally highest of which is referred to as *Ner*, i.e., tribe, and the lowest and more basic one is called *Beá* lineage. Each of these groups claim ownership of a specific territory with its water, farmland and grazing resources, and have a separate animal brand. All speak the Zaghawa language with three dialects as distinguishing marks between the Bedayat, the Wagi and the Kobe; the three main divisions within the Zaghawa. These divisions also correspond to administrative divisions within Dar Zaghawa. The *Ner* (tribal) names repeat themselves across the international borders. Thus in Furawiya area in the Sudan one encounters *Geli Gargi, Kurra* Biriyara tribes which one also encounters in Ndjeres area in Chad. This is also the case in the Kobe areas of Tine in both Chad and Sudan. What this shows is the fact that the international borders came into existence recently (1924 border protocol between the French and the British) dividing the tribes *de jure* into two international domains. *De facto*, Dar Zaghawa, for the Zaghawa, remains undivided since a pastoral family can claim resources in both sides.

From a resource tenure point of view, each of the Zaghawa groups have first access rights to a certain portion of territory, though in practice it cannot exclude any Zaghawa from it. These are historical claims with certain a symbolic value but seldom activated in daily life. This is due to the fact that despite territorial claims, Zaghawa groups are not territorial. Inter-marriage and constant mobility led to a situation where all socially defined territories have become factually multi-tribal. People are not supposed to cut trees in the vicinity of villages, camp sites or well sites. They are also supposed not to graze livestock that do not belong to a village near village sites. Apart from those restrictions each Zaghawa family has free access to the general grazing lands.

On the whole, this area is characterised by scanty and meagre grazing resources for two out of four years. Hence there exists a constant need to migrate to the south into inner Dar Fur to ward off the effects of the ever-present shadow of drought. The reason why only the south is open is related to the geographical realities of an area that is

hemmed in by the Sahara desert on three sides. The distances covered in those years of mass exodus are so enormous that they may carry the Zaghawa pasoralists into the Fur territories around the Jebel Marra massif and beyond into the Rezaigat territories.

3. Management of Intra-Tribal Conflicts: Territorial Rights in Grazing Areas and Water Sources

As alluded to above each Zaghawa group with a separate animal brand (which is a signifier of a *Ner* (tribe) claims territorial rights on certain portions of the Zaghawa Dar. While such claims are recognised traditionally, they are not used as a means of exclusion for any group within the Zaghawa from access to grazingland. Farmlands and flood cultivation plains are another thing, where they are held for generations within families. Such claims amount to regulation of access, the order of that access, and set parameters for resolving any conflict that might arise therein. The general rule, which lies behind such claims, is the rule of "first occupancy", which carries historical underpinnings. The claims associated with this rule were always substantiated by the existence of *Ner* sacred objects such as mountains, rocks and trees that belong to particular groups in a certain territory. These sacralized objects exist always close to Wadis which give possibilities of permanent surface water, i.e., well fields. Since permanent water is a critical factor even in years of good grazing, the water points become points of reference to a tribe's territory. Elaborate codes and rituals related to who shall first dig a well *Bi awar* (water spilling) are enacted each year on the onset of the long dry season when livestock return from wet season (rainy season) grazing areas of Wadi Howar to well fields.

In the Wadi Howar continuum of the Zaghawa territory more diffuse rules of territory tenure are applied though the rule of historical occupancy applies. However, the onset of the drought of the seventies, accompanied by political instability in Chad throughout the two decades between 1970 and 1990, put the Wadi Howar range out of use. The drought led to the mass exodus of the Sudan side of Zaghawa population who moved into the *Qoz* zone of inner Dar Fur where most never came back to Dar Zaghawa. The political instability in Chad led to the migration of most of the Chad-side Zaghawa into Sudan where they remained as reluctant sojourners awaiting the clearance of the political climate.

In December 1990 Idris Deby, a Zaghawa from Ndjeres, took power in Chad and the political situation in the Dar Zaghawa end of Chad started stabilising itself slowly through the 1990s. When I started my first field work among the Chad Zaghawa in 1994, what one noted was not only the relative political stability and peace in this area but also the persistent regeneration of pasture throughout this period and the rise in livestock and human population as people started moving back to their old tracts of territory. One also noted that while the political situation for the Chad Zaghawa of those areas was improving, the situation for the Sudan Zaghawa was deteriorating due to political changes in the national centre of power in Sudan as from 1989. Understandably the Chad part of the Zaghawa range began to be used more and more, including the Wadi Howar basin as a point of confluence of the Zaghawa pastoralists of the two international domains.

The reoccupation of the Wadi Howar basin by the Zaghawa of the two international domains was not problem-free when it came to questions of resource tenure and who will have the right of first access. This might have reflected the gradual change on concepts of tenure over a period of two decades, but also new political realities of the relative ascendance of Chad Zaghawa to political power in their international domain. Small clashes between Zahgawa herders of Sudanese and Chadian background started taking place in the pastures of Wadi Howar. While most were contained it was clear that things were not the same as Zaghawa herders from across the border started using their Chadian identity as a reference for their right of first access to the grazing areas that existed on the Chadian side of the Wadi Howar basin.

The conflict over resource tenure and access to grazing land, which came on the wake of the introduction of an international identity referent as opposed to a tribal one, reached its climax with a tragic incident in the winter of 1996/1997. The incident proposed new realities and the conflict resolution process became an addition. The story itself is very simple but the consequences of it were complex and far-reaching in terms of management of resources in Dar Zaghawa.

