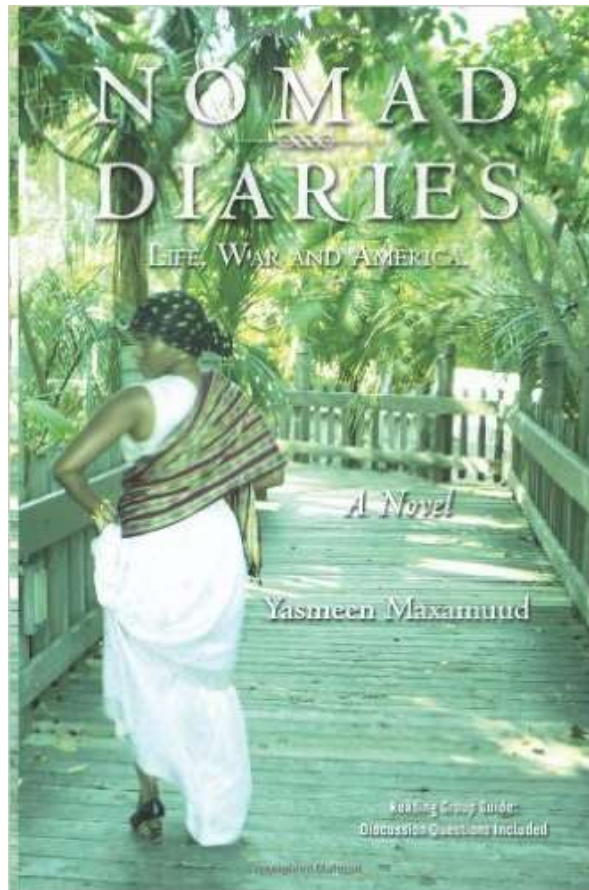


**Representation of Somali Clannism in  
*Nomad Diaries: Life, War, and America* by Yasmeeen Maxamuud**

**Dr. Mansour Mohammed Ali Faraj  
Dr. Ali Saleh Ahmed Al-Haidari**

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**Abstract**

Clannism is the most important issue that has played a great role in shaping all aspects of life in Somalia. Yet, it has received little attention by scholars, policy makers, and writers who concern with Somalia: its history, culture, life, civil war, state failure, and peace- building. Therefore, the

current study is an attempt to investigate and explore how Somali Clannism is represented in Yasmeen Maxamuud's novel *Nomad Diaries: Life, War, and America*. It, accordingly, examines clannism with a wide lens, seeking to understand how this important facet has affected the Somali society as represented in the novel under the study. In attempting such a broad theme in such a short study, this paper aims to introduce the reader to the key images of clannism. The study concludes that the Somali clannism is, first of all, represented as the main marker Somali individuals identify themselves and, therefore, it is viewed as a threat to national identity and social cohesion. It is also depicted as a form of political identity in a sense that the president Mohammed Barre established his political system on the basis of clannism. Finally, clannism is represented as the agent of destruction in Somalia after the collapse of Barre's regime in 1991 as the revolution was mainly based on clannism.

**Keywords:** Clannism, Somalia, clan identity, affiliation, lineage, national identity, rebellion.



**Yasmeen Maxamuud**

## **1. Introduction**

Somalia has received a great attention by scholars, historians, journalists, and researchers to examine and explore the main issues connected with all the aspects of the society: the Somalis' daily lives, personal views, outlooks and aspirations. Literature, especially poetry, has been one of the most important vehicles used not only to articulate the people's problems and social and political challenges but also to tackle their own identities as being expressed by Samatar, who considered poetry as a medium by which Somalis ask, "Where do I come from? and Who am I?" According to him, poetry, in Somalia, is not art for its sake, but art for a cause. The poet has been the spokesman of his own clan to the extent that he or she is capable of stirring up the most violent passion of his clan into a lethal war but is also capable of cooling those passions for peace.

Yet, Somalia has become in a dire need for those writers who should give national ethnicity priority rather than clan identity and for those who raise all issues related to all Somali people as a whole. Among those writers who belong to Somalia rather than to their own clans is Yasmeen

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Maxamuud, a diasporic novelist living in the United States. In her novel *Nomad Diaries: Life, War, and America*, she concerns with the portrayal of the lives of Somalis, specifically of women, in Somalia under Barre's cruel militant regime, the civil war of 1991 and its impact on people, and Somali refugees and their settlement in America. Through tackling these issues, she, moreover, focused on clannism as the most important issue to address. This is due to the fact that clannism was the main cause of political conflict and civil war in Somalia.

