THE COLONIAL DISCOURSE OF DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA: THE SOMALIA EXPERIENCE

By

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis is a reconstruction of the Somalia's encounter with the colonial discourse of development and its impact on indigenous farmers. It is an analysis of several narratives of Somali experts who worked for development projects in Somalia during the early 1970s and late 1980s. The informants interviewed for this research articulate what has been institutionalized as development was actually an apparatus for controlling indigenous Somali people and their subsistence way of living by dictating what to produce, as well as imposing on them a lifestyle that was detrimental. The interviewees maintain that conventional development practices were racialized, by giving privilege to white "experts" over Somalis. Traditional development was also gender-biased, as it devalued the role of Somali women in farming. Agricultural methods based on Western "scientific" approaches are argued here to be corrupted, as they helped to perpetuate Somalia's repressive military regime. Colonial development practice was directly implicated in the collapse of the Somali state in early 1991.

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CHAPTER I

THE SOMALIA EXPERIENCE OF THE DISCOURSE OF DEVELOPMENT

1.1. INTRODUCTION

I have come to my initial understanding of the discourse of development through my university training. I enrolled in the faculty of Agriculture at Somali National University in 1983. Studying science at that time, in that part of the world, was constructed as a secure way of getting employment as well as achieving higher social status. Science was also seen as the gate way to the "developed" countries for further studies, a goal highly desired by me and the educated class of people in Somalia at that time. The language of instruction in the faculty of Agriculture was Italian. This meant that Somali students, who graduated from secondary school in the Somali language, had to learn Italian language prior to entering the university. Almost all of my university professors were Italian. The curriculum, text books as well as all reference materials in the library were written in Italian and were from Italy. This means that lot of what we were studying had little relevance to Somalia's setting in which we were being trained to work.

The aim of my university training was to produce Somali graduates who would be able to apply their "scientific" knowledge to the development of Somalia's agriculture and livestock. The conceptual ground which guided the scientific approach we studied was that in the natural order, things are fixed and static, and the qualities of reality/natural existence can only be known through scientific observation. The principal preoccupation of this scientific methodology was the precise knowledge of how nature works, with the outcome of being able to intervene scientifically for the purposes of human interest.

During my training as an agricultural scientist, I learned how the world of plants works, the

causes of growth, as well as the factors which affect productivity. I also learned how to conduct scientific research by observing things "objectively". This entailed observing the phenomena under study by distancing the observer from the object of study, thereby insuring the impartiality of the observer. It also entailed studying a cause and effect relationship, by isolating the object of study from its environment, dividing it into small parts and studying each one of the parts separately.

One thing that dominated our study and research in agriculture in Somalia was the question of why Somali farmers produce less, and how to increase their low yield agricultural production through scientific methods. There was an hegemonic scientific discourse which claimed that Somali farmers produce less because they did not employ scientific techniques to manipulate nature. We were taught that the ideal model of producing agriculture and livestock was the scientific way in which Italian farmers did their farming. Italy and its way of producing agriculture, as well as its economic "progress", was presented to us as a model for industrialized country. For example, we were taught that using certain specific tools such as tractors were necessary for agricultural production. Similarly, methods to use external inputs such as fertilizers, as well as the scientific way of eliminating weeds and pests by using chemicals, was part of our curriculum. I learned different Italian regions, their climate, and what type of agricultural crops they produce. I also became familiar with different Italian cities such as Milan, Florence, Torino, Palermo, Rome and Napoli where my professors had come from in each academic semester. I became accustomed to hearing different Italian accents, which are spoken in the different regions in Italy.

However, studying Somalia and how Somali people produce agriculture and livestock was not a part of our curriculum. In my university training, there was no place given for studying indigenous Somali knowledge and their mode of producing agriculture and livestock. There was an explicit message in the discourse of our curriculum that Somalia, its people, and their cultural

resources were not worth studying. We studied Somalia through a scientific lens, thus coming to the conclusion that Somalia's "unproductive" mode of agriculture and caring for livestock should be changed/transformed.

What had been overlooked in our scientific training was that the Somali mode of production had always been a culturally and socially constructed activity. The role of human beings in the construction of their world was disregarded. In this sense, scientific methodology excludes other ways of knowing the nature. As a consequence of the way we were educated, a legitimation of the scientific way of knowing occurred, which itself has a historical origin in European culture, and it became seen as the *only* way of knowing.

As a result of our university training, Western ways of knowing and their world view became the only lens through which we came to see and understand our world. Through this analytic approach we learned to despise our own country, our culture and our way of living. We looked down on its natural as well as cultural resources describing it as "primitive" while we revered the West and its "civilized" tradition. The desire to go to the West for study or employment was so strong that it became synonymous with going to the paradise. The phrase *"Qalqaalo ayaan ku jiraa"* which in English means "I am in the process of going abroad", was part of the everyday language of Somali educated class of my generation. In a sense, the desire to go Europe and North America, for myself and some of my generation, made us prisoners inside our own homeland. There was nothing more frustrating than becoming a foreigner or living as an exile in your own home.

It was through my scientific method of observation that I came to understand the discourse of development as an indispensable necessity for Somalia as well as the rest of African countries. As I came to understand, development was synonymous with science and its method of application to the economic production of Somalia. Through a scientific discourse, development became the path

of scientific progress to which Somalia and other African countries must adhere.

The rationale for conducting this research is based on my own location as a Somali citizen and my experience in university training as an agricultural scientist. It was through this experience that I came to understand the way in which knowledge is constructed, in/validated and legitimized through the structural power relationship between the Southern and Northern hemispheres. I went on a few field trips and conducted research on Somalia's agropastoral system during my undergraduate years, as well as my first year working as faculty member in the Faculty of Agriculture at Somali National University. I came to understand that the Somali peasants' world view and their way of living had something to do with what they produce and how they produce it. I also became aware of how Somali indigenous cultural resources had been devalued, denigrated and discarded by the development enterprise and its discursive practices.

My research is an attempt to understand the Somali experience of the discourse of development. In particular, the research attempts to answer these questions: (1) Why the Western model of development was introduced to Somalia; (2) What the objective was of an imposed Western model of development; (3) What the practices were by which development objectives could be achieved; (4) Who was responsible for the implementation of development projects in Somalia; and (5) How imposed development practices influenced indigenous Somali people and their way of living. The study also provides strategies as to how it is possible to decolonize the discourse of development.

This study is a reconstruction of the lived experience of Somalis' encounter with the development discourse, through ethnographic study. As human beings, we participate in socially constructed realities, which in turn shape our perception of the world and thus our way of living. It is within a discursively constructed social space that our subjectivity, as well as our role as individuals, is defined and produced. As critical researchers, one way to understand subjectivity and

to emancipate ourselves from an oppressive power is to reflect back on our lived experiences and how our subjectivity is constructed within a dominant discourse. Thus, reconstructing our lived experience through ethnographic study is one way of seeking an insight or understanding how our realities are textually mediated.

As a critical researchers, what social research we undertake and where we choose to study, is a political move. This is because, "our own location as positioned subjects, is inherently political space through which we interpret social reality from our own culturally-mediated and historically arrived at, vantage point" (Zine, 1997, p. 1). In this regard, I am not claiming political or emotional detachment from this research, nor do I claim authority. My goal here is to understand how knowledge is constructed, in/validated, within and through the colonial discourse of development with the aim of decolonising development through the revitalization and reclamation of Somali indigenous knowledge. Africa is used in this study not to homogenize nor to essentialize. I am aware that each and every country of Africa has its unique experience of development. However, as George Dei (1998b) argues "there is a shared history of colonial and imperial imposition of external ideas and knowledges over much of the continent" (p. 25). In this study, Africa's experience with the discourse of development is used as a shared historical experience of imperial imposition which needs to be problematised and interrogated. In a similar vein, Somalia is used in this study not as an homogenized entity nor to decontextualize its development experience. I am aware that different regions of Somalia have had different experience on the discourse of development. For example, the majority of the development projects in Somalia were concentrated in the Southern regions where the capital city, Mogadishu, is located (Mehmet, 1971). This study is based on the narratives of Somali experts who worked for the development projects of Southern Somalia during early 1970s and late 1980s.

There are competing discourses as to why development in Africa failed. Differing arguments

are whether the culprit is Africa's internal characteristics, such as the undemocratic nature of African regimes, the corruption of their systems, nepotism and tribalism or whether it is external factors, such as colonialism and its continuing practices. For instance, Ayittey (1998) argues that most of Africa's crises and underdevelopment are due to what he calls "two fundamental ailments", which are "the defective political system of sultanism and the defective economic systems of statism" (p. 49). According to Ayittey, sultanism characterizes the lack of political freedom in Africa where one man, clan or a party monopolise the political enterprise of a country. Similarly, statism is when a totalitarian regime controls all the economic activities of the country, including its development directions (p. 49). In his analysis of Somalia's crisis, Ayittey states that during 1991 -1992, Somalia became known as "the Graveyard of Aid" because of its corrupted military regimes (p. 52). Here he implies that foreign aid could have been worked had it not been a totalitarian regime in Somalia. What Ayittey has overlooked was how foreign aid itself produced and maintained the repressive Somali regime. While it is important to reveal the corrupted nature of most of Africa's unpopular regimes, the fact that these regimes do/did not exist in a world vacuum is equally important. Thus, analysing Africa's problems on the basis on internal/external dichotomy conceals discursively how the corruption and the repression of African regimes and the continuation of imperial impositions are interrelated and supportive to each other. Contrary to what Ayittey argues, Somalia's experience on the discourse of development is a case example of how Western countries and their ill-fated development enterprise supported and maintained the despotic military regimes of Africa. Western countries and their economic institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF were the ones who supported and thus consolidated the ousted Somali regime and its repressive rule since its last hour of power (Maren, 1997). This study argues that understanding Somalia's experience of the discourse of development needs a critical perspective, one which takes into consideration how the dominant

discourse of development and its hegemonic practices supported the local and repressive regime in Somalia[1].

1.2. MAPPING THE THESIS

This research is about reconstructing Somalia's experience with the discourse of development based on the narratives of Somali development experts. The rest of the first chapter deals with the literature review. It looks at some of the literature relevant to the study which also contributed to my critical conceptualization of the discourse of development. A brief introduction to Somalia, its location, an historical sketch, and its current situation will also be taken up in this chapter. Chapter one also examines the qualitative methodology employed in this study, including the methods of gathering data, ethical procedures and protocols as well as introducing the informants of the study.

Chapter two presents the theoretical framework and seeks to answer the question of how to critically conceptualize the discourse of development. It analyses the phenomenon of colonialism in the light of colonial/post-colonial discourses. To understand how power is exercised in the discourse of development, Foucault's conception of power is used, to demonstrated the complex linkage to regimes of knowledge.

The third chapter is concerned with the experience of Somalia's encounter of the conventional development. It focuses on three critical questions: 1) why the western model of development was introduced to Somalia; 2) what was the objective of the imposed Western model of development; and 3) how should these development objectives be achieved. The role of the different development players such as Somali and foreign experts, as well as the role of the ousted Somalia's military regime,

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[1]The role of Somalia's military regime and foreign donors and their experts in the development practices in Somalia will be taken up in the last section of Chapter 3.

is taken up in this chapter. Chapter three also examines the impact of the practices of the conventional development discourse on Somalia's indigenous people and their way of living.

Chapter four is concerned with developing strategies for decolonising the discourse of development. The relevance of indigenous knowledge in decolonising the discourse of development is discussed here. And finally, Chapter Five discusses the transformative aspect of the study for both informants and the researcher. This chapter also delves into some future practical strategies on the decolonisation of development in Somalia.

1.3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The following section presents a review of the literatures relevant to this study. The focus of this literature is on the perspective of scholars from the Southern hemisphere and their critique of the discourse of development. I strongly believe that the critical perspective of Southern intellectuals/scholars on the discourse of development is necessary as a first step towards the decolonization of development. In this sense, critical voices from the Southern hemisphere, both scholars and activists, represent a counter-discourse to the hegemonic nature of conventional development.

Critical understanding of the discourse of development entails deconstructing the discursive framework which informed the traditional colonial discourse of development. Samir Amin (1985) states that conventional development is informed by liberal economic doctrine which advocates a worldwide expansion of capitalist market system. This type of economics argues that the liberalisation of the market, which mainly consists of the flow of trade and capital, will ensure maximization of growth and an equitable wealth distribution through the provision of full employment. Thus, the discourse of development, according to Amin, is not geared toward the

development of Third World people, but rather a process which their nation states adopt in order to constantly adjust to the world market (p. x). Amin contends that the expansion of capitalist economies, which mainly consists of companies controlled by the bourgeoisie, is guided by making profit. Therefore, there are no guarantees that full employment will take place, and hence no guarantee that equitable distribution of wealth which "liberal Utopia" proclaims will take place (1997, p. 15). Amin states that the pursuit of liberal economic development will inevitably lead to widening the gap between rich and poor countries which is disastrous for all humanity (p. x). According to Amin capitalist expansion leads to the dominance of the white race and hence the oppression and the destruction of non-white cultures. He states:

> Genocide against marginalised populations, beginning with the American Indians and the slave trade, forced assimilation and massive deculturation, technological impoverishment and chronic famine are landmark in the history of capitalism from its outset and are still before our eyes (1985, p. 68).

Amin proposes his famous "delinking" project to rupture the integrated market system which conventional development discourse proposes. "Delinking" is a refusal to become subject to world-wide capitalist expansion, and it proposes the creation of a world of polycentric economic development (p. 62). However, delinking should not be understood as a withdrawal mechanism in which Africa isolates itself from the rest of the world. Instead, it is a political project which advocates a re-articulation of Africa's economic development in terms relevant to localized needs and concerns.

In similar vein, Rajni Kothari (1988) interrogates the aim of conventional development discourse. He asks whether the aim of development is to bring prosperity to needy people in the world or whether it is an architect designed to secure the exploitation of ruling elites of the North (p. I). Kothari states that developmentalism should be seen as economism, with an aim to perpetuate the economic exploitation of the South by the North. Hence, development came as replacement discourse for colonialism, to ensure the continuity of a centuries-old exploitation and dependency.

He asserts that "[w]here colonialism left off, development took over - in ways proven more pervasive and potent (p. 143). Kothari sees that a constructive and a genuine model of development can only come from non-western indigenous views that have been subjugated under the discursive practices of the conventional development (p. 216).

C. Douglas Lummis (1991) unpacks the economic foundation of development and argues that development is inherently an antidemocratic discourse. Development does not come to improve the ways of living that have sustained and maintained the livelihood of the people of the South. Instead, it came for "the elimination of most of those ways and their replacement by certain historically specific practices originating in Europe. Economic development means developing those practices" (p. 31). For Lummis, development is an antidemocratic discourse, in that it imposes an economic practice which people, in a state of freedom, would not choose, and historically never have chosen. Development is also antidemocratic because it establishes an undemocratic form of rule over ordinary people's lives which, in turn, results in an inequality in wealth and power (p. 32-34). Lummis stated that the underlying assumption of development and its economic doctrine is that societies can only be organized through the development of their economic situation and that development is really what people want. Lummis argues that the discourse of development, with its economic primacy, redefines the political demand of societies in the South in that "freedom becomes free market; equality becomes equality of opportunity; security becomes job security; consent becomes 'consumer sovereignty'; and the pursue of happiness becomes a life time shopping" (p. 34).

Claude Ake (1997) discussed the *internal* impediments of conventional development discourse in Africa. He argued that the political structure in Africa has been the major obstacle in pursuing a genuine development enterprise in Africa since its independence (p.1). Ake stated that the demise of colonialism in Africa did not bring a new state in which its function and form is different

from the colonial state. He asserted that "state power remained essentially the same: immense, arbitrary, often violent, always threatening" (p. 6). Ake stated that what followed African independence in early 1960s was a fierce political competition among African elites accompanied by a void of ideological guidance. Thus, the sole preoccupation of African elites became the desire to strengthen their state power in order to survive in a midst of political lawlessness (p. 6-7). Ake argued that African elites had not the vision nor an agenda on development. There was a confusion and misunderstanding as to how Africa should proceed. The Western World provided the ideology, as well as the practical agenda for the development of Africa. Development, in this sense, became an exogenous agenda and was understood as a strategy to catch up with the West (p. 7-19). Ake strongly believed that "development could not proceed in a situation in which the national leadership had no vision or agenda of its own and relied on outsiders" (p. 40). In this regard, he proposed an African-centred development which takes into account African people "not as they ought to be but as they are and try to find how the people can move forward by their own efforts, in accordance with their own values" (p. 142). However, Ake argues that African-centred approach of development cannot take place unless the "development-friendly authoritarian" present in African regimes is replaced by democratization, which according to Ake, is an indispensable part of development (p. 158).