3.1 The Narrative: Locality and the State

In a desolate corner of Wadi Howar, camel herders from the Zaghawa; one group from Chad and another from Sudan met. The Chadian herders beat the Sudanese herders claiming that they had trespassed international borders by grazing on what was technically the Chadian side of the Wadi Howar depression. When the Sudanese Zaghawa herders reported back to their elders what had happened, a party of young people who were having the formal capacity of being a part of the so-called popular defence forces (PDF) of the Sudanese regime were dispatched to look closely into the matter.

Armed with Kalashnikov (AK47) assault rifles issued by the Government of Sudan, the party of the young Sudanese Zaghawa caught up with the Chadian Zaghawa herders and seized a number of camels and returned to Furawiya area. The traditional way of dealing with such a situation was for the elders of the Chadian Zaghawa to approach their counter-part or the local Zaghawa native authority in the Sudan side to look into the matter. However, when word of the situation reached the young Bedayat Sultan *Timan Deby* (the brother of President Idris Deby of Chad), he dispatched an armed group including his machine gun-mounted Toyota land cruiser to forcibly return the camels and the PDF force of the Sudan Zaghawa to his court in Bahai - just half a mile into Chad from the Sudanese Bahai.

When the two armed parties encountered each other on the impossible situation whereby the Sudanese Zaghawa could not concede to force and the Chadian Zaghawa could not return empty handed, a battle ensued. By the time the machine-guns and AK47 assault rifles were silenced, ten Sudanese Zaghawa and seven Chadian Zaghawa were dead. The traditional way of responding to this situation was for the Furanwiya people to mobilise the Sudan Zaghawa in order to take revenge on the Chad Zaghawa and for the Chad Zaghawa to mobilise in order to counter the inevitable. But it was not as simple as that. It was a complex situation where the parties involved cut across international and *Ner* tribal identities. Those who died in this incident were mainly from two Zaghawa *Ner*: Geli Gargi and Biriyara, but those who got wounded belonged to other groups within the Zaghawa. The issue which triggered this tragic outcome was also an issue of principle: i.e., whether a Zaghawa group can exclude other Zaghawa groups from access to water and pasture irrespective of whether that was in Chad or in Sudan. In fact, for most of the Zaghawa herders, the grazing area which led to bloodshed among fellow tribesmen was neither Sudanese nor Chadian. It belonged to the Zaghawa's and was located in Dar Zaghawa. The person central to this incident was a sultan, i.e., a native authority, who happened to be the brother of a President whose war of coming to power and being maintained in power was - at the time - understood to be a joint Zaghawa enterprise, not marred by national identification.

3.2 The Management of the Conflict: Invention of a Tradition

In the apprehensible situation that followed in the aftermath of this conflict, a tradition of conflict management has to be created to preserve peace and prevent an all out intra-tribal war that might drag the two states into an armed conflict. Ironically it was the President's brother, Sultan Timian Deby, who mismanaged a conflict that could have been otherwise controlled. The other party, the PDF force, is a militia that belonged to another government. War would have been a likely scenario had the native chiefs of the Sudan Zaghawa played the same game as Sultan Timan did, i.e., resorting to their narrow group identity and drumming for war. This situation could have had secondary effects in Chad itself because those who died had the same tribal identity on both sides of the border, i.e., Geli Gargi and Biriyara (the clan of the President). Coincidentally, there was a political conflict between the Biriyara and the Geli Gargi in Chad, simmering for years over the Sultanate, of which the President's brother is now made incumbent sultan. It will not help the situation if the intra-tribal war scenario became a reality. In addition, an officer in the Chadian army, who happened to be Geli Gargi Zaghawa from Sudan, was shot accidentally by the President (Biriyara) a few months ago. Although they forgave that incident, the Geli Gargi were now interpreting the situation as another insult from the President's clan. In addition to all this, the Wadi Howar range was put out of limit as groups disengaged, each regrouping in apprehension of the bleak prospects of war.

Normally intra-tribal conflicts are dealt with by elders in the locality of the occurrence but the Klashnikov culture brought about new and stark realities. On hearing about the incident, the President of Chad immediately dispatched his brother (an engineer who was later appointed ambassador to Libya) with a delegation from Ndjamena (1400 km

away) to set in motion a process of containment and reconciliation. Simultaneously, he sent a stern and strongly worded message to his brother, the Sultan - as a result of which the latter dropped out of sight. The fact that Sultan Riman temporarily disappeared was positively received by the Geli Gargi Zaghawa of the Sudan as a sign of the seriousness of the President who, in making that happen, has demonstrated a strong political will to deal with the problem personally. This was also a public disgrace to the Sultan since he will not be given the opportunity of being a part of the management of a conflict which he helped create though his office automatically made him a part of its resolution. In fact, rumour had it that Sultan Timan had to hide in the house of the Shertai of Dar Galla, the native chief of the Sudanese Geli Gargi, because he was told that the President was so angry with the role he played so incompetently in this conflict that he might shoot him on sight. Whether true or not is irrelevant, but it helped to take the steam out of the anger of the Geli Gargi of both Sudan and Chad at the loss of ten tribesmen.

Doussa Beby, the President's brother and emissary, apologised to the Geli Gargi on behalf of the President by distancing himself from what their brother, the Sultan, had done. In the process, he pointed out the blood affinities between the two tribes and the traditions of peaceful resolution of intra-tribal conflicts within the Zaghawa. The Geli Gargi insisted that the apology should personally come from the President because they had two outstanding cases and in both the President's clan was involve one was the present case, the other was the shooting by the President of their son, the captain in the Chadian army, some months ago.

