The state, the crisis of state institutions and refugee migration in the Horn of Africa: the cases of Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia

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6. The Factors for the Crisis (Failure/Collapse) of the State in Africa

I have attempted to show, in the previous chapters, that the state and refugee crises have been part and parcel of the same process. They have both been the result of the (re)construction of the state as a sovereign territorial political entity and its failure. In other words, they have both the result of the failure of creating cohesive political community, constructing strong national political identity, a viable state, and effective and efficient state institutions. I have also tried, at the end of the previous chapter, to identify the major factors which contributed to the failure/collapse of the state and the increasing refugee migration. This chapter is a follow-up of the previous chapter and an introduction to the coming three chapters. As a follow-up this chapter will identify in more detail the major factors which lead to the collapse of the state. As an introduction to the next chapters it will indicate which factors will be emphasized in analyzing the failure of the state in the three Horn of African countries.

The Horn of African countries have been living examples of political chaos, followed by refugee migration. To understand what happened and still is happening in this part of Africa it is, therefore, important to highlight the major factors which have been contributing to the demise of these states to the extent of changing their boundaries and their mere existence as we knew them at the end of the 1980's and the beginning of the 1990's. Generally speaking, the factors, which have been behind the failure/collapse of the post-colonial states in the Horn of Africa, are complicated and interrelated in many ways. They are both socio-political and economic, domestic and international, historical (both pre-colonial and colonial) and current (post-colonial). Thus, to fruitfully grasp the complexity and the continuity and changes in this part of Africa it may be useful to employ a historical approach. To do so I prefer to divide the period to be covered in this research into pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial.

6.1 Pre-colonialism

Contrary to the dominant colonial discourse and the distorted construction of the continent's history, Africa's diverse societies and cultures have their own historical roots and continuity, which shape the present and will influence the future (Markakis, 1996: 4). By history, it does not mean the history which starts with the coming of European powers, the creation of colonial entities and the domination of Westernization as Hugh Trevor, professor of modern history at Oxford University has said, 'Perhaps in the future, there will be some African history. But at present there is none; there is only the history of Europeans in Africa. The rest is darkness ... and darkness is not a subject of history' (Quoted in Ake, 1995: 27). Nor as the American media icon Eric Severeid has declared: 'there is little in most of the new African and Asian nations worth noting in twentieth century terms that was not put there by westerners' (Ibid.). Contrary to such racially motivated colonial historical discourse, there has been history and civilization of Africans comparable to that of the rest of the world. Contrary to what Henry Kissinger has once said: '... Nothing important can come from the south. History has never been produced in the south. The axis of history starts in Moscow, goes to Bonn, crosses over Washington, and then goes to Tokyo. What happens in the south is of no importance' (Ibid.), the south is rich in history. This history is not only important but also relevant and crucial if we are to understand correctly and solve the current problems of the south in general and Africa in particular. In general, the major problem of Africa has never been the absence of history but the fact that Africa's history has been distorted and destroyed by
European powers. By history, therefore, it means the history long before colonialism and the domination of Westernization. Alike other issues, thus, to understand the cause of the crisis of African states, we have to go back into history and examine both the continuities and changes of the sociopolitical and economic development of the continent. Examining the pre-colonial history of the Horn of Africa thus will help us to understand what continued through colonialism and post-colonialism and what was destroyed (distorted) during colonialism.

This will be discussed in detail in the coming two chapters. However, it is important to make some points with regard to the pre-colonial Horn of Africa. This part of Africa had been on the move since the beginning of the 16th century, earlier in some cases, throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. In some cases this human movement (migration) continued up until the 19th century and the coming of European powers. This huge population movement was also accompanied by extensive long-distance trade (See UNESCO, General history of Africa, different volumes).

The huge population migration and the long-distance trade had two related results. The first was the intermingling of the different societies and cultures and the disintegration of some communities and the (re)creation of others. Continuous conflicts and wars between different communities over the control of territories and important trade routes were the other. However, the emergence of larger communities and the growth of population created shortage of free land to be occupied without encountering resistance from neighbouring communities. The result was again war between communities in which the better organized was the winner and the weaker was incorporated within the stronger. According to the theory of the origin of the state, developed by Carneiro, it was such wars which gave rise to the creation of bigger political entities - states (Carneiro, 1970: 734). With regard to the constitution of the modern state in Europe, Anthony Gidden (Quoted in Holsti, 1996: 42) also suggests that, ‘it was war, and preparations for war, that provided the most potent energizing stimulus for the concentration of administrative and fiscal reorganization that characterized the rise of absolutism’. Holsti (Ibid.: 42-43) himself stressed that, ‘indeed one could make the case that a significant majority of states were born through war and continued to centralize after armed combat’ However, as Carneiro (1970: 734) points out: ‘... while war-fare may be a necessary condition for the rise of the state, it is not a sufficient one. Or, to put it another way, while we can identify war as the mechanism of state formation, we need also to specify the conditions under which it gave rise to the state’. The other factors are, according to Carneiro (Ibid.: 734-735), environmental circumscription, political evolution and social circumscription (these will be discussed in the next chapter). In addition to these factors, it is very important to note here that the ruling groups and/or elites were the ones who imagined their respective communities, created identities and constructed boundaries, and by doing so they contributed to the creation of some sort of state. In other words, it was those ruling groups and/or elites who played a leading role in the process of statecraft. The strength or weakness of those groups had a serious impact on the process of state-building.