George Dei (1998) argues that development in Africa has never addressed the needs of its people but, instead, it has so far served global capital and transnational corporate interest. He states that conventional development

> is economically unjustified (e.g., rising income and wealth disparities among local peoples), ecologically unsound (e.g., the problem of ecocide), and socially and morally bankrupt (e.g., economic agreements that work for small minority of patriarchal corporate capital interests) (p. 95).

He proposes a shift from conventional development and its imperialist thinking which emphasise

"materialization/materialism", to an alternative approach based on "indigenous African cultural knowledge" (p. 95). His political project on alternative approaches to African development links African development to the local African people's culture and their frame of reference (p. 94)[2].

Vandana Shiva (1993) argues that the accumulation of wealth and profit which is the primary objective of the discourse of development is based on a Western's patriarchal economic vision (p.71). She states that conventional development created an internal colonization, while at the same time perpetuating the old one. Development destroys the sustainable and balanced way of living based on subsistence production by diverting natural resources available to the local people to a resource-intensive commodity production. Consequently, environmental degradation and the impoverishment of women and other marginalized people takes place, as they are primarily dependent on their local natural resources and do not have a purchase power to buy commodified products in the market. Shiva states that:

> The exclusive focus on incomes and cash-flow as measured in GNP [Gross National Product] has meant that the web of life around women, children and the environment is excluded from central concern. The status of women and children and the state of the environment have never functioned as 'indicators' of development.

For Shiva, the discourse of development has colonized the indispensable role of women in the subsistence way of living of Southern societies by devaluing their work as an unpaid work, and, therefore, as non-work. Conventional development also devalued the role of women by displacing indigenous knowledges to an imposed "scientific" knowledge which "breeds a monoculture of the mind by making space for local alternatives disappear" (1995, p. 12).

Arturo Escobar (1992) argues that development needs to be critically understood in order for

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[2] Dei's conceptualization of African indigenous knowledge and its link with the development of African local communities will be taken up in Chapter 4 in a more detailed manner.

the Southern people to be able to imagine an alternative future. He argues that development has to be understood as a discourse, an apparatus of power/control which "links forms of knowledge about the Third World with the deployment of forms of power and intervention, resulting in the mapping and production of Third World societies" (p.23). Therefore, the discourse of development is what defines people as "Third World" or "First World", and this in turn shapes how people come to know who they are. For Escobar, development is a colonial move, a strategy produced by the "First World" to represent others as a degenerate people who cannot manage their own lives. "Poverty" was constructed as the essential trait of "Third World" people. As a result, "economic growth and development became self-evident, necessary, and universal truth" (1995, p. 24).

Escobar states that Southern people should embark on a strategy which fundamentally changes the order of the development discourse. This entails "moving away from development science in particular and a partial, strategic move away from conventional Western modes of knowing in general in order to make room for other types of knowledge and experience" (p. 216).

1.4. METHODOLOGY: CRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHY

This study uses critical ethnography to understand the experience of Somalia on the discourse of development and its impact on indigenous Somali people and their way of living. Critical ethnography attempts "to probe the lived realities of human actors and the conditions informing both the construction and possible transformation of these realities" (Dilorio, in Anderson, 1989, p. 252). In other words, the aim of critical ethnography is to interrogate how hierarchical power is constructed and maintained within specific social settings. Its objective is to understand how the power relations in the social world inform and condition the subjective realities of human beings. This study look at how the dominant discourse of development, which is situated within the asymmetrical

power structure between North and South, has impacted on indigenous Somali people, their knowledge and their way of living. My methodology entails calling into question the knowledge assumptions which inform and maintain the development enterprise.

Critical ethnography holds that our socially constructed realities as Somalis consisted of a taken-for-granted world which most often concealed how the dominant discourses textually mediated our ordinary lives. How do we critically understood our constructed reality is a crucial question for researchers whose aim is to transform their social realities. However, critical ethnography holds that there are historical conditions, discourses, which have informed our social realities and that need to be probed. In this case, critical ethnography is a dialogical interpretive framework with the objective of locating respondents' meanings in a larger social context. Here, the assumption is that human beings have the capacity to interpret, negotiate and construct the meaning of their social realities.

Critical ethnography seeks to understand how our world is socially constructed, and to ameliorate our social realities. Its strategy of social change entails empowering the participants through their participation in the research. Participants, therefore, are not only informants but also become trained as agents of social change. Through their involvement in the research process, they develop their awareness, and thus their role as activists.

With regard to the issue of accuracy, critical ethnography takes into account the subjective role of the researcher and his/her ideological biases. Here, critical ethnographers talk about the need to be reflexive. According to Anderson, reflexivity in critical ethnography is a dialectical process which involves five different forms, including:

> (a) the researcher's construct, (b) the informant's commonsense constructs, (c)the research data, (d) the researcher's ideological biases, and (e) the structural and historical forces that informed the social construction under study" (Anderson, 1989, p. 254-255).

Therefore reflexivity is an ongoing process in which critical researchers become cognizant of their

privileged positions as researchers and their ideological/political orientation. Furthermore, they honestly share their research motivation, as well as their political agenda, with their informants. Another critical issue concerning accuracy is the establishment of a proper contact and relationship with the research informants. With regard to the establishing the appropriate relationship, Dorothy Smith (1990) writes:

> Claims for the admission of accounts to membership in a textual reality depend upon establishing the proper relationship between the original claims to represent and the account that has been produced (Quoted in Zine, 1997, p. 39).

Establishing a relationship starts with the employing a sound method in critical ethnographic research. In this research, the method of gathering the data consisted of in-depth interviews.

METHOD

The six Somali development workers/experts that were interviewed in this research consisted of five men and one woman. Access to the informants was obtained through my community contacts. There are more than forty thousand Somali immigrants in Metro Toronto[3] and some of them were professional experts in Somalia. However, access to female Somali informants was difficult for the simple reason that female Somalis are underrepresented in the professional ranks in Somalia. All of the informants have lived in Canada for a minimum of four years.

Bulale has Master Degrees from two European universities, the first one in animal science and the second in social anthropology. Bulale worked for the Ministry of Livestock Development as a director of their projects from 1971 to 1981. He also worked for a development project jointly sponsored by the Swedish and the Somali government from early 1980s to 1990. He emigrated to Canada when the civil war started in Somalia in early 1991 and presently lives and works in Toronto.

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[3]The Toronto Star estimated Somali community living in Metro Toronto around forty thousand (Toronto Star, October 29, 1993).

Hirsi graduated from the Somali National University for his first degree, and worked as an assistant lecturer at same faculty untill 1990. During this time, Hirsi also worked as an agronomist for a development project called Farming Systems Research in the Middle and Lower Shabelle regions, that was funded by the World Food Organization (FAO). The Project was collaboratively executed by the Somalia's Ministry of Agriculture, Faculty of Agriculture and the Agricultural Extension Project. He then went to Europe for further studies where he obtained a PhD. He emigrated to Canada to join his family and presently lives in Toronto. Asli, the female informant, did her Bachelor and Master degrees in Europe where she stayed from 1978 untill early 1987. Asli worked for different agricultural development projects including Seasonal Credit for Small Farmers sponsored by the FAO and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Presently Asli and her family live in Toronto where she and her husband work. Warsame, an Engineer in profession, acquired his first degree in Somalia and worked for the Ministry of Planning. He then went Europe for further studies where he obtained both M. Sc and PhD degrees in engineering. Warsame's work included planning and evaluating development projects in Somalia. Guleed has a Bachelor's Degree in Engineering Science with a specialization in agricultural irrigation. He worked for the Ministry of Agriculture in Somalia, for the Fanole Project, from 1987 to 1989. Rooble graduated from the Faculty of Agriculture with a Bachelor's Degree and worked for the Ministry of Agriculture. He is now finishing a Phd in Agriculture in a Canadian university.

The Somali experts interviewed for this research have different backgrounds with regard to their levels of education, as well as their working experiences in development projects, consequently their narrative styles are different. As we see in Chapters 3 and 4, there are areas that some of the informants described in great depth which others discussed superficially or did not touch on at all. It is for this reason that I relied more on some of the informants for specific issues. For instances,

Asli, the female informant, narrated her experience on how conventional development practices are racialized and gendered (Chapter 3) while Bulale related his experience on the relevance of indigenous Somali knowledge.

The development projects that the informants worked for were all located in the Southern part of Somalia, where the majority of agricultural projects were situated. However, the informants came originally from different regions of Somalia.

The informants' names used in this study are pseudonyms for the purpose of keeping anonymity. Asli, the female informant, was known to me through my voluntary work with a Somali Youth Association of Toronto where she was working two years ago. Rooble and Hirsi had graduated from the Faculty of Agriculture at Somali National University before my year of graduation and were my acquaintances, while Guleed, Warsame, and Bulale were introduced to me through community ties.

Informants were provided with a participation form to explain the research objectives and goals, as well as consent forms (See Appendixes I and II) prior to the interview. There were also interview questions used as a general guideline for the direction of the interviews (See Appendix III).

The informants had the freedom to speak either in English or Somali. However, they spoke Somali with some technical English terms, as well as intermittent English phrases and sentences. All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed in the English language. In the process of translation, I performed a meaningful translation, rather than working word by word. I am aware that translation involves losing some of the meaning; however, I tried my best to keep the original meaning as much as I could.

As ethnographic researchers, we are dependent on our informants, and therefore their willingness to participate in the research is an important factor. Rooble showed an interest in

participating in the research after I explained to him my objectives. However, as we talked about the arrangement of time for an interview, I found that he was less interested and at one time he suggested to me that I can get more information regarding his project from the library. I made it clear that I was interested in the view of Somali experts regarding Somalia's experience in the development discourse. However, we came to a mutual agreement and did the first interview. Unfortunately it was a brief meeting, which lasted only ten minutes as Rooble had another unexpected appointment. In this case Rooble's account was not helpful for the purpose of this study.

1. 5. SOMALIA: AN OVERVIEW

In this section, I intend to provide a brief introduction to Somalia. It further discusses the difficulty involved in undertaking the task of presenting Somalia to others. Introducing peoples, cultures and places to others is not a neutral exercise. It involves (re)presenting others, which, as Edward Said would remind us, is not a natural way of depicting others (Said, 1979). In other words, we always see others through our culturally-mediated location, which is intricately contingent on our own interests and desires.

As my research involves Somalia, the question of how I (re)present Somalia to my readers has preoccupied my thoughts for some time. The fact that much literature has been written about Somalia by non-Somalis, especially since the collapse of its military regime and thus its centralised state, has complicated the matter. This is because each and every account of Somalia involves a different way of representing its people, history and culture and a different articulation of what has happened in Somalia. Much of the recent literature written about Somalia by Western scholars, journalists, politicians, and professional aid workers has been an attempt to understand Somalia's present anarchy and to try and answer why and how Somalia has arrived at this state of affairs.

Therefore, undertaking research about Somalia, as well as writing and talking about it are politically charged activities.

The goal of this brief introduction to Somalia is not to present the many different ways in which Somalia has been discursively represented in the literature. Its aim is to problematize the colonial representation which has dominated most of the literature about the nation state and its people. In this representation, the Somalia which the colonial explorer, Richard Burton, "discovered" in 1854 and the present situation in Somalia, are the same. Burton was the first British colonial explorer and anthropologist who set his feet in Somalia during his famous expedition to Africa. Burton's mission was to "discover" parts of the dark continent and to present its savage people to the European colonizers. In his famous book *First Footsteps in East Africa* written in 1856, Burton represents Somali people as violent, savage and an uncivilized people who always enjoy killing and maiming each other. Burton writes:

> As regards courage, they are no exception to the generality of *savage races*. They have none of the recklessness standing in lieu of creed which characterized the civilized man... Yet they are by no means deficient in the wily valour of wild man: two or three will murder a sleeper bravely enough (Waterfield, 1966, p. 90-91).

What is clear in this short passage is that Burton had a preconceived notion of what characteristics the savage people had. In his book, Burton uses the colonial dichotomy "savage/civilized" races as a reference for his "objective" observation of Somalis. Somalis, in this case, as an African race became one of the savage races whom Burton was about to discover. Burton, during his short stay in Somaliland, using his "objective" and all-seeing gaze, described Somali people as a lawless society in which killing each other and violence were not the exception but the rule. Decontextualizing and dehistoricising social behaviours and events were/are epistemologically violent tools employed in the colonial discourse to represent colonized people.

Burton's famous description of Somalis as "a fierce and turbulent race of Republicans"[4] has received a new currency during the recent Somali civil war. The colonial representation of Somalis as a fossilized species with no change throughout the history became the source of explaining the contemporary crisis in Somalia.

Professor I. M. Lewis (1997), who is one of the earlier anthropologist/writers and still writes about Somalia and its people, describes the present situation in Somalia as one similar to the lawless and violent situation which Burton had described more than a century ago. Lewis states:

> This situation, of loosely articulate clan politics units, was exactly the same as that described by Burton and other nineteenth century explorers in the course of their travels in the Somali hinterland. The only significant difference today is the superabundance of modern automatic weapons which have long replaced the traditional spear (p. 8).

According to Lewis, clan identification, which is a fixed characteristics of all Somali people, has always been the source of the Somalis' conflict and lawlessness. Therefore, the fact that Somalis are inherently a clan society, their conflict, violence and lawlessness is also an inherent characteristic. Lewis states that Burton's observation of Somali people was absolutely right as well as prophetic. Lewis claims that Burton understood Somalis well when he characterized them as a "fierce and turbulent race of republicans" (p. 10).

For Lewis, the imperial imposition throughout the history and its impact on Somali society has no place in his "objective" representation of Somalia and its people. Somalia, from Burton's historical "discovery" to the present day, has witnessed and experienced different imperial power impositions, which have impacted its social, political and economic structures. Thus, to analyse the present crisis in some part of Somalia does not require essentializing Somali people as a tribal society

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[4]Quoted in I. M. Lewis on the opening page of his book, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics Among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa (1961)*

and thus a violent people. Rather it needs to be accounted that the imperial imposition of power, including colonialism, developmentalism during the postcolonial Somalia, and the present globalism had an impact on Somali society and its social organizations including the tribe.

This research attempts to rupture the colonial tropes which represent Somali people as a number of pre-historic tribes whose only rule is violence. Developing narratives through ethnography is a counter-discourse against the colonial representation of Somalia. Counter narratives allow ordinary Somali people to represent themselves by reconstructing their experience of the violent imposition of imperial powers. This research represents an alternative way of representing Somalia, its people and history, by a giving voice to the Somali people to develop their own identity through the articulation of their own experience and their own account of the history of imperial imposition. The study, through the narratives of the Somali development experts, establishes that the culprit of Somalis' present crisis is not tribalism. This discussion is taken up the last section of Chapter three.

As a brief introduction to Somalia, suffice it to say that Somalia is located in the Horn of Africa. The territory Somalis inhabit was divided into five different regions by European colonizers: the French Somaliland, British Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, Ethiopian Somaliland, and the Northern Frontier District (NFD) which later on became part of Kenya (Lewis, 1993, p. 25-26). British Somaliland and the Italian Somaliland became independent in June 26, 1960 and July 01, 1960 respectively, and they joined together and formed the Somali Republic. As was the case with many other newly independent African states, Somali nationalist bourgeoisie formed the first Somali government in 1960. In October 1969, the Somali national Army launched a coup d'etat and replaced the first civilian Somali government (Abdullahi, 1992, p. 1-2). The despotic military regime under the dictatorship of Siad Barre lasted twenty two years. In January 1991, Barre and his regime were ousted by opposition movements. Since then, the opposition movements failed to form a centralized

Somali government to replace the deposed one. However, on May 17, 1991, the Northern part of Somalia declared an independent state called Somaliland (p, 5). The disintegration of Somalia into smaller mini-states became the de facto of the present situation in Somalia. And more recently the North Eastern region of Somalia declared an independent state called Puntland.