A truce was reached pending the President's apology and that the two groups should refrain from hostile action against each other. The President personally apologised and paid Diya (blood money) totalling more that 200,000,000 Central African Francs. By so doing, the President, as some people say, "bravely shouldered" the responsibility and accepted the public blame for his brother's acts. That was not a sign of weakness. On the contrary, it was a sign of strength. The of principle of access to pasture and water resources within the Zaghawa territory irrespective of national identity was positively affirmed. The President became the guarantor of the peace agreed upon. An emissary was stipulated to accompany the Chadian Zaghawa during their Wadi Howar sojourn in order to resolve problems or refer them to higher authority before escalating into an outright conflict.

4. Emissaries and Envoys: Mangement or Inter-tribal Pastoral Relations?

In the situation described above one does see the creation of a tradition whereby an incumbent President becomes a party to the management of intra-tribal conflict by resolving societal issues of resource tenure and management. This, of course, is an exceptional situation because the ruling African elites have shown very little interest in Africa's pastoralists. This, of course, is again in line with what Horowitz observe "with the exception of Mauritania and Somalia, the ruling elites in African states are drawn from non-pastoral groups which also view pastoralism with ambivalence at best and often with outright hostility" (quoted in Sharif Harir 1996).

Here the President is not only of a pastoral background, but also a group member. Though he was the guarantor of the peace agreement reached in this instance, as a president he might not have been able (in fact it was impossible) to follow the day to day management of this peace. Hence an emissary was appointed to accompany the Chadian Zaghawa in the daily regulation of relations and management of resources so as to prevent the occurrence of situations leading to the disturbance of the peace. The idea of an emissary or an envoy accompanying mobile pastoral groups and acting as an interface between the local population and authorities of the receiving area and of the incoming groups is not a new thing among the Zaghawa. The incident above revived an old idea which has been in practise in the management of Zaghawa relations with groups such as the Fur, the Masaleet and Rezaiqat Arabs, whose areas have been hosting Zaghawa herds in years of mass exodus resulting from recurrent droughts. In the remaining part of this paper I shall seek to elucidate its workings on the ground.

5. The Need For Long Distance Migration and Expansion of Range

The Wadi Howar basin Zaghawa remember time in terms of years of good rains, which are seldom, and years of bad rains during which mass exodus was necessary. Thus *Baré Bere* (the years people have to go to Wadi *Baré* in Dar Masaleet), *Joul Bere* (the year of Fur country), *Ershiqat Bere* (the year of Dar Rezaiqat) are some of the years one

hears about. The need to move out temporarily from this area is a built-in-mechanism to manage the herds if herds are to survive drought. There are heavy migrations amounting to mass exodus in two out of every four years. In fact Dar Zaghawa seems to confirm the idea that in the drylands of Africa there is not a single tribal range that is big enough to provide security against drought. The need to encroach on other groups' territories is a constant one and that has to be done peacefully and managed carefully throughout the sojourn.

We cannot say for certain how inter-tribal relations between incoming sojourners and settled tribes of receiving areas were managed during the 19th century. However, when it comes to the Zaghawa, the British colonial period shows (starting in 1917 when Dar Fur was annexed) a clear picture of how that was managed. The four Zaghawa chiefs (Sultan of Dar Kobe, the Shertai of Dar Galla, the Melik of Dar Tuer and that of Dar Artaj) collectively supported an emissary to move with the main body of the tribe entering a certain area, e.g., Fur territory. This emissary who is known as *Mandoub* carried papers signed (stamped) by the Zaghawa chiefs and addressed to the chiefs of the tribes of the receiving areas. Later, after the British re-organised the native administration in Dar Zaghawa in 1950/51, each chief in the Zaghawa could appoint as many emissaries as necessary depending on the directions to which the Zaghawa exodus was heading. However, the district commissioner who gave them letters to his counterparts in the district of reception must also approve these emissaries.

Emissaries, normally presented their credentials to the local authorities in the reception areas and mediated as the juridical-political authority in conflicts arising between the Zaghawa sojourners and the host communities in conformity with the legal and social customary codes applicable in the area of reception. The district commissioner also gave assistance to the local authority in producing men wanted for offences and crimes committed and also to oversee the discharge of the responsibilities and liabilities arising therefrom. However, one of the main areas of responsibility of such an emissary is managing information related to resource use in the area of reception. This might relate to tree felling, trespass on farmland, grazing in the vicinity of village parameters... etc. Any damage or liability resulting from misuse and compensations thereof in case the culprit is not identified is collectively borne. The emissary has to see to the execution of such a collective responsibility. This was the idea revived in the settlement discussed above.

Another function, related to the management of peace and inter-tribal relations, was that of the guarantor (Dhamin); an envoy accredited to a market area to confirm the identities of Zaghawa livestock sellers. Such a person is approved by the local Zaghawa authorities and the local government authority in the market area to seal a transaction between the Zaghawa livestock sellers and the purchaser. His main function is to guarantee the identity of the seller and to undertake to trace this person in case the animal sold was disputed by a third party at a later date. He receives commission on sales and entertains Zaghawa livestock sellers in his house.

6. CONCLUSION

In the arid lands of Sahelian Sudan, one encounters two types of pastoral movements that are adopted as organisational solutions to the constraints which an environment that is characterised by scarce resources presents: a predictable seasonal movement within one's "own" territory in response to the seasonal shortages of water and pastures and long range migrations that take herds and people outside their "own" territory to other group's territories. The first type of seasonal migrations are done most of the years as exemplified by the Hadendowa (Beja) of eastern Sudan, the Shukriya of Butana, and the Kababish of Northern Kordofan among others. The second type of migration can be exemplified by the Rufa'a al Hoi, who follow the Blue Nile into Khor Yabus in the Ingessena area, the various Baggara groups who move from the lower fringes of the semi-arid lands to the southern riches of savannah, and the Zaghawa who move from the Wadi Howar basin down to the Fur and Masaleet territories a few hundred kilometres to the south of their ethnic territory.