The war between the various communities and later on between the chiefdoms and kingdoms together, more or less, with the factors indicated above gave rise to the development of complex and diversified political structures in different parts of the Horn of Africa. By diversified I mean, for instance, that the political structure developed in Ethiopia was different from that of Sudan, and the political structure in Somalia was different from both Ethiopia and Sudan. Even within each there had been different political structures in their long history.
ranging from simple clan structure to centralized monarchy. This is a clear indication that Africans were capable of constructing effective political structures which served their respective needs. This means that there had been political communities whether we call those communities tribal, chiefdom, kingdom or early states. There had been some form of political accountability - power relations between the rulers and the ruled. There had been political legitimacy and representation which correspond with the existing type of political accountability. Moreover, the societies (individuals and groups) had been identifying themselves with the established political communities whether they were chiefdoms or kingdoms. However, it is true that those political communities, the order of political accountability, identities and the features of sovereignty were different from those existing in Europe and what was later established (attempted) by colonial powers in Africa. For instance, the pre-colonial sovereignty had two features radically different from sovereignty exercised in post-colonial Africa (Herbst, 1996: 127-128). First, 'in large parts of pre-colonial Africa, control tended to be exercised over people rather than land. Land was plentiful and populations thin on the ground. Indeed, many precolonial polities were surrounded by large tracts of land that were open politically and physically or both' (Ibid.). Thus, the precolonial practices were radically different from the later European and post-independence African view that states are territorial entities. Second, 'sovereignty tended to be shared. It was not unusual for a community to have nominal obligations and allegiances to more than one political center. As power was not strictly defined spatially, there was much greater confusion over what it meant to control a particular community at any one time' (Ibid.). This was significantly different from the modern notion of statehood, where sovereign control over each piece of territory is unambiguous: there is never any doubt about where one stands, and that one always stands on the domain of a single sovereign state (Ibid.). ‘The imposition of territorial state by colonial authorities’, as Herbst (Ibid. 129) correctly points out, ‘was thus a severe disruption of African political practices. The concept of the nation-state as introduced by Europeans required only that territory be clearly demarcated. Authority was not dependent on popular support and legitimacy’.

Thus, it is important to emphasize here that the situation in the pre-colonial period and the problems the society encountered were very different from those of the Europeans and so was the solution. There was no need to copy (import) from somewhere as happened in colonial and post-colonial periods. After independence, however, Africa’s heterogeneous political heritage was brushed aside in the rush by nationalists to seize the reins of power of the nation-state defined politically and geographically by their European colonizers. Understanding what was lost when the Europeans imposed the territorial nation-state or understanding what the colonialist destroyed little more than a century ago is, therefore, important in explaining the current crisis in Africa. It will also be helpful for the development of a more indigenous alternative to the nation-state as theorized, designed, and imposed by the Europeans.

6.2 Colonialism

As has been pointed out, colonial powers, in order to create their own political structures, destroyed and/or distorted the existing ones. In other words, colonial powers reconstituted the political structure of Africa. In this process they arbitrarily divided the region, with little or no respect for preexisting social and political groupings. It is this arbitrary division and artificial creation that has immensely complicated the task of creating cohesive political community and state-building in post-colonial Africa in general (Ravenhill, 1988: 283). An adequate
understanding of the post-colonial state in Africa, therefore, requires a deeper understanding of the historical conditions surrounding the formation of the colonial state, the structure and process of that state, the impact on the indigenous social structures, and how all these factors together shaped the nature and role of the post-colonial state (Mozaffar, 1987: 2-3, see also Young, 1988a: 2). In this respect, two important sets of questions should be addressed. Firstly, what legacy did colonialism leave to Africa or what impact did it make on Africa? Secondly, in view of this impact or balance sheet, what is the significance of colonialism for Africa? Does it constitute an important episode in the history of the continent? Was it a major break with the past of the continent, or was it a mere passing event which did not constitute a break in the history of the continent? In short, what is the place of the colonial era within the wider context of Africa's history?

