



The Suicidal State in Somalia: The Rise and Fall of the Siad Barre Regime, 1969-1991

Mohamed Haji Ingiriis

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This book is a critical reposition of the study of military regimes in Africa. Documenting and delving deep into the reign and rule of General Mohamed Siad Barre regime in Somalia from 1969 up to 1991, the book puts emphasis on African agencies—ostensibly shaped by external beneficiaries and patrons—over what went wrong with Africa after the much-awaited post-colonial period. It does so by critically engaging with the wider theoretical and conceptual frameworks in African Studies which more often than not tend to attribute the post-colonial African State raptures to colonialism. The main thesis of the book is that colonialism left Africa on its own space wherein African leaders could have made a difference. By putting discrete perspectives into historical context, the book circumnavigates through comparative and comprehensive holistic approach to the Siad Barre regime to reveal how colonialism did not produce less than what criminalisation of the State resulted in Somalia. This empirical analysis is crucial to understanding the contemporary conundrum facing the Somali world today. The argument is that the contemporary conflicts are not only attributable to—but also because of—the past plunders of the post-colonial leaders trained by the departed colonial authorities. Employing nuanced analytic concepts and categories, the aim of the book is to refine the past to recapture the present and envision the future. Framing new ways of analyzing military regimes in Africa begins with (re)assessment of how the Siad Barre regime was previously approached. Marshalling extensive and extraordinary amount of sources, the book unveils the intricacies and contradictions of the dictatorship and its impact on the Somali psyche. The book locates the evolution of the regime within the wider context of the Cold War political contestation between the East and the West. Unparalleled in-depth and analysis, this book is the first full-length scholarly study of the Siad Barre regime systematically explaining the politics and process of the dictatorial rule. The historicity of exploring Somali State trajectory entails employing a Braudelian *longue durée* approach. Thus, three interrelated sets of contexts/questions inform the study: how Siad Barre himself came into power, how he ruled and maintained his authoritarian reign over the Somalis and who had assisted him from inside and outside the Somali world.

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