The significance of this study, therefore, lies in the fact that it offers scholars, Somali politicians, decision-makers, clan-leaders, as well as the Somali people useful insights that foster a better understanding of clannism and its role in the Somali society today, which is the most important factor in the process of peace-building. As some argue, it is this situation 'that both scholars and policy makers need to address in order to end the Somali internal war and create a viable state' (Osman, 2007).

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Contextual Background**

Somalia is a sovereign country in the Horn of Africa. It is considered as the most culturally homogeneous country in Africa. Most of Somalis are ethnic people who trace their ancestry agnatically ("related through male descent or on the father's side" <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/agnatic>) back to a foundational bifurcation that categorises them as either Samaale or Sab (Fox, 2015). Historically, Somalia consists of six major family clans: Dir, Darood, Isaaq, the Hawiye, the Digil, and Rahanwayn or Merifle. The first four are Samaale clans, follow pastoral lifestyles. The second two belong to Sab, depending on agriculture (Fox, 2015). According to Lewis, clan family is the ultimate unit of clanship. The genealogical length of a clan family can count up to thirty generations to a common ancestor. In this sense, over time, these major clan families expanded and broke down, according to agnatic descent, into smaller units known as lineage groups or clans, which are themselves separated into subclans, and each subclan is further subdivided into sub-subclans (Fox, 2015). Each of these clans has been identified by its own definite region with its distinct social, economic, and political outlooks.

In spite of being one ethnic community with the same language, religion, culture, Somalia is a clan-based society. The clan is an important social organization in the social structure that dominates its people socially, politically, economically, and culturally, for a clan is "the inherited patriarchal lineage of ancestors, passed down orally in detail, generation to generation, determining origin, social standing, and access to territory, property and power" (IRIN, 2001). As a crucial source of identity, "clan," as being articulated by one of the social workers at the children's home, "is everything here. You need clan to marry, to get credit, to get a bank account, to get property, to belong. Without clan, you are a nobody in society" (IRIN, 2001).

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To put it differently, Somali's primordial identity is established by membership to a segmentary clan lineage system which is considered as "the most important factor that has historically defined the identity and social relations of Somalis"(Osman, 2007). The majority of people identify themselves in the terms of their clans. Clan members are united and identified by the bonds of primary lineage, which is seen as the most distinct heredity set within the clan. Their identities are shaped by their clan affiliation and their loyalties are renounced to their clan. Accordingly, clan identity was promoted by a strong, informal education system under which the young learn how the kin system works, and which clan and sub-clan they belong to, and how the clans relate to each other (Elmi, 2016).

In Somali society, the impact of clan identities was very vital. Traditionally, the clan system was constructed as a dire need for nomadic people to survive in the barren of the Horn of Africa. First of all, this was due to the fact that clan allegiance was the only form of identification outside of one's name. It was the means to place someone, to determine their social standing, their region of origin and who their family and friends were. Secondly, as its history demonstrates, such a system offered Somali people a social safety net, providing them with stability, justice, protection, and security. Moreover, the clan was the social and political unit of organization and government (Ssereo, 2003, p. 26). Each clan had its own leaders and council of elders, and land was communally owned and managed (ibid, p.26). It was the basis that structured law and social activities within and between the various clans. It was viewed as a source of unity and cohesion, according to Ssereo, who states that clan identity "under normal circumstances, shared cultural values, traditions and customs as well as language are the basis for unity and social cohesion" (ibid: p. 39).

However, if clan is praised as a cultural and social unit for Somali society organization, why did Somalia fail to remain stable after independence? What was the role the clan structure or system had in the collapse of the post-colonial state? There has been a vast literature on these two questions. It indicates that clan is not problematic, it is clannism that has caused all the problems including the failure of the state in Somalia.