Though these questions will be dealt with in one of the coming chapters, it would be worthwhile to make some points here. Colonialism lasted in most part of Africa for under a hundred years, a little more in some cases. Therefore, measured on the time-scale of history it was but an interlude of comparatively short duration. But it was an interlude that radically changed the direction and momentum of African history (Boahen, 1985: 806). Colonialism was a rupture from the pre-colonial period in a sense that, firstly, colonialists destroyed the existing political communities, distorted their development and attempted to reorganize them so that it would be easy to impose their rule (the creation of ethnic groups and ethnic identity is one good example). Secondly, it was a rupture that distorted the established identities and created a shallow identity within the newly created colonial political communities. Thirdly, the pre-colonial political accountability, political legitimacy and system of representation were also altered and replaced with the new order of political accountability in which the society was transformed into colonial subject. However, it should be emphasized here that the impact of colonialism was more serious in destroying and distorting the existing political communities, identities and order of political accountability rather than in creating new ones. This had been mainly because colonialism in Africa lived long enough to destroy and disarticulate the pre-colonial system but not long enough to create new and deeply rooted political and socio-economic arrangements.

However, Africa was not the only continent colonized by European powers. Why does then the negative impact of colonialism seem far stronger in Africa than in any continent? Analyzing the African colonial state and the pattern of decolonization in comparative perspective will help us answer this important question. Furthermore, the establishment of colonial rule and its working should not be taken to be solely the result of the actions of the colonial powers. Rather, it was a two-way process in which the Africans themselves also played a role. It is, therefore, important to consider the relevant actors which were involved in the establishment and working of colonial rule in Africa.

There are other important points to be considered in understanding the impact of colonialism in Africa. First we have the different phases in the establishment of colonial rule and the respective policies pursued and the measures taken during these phases. The colonial period can be divided into three overlapping phases: the period from the establishment of colonies in the 1880s and 1890s until the First World War; the inter-war period; and the period from the Second World War to independence (Tordoff, 1997: 36). During these phases different
economic, political and social policies were pursued and various measures were taken by the different colonial powers. The second point is the partition of Africa into different colonial powers and the different policies pursued by those powers. If we take only the Horn of Africa, it was partitioned among British, French and Italy. Even worse, the Somali people alone were divided between British, French and Italian colonial rule. Taking into account that each colonial power had more or less different policies it will not be difficult to comprehend how complicated the construction of a viable post-colonial political community, national identity and functioning state in this part of Africa has become. It is, thus, important to take into account these factors in analysing the impact of colonialism on the different countries concerned.

6.3 Post-colonialism

It is clear, from the above brief discussion, that both the pre-colonial and colonial developments of Africa are contributing factors for the failure/collapse of contemporary African states. However, they can not explain everything that went wrong in post-colonial Africa. The major explanation lies within the post-colonial socio-political and economic development (underdevelopment) of the continent. It is, therefore, crucial to focus on this period.

As colonialism was a rupture from the pre-colonial period, independence or post-colonial development has also been another rupture in African history. It has been a rupture in the sense that colonial rule was abolished and Africans became citizens of their respective countries rather than being subjects of different colonial rule. It has also been a rupture that created an opportunity. It would have been possible to construct (reconstruct) new post-colonial political communities, to create national identities, and establish a new order of political accountability, political legitimacy and political representation. In addition, it has been a rupture that created an opportunity to embark on the development of a more indigenous alternative to the European designed territorial nation-state and development paradigm. However, this opportunity which was created during decolonization was missed. It is, therefore, possible to soundly argue that the crisis that Africa has been suffering from partially emanates from missing the opportunity created at the time of decolonization and after. What this means is that the problems individual countries encountered and the magnitude of crisis they are in depend on the extent to which they managed to create a unified political community; to create strong political identity over and above other sub-national (ethnic, regional and/or religious) identities; to establish corresponding political accountability which can prevent monopoly of power and can create political legitimacy and make possible the reasonable representation of the various interest groups; and to make (build) both politically and economically a viable state.

Further to the general arguments above, it is crucial to analyse in detail, what happened during the post-colonial period to the process of creating political communities, national identities, political accountability and the process of state building. As Bratton (1989: 409) cleverly points out:

The harsh reality of state formation in post-colonial Africa is that, in many countries, the apparatus of government has begun to crumble before it has been fully consolidated. There is a crisis of political reality that is just as severe as the well-known crisis of economic production. These two crises are
intimately interrelated, each being as a cause and an effect of the other. We are currently witnessing in Africa a self-perpetuating cycle of change, in which weak states engender anemic economies whose poor performance in turn further undermines the capacity of the state apparatus.