CHAPTER II

CONCEPTUAL MAPPING

2.1. Introduction

There is a great confusion as to what development is all about. The literal meaning of development masks what it is in reality. This chapter provides framework as how to critically conceptualize the colonial discourse of development.

2.1. Colonialism Revisited

In my Secondary School years in Somalia, I was taught in my history class that Somalia was colonized by British and Italian imperialists from early nineteenth century to the 1960. In that history class, emphasis was on the Somali people's victorious and heroic responses to the European conquerors. However, colonialism as a concept was understood and taught as a past historical epoch where alien white forces physically conquered Somalia to exploit its people and resources. Colonialism, therefore was presented as a temporal phenomena which characterized the physical presence of white European colonizers and their administrations. I was also taught that the end of the colonial rule in Somalia in 1960, when most of the European colonizers physically left Somalia, marked the end of colonialism. What we did not learn in that history class was that the physical presence of white European colonizers in Somalia, and thus their direct exploitation of its human and non-human resources, although an important factor for colonialism, was only part of the colonial enterprise.

This narrow conception of colonialism failed to explain the continuation of Western imperial domination in Africa. Recent colonial/post-colonial theories reject the conception of colonial as simply an alien notion which directly rules and exploits the indigenous African resources. Rather, colonialism is conceptualized as "an ideological or discursive formation...an apparatus for constituting subject positions through the field of representation" (Slemon, in Dei, 1998, p. 4). Viewing colonialism as a discursive formation entails understanding 'colonial' "not simply as 'foreign' or 'alien', but rather as 'imposed and dominating'" (Dei, 1998, p. 5). This view takes into account the interplay between a colonial discourse and the colonized people, in other words, how the colonized people are represented and constructed within the colonial discourse. The aim of colonial discourse, according to Homi Bhabha (1990) "is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction" (p. 75). Discursive representation of a colonized people entails producing them "as a fixed reality ...[which is] entirely knowable and visible" (p. 76). In this regard, colonial discourse takes into consideration the intricate mutuality of knowledge and power.

Foucault (1977) argued that knowledge and power do not exist separately. Knowledge, in this sense, could not be regarded as only a liberated enterprise. Knowledge induces power, while at the same time power creates a new regimes of knowledge. Foucault stated that:

> we should admit ...that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations (p. 27,28).

Foucault, in the linking of knowledge and power talks about a new form called 'disciplinary power'. The aim of this new configuration is to produce docile subjects, by making individuals visible enough to be described, analysed, differentiated, categorized and judged. Therefore, the aim is to manifest "the subjection of those who are perceived as objects and the objectification of those who are

subjected" (p. 184). In other words, those who were subjected to the new power were also the objects of new regimes of knowledge.

For centuries, European imperialism meant conquering other people's lands to exploit their resources. Concomitantly, they were involved in the business of knowing others. As such, knowledge about other peoples or "the variety of textual forms in which the West produced and codified knowledge about non-metropolitan areas and cultures, especially those under colonial control", became part of the colonial enterprise (Williams and Chrisman, 1994, p. 5). Edward Said's seminal work "*Orientalism*" (1978) examines how the production of the "Orient" as a discourse became an apparatus for control and domination over the "Orient". Said states that:

> Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient - dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it; in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient (p. 3).

Orientalism as a discursive formation introduced Europeans to the Orient while at the same time "reiterating European superiority over Oriental backwardness" (p. 7). The representation of Europe to itself and the representation of others to Europe were not in any way a natural depiction of the Orient and the Occident. Instead, it was "a projection of European fears and desires masquerading as "scientific/objective" knowledges (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 1995, p. 85).

As Africa and its people became knowable and visible under the Western regimes of knowledge, its colonization became rational and justifiable. In 1922, The Governor of the British West Africa, Lord Lugard, announced the dual mandate of British imperialism to conquer Africa by saying:

> As Roman imperialism laid the foundation of modern civilization, and led the wild barbarians of these islands [British] along the path of progress, so in Africa today we are repaying the debt, and bringing to the dark places of the earth - the abode of barbarism and cruelty - the torch of culture and progress, while ministering to the

> material needs of our own civilization... we hold these countries because it is the genius of our race to colonise, to trade, and to govern[5].

In this colonial discourse, Africa was represented as a dark place, the home of barbarism and cruelty, which for Lord Lugard, had a resemblance to Europe's pre-historic stage. Therefore, colonizers came to Africa first and foremost to bring to the "torch" of civilisation. The representation of Africa as a degenerate place was needed in order to legitimize its colonization and the exploitation of its resources.

However, colonial power, according to Foucault's conception of power, was also a visible power. Foucault stated that under the old European feudal and Monarchical system, power was "visibly embodied in the person of the king, who has unlimited power over an anonymous body of subjects" (Sarup, 1993, p. 67). The sovereign power, as Foucault called it, was exercised "as a means of deduction, a subtraction mechanism, a right to appropriate a portion of the wealth, a tax of products, goods and services, labour and blood, levied on the subjects" (Rabinow, 1984, p. 259). Colonial power, in this sense, was a sovereign power in that European colonizers were visible enough to oppress its conquered people. They had the right to take the lives of their subjects, expropriate their lands, punish and jail the natives and send some of them into exile. As Frantz Fanon (1963) tells us, in Africa, colonialism was established through the use of violence. Fanon argues that the presence of soldiers and policemen with firearms was a constant reminder to the natives that they have no choice but to obey their colonial masters

> the policeman and the soldier, by their immediate presence and their frequent and direct action maintain contact with the native and advise him by means of rifle-butts and napalm not to budge. It is obvious here that the agent of government speak the language of pure force (p. 31).

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[5]Martin Carnoy quoted at the opening page of his famous book Education as Cultural Imperialism, New York: David Mckay Company, 1974.

Therefore, during the colonial era, producing knowledge about natives in order to dehumanize and denigrate was coupled with the use of physical power to oppress them. At the end of the colonial rule in Africa, that form of violence and repressive power has been replaced by another form of violence.

2.3. The Discourse of Development as a Colonial Discourse

According to Arturo Escobar (1995), development as a historically constructed discourse became institutionalized after the Second World War (p. 6). In 1949, United States President Truman politicized and publicly announced the establishment of development as a new institution, new form of power relationship between the so-called "developed" and "underdeveloped" countries. Truman stated:

> We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefit of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas. The old imperialism - exploitation for foreign profit - has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic fair dealing (Esteva, 1990, p. 6).

President Truman, articulating the new power relationship distinguished his project from the old colonial power and its exploitative objectives. He stated that the goal of the new power structure was the welfare of the people who live in "underdeveloped" countries. However, Truman still employed the imperial dichotomy to diminish the "underdeveloped" world. He homogenized the "Third World" as group, and their basic characteristics were their lack of what "developed" world had, namely "scientific advances and industrial progress". Both the old colonial and the new power relationship represented other non-Euro-American societies as inferior human beings. The violent way of representing others, regardless how it is articulated, is what made the colonial and the new power relationship a dominating and imposing power. This is because the violence that was introduced under colonialism and development has always been engendered through representation (Escobar,

1995, p. 214).

Escobar argues that there were historical conjectures that made possible the emergence of development as a discourse. These were:

> the breakdown of the old colonial systems, changes in the structures of population and production, the advance of communism in certain parts of the world and the concomitant fear of communism in the capitalist world; it also included the faith in science and technology, reinvigorated by the success of the Marshal plan, new forms of economic knowledge and the development area studies (e.g., Latin American Studies, [African Studies], etc.), as well as enriched experience with the management of complex social system (p. 429).

Though these historical phenomena contributed to the construction of development as a discourse, Escobar dismisses the fact that development can be reduced to merely product of these elements or as a result of their combination. Rather, he states that the discourse of development is "the result of the establishment of a system that brought together all of these elements, institutions, and practices creating among them a set of relations which ensures their continued existence" (p. 430).

Escobar maintains that development can best be analysed as a discourse. He invokes Foucault's notion of discourse, in that these analyses give the possibility of "stand[ing] detached from [the development discourse], bracketing its familiarity, in order to analyse the theoretical and practical context with which it has been associated (Quoted in Escobar, 1995: 6). Development as in any other discourse, couples the production of knowledge about the Third World with the exercise of power over its people. Escobar states that the use of expressions such as Third World and First World, South and North, centre and periphery are discursively produced a social spaces which "is bound with production of differences, subjectivities, and social order" (p.9).

Escobar also asserts that development should be viewed as a colonial discourse like other colonial discourses such as Orientalism. Development as a colonial discourse produces knowledge about Third World subjects with the aim to exercising power over them (p. 9). Finally Escobar

proposes to study the colonial discourse of development by analysing what he called the "three axes" that characterize development and their interrelations. They are:

> the forms of knowledge that refer to it and through which it comes into being and is elaborated into objects, concepts, theories, and the like; the systems of power that regulates its practice; and the forms of subjectivity fostered by this discourse, those through which people come to recognize themselves as developed and underdeveloped" (p. 10).

The following chapter discusses how Somalia is constructed as an "underdeveloped" country and the "scientific" solution that was prescribed to its indigenous farmers through development workers. The chapter also examines how the subjectivity of foreign and Somali development experts is constructed differently in the discourse of development. And finally, how the colonial development discourse and its practices impacted Somali society is taken up in this chapter.

CHAPTER III

THE NEED TO "DEVELOP" SOMALIA:

WHO SHOULD DO IT AND HOW SHOULD IT BE DONE?

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first examines three critically important questions: (1) Why the Western model of development was introduced to Somalia; (2) What the objective was of an imposed Western model of development; and (3) What the practices were by which the development objectives could be achieved? The second part studies what parties responsible for the implementation of the development objectives. In this segment, the role of different players in the development enterprise in Somalia is examined. The third section is concerned with the impact of the practices of conventional development on Somalia's indigenous people and their way of living.

3.2. The Construction of "Abnormality" and the Need for "Scientific" Intervention

The Somali development experts interviewed were asked why, in the first place, Somalia had eagerly pursued a Western model of development since its independence in 1960. Warsame, who worked for the Ministry of National Planning, states:

> the reason why different Somali regimes, since the independence, pursued conventional development blindly was not to eliminate a persistent hunger or poverty. Rather, it was just because Somali elites believed faithfully that Euro-American models of development was the only path to a real progress... there was a culture in the Somali elites which regards everything from Europe and America as civilized, developed and modern. While our tradition, our ways of living were seen as backward and primitive.

Here, Warsame dismisses the myth propagated by the scientific community which argues that

conventional development discourse came to Somalia, and the rest of Africa as well, to eliminate poverty. He states that Somalia, like the rest of Africa and the Third World, was represented as part of development discourse and it was through this discursive representation that Somali elites came to know who they were/are as a people and as a country. In this form of representation, Somalia was exemplified as a "poor" and "backward" country, and embracing the Western model of development was/is indispensable to its survival. This literature constructed a world view of Somali elites/leaders who saw their country as poor and backward, and one that needed to embark the Western model of development.

Arturo Escobar (1995) stated that the end of the Second World War marked the rise of the discourse of development economics which "constructed its object, the 'underdeveloped' economy"(p. 73). Development economics became a new object of study in which what had been constructed as the economic problems of the "underdeveloped" countries could be studied, defined, measured and hence solved using economic prescriptions. Thus, development as a whole became synonymous with economic development which could be "measured by the yardstick of Western progress" (p. 83). In this discourse, the problem of underdeveloped countries was characterized by "a vicious circle of low productivity, lack of capital, and inadequate industrialization..."(p. 83), and a country's problem became purely an economic one. The central preoccupation of the discourse of economic development was "[t]he need to compose the world as a picture" (p. 56). In other words, there was a need to produce knowledge which depicted the world, and in particular, the "underdeveloped" world, through the economists' gaze. The discourse of economic development became an established discipline of knowledge with its "associated institutions and practices: economic institutes and faculties and, more importantly, the planning institutions"(p. 85).

As the knowledge of "underdeveloped world" became ritualized and institutionalized,

economists started studying "scientifically" and "objectively", the social, environmental, economic and historical aspects of the life of Third World countries. For example, Rostow's work on the stages of economic development is a classical example of how the development economics characterized the problem of the Third World countries and prescribed solutions for it. Rostow's model consisted of five major stages of economic development which were applicable to all countries in the world. The first was the traditional stage, which exhibited little change. As a result of market expansion and the emergence of local entrepreneurs, the second stage, which Rostow called the "precondition for takeoff" began its momentum (So, 1990, p. 29). Rostow argued that a country needed an economic stimulus in order to reach the third stage which he called the "takeoff stage". Therefore, for a country to have a self-sustained economic growth which was necessary for subsequent economic stages, its "capital and resources must be mobilised so as to raise the rate of productive investment to 10% of the national income..."(p. 29). The fourth stage, "the drive to maturity", was reached once the country showed a self-sustained process of economic growth. The last stage, a "high mass-consumption society", reflected "growth in employment opportunities, increase in national income, rise of consumer demands, and formation of a strong domestic market" (p. 30).

Based on linear stages of economic growth, Rostow argued that Third World countries were going through similar stages on their way towards development. Further, he contended that Third World countries were economically deprived because of their lack of productive investment. Therefore, foreign aid, such as capital, scientific technology and expertise were imperative "in order to propel Third World countries beyond the precondition stage" (p. 28).

Another classical addition to the discourse of development economics was the invention of the Gross National Product (GNP) after the Second World War. Serge Latouche (1992) historicised the invention of Gross National Product (GNP) as well as its function as a universal index of

"standards of living". He stated that there were historical occurances which lead the universalisation of the standard of living. Among them were the rise and spread of the concept of national account, the relative economic growth which industrialized countries experienced after the Second World War and the emergence of development discourse (Latouche, 1992, p. 251-252). Thus the need to quantify, measure and compare the economic status of different countries in the world became seen as essential. Gross National Product (GNP) per head became the basic indicator of the standard of living applicable to all nations in the world. Since then, the income of nations, which is composed of the income of its people, became the official indicator of a nation's development (p. 253).

As a result of the institutionalization of the discourse of development economics, more knowledge on "underdeveloped" countries became available which in turn constructed an individual African country's subjectivity. It was through this discursive representation in which Somali elites, as well as Africans, came to recognize themselves as "underdeveloped". In contrast, the development economic discourse represented the West as "developed" "civilized" and "progressive" and prescribed their model as one to be followed by the rest of the World.

Escobar explained that there are studies establishing the existence of a historical relationship between the decline of the colonial order and the rise of development, especially in the consolidation of development economics (p. 26). As Somalia and the rest of African countries approached their independent stage, there was abundant knowledge created about their underdeveloped economic status. With their scientific gaze, development economists, anthropologists and social scientists seized the moment, analysing how African societies were underdeveloped and what their future would be. As a result of these scientific diagnoses, what should supposedly be done about Africa's uncertain future became subject of discussion and analysis by Western politicians, planners and diplomats.

Eugene Black's (1963) speech on Africa's problems of underdeveloped is a classic example

of how the Western world and their institutions, such as the World Bank, constructed a view of the newly independent African states. Black was the President and Chairman of the Executive Directors of the World Bank from 1949 to 1962. The speech he delivered in 1961 at the University of Georgia is worth quoting in length:

> Students of Africa ascribe various reasons for the *failure of economic development* to spread within the continent. Certainly climate has something to do with it... *climate has been an important factor in holding back any rise above the subsistence level*. Throughout the continent various *debilitating diseases are prevalent*; for many of these there is not yet any medical cure...
> From the point of view of economic development, the *lack of indigenous African enterprise* is perhaps the most important generalisation to be made....there can never be any political stability or important material progress in these societies unless more and more of the population is willing to move from subsistence living to participate more actively in the modern money or market economy...
> The real question will be, where will the continent turn for help?" Clearly they cannot lift themselves by their own bootstraps...
> Considering *the climate and the prevalence of diseases*, it is not surprising that no Calvin rose in Africa to preach a theology based on *the idea that hard work is a virtue*...
> With five-sixths of the people of Africa engaged in some kind of agriculture, mostly *subsistence agriculture*, the encouragement of settled farming is probably the most widely recognised need on the continent. But the objective, too, is beset with very formidable obstacles. For the most part, African cultivators still *follow customs hundreds of years old* (Black, 1963, p. 85-102) [emphasis are mine]

According to Black, Africa's economic underdevelopment could only be attributed to three things: (1) the nature of Africa's physical environment, with its harsh climate and debilitating diseases; (2) the nature of Africa's people, who are lazy and do not know the virtue of the good work; and, (3) the anachronistic African culture with its subsistence farming. Therefore the problem of Africa was/is rooted in the inferiority of its nature, people and their culture. These racist and violent representations under the guise of "scientific economics" legitimized the recolonisation of Africa.