Clannism has influenced the politics, stability, and peace in Somalia in the contemporary era. According to Ssereo, "Somali political conflict, government crisis, and 'clan-based civil war', 'have both revealed the negative consequences of clan politics and the manipulation of clan differences to achieve power"(Ssereo, 2003, p. 27). It is described as a double-edged sword; while functioning as a factor for peace and stability, it has been proved to be "a source of division, conflict," (Lewis, 1994) bloodsheds, xenophobia, and masculine control in Somalia (Musau, 2013). Moreover, Wam and Sardesai (2005) hold the view that clan segmentation has been used to divide Somalis, to mobilize militias, and even fuel rampant clashes (World Bank, 2005). Somali political actors use it in the quest

for political dominance and monopoly of the state or for preventing the emergence of a strong state run by another clan (Osman, 2007, p. 4).

While clan refers to a social organization, clannism is "the politicization of the clan system" that has engendered clannism as a socio-political ideology (World Directory of Minorities: Somalia : Somalia Overview, 2013). In other words, while clan was regarded as a political unit existed in the cultural context of pre-colonial Somalis, clannism is the new form of politics established in both the colonial and post-colonial eras. In the colonial era, clan, according to Samatar, was institutionalized and legitimized as the only political unit to access the colonial state resources, and, accordingly, each clan chief was to act as "the middle man between the state and the members of his clan" (Samatar, 1997). After independence in 1960, clannism as a political identity continued as the new state failed "to produce leaders genuinely capable of rising above the issues of clannism" (Odowa, 2013). In addition, the new Somali constitution created after independence and the president Abdirashiid Ali Shermaarke (1960 –1969) both failed to address the national integration and establishing strategies to move citizens away from clan loyalties and towards national objectives.

As it has been noted above, Somalis are subjected to a primordial identity defined by clan affiliation, and, accordingly, members of each ethnic group should act on clan ethnicity as a political identity (Leroy, 1989, p. 5). For instances, each clan sought "status and position in the politics through clannism" (Adam, 1992). Similarly, the members of each clan surrender their rights to their clan leader, Hence, any leader intending "to participate in the political process must portray himself as an advocate of the interests of his clan" (Luling, 1997). Such a rigid loyalty compels him to adopt whatever action viewed to be in the interest of his clan even if it is detrimental to others. In this sense, he had to take advantage of opportunities to achieve personal and clan interests, allocate resources, provide employment, or ensure security for members of his clan. Thus, Somalis, in spite of their desires for a stable national government, became disappointed with "the incompetence of the leadership of the first Somali civilian government" (Odowa, 2013) as "the new political elites actively engaged in nepotism, corruption, injustice and the theft of government resources" (Elmi, Understanding the Somalia Conflagration: Identity, Political Islam and Peacebuilding, 2010, p. 20).

Under the militant regime of Mohamed Siad Barre, who came to power on October 21, 1969, after the death of President Shermaarke, breaking down the clannism as well as the unification of the great Somalia became the main political goal Barre intended to achieve. However, he failed and, instead, he aimed to strengthen his personal power and totalitarian leadership of Somalia in the name of the scientific socialism (SS). This ideology was an attempt to blend socialism and Islam and to overcome the persistent force of tribalism. Its objective was to overcome the dangers of clan-centered identities and oppositions that could threaten the collective national identity.

In spite of all his attempts, clan and lineage did not wither away as “they were so deeply embedded in the social, political, and economic fabric of the country’s institutions and the existence of inequalities between and among families continued to be manifested” (Chopra et al. 1995). Moreover, Politics, based on clan identity and affiliation was made worse by Barre himself who used it as an attempt to maintain power. He favored his lineage and turned inward to rely on his family clans to provide the key members of his government and administration in so much that his government came to be dubbed the MOD; Mareehan (his clan), Ogaden (his mother’s), and Dulbahante (his son-in-law’s). Thus, the application of clan interests into the political system led to the fact that:

the state has been perceived by the public as an object of clan competition – a tool for political and socio-economic aggrandizement – rather than a common framework for the socio-economic and political development of all Somalis irrespective of their clan affiliation (Osman, 2007, p. 2).

And this resulted in fueling the conflict and breaking up the civil war in the contemporary Somalia.

### **3. Discussion**

#### **3. 1. *Nomad Diaries: As A Critique of Clannism in Somalia***

##### **3.1.1 Clannism as Detrimental Threat to National Identity and Social Cohesion**

Any state is said to be made up of homogeneous individuals sharing the same language, culture, religion, and history. Such cultural, linguistic, and historical similarities make the state a nation- state characterized by unity. These features are normally reflected by a national identity shared by all members of a community. The relationship between the state and people are well described by citizenship under which citizens are granted certain rights and they adhere to certain duties and responsibilities and owe their allegiance to it. It also generates a sense of belonging to citizens in order that social cohesion can be established.