This seems very true in much of Africa. To this extent there is a consensus among scholars and politicians. However, the important question that should be raised here is what are the major factors which contributed to such political and economic crisis? Scholars and politicians inside and outside Africa have been giving different answers emphasizing different factors. Some of them emphasize internal factors and blame Africans themselves. Others emphasize external (international) factors and blame the European and American dominated international political and economic system. Still others focus on political or economic or cultural factors separately. Though the different approaches have their own points, focusing on a single factor/actor will not help us to understand the complex socio-political and economic crisis of the continent. For there is no internal without external; nor is there a political or economic or cultural factor without the others. It is, therefore, crucial to identify and analyse the major factors separately and then bring them together to show how one factor influences other factors and is influenced by others in contributing to the overall crisis of the continent. The major factors which contributed to the socio-political and economic crisis and finally to the failure/collapse of the real existing post-colonial state in Africa, as indicated in the previous chapter, can be (re)grouped as follows:

- the imposition of European (Western and Eastern) and America ideologies and mainstream development theories (political, economic and social), especially after the end of World War II;
- the political development (better to say crisis) within each country under the influence of the dominant ideologies and development theories and the resulting chaos;
- the continuous economic deterioration of each country which is mainly the result of the failure of the mainstream economic development theory(ies) and the developmental state;
- the intervention of foreign powers, especially superpowers, globalization and regionalization of the world economy, the imposition of structural adjustment programmes and related political conditionalities which resulted in the further marginalization of the continent.

These are very broad categories which cannot be exhaustibly discussed in one research project. Thus, what I will attempt to do in the remaining part of this and the coming chapters is to show that there is no one singly factor responsible for the African crisis. This will be a modest attempt to show that multiple interrelated factors have been in play in post-colonial African political and economic development (underdevelopment).

6.3.1 Imposed Ideologies and Development Theories

Perhaps, the single most important factor which not only contributed to the continued crisis of the state and society in Africa but can also be taken as the source of most of the other factors has been the irrelevant nature of the different ideologies and state and development theories exported into the continent and adopted by African governments. As Markakis has correctly put it:
The distressing fact that all too often such imports have proved inappropriate has done little to diminish Africa’s receptiveness to fashionable abstractions that shine brightly but ephemerally in the inter-national intellectual firmament. The list of such imports that have been tried and discarded is long and includes the cluster of imaginative concepts produced by the theoreticians of modernization and development in the second half of this century. Among them the notions of development were perhaps the most imaginative. We may recall how political stability in the newly-emerged states was to be guaranteed by ‘constitutionalism’ and ‘rational legitimacy’, how institution-building would produce ‘functionally specific’ bureaucratic structures, and how democracy would take root with the growth of a ‘civil culture’, the ‘professionalization’ of the military, and the ‘routinization’ or ‘transference’ of charisma.

Things didn't work out as planned, of course, and most of these notions have been laid to rest. However, new ones have come to take their place. 'Good governance', 'civil society', and the 'free market', are currently a fashionable combinations designed to promote 'democratization' which in turn will facilitate development. (Markakis, 1996: 1)

If social and economic development means anything at all, as Hettne (1995: 177) argues, it must mean a clear improvement in the conditions of life and livelihood of ordinary people. The mere fact that this did not happen in the last three or more decades in Africa proved that the theories and policies tried in the continent were wrong. However, as Robert Chambers (quoted in Hettne, 1995: 10) put it, 'it is alarming how wrong we were, and how sure we were that we were right'.

Among the major ideologies that influenced the socio-political and economic development of the continent: nationalism, liberalism and socialism will be considered here. Nationalism on its own or as part of liberalism and/or socialism has been a strong force in influencing the policies adopted and the measures taken by the African political elites. Liberalism and socialism have also played a significant role in Africa. It is not only the attempt made by an African country to adopt liberalism or socialism that affects its overall development but also the sudden shift from one to the other. Countries such as Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia adopted liberalism, then shifted to socialism and back again to liberalism with devastating consequences.