The discourse of development economics achieved what European colonizers did not achieve during their colonization in Africa: (re)colonizing Africa without the use of any physical force. The question was why African people, who, in the past, had fiercely resisted colonial occupation,

succumbed now to the new colonization under the name of development. Answering that question, Bulale stated that:

> By the time Italian and British colonizers left Somalia, there were enough Somalis who went through colonial tutelage whose ideas and world views were same as colonizers. These are the group whom colonizers trained in their hands and trusted them to be the leaders of the newly African independent states.

According to Bulale, the imposition of the colonial system of education was a ground preparation for the upcoming (re)colonization of the newly independent African states. Hussein Bulhan (1980) discusses at length how the colonial-imposed teaching in Somalia produced what he called "the captive intelligentsia of Somalia" (Bulhan, 1980, p. 25). He stated that the introduction of the colonial system of education served two main purposes: (1) the creation of a new type of intelligentsia and (2) at the same time, the displacement of an indigenous intelligentsia. Bulhan argued that the creation of a captive Somali intelligentsia weakened the popular resistance against colonial occupation led by the indigenous intelligentsia, with leaders such as Sayyid Mohammed Abdulle Hassan[6]. Bulhan also asserted that the imposition of colonial tutelage undermined the very foundation of the Somali society by devaluing the Somalis' indigenous knowledge and their way of living. This, according to him, had and still has a serious effect on the nations' struggle towards development:

> The student whose school fees and general expense entailed great family sacrifice often came home despising their living conditions and wisdom. True to its colonial character, the school system continued to undermine, not enrich, the family, its members, and the general society. This parasitic but also conceited outlook has had far-reaching implications for national *underdevelopment* (p. 33) [emphasis are not

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[6]According to Bulhan, Sayyid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan was the father of Somali Nationalism, as well as one of the indigenous intelligentsia. Sayyid Mohamed formed and led the famous "Dervish Movement" who fought against the British occupation of Somaliland for 20 years. Finally, the Sayyid and his movement was defeated in 1920 by colonial forces and by air bombardment which was the first of its kind in a colonial war of occupation (Bulhan, 1980, p. 29). [For detailed information about Sayyid Mohamed and his Dervish Movement consult Said Samatar's book, *Oral Poetry and Somali Nationalism: The case of Sayyid Mohamed 'Abdille Hassan*, (1982).

mine].

Somalia, as a newly independent state, came to a world space which had already been textually mediated. In that discursive space, what defined Somalia was not what it was, but what it lacked. Anthony Reyner (1960) discussed the problems of the nascent Somali state stating: "Independent Somalia presents a distressing picture. Its economic and commercial potential is bound to remain low because none of the known resources can be developed quickly and easily" (Quoted in Samatar, 1988, p. 60). In a similar vein, I. M. Lewis (1960) noted that one of the biggest challenges that Somalia will face in the future is "the development of the territory's slender resource ..." (P. 288). Professor Lewis continued his observation of Somalia's problems by stating that "It is extremely important that the industry should improve,...there is at the moment no other local product capable of making such a substantial contribution to Somalia's economy" (p. 293). Therefore, according to Lewis, Somalia cannot stand as a country "[u]nless oil or other readily exploitative mineral resources are discovered, however, there is little likelihood of foreign capital investment increasing markedly, and there is no doubt that foreign aid will remain hope for further development"(p. 292). These prescriptions of what Somalia should do emphasize the increase of Somali nation's wealth but not the welfare of its people. The main concern of development enterprise was not the improvement of the lives of indigenous people but was mainly a strategy designed for "catching up with the west" (Ake, 1996, p. 11). Accordingly, Somali elites took the advice of their mentors and adopted the Western development practices suggested in this literature. A few years after independence, Somalia became known as a nation whose survival depended more on foreign aid than any other source. To use Graham Hancock's (1989) phrase, Somalia become an "archetypical aided country"(p. 171).

Ozay Mehmet (1971) has discussed the effectiveness and the impact of foreign aid on

Somalia's early stage of development. He stated that Somalia, which was represented as one of the poorest countries of the world, was also one of the largest recipients of foreign aid. He noted that "during 1964-9 she [Somalia] received an annual average of about $15 per head of her 3 million population. This rate of aid is more than three times the figure of $4.5 per capita, which represents the average annual aid to other developing countries during 1964-7" (Mehmet, 1971, p. 3). Mehmet also reported that up to the end of 1969, 85 per cent of Somalia's development expenditure was financed externally. That period was characterized by a flood of foreign aid, which consisted of different forms including: bilateral aid, multilateral aid, soft or consessional loans, commercial loans, as well as food . The aid came from all corners of the world, including both the Eastern and the Western blocks. Mehmet noted that the fact both the U.S.S.R and the U.S.A. were the main bilateral aid providers to Somalia had to do with the cold-war politics, which made Somalia a strategically important place (p. 37-38).

As to whether the flood of aid helped Somalia achieve any economic and social development, Mehmet argued that the first decade of Somalia's independence "closed with little demonstrable progress" (p. 36) . Further, he states that "Indeed, evidence suggests that living standards, on average, were lower at the close of the decade than at its beginning." (p. 36). Mehmet also pointed out that the torrent of aid engendered an unequal distribution of income among the Southern and the Northern parts of the country. Furthermore, foreign aid exacerbated Somalia's burden of indebtedness to other nations (p. 45-6). Regarding the development projects that had been successfully implemented, Mehmet reported that "[t]he overall result was a painfully slow rate of implementation of development projects, together with an exceedingly high number of unfinished or abandoned ones" (p. 43). Somalia's first decade of pursuing a Western development model did not lead to an economic take-off, as economists predicted. Instead, it fostered social inequality and foreign

dependency with an ever-increasing foreign indebtedness. It also demonstrated a vision of development that was deficient on the part of Somali leaders whom Mehmet characterized as:

> naive, not only in failing to appreciate fully the limitation of external aid, but, more importantly in understanding the ability of the Somali nation to absorb large amounts of aid effectively and productively at a time when the nation lacked an efficient administration and other conditions necessary for a successful economic take-off (p. 47).

As Claude Ake (1996) argued, the lack of vision and a weak agenda of development was common to all new African states in that "African countries came to independence with hardly any discernible vision of development and no agenda for its realization" (Ake, 1996, p. 19). As a result, the "developed" world came in and "provided the development paradigm and agenda for Africa"(p. 19).

The second issue which this second section seeks to address is the objective of some of the imposed development projects implemented in Somalia during early 1970s to late the 1980s. The Somali development experts interviewed for this thesis were asked the objectives of the development projects with which they were involved. Their response was that the purpose of these development projects were primarily to increase Somalia's agriculture and livestock production. Bulale, for instance, graduated with a Masters degree in Animal Science from a European country, and specialized in the genetic development of livestock. He then worked for the Ministry of Livestock Development in Somalia for ten years as a senior administrator. Bulale worked closely with two cattle and poultry breeding projects located near Mogadishu, the capital city of Somalia. Bulale stated that the goal of both projects was:

> to improve the production of Somalia's cattle and poultry. The improvement had to be done through scientific cross-breeding between Somali and European cattle and poultry. The result, as the project rationalized, would be a hybrid species with more milk production than the original Somali cattle species... The produced milk would supply Mogadishu's market, including the government-owned milk factory. However, Somalia's cattle (Zebu cattle) and poultry have normally a high adaptation to tropical climate and a high resistance to tropical diseases. After ten years of cross-breeding, the new hybrid species had less tolerance for the Somali climate and less resistance

to tropical diseases, and thus less productivity.

According to Bulale, the main reason for introducing these development projects into Somalia was to increase what had been constructed as the "low yield" of Somalia's agriculture and livestock production. Production, in the discourse of development, has a value only if it is marketable. This meant that small Somali farmers should be expected to produce large quantities of commodified goods for the market. The production of milk and other agricultural products by Somali small farmers for the consumption of their families and their local community did not contribute to the economy of the country as measured by Gross National Products (GNP). According to the discourse of the development economist, the GNP -- or the "nation's output of goods and services valued at current market price"-- was the official indicator of the nation's economic status (Robert, 1990:186). Therefore, the only way Somali peasants could contribute to the GNP and become a part of other economic indicators was to sell their products to the market and buy other commodified goods. Thus, production was not for the satisfaction of local needs but for market needs.

Consequently, the market, was the place where products gain a legitimate economic value. Thus, any production which had any other destination than the market was not a "real" production. The subsistence mode of producing agriculture, such as that of Somali peasants, which normally generated little or no surplus is/was constructed as an anachronism or tradition that should be transformed. However, the market in which the economic doctrine of development worked was not the local market controlled by local Somali peasants. As Samir Amin would remind us, the concept of market in the discourse of development was situated within liberal economic discourse which equates development with market expansion. This economic discourse assumed that "the market as a whole will ensure the maximisation of growth and an equitable distribution...." (Amin, 1985: x). Thus, liberalisation of all trade and capital throughout the nations of the world was indispensable for

the market to function effectively. The world, in this sense, is "one big marketplace in which nations compete with economic rank and respectability" (Robert, 1992:186).

According to Bulale, another goal of introducing development projects to Somalia was to transform Somalia's subsistence mode of production to a market oriented mode of production. This has been the standard agricultural development policy introduced to Africa by Western developmentalists and their institutions. Ake observed that more than 70 percent of the peoples of Africa were rural dwellers who were engaged in agricultural activity for the sustenance of their livelihood (Ake, p. 142). Therefore, introducing a market oriented production to Africa, which means producing for profit, would supposedly stimulate other economic sectors and hence improve the standard of living of African people. Thus, produce for profit, or perish, became the official policy of development institutions toward Africa's agricultural development. The World Bank study in 1993 clearly outlined this strategy:

> the pillar of a new strategy [of Africa'a development]]is to undertake policy change necessary to make agriculture, agro-industry and related services profitable. This profitability will be the main element to stimulate the private sector (including small farmers) to invest in agriculture, agro-industry, livestock, marketing, input supply, and credit (Quoted in Ake: 143).

However, this policy overlooked the fact that introducing a different mode of production than what Somalis had been doing for centuries entailed total displacement and destruction of indigenous Somali knowledge and their way of living. This meant that what to produce, how to produce, and for what purpose, was a socially constructed activity informed by the Somalis' world view, which was the product of their long-term interaction with each other and with their physical environment. The Somali way of producing agriculture and livestock was not separate from their social values and their tradition. For instance, the concept of producing for profit encouraged competition among farmers and thus, individualism. Contrarily, communism and the spirit of helping each other was fundamental

in the Somalis' subsistence mode of agriculture production. Therefore, contrary to what Western economists have claimed, any mode of production, or economic model, was a socially constructed model imbued with certain social values:

> any [economic] model, however, whether local or universal, is a construction of the world and not an indisputable, objective truth about it. This is the basic insight guiding the analysis of economics as culture" (Escobar, 1995, p. 62).

Therefore, imposing an alien mode of production on the indigenous people of Somalia is not a way of improving their life but rather a way of colonising them.

The transformation of the Somali small farmers' production from subsistence to a market oriented production was realized through the introduction of a "scientific" way of producing agriculture and livestock. Hirsi, who has a Phd in agronomy, worked for a development project funded by World Food Organization (FAO) from 1987 to 1990. He explained how the "scientific" method of producing agriculture was introduced to Somali peasants:

> The project introduced new techniques of farming and new chemical products to the small farmers in the Lower and the Middle Shabelle regions of Somalia. The new techniques included farming in lines, rather than random distribution, which Somali farmers had been using for centuries. The chemical products introduced were mainly fertilizers and chemicals for weed and pest control. The rationale of the Project was that using new techniques of farming and chemical products would result in an increase the output of the Somali small farmers. This has been done without taking into consideration the socio-economic, as well as the local environmental conditions.

Hirsi and his co-workers were responsible for showing Somali small farmers how to apply new farming techniques and new chemical products by using an experimental block. The experimental block also served to compare its yield to the small farmers' production. The idea was to convince Somali small farmers to abandon their indigenous way of farming and to adopt "modern/scientific" procedures in agriculture. According to Hirsi, scientific intervention into Somalia's "low yield" production entailed the introduction of new techniques of farming and employing chemical products. The chemicalisation of agriculture consisted of three methods: (1) the elimination of undesirable

plants by using herbicides; (2) the application of fertilizers into the soil; and (3) the use of new seeds called the "high yielding variety".

The underlying assumption for the chemicalisation of agriculture is that the nature alone is insufficient to provide enough agricultural production, thus human manipulation is necessary. Science, in this sense, is constructed as the right tool to control and dominate nature. Chemicalisation of agriculture is considered the "scientific" way of producing in the sense that it forces nature to yield more products. However, as Shiva would remind us, chemicalisation of agriculture destroys the harmonious nature of the environment as well as its biological diversity. This is because chemicalisation procedures have only one aim, which is that of "increasing the output of a single component of a farm, at the cost of decreasing other components and increasing external inputs" (Shiva, 1993, p. 40). Therefore, the scientific way of farming reduces the quality of indigenous farming systems, which "is based on mixed and rotational cropping systems of cereal, pulses, oilseeds with diverse varieties of each crop" into farming individual crops (p. 40). The role of science, in this sense, was/is not to improve indigenous needs but rather to subordinate agricultural production to market imperatives. Science, therefore, "is deeply wedded to economism, [and thus] it is unrelated to human needs" (p. 59).

The "scientific" way of farming, comprised mainly of the chemicalisation of agriculture, has been introduced to Somali small farmers without their consent. Development experts employed different strategies for the imposition of the "scientific" way of production on the local Somali farmers. Asli is an agronomist and worked for a development project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and FAO. She explained how the "scientific" way of farming was imposed upon the local Somali peasants:

> The project was intended to improve Somali small farmers' output by providing seasonal credit money in order for them to purchase herbicides, pesticides and

> fertilizers imported from Western countries. The project, in the beginning, provided free herbicides and fertilizers to the Somali indigenous farmers. After a while people were asked to buy the chemical products...finally, as the inflation of the Somali shilling skyrocketed, foreign project managers asked the Somali small farmers to purchase the product in Somali shilling equivalent the value of the United States dollar at the black market. This was a price that small farmers could not afford in any way...The project also provided Somali small farmers special seeds which they said were tolerant to herbicides and more responsive to the fertilizers... there was no room for taking into consideration local conditions nor did the local people have a say for the project and its agenda.

According to Asli, the imposition of the "scientific" way of producing agriculture to Somali peasants was achieved through incentives such as seasonal credit money, free agricultural chemicals and seeds. The aim was to create a conducive environment where Somali small farmers would become dependent on the external agricultural inputs imported from the Western market, thus creating new markets for the chemical products of capitalist nations.

The chemicalisation of agriculture and its contingent practices were forced upon Somali small farmers without taking into consideration the local conditions and without their consent. This implies that conventional development discourse was/is anti-democratic in its content and imperialist in its ideology. It was anti-democratic because it compelled Somali small farmers to adopt an alien way of producing agriculture/livestock; it denied the right of the local Somali farmers to represent themselves and thus control their destiny; and it destroyed the ecological balance between indigenous Somalis and their environment. Conventional development can be argued to be an antidemocratic discourse in that it unilaterally devalues indigenous Somali knowledge as primitive and anachronistic. This myopic discourse of economic development would not have been implemented in Africa had it not been for tyrannic regimes such as the one that existed in Somalia from 1969-1991. (See the discussion below regarding the role of the Somali government in its development).