In the first type of movement, the management of scarce resources is governed by the repertoire of customs and traditions that regulate tenure and access to resources that emanate from the single "we" group. Here a common denominator is found in the cultural codes that are shared by the "we" group. While those cultural codes do not exclude the possibility of conflicts occurring within the "we" group, the resolution of such conflicts when they occur follows a traditional path illuminated by customs and historical precedents. Where such a precedent is lacking due to

the "atypical" nature of the conflict, a tradition is invented, as we have seen in the intra-tribal case referred to above, on the bases of an existing common culture and kinship affinities.

However, the long-range type of movement which brings groups who do not share a common tradition together poses problems of a different nature and order. A common ground has to be created politically. This is not only in anticipation of a conflict but also in order to create a common ground relating to management of resources in those areas of receptions. Here emissaries and envoys accredited to the host groups' local authority play that role. While such groups (the in-coming and the receiving) might find some complementarity of functions, such as the case with pastoralists and agriculturalists, and find a form of symbiotic existence, conflict might arise and mechanisms of solution will be needed. It is in the interest of the two groups that resources should be managed in a manner that is not detrimental to any of them. Here *Mandoub* and *Dhamin* play a role that minimises conflict whether relating to resource management or peaceful co-existence.

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ETHNICITY AND SCALE

Frode Storaas

The term tribe is no longer used in anthropological literature; it has been substituted by the term ethnic group. The change was meant to help to break the idea that Africa could be described as a discontinuous array of tribes with shared culture. A systematic order and functional integration of these entities evolved from the structural-functional way of studying the tribes. The works of Phillip Gulliver on the Turkana, Edward Evans-Pritchard on the Nuer, Neville Dyson-Hudson on the Karimogong are among the many great monographs on Africa that have become classics and still strongly influence African studies. These anthropologists sought to demonstrate social and political order in `primitive' societies. They were not so much concerned with situations where people did not conform with their models. Rather, they presented in general terms a picture of social conformity where there was no room for individual variation. Commenting pointedly on Evans-Pritichard's work, Rosaldo (1986, 94) says that "[o]nly someone pathologically oversocialised could follow such programmed normative commands without exceptions or contextual qualification." Victor Tuner (1987, 72) finds much anthropological work guilty of "a systematic dehumanising of the human subjects of study...". He writes:

Within anthropology there was a tendency to represent social reality as stable and immutable, a harmonious configuration governed by mutually compatible and logically interrelated principles. There was a general preoccupation with consistency and congruence. And even though most anthropologists were aware that there generally are differences between ideal norms and real behaviour, most of their models of society and culture tended to be based upon ideology rather than upon social reality, or take into account the dialectical relationship between these (pp. 73-4).

Although the anthropologists of that time provide information about the variation of everyday life, they sought to penetrate what they felt to be trivial in order to discover organisational principles. Sally Falk Moore (1978, 36) has noted that in the academic tradition represented by these authors " ... congruence is stressed... the analysis is made in terms of it." In a newly reprint of "Ethnic Groups and Boundaries" (a collection of essays on social organisation of culture difference that for 30 years argued against the structural-functional paradigm), Fredrik Barth writes: "...similar ways of thinking are constantly being reintroduced into the social science literature, deriving either from the common-sense reifications of people's own discourse and experience or from the rhetoric of ethnic activists" (Barth 1998, 5). The reification of ethnicity and ethnic groups covers up the manifold of ways people do organise. Furthermore, the conflicts we can observe on the ground, do seldom, if ever, correspond with how the involved ethnic groups are defined.

By using Turkana as my empirical case, I will try to demonstrate in this paper how scale becomes a factor in the way people identify themselves with groups of people and in certain situations mobilise as a force.

Turkana District in the northwest corner of Kenya covers 62,500 square kilometres. The entire district lies in the Rift Valley. This break in the earth's crust extends from southern of Africa through eastern Africa, all the way to Turkey in the north. Lake Turkana is located in the middle of the Rift and represents a natural boundary of the Turkana District in the east. The steep escarpment ascending to the high plateau in Northeast Uganda forms the western boundary. The floor of the Rift Valley rises gradually from an altitude of 400 metres at the lake to 900 meters where the escarpment rises abruptly to the surrounding ridges of 1500 and more metres elevation above sea level. In places the landscape is flat or slightly undulating, but for the most part it is interrupted by hills and mountains. The Loima massif rises in the centre of the district.

Drainage into Turkana from surrounding territory is the region's primary source of water; actual precipitation within the region is less important. Rivers and streams descend into the Turkana criss-crossing mountains and steep valleys on their way to the level lowland terrain of the region. Neighbouring highlands with higher annual rainfall represent the catchment for many of these water courses. And although these river courses are dry for most of the year, water is readily available just under the surface. In more than 90% of the region water is permanently available within a distance of 20 kilometres (Sanford 1983). The even flow of water just under the surface extends under the banks of these riverbeds giving nourishment to trees and brush. Now and then the rivers flood, spreading far beyond their

banks. Here the earth and sand host seeds which await moisture. Even without rain vegetation can flourish along the river banks. While these green strips appear insignificant at a distance, they can be of great value to people and livestock who wander from one green strip to another during dry periods.