Different political and economic development theories have been tested on Africa, all of them developed somewhere outside the continent. These mainstream development theories were tried and discarded one after the other without any meaningful positive results. The latest of these theories are economic liberalization and democratization. The major objectives are restructuring of the economies and political systems of African countries. Based on these theories various policies and practical measures have been recommended (or imposed) on almost all African countries. African countries one after another attempted to implement these recommendations. The result, contrary to what the World Bank and IMF wanted Africans to believe, has not been encouraging at all, to say the least. Thus, it is imperative to raise some basic questions: What are the major assumptions of the different ideologies and political and economic theories? How are they related to Africa? Or how relevant are they to Africa? Why the sudden shift from one to the other and with what consequence? These questions will be discussed in the first part of the last chapter.
6.3.2 Political Crisis

As we can understand from what Bratton has pointed out above, African countries are born with political and economic crises, which are not only interrelated but also are a cause and an effect at the same time. If we start with the economic crisis we will easily find out that the most fundamental cause for economic decline in Africa is related to political crisis and vice versa. Therefore, political chaos and economic decline (poverty) have been an inseparable aspect of life in Africa.

In much of Africa the state has often been the only available vehicle for personal accumulation of wealth, therefore, there is 'too much at stake in the competition for power' (Diamond, et. al., 1988: 69). This competition can be between individuals or between political, ethnic, regional or religious groups. The result, as Bratton (1989: 421-422) points out:

Brutality, intolerance, and corruption can all be traced to the zero-sum nature of African politics, in which the winner takes all and the loser consigned to the political and economic wilderness. Nor has an indigenous productive bourgeoisie emerged to counterbalance the expansion of the state and to lead a movement in support of individual rights. Instead these historic tasks must be initiated from different source.

In other words, social incoherence, i.e., a lack of recurrent pattern of political exchange and reciprocity in relations among socio-political groups has been a factor which contributed to the crisis of the state in Africa. The politicization of ethnic, religious and regional interests make competition and the possibility of violent conflict among groups much wider. However, the destructive effects of these struggles could be reduced if there was negotiated consensus on the nature of the overall political community, political structure and political legitimacy. This may help to regularize the patterns of interactions among these contending elements and their interests (Rothchild and Foley, 1988: 234). The problems here are, at least, of two types. The first is the relations between the different ethnic/religious/regional groups themselves. The other is the relation between these groups and the state. For the relations between ethnic groups themselves and with the state are believed to be the major issue in Africa, up until the emergence of religious fundamentalism. They will be discussed more closely in the coming chapters.

Heterogeneity of society within an individual state is not unique to Africa. As Walker Connor (1994: 29-30) points out, of 132 contemporary states only a dozen (12, i.e., 9.1%) could be described as homogeneous from an ethnic point of view, an additional 25 states had one ethnic group totalling 90% of the population, another 25 had a single ethnic group between 75% and 89% of the population. But in 31 states the largest ethnic group represents only 50% to 74% of the population and in 39 states the largest group fails to account for even half the population. In the particular case of Africa, probably with the exception of Somalia, all countries are multi-ethnic. If heterogeneity is not unique to African why has the continent more problems that any other region on the planet? Why has ethnicity, religious and regional diversity been a major problem? Why does this problem make the process of creating cohesive political community extremely difficult, if not impossible, in Africa? To answer these questions one has to critically examine the historical development of individual states. This will be the focus of the second part of the last chapter.
However, it is worth pointing out here that in Africa the creation of coherent societal relations has been and will be a fundamental task to be accomplished. This entails, among other things, the emergence of a fully responsive political structure, one which not only directs interest group demands into legitimate channels but also implements policies and programmes to meet the reasonable claims put forward by these groups. It also entails the creation of political institutions which can give all the various groups the opportunity to participate in decision-making, since only in such institutions can they feel that they are full members of a national state, respected by their brethren, and owing equal respect to the national bond which holds them together (Rothchild and Foley, 1988: 238). On the other hand, it should be noted that the ability of the African state to meet the demands of the social forces in its midst is strictly limited in practice - by limited resources at its disposal, by the overextended nature of its institutions, by the existence of parallel market activities, and by the over politicization of life in many African societies.

Another important factor which contributed to the political crisis has been the attempt over the last three or more decades to impose a high level of centralization regardless of the heterogeneous nature of the society. It has partially been the result of the influence of the modernization discourse which advocates a strong centralized state. Though this is not the best way, the contemporary African states can be characterized as centralized through a variety of measures: centralized (in extreme cases personalized) decision-making process and lack of participation from the various socio-political groups; the absence of competitive political parties or contested elections; the proportion of public revenue expended by national as opposed to local governments; the taxes raised by national vs. local governments; the proportion of GNP expended by government; the juridical weakness of local governments; etc.

As Wunsch and Olowu (1990: 4) point out, one critical difference between African states and most others across the world lies in the qualitative dimension, especially in the distribution of authority, responsibility and resources available to central vs. local governments. In Africa local governments (if they exist) are hardly effective. In virtually no African countries have local governments any independent juridical authority. Even in states where local governments are largely arms of governments, the percentage of total budgetary resources allocated by them is far greater than in Africa. For example, from France at the lower ranges (17%) to Sweden at the higher (66%), local level institutions are major partners in the delivery of public services. The equivalent African figures are as low as 2% (Ibid.). The percentage distribution of personnel at the local levels also reflects this pattern. African countries as a whole have the least of their modern sector employees at the local level (2.1%) compared with Asia (8%), Latin America (4.2%), and OECD (12%) (Ibid.).