Imposing chemicalisation and its accompanying practices on Somali small farmers was not the only way of introducing the "scientific" way of producing agriculture to Somalia. There had been

many large scale development projects in Somalia which were capital intensive, as well as involving complex technologies. Guleed is an agricultural engineer. In 1987 he finished his first degree from abroad and started working for the Ministry of Agriculture in Somalia where he was placed in a project called Fanole. The Fanole Project was one of the biggest development projects in Somalia, and was started in 1972. The Project consisted of three different development components: (1) construction of a diversion dam for the generation of hydro-electricity (5,000 kw); (2) opening of a 25 km long canal; and (3) establishment of a state farm covering 8,199 hectares (Samantar, 1988, p.510)[7]. Guleed's responsibilities included working on the construction of the principle canal, land preparation, and building irrigation and drainage systems. Guleed states that the goal of Fanole project was

> transforming Somalia's indigenous land into a cash crop land. There was an assumption which states that Somali indigenous people produce less, or that they do not develop their fertile land as much as they should. Therefore, transforming their small farming land and their forest into a large scale project such as a hydro electrical and state farms which produce large quantities of food would be an ideal type of development. The large scale state farming in Fanole was designated to produce rice, which was not a local crop.

According to Guleed, the objective of introducing large scale development projects, such as Fanole, was not in any way to improve the lives of the Somali peasants. Instead the intent was to transform the "underutilised" land of Somali peasants into a land which produces a cash crops. This entailed expropriation of the Somali peasants' land, which was their only asset and source of livelihood. The market-oriented production which the government of Somalia pursued was an antithetical to the family consumption oriented production on which the Somali subsistence mode of production was/is based. As Ake has pointed out, there had always been conflicts between African governments and African peasants, who have two different agenda of how and what to produce. He argues that

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[7]For the details of the Fanole Project, see Samantar, 1988, p. 510-515.

"[s]ince capital and peasantry are not in direct exchange relations, capital and state have to find other ways to control and appropriate peasant production" (p. 65). According to Ake, the policies which African governments develop in order to appropriate peasant production include:

> the emphasis given to export crops even in the face of food shortage; the distribution of land in favour of those who do not put it to the most productive use; the use of agricultural support systems to control production and facilitate the appropriation of the surplus product; and the preference for large-scale capital-intensive projects, such as irrigation schemes ...which offer policymakers lucrative deals (Ake, 1996, p. 66).

3.3. The Role of the Development Experts and Somalia's Ousted Regime

This section examines the role of Somali and foreign development experts/workers in the implementation of the imposed development policies in Somalia. It also examines the role played by the ousted military regime in Somalia as well in the practices of conventional development discourse. The Somali development experts were asked what their role was in the development projects with which they were involved. They stated that they were not happy what they were doing, which was mainly implementing policies that came from the top. The majority of the Somali experts were in senior positions in different projects and government departments. However, they said their role was limited to implementing development policies.

Bulale worked as the Director of livestock development projects in the Somalia's Ministry of Livestock. He explained his role and his experience working in development projects:

> for the ten years that I have been involved in development projects, there were more than twenty that I was involved in, and all of them failed in achieving their development goals. Theses projects failed for one reason - their developmental goals were not based on the reality, needs and the knowledge of local Somali people. This made me rethink my role as a senior development expert. After all these experiences, I came to realize that I was just a technocrat - technocrat in the sense that I was only carrying out orders from my top officers. When you are a technocrat, you just sit in an office and do what you are asked to do...I realized that the development policies which I was executing served only the government elites and their foreign counterparts but not the indigenous Somalis... For this reason I decided to leave doing

technocrat jobs...

Prior to his job as a development expert, Bulale and a group of Somali students were sent to Europe for university level studies. It was during 1960s, and the newly independent Somali state was in need of Somali educators/experts who could replace colonial expatriate administrators and run the modern Somali state. According to Bulale, his group was specifically sent to Europe to study different fields of science. Science was viewed as a necessary step for the development of the new born Somali nation states. Bulale obtained a degree in animal science, specializing the genetic development of livestock.

Bulale came back from Europe with enthusiasm, hoping that his science degree would help his now independent country advance through scientific development. However, as Bulale states, after ten years of working on more than a dozen of development project, his faith in conventional/scientific development was shattered. Bulale argued that there was one primary reason why these development projects failed in Somalia and that is that they were undemocratic and failed to take into consideration the reality and the needs of indigenous Somali people. He said there was no consultation with indigenous Somalis, and the decision as to what to develop and how to implement it was normally in the hands of a very small group of Somali government officials and foreign donors.

The undemocratic nature of conventional development restricted the role of Somali experts to that of technocrats. Bulale's frustration in this weakened role, which lead him to leave his job, emphasizes the critical situation in which Somali development experts found themselves. On the one hand, Bulale and his Somali colleagues were insiders, knowing exactly why so many development projects failed. On the other hand, there was no room for them to make changes in how the development enterprise proceeded.

Warsame explains the powerless situation of Somali development experts. Warsame, a Phd from a European country, worked for the Ministry of National Planning in Somalia in the Department of Planning and Evaluation. His job included the planning and evaluation of development projects in Somalia. He worked with foreign development experts and was responsible for making changes and suggestions as to how development projects would meet the needs of the local Somali people. Warsame states that:

> Most of the foreign development experts used to ignore the recommendations which Somali experts used to give regarding the relevance of development projects to the needs of indigenous Somalis. Foreign experts knew their way...they used to go to the top government officials and get their approval for the project implementation. There were some projects that had already have designed and planned in foreign countries and thus had no relevance for the local Somali needs. And yet we had no say on making some changes or giving advice. As such, our role as Somali experts was limited. However, no one liked working on something that will bring only failure, such as those western imposed development projects. But the situation was like working under two tyrannic regimes... the oppressed Somali regime and Western donors and their imposed/undemocratic development models. This left one either to accept the situation as it was or leave it...

Warsame and other Somali experts who had specialized degrees were supposed to be in charge of the development agenda in Somalia. In name only, Warsame was in charge of the planning of development relevant to the needs of Somali peasants. He was also in control of evaluating whether development projects achieved their stated goals or not. This included the evaluation of how the project impacted the lives of indigenous Somalis. However, as Warsame states, his role had been denied by what he calls two dictatorial systems. He describes both Somalia's military regime and Western donors/lenders as tyrannic in the sense that both of them were undemocratic for not allowing Somali people to freely decide what was good for them. Both were interested only in looking after their interests and not the needs of the Somali people. These two undemocratic systems supported and sustained the colonial discourse of development. In return, the Somali military regime and Western donors were the only ones that benefited from the outcomes of conventional development

discourse.

To understand the role of Somalia's tyrannic regime within the discourse of development, Asli provides what she calls a "typical example" of a development project in Somalia. It was in early 1987, soon after Asli finished her M.Sc. degree in agriculture in one of the Western European countries. Asli started working as a senior administrator in the National Organisation of Agricultural Cooperatives in Somalia. The project in which Asli worked was called Silos Project, funded by the Italian Aid Agency known as Fondo Auito Italiano. The aim of the project was to complete the building of 360 silos in the Lower and Middle Shabelle regions in Somalia. The silos would enable Somali cooperative farmers to store large quantities of their grain products, mainly maize. Near the completion of the project, Asli was asked to write an evaluation report. Asli consulted with her colleagues and took field trips to the actual sites where silos had been erected. She found that there were some that had not been properly erected. Each silo was supposed to have an electric generator so that the grain could be stored inside, and a protection fence was needed for each one so that cattle and other animals would not be able to use the silos as a shelter during the hot weather. The fibre glass construction of the silos was improperly put together, and there were also complaints regarding the use of a proper cover for the ground soil. Asli wrote what she had found in her evaluation report and sent it to the government office that requested the report from her. A few days later, she was called to a meeting at the office of the Vice Minister of Agriculture. The Vice Minister of Agriculture and the director of the Italian aid agency were among those who attended the meeting. The Director of the Italian aid agency accused to Asli of being an "inexperienced junior staff" and stated that she did not have the right to submit a report like that. Asli states that:

> at the end of the meeting, the project was approved as a complete project and my concerns in the report had not been addressed...I asked myself what was the aim of the meeting? Why did the Director of the Italian aid agency attend the meeting? Why did he insult me in front of the Somali government officers? Who is in charge in the

> final evaluation of development projects in Somalia? The Somali government or the donor/lender countries?... This was the way we have been terrorized to be silent in the corruption and mismanagement of development projects in Somalia... I went to a senior agricultural officer with whom I worked and told him about the silos project and what had happened. He told me that this corruption was exactly the nature of the development projects. He said you have two choices: either leave and go back to Europe or join the group who are selling out the country.

Here, Asli is explaining a situation in which working for development projects in Somalia became synonymous with "selling out the country". The silos project, as Asli states, is a prototype of the outcome of the colonial discourse of development and its discursive practices in Somalia. Both foreign development profiteers and the despotic Somali government were in agreement in the business of selling out the country. As Asli indicates in the corruption of the Silos Project, Somali government's top officials were not interested whether the silos project achieved its development goals or not. Top government officials, who had the final say in the implementation of development projects were only interested in getting their share of a potential bribe. Therefore, conventional development and its colonial practices contributed and legitimised the repression and corruption that were a part of Somalia's military regime.

As a follow up of the Silos Project, Asli contacted the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture who attended that meeting. She says she asked if:

> the 360 generators arrived for the silos to function. He told me that 10 of them had arrived recently. I then asked when the rest would arrive. He did not say any specific time and then he asked me if I had electrical generator at home. I said "why are you asking me", and he said in a plain and simple language "you could get one if you do not have one". For me, this was a shock ...It shocked to me because I was not expecting to hear that at all, and especially to hear it from someone like the Vice Minister of Agriculture who was supposedly a safeguard of the public interest.

According to Asli, corruption and mismanagement of conventional development practices were not the exception, but the rule. What was going on in the development enterprise in Somalia was an overt, large-scale and corrupt enterprise in which high ranking government officers routinely

participated. The oppressive Somali regime's objective of inviting more foreign donors to finance the development projects was solely to consolidate their repressive policies. Herb Feith (1979) calls repressive-developmentalist regimes those states in which their "role as the ultimate development agency legitimizes [their] authoritarian nature and repressive policies" (Feith, in Nandy, 1992, p. 270). Thus, in those regimes the discourse of development became "the process in the name of which the state mobilizes resources internally and externally and, then, eats them up itself, instead of allowing them to reach the bottom and the peripheries of the society" (p. 270). In a similar vein, Pramod Parajuli (1991) argued that the notion of nation state in the Third World is a problematic one. It evolved as an imposed structure of European colonialism and was legitimized during the post-colonial era as the agent of progress and development. Thus any social change/development had "to be carried out only by modern state apparatus..." (p. 175). As such, in the case of repressive regimes, such as the one that existed in Somalia, people have no choice but "to live either as people without a state or in a state which is not theirs" (Quoted in Parajuli, 1991, p. 175).[8]

Asli and Warsame stated earlier that Western donors and their development experts were in full control of deciding the overall agenda of the development enterprise in Somalia. They were also enjoying limitless privileges that Somali experts who worked for development projects did not have. Both Asli and Warsame questioned the privileged status of the foreign development experts. They argue that the elevated status of foreign development experts was/is a discursively constructed space which is contained in the power relationship between the so-called "developed" and "developing" countries. Asli explains that the privileged status of foreign experts, who were mainly white male

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[8]It is my contention that in the present situation in which Somali people could not agree on forming a central government has something to do with their experience in the last repressive regime. Under that regime, Somali people lived in a state which was not theirs, while in the present situation they opted to live as people without a centralised state.

university graduates, had nothing to do with their expertise and educational credentials, as most people in Africa believe. Instead, it had something to do with where they were from and who they were. She explains how the conventional development discourse was positioned differently between her and her German university classmates. She states:

> I was out of my country for ten years living in West Germany, which was not friendly to foreigners. I was very happy to graduate and leave Germany at once to my beloved country. My university offered me a Phd program and I declined, saying to them and to myself that a Phd is too much for Somalia. As I became involved different development projects working with foreign experts, I realized my subordinate status, compared to that of the foreign experts. Some of the foreign development experts came from West Germany and graduated from the same university as I did and we knew each other before. They told me that their salary was up to $8,000 US Dollars monthly, with no tax plus some other benefits. At that time I was getting 1,500 Somali Shilling, which was equivalent to less than $15 US Dollars. Before I came to Somalia I was hoping that my expertise, professional credentials and my Somali citizenship would give me more privilege than foreign graduates working my home country. I never thought that my European classmates would one day become my boss in my own country.

Asli problematizes the notion of foreign "experts" and how it is constructed within the discourse of development. She poses critical questions as to why she and her German classmates had different positions/status and thus different privileges in the practical outcomes of conventional development discourse. She asks why she has been relegated to a subordinate position despite the fact she had "Western" educational background and professional credential. Why did young white new graduates from the West have a senior position in the development projects of Somalia?

According to Asli, her ten years of scholarship was part of the Somali government's policy for training more Somali students in higher education degrees who would be responsible for the development agenda of Somalia and thus replace foreign experts. Asli then asks, "what benefit did her country get from her expertise and education"? For Asli, the domination of foreign experts in the development discourse in Africa is a clear indication of the persistence of colonialism. In this neo-colonialism, foreign experts replaced the colonial administrators and settlers. Thus, conventional

development discourse is another discursive formation which has an imperialist agenda similar to that of colonialism.

Thomas Turay (1997) argues that conventional development discourse is embedded in Euro-American institutional racism. He states that institutionalized international agencies, such as the United Nations (U.N), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (I.M.F), and the European Economic Commission (EEC), who sponsor many development programs in Africa, perpetuate the practices of Euro-American institutional racism (p. 11). Therefore, according to Turay:

> [t]he involvement of Western so-called experts in designing development programmes for Africa is part of the IMF and World Bank conditionalities. In this way, the dominant white race continues to control, own and discriminate against African human and non-human resources (p. 14).

The Euro-American model of development legitimized and institutionalized the so-called development "experts" as an indispensable component of development programs in Africa. Peter Conze (1987), who worked for the Ministry of National planning in Somalia as an advisor during 1980s, questions whether technical assistance worked in Somalia or not. According to Conze, technical assistance was a form of aid which aims "to improve the performance capacity of people or organisations either by transferring knowledge and skills or by mobilising existing capacity" (p. 484). The rationale for technical assistance is that lack of skilled people is one of the main obstacles of development in Africa. Therefore, technical assistance, including the assignment of foreign experts and training scholarships, will help improve the performance of local people and their organisations. Conze reports that in 1985, the amount of money Somalia received from foreign donors/lenders was between $350 to $400 million US Dollars. One third of this amount was allocated to the technical assistance component, including foreign development experts. Conze mentioned that in 1983, 120 million US Dollars was allocated to the technical assistance component. For Conze, this amount of money is very high. He states that he "[did] not know of any other country with such a high technical

assistance per capita" (p. 484). Here is how the allocated amount of money for technical assistance was divided:

> 42% for long term experts,
> 13% for short term experts,
> 10% for training,
> 26% for equipments, including supportive materials such as cars, furniture, typewriters, copy machines, and 9% for miscellaneous (p. 486).

In each and every development project in Somalia funded by foreign countries, one third of its budget used to go to the foreign expert component. In that segment, 55% of the money plus 26% allocated for the supportive material would go to the foreign experts. On the contrary, Somali experts who worked for development Projects with foreign experts had a monthly salary of 1.500 Somali Shilling which is equivalent to 12 US Dollars (p. 486).

This meant, according to Conze, that a university graduate and Somali citizen who worked for the government and its development projects earned less than a watchman who worked for a foreign expatriate. He states that if a Somali university graduate chose to work in a restaurant as a waiter or a taxi driver, he/she could earn easily five times as much as his/her salary in the government sector (p. 487). Conze states that the inadequate salaries of Somali experts who worked with foreign experts affected their overall job performance. He reports that there was "an extremely low working morale, high absenteeism, second jobs and a general tendency to leave the public sector" (p. 487).