When precipitation occurs as showers over a longer period, the flatland and hills attain a green hue. However, if the intense sun returns too soon thereafter, all that is not protected by shade is rapidly parched - the arid but beautiful and colourful landscape of lava, rocks and sand reappears. Vegetation persists only under and among trees and bushes and in the vicinity of small and large rocks. And it is here that tame and wild animals graze. They fertilise the soil and spread seeds. In this way patches of fertile soil are created which are not so barren.

If one traverses the Tukana District, it is soon apparent that it is not merely brown and desolate; here and there it is green and fertile. The quarter million people residing in Turkana District exploit those localities which provide the best conditions for human subsistence. They have developed techniques for exploiting the resources found in tracts of land which host trees, shrubs and other green vegetation. Three quarters of the population are nomadic pastoralists who migrate with goats and sheep, donkeys, camels and cattle and a few dogs. It is probable that people have exploited nature here by means of animal husbandry for more than 5000 years (Phillipson 1985). But human-like fossils dating back 1.5 million years have been found near Lake Turkana (cf. the Leakeys). They are the remains of people who subsisted from gathering and hunting. Perhaps the local resource base was different at that time, but still many who live in this region survive on what they directly harvest from nature. Different peoples have resided in this region over the centuries. Like human groups in other parts of East Africa, and elsewhere in Africa as well, local populations have been subjected to processes of expansion and division, expulsion and assimilation. Survival must have revolved around the suitability of the various techniques which competing groups of people developed for exploiting natural resources. These have apparently included techniques for selecting and breeding domestic livestock, for organising animal husbandry as well as for maintaining access to grazing land and defending rights in animals against raiding.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century there was in central Karamoja of Uganda a rather loose `cultural confederation' of disparate Ateger communities of eastern Nilotes. "Some, mainly descended from an early Ateger group based on the Koten-Magos hill country further east, were essentially pastoralists. Others, derived from a more westerly branch of Ateger, appropriately nicknamed *Ngikatapa*, `bread people', subscribed to an economy featuring grain agriculture" (Lamphear 1994, 64-65). "Tradition portray the Turkana as the eastern vanguard of the Ateger, descended from clans that broke off from the old Koten-Magos concentration to push down the rugged escarpment which now marks the Uganda-Kenya frontier. At the head-waters of the Tarash River the emigrants formed an association with *Ngikatapa*" (ibid., 66-67). In Turkana today, there are two major categories of people which are called Ngichuro and Ngimonia. Oral tradition associates them with two separate waves of immigration which should have taken place between six and ten generations ago. Ngichuro is said to come from the Karimojong, who, like many of the Nilotic people, are agro-pastoral, while the Ngimonia came from the Jie. "They were Jie herders who wandered to the east and down the steep escarpment to the `land of many caves' - Ngaturkana," as a person told me. The plains west of the lake were at that time inhabited by a loose, multi-cultural confederation of Cushitic - Maa- and Southern Nilotic - speakers called Siger, to the north, and the numerous Maa-speaking "Kor", who lived in close pastoral association with Cushitic-, Maa and Southern Nilotic-speakers called Siger, to the north, and the numerous Maa-speaking peoples, to the south. All of them herded a variety of livestock, the Cushitic specialised in camels and the Kor in cattle. A terrible drought decimated the Siger herds and led to a rapid disintegration of their community. Many of the survivors were absorbed by the Turkana and the Kor. As the Turkana rapidly began pushing out from the Tarash foothills, the powerful Kor alliance was forced east and south, and other people northwards. "While some traditions give the impression that this dramatic expansion was essentially a military one, in fact it certainly derived from a complex combination of factors, including vital commercial relations which kept the Turkana supplied with constant flow of ironware and grain. In some cases large numbers of aliens apparently opted, for various reasons, to `become Turkana' *en masse*, making the process of expansion as much the spread of a culturolinguistic system as a direct armed invasion" (Lamphear 1988; 1994, 68). Hunters and gatherers did not compete so intensely for the same resources and therefore retained enclaves encircled by nomads where they were for the most part left undisturbed. The presence of the Elomo people who subsist primarily on fishing at the south end of Lake Turkana can be explained in this way. Similarly, groups of Irenge, with a distinct language and adaptation, have persisted until the present day in the Songot Mountains in the northern part of the district. These so-called Dorobo groups are not merely hunters and gatherers, many are smiths and potters and some cultivate tobacco. They exchange these

products with their neighbours for various kinds of goods. Now the boundaries of Turkana District have long been enforced by the government, but they do not necessarily correspond with boundaries between the different peoples. For example, groups of people from Turkana have moved south, past the neighbouring Maa-speaking Samburu, and are now established in an area far to the southeast around Isiolo in the vicinity of Mt. Kenya, where they retain their identity as Turkana people. And Ngichuro groups live either permanently or seasonally in the Karamoja District inside of Uganda.

On what basis can we call Turkana an ethnic group? Not language, as there are several groups speaking a similar language; not geographical, as they are spread into several districts; not on the basis of origin, as many different groups have the same origin and, furthermore, those who are called Turkana today are a mixture of many assimilated groups with different origins.