In addition, in virtually every African country, local self-governing institutions have been supplemented with or replaced by field administrative agencies. Non-governmental and private organizations such as unions, churches, cooperatives, universities and the like have been under close government control or they have been eradicated. Private bases for collective actions have carefully been destroyed. Within the political realm, competing political parties have been legislated out of existence (with few exceptions). Power has been stripped from the judiciary and the legislature in most African countries and concentrated in the executive presidency.
Such presidents have often been leaders of a single party or of a military regime where opposition is neither institutionalized nor tolerated (Ibid.: 5). In general, as Wunsch and Olowu (Ibid.) correctly argue, "... the centralization of the formal institutions of government has been futile as well as destructive. It has been destructive because it has preempted negotiation with and real cooperation by elements of the society whose willing commitment and efforts were needed for development. It has been futile in that the African state did not have enough power to compel key elements of the society to act as the state demanded... the result has been characterized as the 'disengaged' or 'soft' state.... In trying to do and be too much, it ended up too little".

The militarization of society and politics has also been a major factor in the collapse of the African state. The intense struggle for scarce resources, the winner take all nature of politics, the heterogeneity of the society and the accompanying conflicts, the centralization of politics and the importance of state control have all contributed to the militarization of politics in much of Africa. In other words, with conflict and disorder as its most prominent feature, a typical Sub-Saharan state will be marked by conflict that gives a central role to the military. Economic crisis, persistent poverty, regional/ethnic/religious rivalry, government corruption and repression, maladministration, etc. have also been reasons for military intervention (Baynham, 1986: 7).

Militarization of society should also be taken as an aspect of the economic consequence of the struggle for survival. Militarization of society is the outcome of overvaluing political power in Africa and the intense struggle to obtain and keep it. This has transformed politics in Africa into warfare. In this competition every form of force is mobilized and deployed, the winners have the prospect of near absolute power and the losers not only forgo power but also face a real prospect of losing liberty and even life. As politics has changed from reliance on argument to force, its vocabulary and organization has also changed. The political formations in most of Africa are for practical purposes armies in action. In a society in which the political formations are organized as warring armies, differences are too hard, the scope for cooperation too limited; there is too much distrust and life too raw to nurture commerce and industry. The militarization of social life in general and politics in particular has reached its logical culmination in military rule in most of Africa (Ihonvbere, 1989: 57-58). For instance, 65 successful seizures of power - the overwhelming majority carried out by soldiers - occurred in Africa between 1958 and mid-1985 (Welch, 1987: 191).

In general, the process of militarization in Africa includes not only the actual acquisition of weapons, but also the extension of military values into political and social structures. This has contributed to the expansion in the size and power of the military establishment, to a reliance on repression by authoritarian regimes, to the continuance of internal and external war, and to an ideology that equates national sovereignty with military power (Luckman, 1980: 179). The point that should be emphasized here is that whatever the causes (pretext) have been, militarization of society and politics and the repeat-ed intervention of the military (both socialist oriented or otherwise) resulted in the consumption of scarce resources, creating more poverty, political instability and repression, and finally in the collapse of the state. The Horn of Africa is a typical case.
6.3.3 Economic Crisis

There is a strong consensus among members of the international community, and the African society and leadership that the continent's economy has been in deep crisis for a long time. There is also a consensus that the economic crisis is partially the result of the political crisis and at the same time it is a major contributing factor to the political crisis. However, there is no consensus on how this crisis came about and how it became worse year after year. Some scholars and international financial institution like the World Bank and IMF focus on the internal factors and blame Africans themselves. Others focus on the international factors and blame the global economic system. Though both approaches have contributed to the understanding of the African economic crisis they have failed to sufficiently explain it. For the internal or the external factors separately cannot explain the complex economic crisis of the continent. It is, therefore, crucial to take both factors into account.

Africa's economic crisis has primarily been the result of the imposition of various economic theories and models, mainly from the West, as the continuation of the incorporation of the continent into the global capitalist economic system. One of the major problems with these theories and models has been the fact that they were not designed to solve the problems of African society. Rather they were and still are designed on the basis of Northern experience and primarily for the benefit of the North. In simple terms mainstream theories and economic models were meant to shape the Third World in the image of the West. Therefore, they do not take into account the structural context of the continent's problems. Though mainstream economic theories and models were hardly relevant to Africa, the post-independence political leaders played a submissive role and facilitated the diffusion of these theories and models. Conditioned by the mystique of Western rationalism, most nationalist leaders readily accepted the mainstream economic theories and models as scientific. In other words, the near absolute domination of Western development theories and economic models prevented the development of alternative models in Africa and in the Third World at large.