Conze believed that technical assistance was an indispensable component of development projects in Somalia. Therefore, he recommended that an adequate salary system should be given to Somali experts who were working with foreign experts. However, Conze did not see that the proportionally high number of foreign experts in Somalia and their privileged status, including their excessive salary and other miscellaneous expenses, has a direct effect on the subordinate status in which Somali experts were living in. The presence of foreign experts in Somalia, as a development

expert from the Western world, displaced both Somali educators who had similar expertise and education credentials, and the indigenous Somali who had known for centuries how to live in a sustainable and peaceful way.

The Somali experts interviewed for this thesis state that the Euro-American model of development in Somalia became a market for the Western products, as well as an employment opportunity for Western university graduates. Asli strongly maintains that the development enterprise legitimizes and institutionalizes what she calls global racism. She argues that racism does not exist only where white people compose the majority of the population. Racism also exists in all over the globe, even where white people are the minority, or even just foreigners. She says her personal experience in working Somalia as a development expert as well as her experience working in Germany as a household cleaner is a good example on how global racism works. This is how Asli narrates her experience in seeking employment in Germany:

> I came back to Germany in early 1991 when the civil war erupted in Somalia. My kids and I came first and my husband joined us later. I started looking for job to support my family. I could not get a decent job comparable with my degree and my experience. I then decided to work as a janitor for middle class households. It took me for a while to psychologically adjust and I told myself to put aside my Masters' degree from a German University. I found two jobs; one German lady hired me to clean her house and another hired me to do ironing. I needed a third job and I told a friend of mine who was a German to look job for me. My friend found a cleaning job for me and I asked her to phone the employer on behalf of me so that the employer will not hear my accent. My friend called up the employer and told that a friend of her was looking for a cleaning job. The employer, a German lady replied OK. My friend told her that the lady who is looking for the job is from Africa. The employer said that she would not allow a black lady to clean her house. My friend phoned back to me and told me the response of the lady. For me that was a big shock that I will not forget in my life. I said to myself "you put yourself that down to clean German washrooms and now you are told that you cannot even do that because you are black"... I applied for a translator job in a refugee camp. Despite my right qualification, the German government told me that I could not do it because I am not a citizen. The only job that was available for me was working as a cleaner illegally, and I was disqualified for even that job because of my skin colour.

3.4. The Impact of Conventional Development Practices on Indigenous Somali People

This section examines the impact of the imposition of a capitalist mode of production on the life of indigenous Somali people. The Somali development experts I interviewed were asked how development projects which they worked for had impacted the indigenous Somalis life. They responded that the imposition destroyed, in many ways, the socio-economic and environmental conditions that sustained the indigenous Somali way of living.

The most significant effect of the imposition of a capitalist mode of production was the displacement/disruption of the sustainable and ecologically balanced production of agriculture and livestock which indigenous Somalis have been practising for centuries. Asli explains how the displacement had taken place:

> Local Somali farmers used to have a very sustainable system of producing agriculture and livestock. This system sustained their livelihood as well as their environment for centuries and there was no need for changing it. For example, with regard to controlling undesirable crops they used to employ different techniques; one of them was cultivating mixed crops which entails cultivating one major crop and one or two other crops within a same space. Eliminating weeds by hand was also another technique. There was no shortage of human power in the villages, and farmers utilize this local human power when need arises for the elimination of weeds. Therefore, the introduction of herbicides forced Somali small farmers to stop practising mixed cropping and not to utilize their local human power.

Asli states that the sustainable indigenous Somali system of farming was based on utilising the balance of nature and locally available tools. Mixing crops was a natural way of controlling both pests and weeds. Having different crops in same area of land also enriched the soil. The imposition of herbicides on Somali small farmers meant farming only one crop at a time. This is because herbicides are designed to destroy all other crops except one crop. Therefore, using herbicides meant farming a monocrop in large quantities. This market-oriented production destroyed other varieties of crops which were important for the survival of local Somalis, as well as ecological sustainability. Indigenous

Somali farmers are mainly dependent on their land and its biological diversity, in multiple ways. They use different varieties of crops for food, medicine, household materials, building materials, etc. However, in the capitalist development discourse, the usefulness of the crop/plant is not determined by the local people but rather by the market.

The imposition of a capitalist mode of production which mainly entailed chemicalisation of agriculture also forced to Somali peasants to abandon the use of local seeds and adopt alien farming tools. Hirsi explains how introducing fertilisers to Somali peasants displaced indigenous Somalis' knowledge and their practices of farming:

> the project introduced certain kinds of fertilizer to Somali small farmers without studying the soil needs and the availability of irrigation water which facilitates the absorption of fertilizers and the economic situation of local Somalis. Most of the Somali small farmers were dependent on rain and could not afford to irrigate their farms. Using fertilizers also required the use of tractors for soil ploughing, which were not available for the local farmers. Using fertilizers also forced Somali peasants to abandon the use of local seeds as a means of production.

As Hirsi states, for fertilisation to be effective an abundance of water is required in some cases, which facilitates its absorption in the soil. This was not possible for Somali peasants, who were dependent on the rainfall. Using external inputs such as fertilisers creates a dependency on the part of the soil. Fertilisers help microbes in the soil to grow more quickly. Microbes are important for the feeding of humus, the topsoil which support the biological life, and for breaking it. Therefore, using fertilisers means growing more microbes that break the humus faster. This enables the crop to grow more quickly. However, within a short period of time, the humus will be washed away. As a result of this, more and more fertilisers are required to give the soil artificial nutrients. Hence the soil becomes dependent on the constant use of fertilisers (Tandon, 1993:214-5). This fertiliser dependency cycle forced the Somali small farmers to purchase more fertilisers from abroad. Thus, the cost of farming per unit became higher despite the relative small increase of the yield. In the long term, as Somali

small farmers use more and more fertilisers, more and more money will go to the Western corporations who manufacture fertilisers. Consequently, Somali peasants will no longer be in control of their soil and its nutrients nor will they profit from their hard work.

The imposition of the use of hybrid, genetically engineered seeds to the Somali peasants was also a violent way of controlling what would be produced and who would benefit from it. Seeds naturally have genetic resource which enable them to regenerate themselves as a new plant. As Shiva rightly states, the capitalist development discourse dismissed seeds' natural ability of renewing "as too slow and primitive" (Shiva, 1993, p. 28). Thus, the use of the seed was colonised by separating its "unity of seed as grain (food) and as a means of production" (p. 28). The regenerating ability of the seed was placed in the hands of corporate industries who genetically engineer it and then resell to the indigenous farmers.

According to Shiva, the commodified/colonized seed is ineffective for two reasons:

> (1) It does not reproduce itself while, by definition, seed is regenerative resource. Genetic resources thus, through technological manipulation, transform a renewable source into a non-renewable source. (2) It cannot produce by itself, to do so it needs the help of artificial, manufactured inputs (p. 30).

As a result of the colonisation of the seed, corporate industries emerged for the genetic manipulation of the seed. Consequently indigenous people are no longer in control of what and how to produce.

Capitalist development discourse colonised the seeds of the local Somali peasants and reduced its role to something which cannot reproduce nor produce by itself. Similarly, the discourse of development colonised the role of Somali women in the subsistence farming. Asli, who worked with Somali women in rural areas, explains how conventional development did not take into consideration Somali women and their vital role in sustaining the life of their community:

> Somali women in the rural area were the ones who did most of the work related to agricultural and livestock production. On top of this, they used to do and still do the reproductive task which includes childbearing, taking care of the extended families,

> providing water, firewood and providing building materials which normally involve distance walking etc...these multiple tasks in which Somali women were engaged were not taken into consideration by the development experts. It is obvious that all patriarchical cultures/systems do not consider the work of reproduction of women as a task. However, the productive task in which Somali women were engaged was colonised to the point that it became more burden to them working in the field....In one development project I was involved with, the project targeted Somali peasants in providing rent tractors in order for them to cultivate a large piece of their land and thus produce more crops. Though the land legally belonged and still belongs to the Somali peasant men, Somali women were/are the ones who used to do and still do most of the farming. Cultivating more land meant more work on the shoulders of Somali women. Normally Somali peasants used to cultivate part of their land according to their needs as well as the availability of their labour, who were/are mainly women...As Somali indigenous system of producing agriculture was gradually replaced by capitalist mode of production, which is alien to the Somali women, their productive role shrunk. Consequently, more women became either cheap labour in the larger state farms or only a house wife, which is a tradition not known to the Somali women in the rural area.

Conventional development and its discursive practices neglected the crucial role of Somali women in the subsistence mode of producing. The role of Somali women who live in rural areas was necessary for the survival of their communities. As Asli states, their role included both the regeneration of human life as well as the provision of sustenance. Somali women in this case were in full control of providing basic sustenance to themselves, their families and the society in general. They had vast knowledge of their ecology and the necessary skills for the utilization of their environment without destroying it. Therefore, the replacement of the subsistence mode of production to that of market economy meant supplanting the Somali women's role.

The role of Somali women in a subsistence mode of living was not limited to reproduction and being household labour. Therefore, the classical division of labour based on sex in which women were assigned only to the role of reproduction was not known to the subsistence Somali society. The designation of Somali women to the private/reproductive role as their only role in the society is a recent phenomena that came with colonialism and its market/economic approach.

According to Maria Mies (1993) the emergence of capitalist market economy came with a

new definition of what constitutes productive labour. The labour which is directly related to and controlled by capital, or the economy was considered to be productive. Therefore the labour, which involves wage, gained more economic and social privilege than the labour in which a wage was not involved. Hence, the creation of public wage labour which mainly became men's domain, was accompanied by the so-called private sector which became the domain of women. Mies argues that the goal of the division of labour by sex was mainly for the exploitation and colonisation of the different sectors. She states that "Th[e] housewifization ...[was]/is necessary for an economy which has as its goal unlimited growth. Within a limited world these goals can be achieved only by dividing the world and exploiting and colonising the separate parts" (p. 120-121). To Mies, the control of women's fertility and labour capacity was necessary for the establishment of a capitalist society (p.120).

Dorothy Smith (1997) explains how the introduction of capitalism's economic system also introduced an organization of gender. She states that in pre-capitalist society, there was no distinction between production and reproduction. Production of food, shelter, tools and other material needs provided subsistence for childbearing and rearing, as well as for the producers. Through a capitalist economic organization the integration of production and reproduction became separated. Production was no longer designated for the provision of subsistence for producers, nor for childbearing and rearing:

> Rather, production is governed by the relations of capital accumulation: those who can sell to capital their capacity to labour may buy the commodities on which household members, including children, can subsist. The direct relationship between production, producers and reproduction has ruptured (p. 125).

The arrival of colonialism in Somalia came with an economic market approach, including houswifization. Housewifization was not known in the Somalia's subsistence mode of living where the role of women was/is much more important than that of the men. That role was not known to

my grandmother, for example, Simman Araye, who until recently refused to stay at home and expect someone else to feed her. Simman, who is now in her eighties, singlehandedly raised five children, including my mother, after her first and second husband had passed away. To support her young family, Simman worked as a farmer, herder as well as a business women.

The neglect of the role of Somali women in the subsistence way of life by the profit and growth-oriented development is also embedded in the representation of Third World women in colonial discourse. Geeta Chowdhry (1995) argues that in the colonial discourse, Third World women have been represented in three different ways. The first representation is the "zenana[9] representation" in which Third World women are constructed as a veiled housewives, "cloistered within the confines of a patriarchal male-dominated environment" (p. 27). Zenana representation gives an image of ignorance, blind obedience, and traditionally-confined women, whose lives are defined and controlled by men. The second representation constructs Third World women as objects of sexual desire. In this image, Women in the Third World are represented as "Eroticised, unclothed 'native' women" who are in desperate need to be civilized (p. 28). The third representation is based on the construction of Third World women as victims, by the current Western feminist and Western-trained feminist. Chowdhry argues that these feminists "base their analysis and their authority to intervene on their "claims to know" the shared and gendered oppression of women" (p. 28). The outcome of these representations was/is to discursively create categories of Third World women by "separat[ing] and distanc[ing] [them] from the historical, socio-political and lived realities of their existence" (p. 28). They also share the implicit assumption that Third World women are traditional and non-liberated and need to be "civilized" and "developed", i.e., to become more like Western

[9] According to the Webster's College Dictionary, Zenana is an Indian word which means "the part of the house in which the women and girls of a family are secluded" (1990).

women. (P. 28).

Asli explains the difficulty involved in the assumption of "let's save the victims" which is based on Western feminists' approach to the analysis of Third World women. In one development project she was involved, Asli and her Swedish counterpart were responsible for developing a project for Somali women who live in the Lower Shabelle region. Asli states that for some time she had known the plight of Somali women in the inter-riverine areas, and her goal had always been helping them in anyway she could. In this project, Asli and her Western colleague wanted to develop a project which best addressed the need of the rural Somali women in the Lower Shabelle region. Asli states:

> we decided to take a different approach to the male-dominated development projects, one which is based on the reality and the specific needs of Somali women in that region. We envisioned a project which would help Somali women do their daily multiple tasks with less physical suffering. Somali women in that region used to do lots of activities. The majority of them involved carrying weights on their back, collecting firewood, water farming, which involved bowing down constantly, carrying children, cooking, just to mention few. From the information I had at that time, the majority of Somali women who were engaged in farming, especially in the area of inter-riverine, suffered backache at the age of 30 years. What we saw in that project was that using a donkey for carrying weights and distance travels would lighten their overwhelming burden ....the donkey was a locally available animal and its use for multiple purposes was not alien to that community. However, we decided to do needs assessment asking local Somali women how they saw about the proposed project. The issue of carrying weight on the back which we saw as a problem was not a problem for them. They said "carrying a weight on the back is normal for women. Who else would do it if not women?". I asked to them about backache and they replied that "backache is women's illness". Implying that all women whom they knew suffered backache. The experience of this project taught me that helping others is not an easy job and it could sometimes harm more than it helps.

Here, Asli poses an important problem which is how one could help others without harming, how to define what is good for others, and who should implement it. For Asli, the fact that someone knows, or rather, assumes knowing the problem of others does not necessarily mean that he/she has the best solution for them. Asli states that Somali women in the inter-reverine areas had and still have many

problems as a result of the patriarchical system in Somali society. The fact that Somali women do most of the work in subsistence rural life does not correspond the little influence/control they have on their lives and the lives of their communities. However, Asli argues that just because Somali women have many problems does not mean that they are victims who do not know the solutions for their problems. Assuming that Somali women do not understand their problems and what solutions are available for them, legitimize outside intervention and thus imposing outside solutions which are not created by Somali women. For Asli, imposing solutions from outside is also an oppression. The question is how Somali women could reclaim their social agency in order to effect social change. For Asli, what is needed is to develop a social space for the Somali women, a place in which Somali women would assume their social agency and thus become influential in their own lives and the life of their communities.