Still the Turkana are referred to as one of several groups which separated from the Karimojong. Dodoth and Toposa are among the groups with traditions claiming Karimojong origins. Today the Dodoth reside just north of the Jie. And Toposa-land is just north of them, in Sudanese territory. Nyangatom, which is east of Toposa in the border region of the Sudan, Ethiopia and Kenya, and the Jiye just north of Toposa, manifest linguistic and sociological characteristics which indicate that these peoples also stem from these groups. Neville Dyson-Hudson has written the following about these groups:

The mutual intelligibility of their several dialects varies considerably but they clearly form a single linguistic cluster: whether their larger affiliation is to a Nilo-Hamitic category (the existence of which is presently disputed) or to some other is irrelevant here. They also share, or have shared recently enough for the fact to be attested, various social institutions: e.g., an age system of non-repetitive form, with broadly similar alternating colour categories and in most cases some correspondence of age-group names; a marked concern with, and elaboration of, cattle as value - whatever the presently divergent facts of their economies may be; a joking relationship between certain kin of opposite sex that appears connected with similar arrangements for widow inheritance; a belief in Akuj as creator-deity dwelling above (Dyson-Hudson 1966, 260-262).

Many of these characteristics common to these groups which have been called the Karimojong Cluster (Gulliver 1952; Dyson-Hudson 1966), Central Paranilotes (Tucker and Bryon 1966) and Ateger (Webster et al. 1973; Lamphear 1994), are present among all of the Nilotic peoples who reside in southern parts of the Sudan and in Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya and as far south as central Tanzania. In addition to all of the common characteristics already mentioned, Watler Goldschmidt adds:

The people are organised into lineages or clans (patrilineal descent groups whose members consider one another as kin) and these are expected to give mutual support in legal disputes and other confrontations. There are no hereditary chiefs and rarely any real political organisation. Instead, the most characteristic single feature of the Nilotic organisation is the system of age sets (Goldschmidt 1986, 1).

The relative prominence or presence of each of these characteristics varies from group to group. For instance, the complexity and significance of age sets for social life is quite diverse. Gulliver (1955, 12) writes, with reference to the Turkana: "There is an age-set system which is not particularly strong... Today it exists mainly as a conservative continuation of the relations established by initiation, and by a certain fraternity amongst contiguous age mates exhibited in feasts, dancing and some ritual activities". Erik Eriksen (1976) reports that the age-set system partially broke down among groups in Toposa, so that local elders sought counsel among Jie "experts". This is also an example of how dissimilar groups influence one another and cultural features penetrate boundaries.

The history of East Africa shows how expansion either drove out or encircled groups which came in the way and also led to the division of the newcomers. There were processes which in fact led to instances of both fusion and fission. Kins were dispersed. Today there are about 30 named clans in Turkana and each of these is represented throughout the district. Some of the clan names can also be found among other Ateger societies. A Turkana clan, *emachar*, is based upon an ideology of patrilinear kinship. But the members have no common ancestor and are unable to recall genealogies extending back for more than three or four generations. These clans each have their own names and signs which distinguish them from one another. The most important are brand markings on animals.

These markings are also called *emachar*. The heads of small children are shaved according to patterns which indicate their clan membership.

Special signs are also used to define people as either Ngichuro or Ngimonia. These categories are by the Turkana referred to as two distinguished *apol*. *Apol* is also the term used for the high side muscle located around the kidney of an animal. On ritual occasions this cut of meat is immediately excised, along with the right kidney, from a newly slaughtered animal. Then the *apol* of the person donating the animal is clarified. If he or she refers to him or herself as Ngimonia, the piece of meat is divided, separating the kidney from the muscle. If the donor is Ngichuro, then the entire cut of meat is roasted whole over the fire. This procedure is followed during every ritual meat feast and thus demarcates the difference between Ngichuro and Ngimonia people.

Today most of the people of Ngichuro are found in five named geographic areas (*ekitela*) in the western part of the district, on the plains and in the mountains near the escarpment. The remainder of the district is divided among 12 named Ngimonia areas. Within some of these 17 territories there are again people and areas with exclusive names. People of some *ekitela* have signs which set them apart. The kind of animal skin used in women's dress and the way pieces of skins are sown together, are examples of such signs which indicate *ekitela* and *apol* (Vigdis Broch-Due 1991). Lamphear writes about the processes leading up to this situation: "As [the] expansion moved further and further afield to occupy the vast area west of Lake Turkana, their earlier sense of corporate identity had become progressively diluted. The once compact community rapidly was becoming a loose confederation of local territorial sections, distinguished by distinct differences in dialect, dress and other cultural features. This was especially true for those sections which had incorporated large numbers of Siger and other strangers" (Lamphear 1994, 72). The processes of expansion, division and enclosure persist. Still people within an area can mobilise in an attempt to exclude others from a specific territory and eventually name themselves as an *ekitela*, first by adding a name to their original *ekitela* name and later drop the original name.

Ekitela is the Turkana term used for geographical territories and their people. *Ekitela* may thus refer to Turkana and its people as a whole or to territories and people at a lower level of scale. People refer to their *ekitela* when they are asked where they are from, to mean where they grew up. The answer given may sometimes refer to a small locality, other times to what are referred to in the literature as sections.

It is difficult to distinguish the Turkana into a category defined in terms of common properties of its members, which also separate them from their neighbours. Greater differences can be found among different groups within Turkana than, for example, between the Turkana section Ngikamatak and their neighbours to the west, the Karimojong section, Ngimatheneko. Variations within and similarities among different `tribes' have been largely ignored by the literature. John W. Burton (1987, xxii) has written:

[O]nly some short decades ago it was commonly accepted that tribes, like cultures, were the objects of anthropological study. The term `tribe' was used repeatedly by anthropologists conducting field research throughout the world and its standard uses encourage the misconception that tribal societies were timeless, bounded steady state systems. Rather than accurately portraying extant social realities, this usage merely provided a convenient way to designate a focal point of study.