National identity or belonging is considered as the most essential need of the human being. Such importance is due to the fact that it is acknowledged as the crucial factor not only in defining and understanding who we are but also determining the social bonds that we create and the rights and duties we share. "To belong," according to Anthias,

is to be accepted as part of a community, to feel safe within it and to have a stake in the future of such a community of membership. To belong is to share values, networks, and practices and not just a question of identification (Anthias, 2008, p. 8).

In Somalia, the situation is, however, totally different. Though it was articulated in its constitution that Somali citizenship is linked to Somalia as a nation- state, most of Somalis mainly identify themselves by clan identity, not Somali nationality. Each of these clans is identified by its own definite region with its distinct social, economic, and political outlooks. Its members are united by the ties of clan lineage and blood, their identities are shaped by their clan affiliation, and their loyalties are renounced to their clans. This rigid loyalty to their respective clan tethers their identity solely to their particular clan instead of Somalia. Somali Diasporas also create a sense of belonging not to their homeland, but to their own clans.

In *Nomad Diaries*, Maxamuud criticizes the social role of the clannism in self- identification and social interactions. Marcus Oliver, an African American, of Somali origin, loses his sense of belonging; he belongs nowhere. In spite of his being Americanized, he feels virtually lost. He is marginalized from the mainstream life in America to the extent that he is forced to question who he is. In such a miserable situation, he is expected to maintain his national identity, strengthening his cultural links and bonds with his country, Somalia. Ironically, he cuts himself off from his national identity and instead he locates himself to his own clan in the motherland.

Thus, for Somali diasporas such as Oliver, clan identity is a means of belonging. With knowing of his belonging to the Ashanti clan, Oliver can finally escape a lifetime of not knowing who he is. As he states, “The only legacy this country [America] had given me is racism and marginalization- now I belong to a traditional clan in the motherland!” He feels happy that he has “an identity beyond being a black (Somali) man in America. He was now an Ashanti” (Maxamuud, 2009).

Moreover, clannism plays a great role in shaping the social interaction among Somalis. First of all, it divides clans into two categories: major and minor clans. The members of minor clans are considered as untouchable or unclean by the majority clans. The clan structure also excludes them from social mainstream life, prevents and punishes inter-marriage with members of majority groups (Last, 2011, p. 8). Clannism is also the basis on which social relationships are based on. In Hamar, for example, Nadifo, the protagonist, and her husband, Cartan Gedi, the Foreign Minister, interacts socially only with those who belong to their kin. Only their fellows are accepted to come to them in their palace as the Foreign Minister is willing to address their needs with ease.

Not only in the homeland, but also in America, Nadifo and her husband’s personal acquaintances and affiliations are also based on clan. In marriage, Nadifo's daughters, Warsan and Henna, for instance, are said to be preserved for suitors who possess the proper lineage within their kin. For this reason, Nadifo rejects Khadija’s proposal of asking Warsan’s hand to marry her son, Mahad. Addressing Nadifo, Khadija wonders “Why” is he less, because he is not from your clan? Is

that why he cannot marry Warsan?" (Maxamuud, 2009) Nadifo also never approves Haybe's marriage to Ceebla because of the clan as she believes that Haybe will dirty her own blood line. For her, Ceebla is not a fine noble girl as Nadifo comments "She is a Gobaad! Why would you marry a Gobaad?! She is lower than you. She is not your equal (Maxamuud, 2009, p. 26)).

Based on what has been mentioned, it is obvious that the supremacy associated to clan identity has influenced the national identity and citizenship. Instead of being based on loyalty, duties and responsibilities that come with being a citizen of Somalia, citizenship is based on the basis of belonging to a particular clan. In this sense, clannism became the source of crisis and conflict rather than a cause of social cohesion and unity. This is to say that it became the source of the Us - Them dichotomy in all social relations in Somali society. The Us – Them dichotomy among Somali people and clans had been increased and supported not only by the colonizers but also by the regimes of both the president Shermarke (1960 –1969) and Barre (1969-1991), whose political regimes were clan oriented; both failed to transcend people's loyalties to the state above the clan lineage.