It is important to note that mainstream development theories, economic development models and policy packages have not been static. Rather, they have continuously been revised. However, the essence of the dominant mainstream economic development paradigm remained the same. If we look at the post-1945 era, for instance, between 1945-1970s some of the major economic theories and modes were vicious circles of poverty and population trap model, the big push theory of industrialization, the Rostowian stage of growth theory, import substitution industrialization (ISI), export promotion and infant industry model, and the trickle-down theory. In the post-1980s era some of these theories and models were revised and replaced by their new versions. Among these new versions structural adjustment programmes (later political liberalization was added as an important component of the package), and globalization and the three major trading blocs emerged as the most dominant.

These economic development theories, models and policy packages have been playing a very significant role in shaping the post-1945 economic development (underdevelopment) of Africa. Most African countries (both capitalist and socialist oriented) attempted to copy these mainstream economic models and implement (in various degrees) the policy packages. The results, however, have been extremely discouraging to say the least. Why? To answer this
question one has to raise some more questions. What are the basic assumptions and the real intentions of the mainstream economic theories and models? Have they been relevant to African society and African problems? What was their impact on the African socio-political and economic development during the last three or so decades? What was the role of the African society in developing and implementing these theories and models? In order to understand the post-colonial economic and political tragedy of Africa one has to answer these basic but difficult questions. Being well aware of the complex and very broad nature of the questions, I will attempt very briefly to provide some answers in the third part of the last chapter.

6.3.4 External (International) Intervention

In addition to the factors identified above other external factors have also been contributing significantly to the crisis (failure/collapse) of the African state. Ever since the time of the slave trade Africa has negatively been influence by external intervention. The creation of the colonial state, the pattern of decolonization and the shaping of the post-colonial states in the western image, the interventionist policies of the super-powers during the cold war years and the current extreme marginalization of the continent, have all distorted and destroyed the gradual socio-political and economic development of the African countries. In short, the contact with the European powers, whether in the form of colonialism or neo-colonialism, not only distorted, disarticulated and underdeveloped the African continent, it also ensured its structured incorporation into and peripheralization in the international division of labour (Ihonvbere, 1989: 16). As a result, African countries had been part of the Third World the day before yesterday, part of the Fourth World yesterday and are part of the Fifth World today. If things do not change, and they do not seem to change, African countries will be part of the Sixth, Seventh.... As Ihonvbere in his edited book of the selected works of Claude Ake has cleverly summarized, some of the consequences of the involvement of external forces, which today continued to determine the content and direction of politics and society in Africa are: the creation of an invisible and unstable state; the creation of decadent, dependent and largely unproductive bourgeoisie; a dependent private sector; an economy depending on a narrow range of cash crops for foreign exchange earnings; an economy vulnerable to price fluctuation; scientific and technological dependency; dependency on foreign aid to sponsor development projects and reliance on foreign exports; a deepening process of rural-urban migration, rural decay and urban dislocation; an overextended, ineffective and inefficient bureaucracy; cultural alienation and the use of coercion to reproduce the domination of society by the local ruling class; the conversion of the continent into a theater of war by the superpowers and/or their proxies; and peripheralization in the world capitalist system (Ibid.). As a result of all these, Africa today is periphery of the periphery. 'A peripheral state within a world capitalist economy', Bratton (1989: 418-419) argues, 'performs principally as an instrument of 'adjustment' to the changing demand of global accumulation. The state weakness in Africa derives from its subordination to the stronger external institutions and, while the state has sponsored the formation of a bureaucratic class, it acts fundamentally as a collaborator on a project led by international capital'.

Though what Ihonvbere and Bratton have described above is very true (as previously discussed in brief), the focus here is the intervention of external actors, mainly superpowers, the Arab world and neighbouring countries in the internal affairs of the three Horn of Africa countries. The intervention of these actors, especially in a conflict situation, and their shift of alliance, the support they provided either to governments or anti-government forces involved in the conflict immensely contributed to the demise of the state in the region. The involvement of the two superpowers and many Arab countries in the Ethio-Somalia conflict and the Eritrean independence struggle is one clear example. The involvement of the Sudan government in the
Ethiopia conflict (supporting Eritrean and Tigrean guerrilla groups); the involvement of the Ethiopian government in Sudan (supporting the Southern Sudanese anti-government movement); and the involvement of the Ethiopian and the Somalia governments in supporting the opponents of the other is another example. What happened in all the three countries, as a result, has been witnessed by the international community.