If raiding was the theme of a study in Karijmoja, for example, the implicated people would not coincide with tribal boundaries. Groups of people from Nigmatheneko *ekitela* of Karamoja could, for instance, join together with people from Ngikamatak *ekitela* of Turkana against other Karimojong groups. As Deng pointed out: "[i]dentification is ... a fluid concept, used by different people at different times to serve different objectives" (Deng 1987, xvii). The term `tribe' has been a subject of debate precisely because it is often so difficult to define. For the people inhabiting the area west of Lake Turkana, the last two hundred years have been a history of integration and disintegration of a loose `cultural confederation' or, even more likely, a whole collection of such confederations (Lamphear 1994).

People in Turkana are affiliated with specific geographical territories to which they can claim exclusive grazing rights. Individuals and groups are associated with different territories in dissimilar ways and not only through *ekitela*. The following cases, told by a Turkana, will illustrate examples of how usufruct claims to land and pasture are tried and defende

A man called Tioko had an *akapel* for his calves near Lorangippi. This *akapel* was a kind of *anama*, that is, a field where he had first grown sorghum but now grazed his calves. The plot was enclosed by thorny bushes and located within his *ere*. But his camp was located outside of this territory which he claimed as his *ere*. One day people from Loya came by in order to water their livestock from the deep wells at Lorangippi. Tioko had a friend who lived near Loya. This friend asked his son to graze their calves inside Tioko's *akapel* after he had given them a drink at the wells. As the boy began to lead the calves through the fence around the *akapel*, Tioko's herd boys tried to stop him. They quarrelled and fought. And the hand of one of Tioko's herd boys was cut. He ran home to tell his mother. And the mother, in the company of a grown son, went to check on the *akapel*. There they found the boy from Loya with his calves inside the fence. They drove out the calves and beat the boy who then ran to relatives at the wells and told of his beating. The boy's father was a respected man and these relatives supported him; they wanted to fight for the boy. But others were present who managed to calm down the irate relatives. There was no confrontation.

Some time later Tioko met his friend from Loya. After he was told about this episode, he said in front of some of those who had been involved in the case: "This man from Loya is my friend, we should have allowed him to have his calves in our *akapel* for a day. Since I was away, it was difficult for him to ask me for permission beforehand. Fighting among friends is not good.

The person who shared this case is from a region in western Turkana where Turkana groups have enjoyed both peaceful and hostile relations with neighbouring groups from Karamoja in Uganda. The alliance among groups there has varied over time. For instance, Karimojong and Turkana groups have allied themselves in order to raid other Karimojong people. Karimojong groups take their livestock for prolonged periods into Turkana, that is, into Kenyan territory. And certain Turkana groups have dry season mountain pastures in Uganda. Because of the long drought which had become quite severe by the end of the 1970s Turkana groups negotiated for the right to graze their livestock over a stretch of land more than 200 kilometres long, which extended through Karamoja down to the plains at Lake Kyoga in central Uganda. One hundred herd units from the Ngikamatak *ekitela* and fifty from the Ngiwoyakwara *ekitela* moved as one grazing unit, *adakar*, and were in Uganda between March and September 1980. Problems occurred on the way back to Turkana and the 300 armed men included in this group conducted several raids against Karimojong people.

Adakar denotes `an entity which shares information about pasture, etc.' There are many such units within a section. And sometimes an *adakar* includes members from different sections. Membership in an *adakar* can be temporary and individuals can be excluded due to bad behaviour or other reasons. Like *ekitela, adakar* can be referred to by name, for example "Lukwang', which is an *adakar* in the *ekitela* called Ngikamatak. There are no symbols or rites which are especially related to this kind of group. All Turkana define themselves as a member of this or that *adakar*. The extent to which each such entity functions as a corporate group varies considerably. The following case told to me by one involved, shows how such a group can be mobilise

An *adakar* from Ngimatheneko of Karimojong burned off a plot of land west of Loima in order to obtain fresh new grass for their calves. Such a scorched field is called *anamat*. They departed after burning the plot and waited to return until after rain had caused new grass to sprout. A few rain showers later we happened to come by this *anamat*. The grass was fresh and abundant. And since we observed no other people in the vicinity we let our calves graze there. Then one morning, shortly after sunrise, several Ngimatheneko men arrived with staves and drove our calves away. We herd boys were threatened with a beating so we ran home to tell what had happened. It was obvious that some Ngimatheneko people had checked the *anamat* the day before and informed others that we were there.

After we told the people at our camp that the Ngimatheneko wanted to beat us, men and women collected staves and clubs and went to the *anamat*. There was fighting between our *adakar* which had used the *anamat* and the Ngimatheneko *adakar* which had burned it off. They won the fight so we had to leave. But we told our neighbouring *adakar* that we had been beaten by the Ngimatheneko. The next morning many more Ngiwoyakwara (Turkana *ekitela*) women and men were prepared to fight. The Ngimatheneko also mobilised their neighbouring *adakars*. So the confrontation which was originally between *adakars* had now become a battle between *ekitelas*. Before the combat began, the parties agreed about how the fight should be fought: it would be strictly one against one, without any ganging up against individuals.

The combat lasted for three days. In the end we won and the Karimojong Ngimatheneko were forced to flee: 112 of them were injured and three were killed. Nobody was killed on our side, but 79 were wounded.