The export-led development programs impacted Somali peasants in many ways which included the complete uprooting of indigenous Somali farmers from their cultivated land. The expropriation of the cultivated land was one of the development practices/policies pursued by the Somali government which had a devastating effect on the lives of Somali peasants. Guleed explains the irreparable destructions engendered by the Fanole Project on the lives of indigenous Somalis. He states:

> Many indigenous farmers lost their traditional farmlands to the Project. For those who did not, they could not get enough water from the river for their farms. This is because the water of the river had been diverted to the big hydro electrical dam and the long canal designed for the irrigation of the state farm. The situation forced indigenous land owners to either migrate to the close urban cities such as Mogadishu or work as a cheap labour for the Project

Abyan (1987) conducted research on the Fanole Project and its impact on indigenous Somalis living near the Project site. He recalls that one small village, which had a population of 400 families prior

to the inception of the Project, was reduced to only 128 families after Fanole was introduced. Due to the loss of their land, 68% of the population had to leave the village. Consequently, many of the village dwellers became employed by the Project. Abyan reported that in each family composed of an average of seven people, three members were employed by the Project. He also noted that there was an increase in the number of malaria casualties, as well as cholera in the village. He stated that due to the use of large scale irrigation, the Project created a muddy and dirty environment which created favourable conditions for the spread of malaria and cholera (p. 505-506). Furthermore, there were a serious problems associated with expropriation of the land. This included "psychological anxiety and sense of insecurity" which was common among indigenous Somalis living in that area (p. 507). The confiscation of their land, which, for the indigenous Somali peasants had always been their source of livelihood, meant the destruction of their security and thus their future. Guleed stated that the introduction of large scale, capital intensive development projects turned the independent, self-sufficient Somali peasants to a population dependent on outside food. He states:

> I never imagined that the most fertile land in Somalia would one day become a drought ridden region with starving people. This became true when, in 1992, I saw a horrible scene on the CNN. It was during Somalis' civil war . A live CNN reporter was in Jilib, a small farming town close to where the Fanole project was located, reporting the famine and starvation of the Jilib population. In that scene, I saw one of my acquaintances in the Fanole Project. The man was distributing food for the starving people in Jilib. This, I said was the result of Western imposed development projects. That man had had his land expropriated by the Project. Consequently, he started working in the Fanole as a cheap unskilled worker. After a period of time he became supervisor in one of the departments in the Project. Now that civil war had broken out in Somalia, the Project came to an end. The poor man first lost his inherited land, and second he lost his job in the Project. As a result, he ended up being dependent on food aid coming from foreign countries.

The story of Guleed's acquaintance epitomizes the destructive results engendered by colonial development discourse. The impact of the imposed development model was not only confined to the rural indigenous people. It impacted all dimensions of Somali people's lives, including the social,

cultural, the economic, as well as political.

The Somali experts interviewed for this thesis were asked if the economic development discourse had a direct impact on the collapse of Somali state and the subsequent Somali tragedy. They responded that the failed development practices directly impacted the present Somali calamity in many ways. Warsame states that the expropriation of indigenous Somalis' land resulted in a mass migration to urban cities. For instance, Mogadishu's population prior to the 1970s was around 500,000. According to Warsame, that number became more than double that amount within sixteen years. Thus, in 1986, Mogadishu's population became 1,200, 000. As a result of the mass migration, a large segment of the population became unemployed. This, according to Warsame, created a real dependency where the large segment of unemployed population became dependent on the employed small segment of population. Warsame states that much of the corruption and nepotism that took place in the government departments had a direct relationship to the dependency created by mass rural migration.

For Bulale, the flood of development aid, with no proper accountability, corrupted the Somali state which directly resulted in its collapse. He states that if it had not been for the development projects, the corruption of government elites would have been exposed to the public. In other words, if the flood of money for development projects were not in place, there would have been little or nothing to corrupt in the subsistence economic base of Somalia. American journalist Michael Maren's (1997) detailed account of the World Bank's loan to Somalia in 1989 is a good case example of the fact that international development institutions could have cared less about the behaviour of Somali government and the existing political circumstances. Maren exposed the World Bank's $33 million loan to Somalia while its dictatorship regime was at war with its people in the North of Somalia. He states that it was clear that the Somali government was engaged in war against its own

people. Thus, circumstances were not favourable implementing any economic development program. However, the IMF and the World Bank ignored these circumstances and proceeded with their financial plan to assist Somalia's economic transformation. Similarly, other development agencies were blind to what was going on in Somalia, and kept financing their projects as though development had nothing to do with the social circumstances. However, Maren states that what they were financing was the destruction of the Somali country: "Their actions were eroding Somalia's economy, making people poor, and, in bizarre way, creating need for more and more aid, more and more NGOs. It was a cycle that eventually would consume itself" (p. 175).

Both Bulale and Warsame dismissed the widely propagated discourse by Western scholars and their media that the culprit of Somalia's calamity/tragedy is the fact that Somalis are a clan-based society. For Bulale, tribalism became a soft target for the Western intelligentsia, whose aim is to depict Somalia as a primitive society that could not survive in this modern age. The explanation of Somalia's political instability as one which was engendered by tribalism dehistoricize and misrepresents the reality of the Somali crisis. It also essentializes Somali society as an immobile, fixed, tribal society. I. M. Lewis (1997) states that tribalism is what characterized Somalia's political culture, in that "the ideological principle here was the same as that embodied in the famous Arab Bedouin axiom: 'myself against my brother; my brother and I against my cousins; my cousins and I against the world'" (Lewis, p. 10).

The flood of development aid in Somalia's first decade of its independence did not result in economic take-off as Western economists predicted. For the following two decades, it created a whole nation whose basic survival, including food, depended on outside aid. The song, by Saado Ali Warsame, artistically depicts the food dependency and the false life style created by imposed development projects and the corrupted Somali government. The song is called "Land Cruiser" which

symbolize the flood of foreign aid and its institutions in Somalia during the late 1980s.

> It's a bad idea and wrong way of thinking
> To buy a Land Cruiser while you beg for maize.
>
> The house is dark
> with no water flowing in the taps,
> and the babies have no food to eat.
> While seeing the shining car
> and hearing the sound of its powerful engine
> you think you're powerful in the Horn of Africa.
>
> Dear relatives, do you all agree with
> the lack of food in our homes
> without raising any objection about the luxury cars
> and buying the Land Cruisers.
>
> It's a bad idea and wrong way of thinking
> to buy a Land Cruiser while you beg for maize (Quoted in Maren, 1997, p. 186).

Finally, Somalia's experience of Western imposed development discourse came to an end with a high cost on Somali society.

CHAPTER IV

DECOLONIZING THE DISCOURSE OF DEVELOPMENT

4.1. Introduction

According to Frantz Fanon (1963), decolonisation is conceptualized as a process "which sets out to change the order of the world" (p. 29). It is the process in which colonized people appropriate their agency and interrogate how the colonial world is constructed and maintained. Its aim is to change the colonial order which has long dehumanized colonized people and exploited their human and non-human resources. Hence, "[t]he last shall be first and the first last" (p. 30). In this study, colonialism is understood as dominating and imposing and takes different shapes in specific historical periods. Similarly, decolonisation is an ongoing process which "invokes an on-going dialectical between hegemonic centrist systems and peripheral subversion of them; between European ...(imperial)...discourses and their [anti]-colonial dis/mantling" (Thiopene in Dei, 1998b, p. 4). This chapter is concerned with strategies for decolonising the discourse of development, and the creation of a conceptual framework for the decolonisation of knowledge production in this area. It will also discuss the relevance of indigenous knowledge in decolonising the discourse of development.

4.2. The Relevance of Indigenous Knowledge in Decolonizing the Development Discourse.

The Somalis' failed experience in pursuing a Western model of development is evidenced in that the era of conventional development is coming to an end. However, the present challenge facing African societies is to imagine development differently, pursuing a new and a fresh way of thinking about it which emerges from and is for indigenous African societies. To think about development differently entails confronting the old colonial constructs of development discourse. Hence,

embarking on a decolonising process is imperative in order to dismantle the discursively constructed images of Africa and its societies which is inscribed in the discourse of development.

Somali development experts interviewed for this thesis have provided possible strategies to decolonize the discourse of development. For Warsame, this meant:

> to stop the thinking that indigenous Somali people do not know how to take care of themselves and therefore need a "civilized" western man to tell them what to do with their live. The idea that indigenous people follow traditions blindly and do not have a systematic knowledge applicable to the development and utilisation of their social and natural resources is a pure myth. During my years of working in development projects, I worked closely with indigenous Somali peasants and I witnessed the vast knowledge they had and how to best utilize it. What is needed is to acknowledge and legitimize the relevance of Somali indigenous knowledge in the development of their own societies...

To Warsame, decolonising the discourse of development meant confronting and rupturing how the colonial discourse of development represents Somali as well as African people. In this discourse, Somalia is constructed as degenerate, inhospitable country consisting of semi-desert and arid plains on the Horn of Africa, which is only capable of supporting a subsistence mode of producing agriculture and livestock (Lewis, 1960, 1997). This representation denies the fact that Somalia has, since time immemorial, been a hospitable place for human beings, animals and other life. It denies the fact that the subsistence mode of producing agriculture and livestock had sustained Somali people for centuries. Therefore, a subsistence mode of production is not the only resource that the Somalis' had at their disposal, but the best way to utilise Somalia's natural resources in a sustainable and balanced way. This meant that Somali people who practice a subsistence way of living have the knowledge and the skills to best utilise their environment. It is this vast knowledge, that sustained indigenous Somalis and their way of living, that has been denied and devalued by the colonial discourse of development. Therefore, decolonising the discourse of development entails interrogating "the power configurations" in which "ideas, cultures and histories of knowledge

production and use" are embedded (Dei, 1998, p. 5). The knowledge that has been produced about Somali, as well as African people, including their culture, mode of living, the description of their geographical areas as well as their history was/is textually mediated. Thus, decolonising conventional development must "challenge imperial ideologies and colonial relations of knowledge production..." (p. 5).

According to Warsame, who worked and lived with indigenous Somalis, the argument that Somali peasants do not have an effective knowledge to support their lives is an insult. Therefore, decolonising the discourse of development is to silence the racist idea that white European and North America know and understand more than the indigenous Somalis about their own survival.

Decolonising the discourse of development means acknowledging the relevance of indigenous knowledge in the development of Somalis' livelihood. It is in this sense which George Dei (1998a) invokes African indigenous knowledge "as a form of epistemological recuperation for local people" (p, 95). Dei examines indigenous African knowledge as an alternative approach to the discourse of development, "one which is anchored in a retrieval, revitalization or restoration of the indigenous African sense of shared, sustainable social values" (p, 95). Revitalising and reclaiming indigenous knowledge are vital for the project of decolonizing the discourse of development. It is within this framework that Dei discusses at length various indigenous knowledges as an anti-colonial discursive framework. Within this structure, indigenous knowledge is conceptualized as:

> the epistemic saliency of cultural traditions, values, belief systems, and world views of society that are imparted to the younger generation by community elders. Such knowledge constitutes an 'indigenous informed epistemology'. It is a worldview that shapes the community's relationship with its environments. It is the product of the direct experience of nature and its relationship with the social world. It is knowledge that is crucial for the survival of society. It is knowledge that is based on cognitive understandings and interpretations of social and physical/spiritual worlds. It includes concepts, beliefs and perceptions and experiences of local people and their natural and human-built environment (1998b, p. 2).

According to Dei there are several distinct characteristics of indigenous knowledge. First it is a situated knowledge, in that it embodies the life experience of indigenous people which comes from their interaction with each other and with their natural settings. In this way, indigenous knowledge is embedded in a specific locality. This means indigenous knowledges "are personal/personalized, i.e., there are no claims to universality..." (p. 2). This, however, does not imply that indigenous knowledge is located in an isolated environment which has no relations to the rest of the world. Instead, it implies that its informed epistemology is positioned so that it has practical application to the survival and the daily life of the local community. Indigenous societies "'import' and 'adapt' whatever else from outside that enriches their accumulated body of knowledge" (p. 8).

Another distinctive feature of indigenous knowledge which distinguishes it from its Western counterpart is its "long term occupancy of a place" as well as "the absence of colonial and imperial imposition" (Dei, Hall, and Rosenberg, 1998, p. 6). Indigenous knowledge is an holistic knowledge in that it addresses all dimensions of human needs, such as the spiritual and the unseen, physical/material, social, and the environment/nature. Therefore, its approach to social development is based on this holistic way of seeing all aspects of human need.

Further, indigenous knowledge is a community-based knowledge, where social interdependency and collective responsibility are crucial aspects for the survival of the community. Elabor-Idemudia (1998) argues that, in African communities, solidarity is ingrained in its social fabric, stating that "[A]ncestorship symbolized the social unity and identity of the membership to the effect that the kin group took on the role of major functions in the society" (p. 147). Members of the group act as a family providing each other social safety and collectively protecting their land, which is their main resource for life sustenance (p. 147).

Another noteworthy aspect of indigenous truth is the diverse and multiple sources from which

its knowledge is derived. Castellano (1998) describes three main sources of Aboriginal knowledge, which could also be easily applicable to all indigenous knowledges:

- traditional knowledge is that old age knowledge that has for generations existed in a community and has been transmitted from one generation to another. This form of knowledge is basically a community archive, in that it records the historical events, ancestral wisdoms, and the genealogies of the clan (p. 21);
- Empirical knowledge which has been learned through careful and daily observation of the nature or knowledge that has been acquired as human beings interact with their social, as well as natural world;
- and the revealed knowledge which is, according to Castellano, the knowledge "acquired through dreams, visions and intuitions which are understood to be spiritual origin" (p. 21). Thus, unlike the Western knowledge, spirituality and connectedness to the unseen is an important source of the indigenous knowledge.

For Dei, reclaiming and revitalising indigenous knowledge is an anti-colonial approach "which recognizes the importance of locally produced knowledge emanating from cultural history and daily human experiences and social interaction" (p. 5). Indigenous knowledge as anti-colonial discourse reinforces all forms of indigenous knowledge that have been denigrated and marginalized, such as local language, indigenous literature, (i.e., oral history), and local cultures. The reclamation of indigenous African knowledge has a direct relevance to the construction of African identities. Identity, in this sense, does not exist in a vacuum, but is understood "as a discursive construct as well as a space we inhabit and engage in social practices" (p, 5). The production and use of locally-situated knowledges by African societies becomes a discursive space within which they engage in both the construction of their own identities, as well as the identities of others.

Decolonising the discourse of development also involves interrogating what constitutes "valid" knowledge. Since the arrival of the colonizers in Africa, Western knowledge has been constructed as the "only" valid and legitimate knowledge on earth. Other knowledges and ways of knowing have been devalued and diminished. Part of what constitute decolonisation of conventional development discourse means "ruptur[ing] [the] normalized categories of what constitutes valid/invalid knowledge" (Dei, 1998b, p. 5).

Bulale questioned the claim of Western knowledge's "universal validity". His university training as a scientist and his field experience in working with Somali nomads taught him that there is no one universal 'truth'. He explains:

> My field work with indigenous Somali people taught me that there are different knowledge systems. Each one has its own relevance and application to a certain space and history in time and thus its own validity. Comparing different knowledge systems from different places, cultures and histories are like comparing apples and oranges. Somalis' indigenous knowledge should not be viewed through Western, but through indigenous Somali lenses...

Bulale stated that his close work with indigenous Somali nomads prompted him to rethink the claim of universality and the validity of the Western scientific knowledge. He said he began to question the relevance of Western scientific truth after more than a dozen of development projects in which he was involved failed to achieve their development goals. Bulale became dissatisfied with the scientific approach of development which maintained a dichotomy of traditional versus scientific knowledge. Thus, no consideration had been given to Somali's local reality, experiences and knowledge. Bulale recalled an incident while he was studying in an animal science class for his first university-degree in Europe. He recalled that his professor in that class strongly believed that the environment had little or no influence on the development of living organisms. Bulale adamantly contested his professor's scientific belief by saying that nature much influence in the evolution of living organisms. The professor threatened Bulale that if he did not concur with this 'scientific' principle, he would not

allow him to pass the course. For Bulale, this scientific axiom implied that nature, including living and non-living organisms, had no influence on the development of both human and animal life. Thus the nature and reality of things are fixed and have no relationship with the outside world. Knowledge, in the discourse of science, is something external which has no relationship to its surroundings. As a result of his early scientific training, Bulale stated that he became detached from his own Somali people and their knowledge. Conventional scientific ways of knowing and managing things were based on the principle that the scientist, the knower, or the expert should be detached and disinterested in his/her subjects. Bulale questioned how could one become disengaged and disinterested while at the same time claiming to help others develop their livelihood. He argued that helping others starts by accepting people as they are and appreciating their ways of living. He explained that the top-down policy pursued by conventional development is legitimized by a principle of scientific detachment. Bulale strongly holds that development cannot be detached from the locally constructed reality, experience and knowledge which should be the basis of textual representations of their way of living.

As a result of his dissatisfaction with the scientific approach of development, Bulale finally resigned his position as a Director of livestock development projects in the Somali Ministry of Livestock Development. He saw his lack of understanding the indigenous ways of producing livestock as a major impediment in working with Somali people. Bulale decided to become a student of indigenous Somali knowledge, especially their way of producing livestock. He went to Europe for the second time for further studies. This time he changed from his former science degree to one in social anthropology with an emphasis on traditional systems of management.