### **3.1.2. Clannism as a Form of Political Identity**

Yasmeen Maxamuud, in her novel *Nomad Diaries: Life, War, And America*, succeeded in offering a vivid portrayal of Mohamed Siad Barre's regime. In 1969, Barre, or Afweyne (Big mouth) as being referred in the novel, held power through a military coup. His primary aim, as he pretended, was to elevate the supremacy and loyalty to the state in order to establish national unity beyond the favouritism based on clan lineage and, accordingly, his government gained the support of the public in its early years of ruling the country.

Yet, people became disappointed as Barre established the most militarized repressive authoritarian regime in the Horn of Africa. In spite of his policy of national unity through implementation of scientific socialism in 1976, Barre resorted to clannism as a form of political affiliation. He politicized clan structure to attain the political power and control economic resources of the centralized state he had established. As a result, instead of founding a national state, Barre, under the name of Scientific Socialism, established a clan- based political system dominated by clan elites of his favoring clans that supported him to dominate and control the state. He strengthened his political allegiance to "the Marrehaan clan, his patrilineal line, and the Ogaadeen and Dulbahante clans, from which his mother and brother-in-law traced their respective lineages" (Ssereo, 2003, p. 34).

Through reading the novel, it is evident that Barre's manipulation of clannism led to nothing but the overspread of oppression, marginalization, poverty, and the violation of the rights of equality and equal participation in politics and sharing of the economic resources. In this sense, Barre's regime did not bring any kind of development to the country. Instead, he exploited clan structure neither to



bring all Somalis together and unify them under one flag nor enhance unity, equality, freedom, and justice, but to dominate and entrench his grip on power and capture all aspects of life.

Under the systematic use of the clan political system, Barre's regime advanced the governmental positions of the members of the ruling clans. According to Ssereo, "prestigious government posts were allocated to individuals from these Barre's three clans (Ssereo, 2003, p. 34)). They were, thus, privileged to high-ranking positions and rewarded with state economic resources in terms of property, businesses licenses, international aid, and so on. Thus, those political leaders used the state to control other clans and state resources to the extent that a popular saying spread in Somalia in the 1980s that "the Marrehaan are drunk on power; the Dulbahante are drunk on pride; the Ogaadeen are drunk on powdered milk" (quoted in Lewis 1994: 165).

While those three clans were privileged by the regime, other clans were marginalized economically and politically. Barre exploited Scientific socialism as an instrument to accumulate wealth, enrich, and empower himself and his regime through exploiting and harassing the public. "Afweyne" and "his family lived excessively around the globe as a result of SS," as depicted in the novel that he "stashed citizenry funds in fat Swiss bank accounts in the name of SS. Poor peasants and informal business women gave their hard earned change in the name of SS ...Farmers saw their farms taken by SS" (Maxamuud, 2009, p. 26).

Like Afweyne, his favoring clan political elites and ministers were privileged to wealth, prestige, accommodation, health care, and education. They lived fully, be satisfied with their wealth earned in the name of SS. They believed themselves to be "the elite that ruled the masses endlessly as if it were a given right" (Ibid, p. 62). They lived in beautiful palaces. Take the palace of the Foreign Minister, Cartan, as an example. It took six years to complete, costing about one million dollars. It was built as "a replica of a palace {Nadifo} had seen in Milan," in Italy. Having "various themes of Moroccan, Turkish, Japanese and European culture," it was decorated by "the world-famous interior designing company Piera Renzo International" (Ibid, p. 24).

Their children were also privileged to get good health care and education. For example, they were sent abroad, to the U.S. and Europe to study while other children did not have even the right to dream about travelling overseas to study. Geelle, Cartan's son, had been afforded an opportunity to go to the United States to study because of his father's position in government while "his friends lined the passport office with false identifications to escape the cruel dictatorship" (Ibid, p. 30).

On the contrary, Somali people were not privileged to live such a lavish life. They were economically marginalized. They were prevented to get their rights granted to them by the

constitution, exploited, and harassed by the regime. They lived a miserable life with poverty and hunger as depicted in the novel:

When Nadifo built a mansion that cost a million dollars, her neighbors hid their hunger shamefully. They may have eaten a meal a day if at all, when Nadifo's food was imported from Europe and the Middle East. But they were shocked when it was all taken away. Call it naiveté or self-indulgence, but they expected their magnificent lives to remain undisturbed, while their neighbors ate, smelled and lived poverty (Ibid, p. 65).