Individuals relate themselves to land and are willing to fight for it. The cases above demonstrate how support can be mobilised in order to exclude people from utilising the resources in an area. In this way sections of people have expanded at the expense of others and this continues to happen. There also are people, which attempt to defend a particular area as their own, for instance, by controlling water points. They may refer to the area with a particular name, sometimes added to the name of their *ekitela*. Furthermore, groups from one *ekitela* have on occasions managed to gain access to an area within another *ekitela* and retain control over it. Two generations ago, five families from the Ngikamatak *ekitela* of Ngichuro *apol* settled in a region now called Nachuro, in the heart of the territory of the Natakonyang, a "sub"-*ekitela* of Ngimonia *ekitela* of Ngimonia *apol*. The grandchildren of these five families are now adults and defend Nachuro as their home territory, *akwap*. But they still consider themselves Ngikamatak and are considered as such by their Ngimonia neighbours. A similar pocket of Ngikamatak people is in the territory of the Ngisanyoka *ekitela* in the south of the district. And near Lokiriama, which is located in the western part of the Ngikamatak territory, there is a small group of Ngimonia people who have resided there for three generations. They have adopted from their new neighbour's sorghum cultivation, something which is not so common among the people of Ngimonia *apol*. Nonetheless, they maintain their Ngimonia identity and demarcate it through the *apol* rite when they slaughter animals. David Turton argues that it is possible to distinguish at least three types of expansions or population movements in East Africa: The concerted move by a group that breaks away, the more gradual infiltration of groups of individuals, for instance through inter-marriage, and the gradual but concerted *de facto* occupation of a territory claimed by others (Turton 1991, 161). Pockets of apparently "displaced" people are to be found throughout Turkana. And it is characteristic that they retain solidarity as local groups and are able to mobilise support and thus defend a territory as their *akwap.*

The principles according to which a society is organised are not always immediately apparent. They can be discovered by relating information obtained through observations with that gained through conversations with people. Much of Gulliver's information was derived from interviews with key informants. "My two best informants were both tribal policemen kindly loaned to me by the District Commissioner as guides and assistants - fortunately both were still unsophisticated" (1955, 13). At this point Rosaldo would surely draw our attention to the historical situation represented here. Regardless, it is my impression that the most important criticism which today can be levelled against the work of Gulliver and Evans-Pritchard is that, in their representations, they dwelled so extensively on organisational principles, structures, without seriously accounting for that dimension of human behaviour which does not necessarily conform to the said principles.

During interviews, informants are inclined to point out principles and how they ideally should function. Empirical descriptions based upon this type of information attain an apparent objectivity when they are ascribed to a people in general (e.g., the Turkana, the Nuer, etc.) or are presented in terms of impersonal pronouns rather than the personal names of individuals. Even though Gulliver and Evans-Pritchard express in the introductions to their monograph reservations about the representatives of their material, they qualify their work in a manner which stresses its objectivity and approximation of the truth. "Although I genuinely found a surprisingly high degree of cultural homogeneity for so dispersed a population, my specific data has perforce to be drawn from a relatively small number of particular areas. I feel certain that my main analysis is substantially correct ... on the other hand it is recognised...that more detailed data would perhaps have permitted further refinement" (Gulliver 1955, 15). "I do not make far-reaching claims. I believe that I have understood the chief values of the Nuer and am able to present a true outline of their social structure, but I regard, and have designed, this volume as a contribution to the ethnology of a particular area rather than as a detailed sociological study, and I shall be content if it is accepted as such" (Evans-Pritchard 1940, 15). Rosaldo's (1986, 93) comment on this follows: "In his introductory persona the narrator asks his readers to set aside the context of colonial domination and view his study as a `true outline', an incomplete, yet objective, scientific account."

Our representation is, of course, guided by the questions we ask and how we direct our observations. These questions and these observations are guided by theoretical background, by method, by our ability to maintain an open mind and utilise intuition and so on. The works of Gulliver and Evans-Pritchard have become classics because they are valid representations of essential features of pastoral adaptations. They looked for the social structures which regulated political and economic life. The fact that people were not always `regulated' had little to do with

these structures as Evans-Pritchard put it: "Men are born into them, or enter into them later in life, and move out of them at death; the structure endures" (1940, 262). By ignoring variations, they could come up with a holistic representation of `the Nuer' and `the Turkana'. However, the boundaries between different groups are not always equally well defined.

If one picks up a book of, let us say, Evans-Pritchard or Monneret de Villard, and makes a deliberate effort to examine the periphery of the community in question, there are always hands reaching in awkwardly from off the screen, as it were, and individuals coming and going for incomprehensible or poorly explained reasons" (Spaulding cited by Deng 1987, xvii).

Perspectives on Turkana in its entirety are problematic. But social life is not arbitrary, what we can observe is influenced by different factors. We may look for some characteristic aspects of what influence people's actions. But our representation cannot ignore the fact that human beings are creative and relate to influence in a creative way and the fact that we as observers never can get a complete picture of what is influencing them, neither can they as participants. Instead of reducing social life to `patterns of order', I think we should strive for a representation which is more open for capturing real life. The social reality is influenced by numerous conflicting or competing rule-orders as well as people's manipulative choice-making.

A more naturalistic approach has been advocated in anthropology for some years now. Criticising our classics may seem out of date. Gulliver and Evans-Pritchard discovered essential features of the societies they studied and for the most part their work is exceedingly useful to us who follow them. Their structural functional way of thinking are constantly being reintroduced by scientists, journalists and other people who claim to represent issues on ethnicity in Africa. However, their use of "ethnic", referring to groups of people who have a common traditional heritage and therefore are considered to have a shared identity, is not necessarily the best basis for analysing and understanding the conflicts we observe. We need to see social organisation as emergent and contested. Thereby, we may discover how people not only organise and mobilise for attacks, but also for peace. As for conflicts, peace is negotiated and mobilised for on various levels of scale.

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