Bulale finished his postgraduate degree in social anthropology in Britain and went back to Somalia. He started working as a coordinator for a development Project called SAREC. According

to Bulale, the SAREC project was funded by the Swedish government and its aim was:

> to use indigenous Somali knowledge as a base for the development of Somali society; to make indigenous Somalis the starting and the end goal of development. The goal was to study the knowledge that sustained indigenous rural Somalis and to legitimize its relevance in the development of local communities.

For Bulale, SAREC's development approach was totally different from the government controlled development projects and their top down development policy. Bulale worked in a Camel study project which focused their study on how Somali nomads raise their camels. The project studied different aspects of camel herding, including the camel's grazing ecology, the camel's diseases and its indigenous medicines, camel breeding and indigenous ways of breeder selection. Bulale became a student for Somali elders who were knowledgeable in camel herding. He states that he learned a very rich knowledge from Somali nomads which was more relevant to the Somali context than any other outside knowledge.

Bulale explained the difference between the conventional development approach of animal breeding based on "scientific" knowledge and the indigenous Somali approach. In his earlier development projects, Bulale had worked on an animal breeding project. In this project, as we have seen in chapter three, improvement of Somalis' livestock production was sought through the introduction of scientific cross-breeding between Somali and European livestock. The assumption was that because of a genetic deficit, Somalis' livestock produced less compared to the European one. Therefore, genetic improvement was needed through cross-breeding of the European species. The "scientific" way of improving the Somalis' livestock neglected both the environmental factor and the local knowledge concerning the improvement of livestock production. Bulale explains the relevance of the indigenous Somali way of animal breeding:

> Somali nomads have a way of selecting animal breeders. For instance, nomads select the camel that has an outstanding genetic quality as a breeder. This involves by checking the family background of the camel breeder. What amazes me was that

> Somali nomads know their herds as they know members of their family. Each and every cattle, sheep, goat, or camel is known by the date of its birth, its genealogy is kept as well as its productive capacity. Once the camel breeder is selected, the rest of the male camels in the herd are castrated and used only for transportation or for consumption. Nomads who do not have an outstanding camel breeder usually go other neighbouring nomads to breed their camels.

Bulale asserts that the indigenous Somali way of breeding animals was an experienced knowledge based on a long period of experimentation. It was an accumulated knowledge, in that each generation of Somali herders contributed something to it.

In a similar vein, Guleed reported the relevance of the Somali indigenous way of irrigating their farms. Guleed stated that Somali peasants living near the river of Jubba traditionally used to irrigate their farms from the water of the river. They used to build diversion channels from the river to their farms by utilizing water gravity.

Asli also reported that community solidarity based on mutual help between the members of the indigenous community, was part of the subsistence living of Somali peasants in Lower Shabelle region. She states that, during the year, there were crucial times in which members of the indigenous community needed each other. For example, during the sowing time, if a member of the community had a smaller labour force from his/her family members, other community members came to help. The assisted family are, in their turn, ready to return their labour to contribute to other needy members of the community. Mutual help also involved other farming activities as well, such as weed elimination and harvesting. Mutual help was/is based on the Somali philosophy of community which says help others and you will be helped. Therefore, contributing to the well being of the community in times of the need was a responsibility for each and every one of the community.

The Somali experts interviewed in this thesis had no doubt that Somali indigenous cultural resources contained a vast and rich knowledge which encompassed all aspects of their lives. The critical question concerns how this knowledge can be helpful for the search of Somali-centred

development. George Dei (1998) discusses five interrelated lessons of indigenous African development which are helpful in answering the above question:

- African-centred development should take into consideration the "local understandings of the complex linkages between natural, spiritual, social, cultural, political, and economic forces of society", in this case, the local people become an agent of their own development (p.101);
- People-centred development should be holistic in addressing all aspects of human life including "the emotional and spiritual well-being of the individual and the social group" (p.102);
- Genuine African development "must be invoked in the name of the common good" (p.102);
- "Social development means matching individual rights of group membership with corresponding social responsibility" (p.102);
- and finally the mutuality and community interdependency which is inherently an African indigenous characteristic should be extended beyond local societies. According to Dei, "there is a need to connect issues locally, nationally and internationally" (p. 103).

Invoking indigenous Somali knowledge as a counter-discourse against conventional development does not imply a call for going back to an ancient, "pure" Somali tradition. Here, it is important to understand that the notion of indigenous or traditional does not imply a knowledge which is frozen in a certain historical time and place. Rather, as Dei argues, indigenous knowledge is an accumulative knowledge in the sense that "[t]here is a continuity of cultural values from past experiences that helps shape the present. Similarly, the present also influences the narration of past" (1998b, p. 8). Therefore, indigenous knowledge systems should be examined as a continuity of historical and social experiences, which are always dynamic and fluid in terms of the adaptability of new social settings. Similarly, invoking indigenous Somali knowledge does not mean embracing blindly all traditional

Somali practices, including its disempowering or negative elements. As a matter of fact, indigenous knowledge systems "can sometimes contain sites and sources of cultural disempowerment for some groups such as women and ethnic/cultural minorities" (Dei, Hall and Rosenberg, 1998, p. 7). Instead, reclaiming Somali indigenous knowledge entails critically interrogating it with the aim of incorporating its empowering elements into the present social needs.

CHAPTER V

THE TRANSFORMATIVE GOALS OF THE RESEARCH

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The political intent of this thesis is to study Somalia's experience of the development discourse through the discursive location of Somali experts who worked for development projects in Somalia. This entailed deconstructing how the colonial discourse of development was created and normalized through "scientific" Western knowledge as a discursive prescription of Somalia's economic and social development. It also entailed revealing how the imposed practices of conventional development impacted on the indigenous Somali people and their way of living.

With regard to transformative goals of critical ethnography, Anderson (1989) states that the goal of the research is that of "unmasking dominant social constructions and the interests they represent, studying society with the goal of transforming it, and freeing individuals from sources of domination and repression..." (P. 254). This chapter examines the scholar/activist aims of my research. In other words, I wish to present how the research transformed the researcher, the informants and their social world.

5.2 FROM RESEARCH TO SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND ACTIVISM

The method of privileging Somali experts' experience as a departing point of understanding Somalia's encounter with development is a discursive strategy with transformative goals. The objective was to enable Somalis to reconstruct their experience of development as an imperial imposition, in order to enable them to deal with future themselves. This is a strategic departure from colonial pedagogy for the study of Somalis as objects, and who have no control in changing their own

society.

I had some difficulty with some of my informants in explaining the objective of my research and exactly what was I needed from them. What became problematic involved the objectives of my research and the method of inquiry. I explained to my informants that the objectives of the thesis was to create an understanding of Somalia's development experience by using the narratives of Somali experts as a method of inquiry. In other words, understanding Somalia's encounter with the development enterprise through the eyes of Somali experts. Some of my informants told me that they had no written documentation/reference regarding the development projects for which they worked. They also said they had no accurate financial records of the budgets of their projects, the number of foreign and Somali experts who worked in the projects, or even the number of development programs undertaken by the project. Some others suggested that I look for documents relating to their development projects on the Internet, under the World Bank and Africa. I insistently explained to them that the aim of the research was not to understand Somalia's experience of development through books and recorded documents written by non-Somalis with some type of statistical analysis, such as the projects' budget, number of employees, etc. Instead, the focus of this study was to understand development from Somali experts' eyes.

The difficulty of our misunderstanding lay in the conception of what constituted a legitimate "scientific" method of inquiry into social problems. Understanding Somalia's social realities through the Somalis' subjective experiences/location was not seen by my informants as a proper/legitimate method of social inquiry. Rather, it was understood that written documents by other non-Somalis about Somalia's development experience should be the legitimate approach of undertaking my research. The notion that one's own experience does not form the basis for an acceptable way of understanding social realities is embedded in the dominant "scientific" discourse's construct of what

makes for authentic/real knowledge and how should it be acquired. Knowledge, or the realities of the social and natural world, is something constructed as out there, that researchers can acquire through a detached and disinterested approach. The "scientific" approach to knowledge disempowers people, as it reduces them to objects who are deemed incapable of constructing their social world. It also delegitimizes the knowledge that indigenous/local people have about themselves, as they putatively could not be disinterested and detached from their own social realities. According to the dominant discourse of knowledge production, only those who are equipped with "scientific" research methodology can study "objectively" the Somalis' social realities, through their detachment from the Somalis' localized context. In other words, non-Somali researchers and Somalis who are not interested to engage any social transformation can best study Somalis' social realities "objectively".

During the interview sessions, we started a process of legitimizing our experiences of Somalia's social realities. We discussed at length that naming our collective experience as Somali citizens, in our own terms of reference with our own language, was an indispensable strategy for the construction of Somali identity as well as our own future.

The question of the timing of the research, and its relevance to the present Somali crisis came up in our interview sessions as a topic of discussion. My informants were curious as to my reason for undertaking this research at a time in which what used to be Somalia was in a political crisis. In this case, undertaking research on Somalia's development experience was seen by my informants as a parochial, unrelated subject in the present situation of Somalia's instability. This has led to us asking a very critical and important question: how do we come to understand the Somalia's present anarchy? We discussed in great deal that Somalia's political crisis could not be understood in isolation and without taking into account its historical encounter with imperial dominations that took place under colonialism, developmentalism, and cold war ideology. As with the instance of my study,

we came to understand development, according to their working experience, as a colonial discourse that had a tremendous impact on all aspects of the Somali peoples' lives, including the social, the economic, the political and culture. The destruction of Somalia's indigenous ways of resolving problems as well as managing and organizing their lives has had a tremendous impact on the present crisis in Somalia.

As all of my informants had experience in working on agricultural projects, the impact of development on Somalia's subsistence way of producing their food and the food dependency it created was a further point of discussion. During the time of our interviews, there was a news report from Somalia stating that one of the United Nations agencies responsible for distributing food in Somalia had a stock of food, that had exceeded the safe date of expiry, in its stores. The report stated that the agency had sold the food to Somali retailers to distribute the food locally, with the condition being not to use the bags of the agency, with its logo and the expiry date of the food. They also reported that the food was not fit for human consumption. The critical question that came from the discussion of this incident was: if Somali people could not feed themselves, would they be able to decide their own future on their own terms? Can Somalis decide their future by themselves if they are dependent on their basic needs from outside sources? It was at this juncture when we came to an understanding of the importance and the relevance of Somalia's experience of development in the present Somali crisis.

5.3 WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE

One thing that emerged as a result of our in-depth interviews was the insight that the experience we acquire from the interaction with our nature as well as our socially constructed world is a legitimate source of knowledge. It is also a discursively located site which enables us to engage

in resistance to the imposition of dominant colonial discourses. Therefore, talking, writing, and discussing our collective as well as individual experiences is a political strategy with the aim of constructing our own niche in the world. As a practical strategy, we discussed the importance of establishing a centre for the study of indigenous Somali knowledge. Bulale, who worked a project for the study of indigenous Somali knowledge, embraced the idea enthusiastically. The idea is taking shape as we are in the process of gathering information and studying the feasibility of this important and exciting project.

As a researcher, this study gave me an opportunity to have an insight/understanding as to how knowledge is constructed, regulated and in/validated through and within the dominant discourses; and how the knowledge produced about Somalia and its people, through the discourse of development, colonized their social realities. Therefore, the need is present for knowledge to be contested, interrogated and deconstructed in order to discover how it is produced and normalized; as well, there is a view for developing a counter-discourse. It is this reflexivity about knowledge production that prompted my interest to continue a thorough study of indigenous Somali knowledge at the next level of my study, in a PhD program.

5.4 CONCLUSION

George Dei (1998) wrote that "[w]hat constitutes 'valid' and empirical knowledge in development practice has today a point of contention for many" (p. 96). This thesis represents one of the many African voices which contest and interrogate the validity and the privilege of the dominant "scientific" erudition which informs conventional development and its discursive practices. The study has attempted to show how Euro-American development scholarship has impacted indigenous Somali knowledge and way of live. To demonstrate this point, Somalia's experience of an imposed colonial

discourse of development has been reconstructed through the narratives of Somali experts who worked for development projects in Somalia during early 1970s and late 1980s. The study's approach was to try and understand Somalia's encounter with the development discourse through the lens of Somali experts and is an attempt to generate local responses as a counter-discourse against the dominant knowledge.

Somali experts interviewed for this research articulate their comprehension of the discourse of development through their working experiences with indigenous Somali people. The informants of this research stated that conventional development discourse produces a widespread consciousness of Somali people and their way of living which defines them as "underdeveloped", degenerate people whose anachronistic subsistence way of living could not support their families. They stated that what has been institutionalized as development was actually an apparatus of controlling indigenous Somali people and their subsistence way of living by dictating to them how to live and what to produce, as well as imposing on them a lifestyle that was different from theirs. Consequently, imposed development practices destroyed the indigenous Somali people's subsistence mode of living and the country's ecological balance.

The experience of Somali development experts demonstrated how the practices of conventional development are racialized, by the hiring of development experts who are predominantly white males. As a result, Somali experts/educators were relegated to a subordinate position, where their position as development workers became unbearable. The narratives of interviewed Somalis also stated that the capitalist mode of production by the prevailing development discourse was/is gendered, in that it devalued and neglected the role of Somali women in the subsistence mode of production. The undemocratic nature of development practices in Somalia also directly consolidated and supported the corruption and the repression of Somalia's military regime. This, according to the

Somali experts, had direct repercussion with respect to the collapse of the Somali nation state in early 1991.

Regarding strategies to decolonise the colonial discourse of development, the informants of this research are in agreement with Dei (1998a) who "calls for a shift in the conventional development thinking to examine what the indigenous African cultural knowledge base can offer in terms of an alternative approach to African development" (p. 95). Here, indigenous Somali knowledge is invoked as a counter-hegemonic discourse with the aim of providing a discursive space for local Somalis to legitimize their knowledge and their local experiences. This study has pedagogical implications, as both the researcher and the informants came to the realization that as a Somali citizens, legitimizing our collective as well as our individual social experiences, and naming them in our own way, is crucial for dismantling colonial constructs, as well as reconstructing our own future.

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Appendix I

Date:

REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH INTERVIEW

Dear participant:

I would like to invite you to in a research project that I am currently undertaking as the basis of my MA thesis at OISE/UT in the Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education.

The Purpose of the Study is to understand Somalia's experience of the conventional development discourse and its impact on indigenous Somali knowledge and their way of living. This study will contribute to the critical voices from Africa which interrogate conventional development discourse and calls for decolonising it through revitalizing the indigenous African cultural resource.

You are among six Somali development experts/workers selected to participate in this study. I would like to interview you twice, first to get your views on the topic mentioned above, and secondly, to verify the summary of the main themes derived from the first interview. The first interview will last approximately one and a half hours, while the second will last approximately one hour. Both of these interviews will be tape-recorded and later transcribed and interpreted. The tapes will be stored in a locked cabinet. You will be given an anonymous name to ensure confidentiality. You may withdraw at any time from the interview process. Please complete the attached consent form and keep a copy for your records.

I look forward to your participation in what I feel is a very exciting project.

I remain,

Yours very truly,

Ahmed Mah

Appendix II

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

I would like to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated summer/fall 1998, requesting my participation in your research project.

I hereby indicate that I am willing to participate in the interviews and agree that the information I provide be used for the purpose of your study. I have kept a copy of this consent form for my records.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____ 1998

Address: _____

_____

_____

Appendix III

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Could you give me a brief introduction to your background, including your schooling and professional work?

2. What is your experience and/or involvement in development projects in Somalia and what was your role and responsibilities?

3. In your opinion, what was the objective of development projects which you worked for, and how was it achieved?

4. What was the role of the indigenous Somali people to whom development projects were geared?

5. Could you explain the role of Somalia's ousted regime and the foreign experts' in the development enterprise?

6. In your experience, how did development practices influence indigenous Somali people and their way of living?

7. In your view, do you see Somali indigenous knowledge as an alternative approach to the conventional development?

8. If yes, could you elaborate on how Somali indigenous knowledge would be an alternative approach to conventional development?