Unlike the political elites, people sought and struggled not for status and prestige, but for justice and equality "for better schools for their children, building houses, buying Japanese cars and throwing trendy weddings". Yet, they lived poverty and were "limited to the remnants that were thrown their way" (Ibid, p. 62). Accordingly, they lived:

As if {they} enjoyed the poverty, limitations and inequality that existed. As if they enjoyed seeing Nadifo hop from one country to another and hear names of countries they could only associate with her. As if they consented to the lifestyle Nadifo and her family lived (Ibid, p. 62).

Thus, it is apparent that there were some clans who were privileged to control Somali politics and economics while other clans were not only politically and economically marginalized but also subject to brutality, suppression, and oppression. As Barre "ruled the country for more than twenty years with an iron fist" (Ibid, p.23) through highly centralized system with all the powers in Hamar, the capital city, and was assisted by the military who had been identified with particular clans. He also established a repressive security apparatus to suppress his people and prevent any rebel against his regime. He made them live in fear as he used to give speeches that propagated fear that became a "part of everyday living like eating, praying and breathing" (Ibid, p.26). Accordingly, Somali people's right of freedom of speech was totally banned and violated; they were silent, timid, and frightened, having no voice to express their anger, discuss the cruel political conditions they lived in, or reveal their suffering and struggle for equality, and if they were "caught discussing political affairs, it [would result] in the suspicious and deadly disappearance of the culprit"(Ibid, p. 22). Even when feeling a need to express their wrath, they "cursed him under their breath, unable to trust their voices, as if their own words would betray them, leaping out of their mouths to the ears of a callous few called *guulwadayaal* (victory pioneers)" (Ibid, p. 22).

Moreover, through his external military support, Barre, as the narrator claims, "policed the streets with an agonizing gaze which followed people everywhere, hovering over them. God-fearing

adults would look over their shoulders to assure themselves Afweyne and his henchmen were not following". He also handpicked and recruited rural drifters "to spy on the bewildered citizenry" and to create a gap between them. People "became suspicious of each other. Every clan held abhorrence for the next, with people just about having enough" (Ibid, p. 27). The regime, furthermore, had "encouraged animosity among clan groups and used massive military force to put down popular protests"(Lyons A. I., 1995, p. 8). As Visman puts it, 'while Siad Barre's repressive regime incited widespread distrust of central government, his strategy of divide and rule left a legacy of deep inter-clan hostility and resulted in a number of clan-based insurgencies" (Visman, 1998, p. 3).

### **3.2.3 Clannism as the Agent of Destruction in Somalia**

Barre's Clan-based political system that led to a deep inter-clan hostility political and economic inequalities, social injustice, brutal dictatorship, and repression that fatigued Somali people gave rise to the emergence of armed rebel movements based on clannism. They all emerged together to overthrow Barre's military regime. They were willing to participate in that rebel "to get rid of the thief, brutal, cruel, evil SS" (Maxamuud, 2009, p. 27). In spite of Barre's repressive terrorizing measures to encounter and overcome those rebels, they succeeded in defeating the regime on January 27, 1991.

However, the rebellion was based on clannism. It was activated not by national interests but by enmity and revenge. The warlords of armed-clan militias took the advantage of the revolt not only to overthrow Barre's authoritarian regime and advance personal and clan interests but also to take revenge against each other as the narrator states that those who once "had only one thing in common: [the goal] to oust Barre; beyond that, they hated each other as much as they hated Siad Barre" (Mukhatar, 1997, p. 55).

Accordingly, the war they waged against the regime "degenerated into clan conflict, revenge bloodshed, ethnic cleansing, destruction, predatory looting, banditry, and occupation of valuable real estate. People witnessed loss of lives of parents, brothers, children, or relatives. The rebels attacked the regime leaders' palaces, murdering their families, and looting their properties and livestock. All were killed in the clan conflict as the attackers were willing to perform revenge killing and "slaughter as many people as they could in the shortest amount of time" (Maxamuud, 2009, p. 35). The scene was too dreadful to describe:

Bodies began to pile up. Corpses of men, armless corpses of women, children's lifeless bodies, and adults with horrified expressions lay alongside bullets and discarded machetes that had delivered their ends. ... Pristine Persian rugs had lost their luster. Like so much else in the house, they were now defiled with

blood. The smell of death joined potent sandalwood, amber, and musk attar from Persia and Arabia (Ibid, p. 39).