The point that should be clear here is that the governments in these countries and their respective leaders have been active participants. They have been actively participating either by creating the conflict situations or by failing to solve the existing conflicts. They have also been active by interfering in the affairs of their neighbours, by prepared fertile grounds for external intervention or by directly asking for foreign intervention. To understand the role external actors played in the failure/collapse of the state in the Horn of Africa, therefore, we need to examine not only what the external actors have been doing but also the participation of the domestic actors.

In addition to the intervention of external actors, the end of the cold war and the collapse of the socialist camp have also seriously affected almost every state in African. The flow of foreign investment and aid into Africa is declining as the result of the emergence of new states in Eastern Europe with a better investment return for international capital. The disintegration of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia along ethnic lines aggravated ethnic conflict and strengthened the aspiration of many ethnic groups toward achieving their own state or wider autonomy within existing states. The collapse of the Soviet Union as a superpower gave Western countries every opportunity to impose whatever policy they feel serves their interests. The most dramatic effect of the end of the cold war and disintegration of the Soviet Union has been the collapse of pro-Soviet states which used to receive huge amounts of aid, especially military aid from East European countries. The collapse of Mengistu Haile Mariam’s government and the disintegration of Ethiopia into two states is one perfect example.

To sum up, it may be possible to construct a model which may help to show the various factors and actors and their interrelations which contribute to the chronic crisis of the state in Africa. As illustrated in the model and as will be discussed in more detail in the coming chapters, it is not possible to pin point one single factor/actor which has been behind the demise of the African state. Various interconnected factors and actors have been involved. The pre-colonial development, the slave trade and later the colonial intrusion have all played a significant role. In the post-colonial era, the irrelevant nature of development theories, the imposition of various policies and programme packages which are hardly related to the situation in the continent, the adoption of contradictory ideologies have all significantly contributed to the overall crisis of the continent. In addition, the globalization and regionalization of the political and economic structure of the world have also further marginalized Africa. This process which is dominated by the Western powers has weakened the capacity of the African states.

The post-colonial internal political development, namely: patrimonial nature of the state, centralization of politics, concentration and monopolization of power, personalization of leadership, and militarization of society and politics contributed not only to the political crisis but also to the economic deterioration. In turn the economic collapse, which has mainly been the result of the failure of the mainstream economic theories, models and policy packages (or
simply the failure of the developmental state) aggravated the political crisis. Moreover, the involvement of external forces as the result of both the foreign policies of the African states themselves and the interests of external powers, notably super-powers, has also significantly contributed to the political crisis in Africa.

Thus, one can safely conclude that the crisis (failure/collapse) of the post-colonial state in Africa has been the result of both historical and current developments. It has been the result of economic and political factors, domestic or otherwise, which are not only interrelated but also a cause and an effect at the same time. However, in order to plausibly explain the crisis of the state in the Horn of Africa the specific situation of each country should be considered. This is what I will attempt in the last chapter. The different factors identified above will be analysed with a major emphasis on the notions of political community, identity, political accountability and, state-making and the security/insecurity it generates.
FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FAILURE/COLLAPSE OF THE STATE AND THEIR INTERRELATATIONS

Pre-colonial Development
- Population Growth
- Population Movement
- (Re)construction of Political Communities and Political Structures

Colonial Development
- Distortion (destruction) of Pre-colonial structures
- Creation of Colonial Structures
- Incorporation into World Capitalist Economic System
- Pattern of Decolonization

Ideology, Mainstream State and Development Theories

Political performance
- The failure of the (Re)Construction of Territorial Sovereign State
- Lack of Appropriate Policies and Failure of Implementation
- Failure of Centralization
- Personalized and Poor Leadership
- Quality Failure of Accommodating Various Interests
- Militarization of Politics
- Foreign Policy

Economic Performance
- The Failure of Mainstream Economic Development Theories, Models and Policy Packages (the Failure of the Developmental State)
- Lack of Appropriate Policies and Failure of Implementation
- Overexpansion and Inefficiency of the Public Sector
- Scarcity of Natural Resources
- Shortage of Capital and Know how
- Poor Infrastructure
- Negative Balance of Trade

Social Performance
- Lack of Appropriate Policies and Failure of Implementation
- Rapid Population Growth
- Low Level of Public Services
- Urban-rural Disparity

External Factors
- Intervention by both Superpowers and Others
- Globalization and Regionalization
- Marginalization of Africa

Poor Domestic Political and Socio-Economic Performance

Failure/Collapse of the State

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