Like the gun, rape was used as a weapon to terrorize, humiliate, and dishonor clans through women bodies that “provided perfect vehicles for revenge” and cause a permanent impact on their clans (69). the armed militants victimized and "violated mothers, wives, grandmothers, and pregnant women, indiscriminately” in the public (Ibid, p. 69). These women were gang raped not out of sexual desire, but out of animosity and revenge. For example, Henna, the protagonist's daughter, was gang-raped by a number of rapists motivated by resentment, enmity, and revenge oriented towards not only her family but also her clan as a whole. They raped her because they:

wanted to destroy their enemies through her body. They wanted to permanently mark her, impregnate her with a hateful reminder, a vendetta. Her body would become a causality of war, a pillage of virtues, and a place to hold an enemy child until birth (Ibid, p. 64).

Clannism, thus, became the agent of evil in spreading conflict, destruction, violence, and mischief in Somalia. It was, according to the protagonist's son, Haybe, a burden and “a curse that had created the civil war-the brutal murder of his brother, the dismemberment of innocent people, the skinning severing, and chopping of children, and violating women”. This is why he despised his mother’s obsession with clan, which he viewed as “the knife that had slain her family, destroyed her daughter, and pillaged her homeland” (Ibid, p. 205. Thus, the hope of Somali people that:

the fall of the dictatorship would lead to a more peaceful and prosperous Somalia soon faded away as the country descended into a still yet unfinished civil war that saw the state replaced by warlords, clan militia and weak authorities (Harper 2012, p. 57).

This was due to the fact that warlords’ leaders of armed clan-based factions had failed to set up a working governance structure that could lead to build a new strong state and bring stability, justice and peace to people after the ouster of Barre dictatorship. Instead, they succeeded only in “planning the massacre of innocent civilians in the name of clan warfare, taking arms in the name of clan cleansing,” waging a “monstrous war” against each other, and “tearing apart their lines and devastating their homeland” (Maxamuud, 2009, p. 224).

Thus, Somali people's disappointment in the politics was again repeated in a sense that the leaders who led the rebellion forgot the rhetoric of revolution and promises of change and,

accordingly, the old practices of misgovernment, corruption and tyranny returned in invisible ways until they become as obvious as practices of the Barre's regime.

## Conclusion

The current study shows the negative influence of clannism and comes to conclusion that clannism in Somalia has become the curse of Somalia. It has influenced the Somali society in all aspects of life. It is acknowledged as the main cause of conflict and the failure of the state. Socially, it has been depicted as a threat to national identity and social cohesion. It is considered as the main marker for constructing Somali identity. People identify themselves in terms of their own clans, not on the basis of citizenship to the state- nation; they derive their identity from their shared ancestors rather than the sense of national belonging and citizenship. This rigid loyalty to their respective clan chains their identity solely to their particular clan instead of Somali national identity and citizenship and determines their social relationships with each other.

Moreover, from the political perspective, the situation was getting worse and worse. Siad Barre, despite his attempts to transcend clan lines and inculcate loyalty to Somali nationalism, failed to address clan system and make use of its advantages to unify Somalis in terms of the nation and build a strong state united by a national identity shared by all people. He promoted and institutionalized clannism as a means of political identity. He relied on clannism as a major informal structure of governance to maintain power through placing his trust on political leaders chosen from, his own clans, alienating other clans from political participation. In addition, he exploited clannism as a policy for rule and divide, aiming at creating hatred among various clans.

Barre's political clan-based system sustained its power by force and terror, leading to inequality, social injustice, marginalization, and oppression. As a result, this 'ethnic favouritism' prompted the creation of factional groups who gathered together against the regime and finally, defeated it in 1991. However, the victory they won turned to the most horrible catastrophic war based on clannism the Somali people have ever faced. The revolution was activated not by national interests but by enmity and revenge. The armed-clan leaders mobilized local militia and fought each other in order to defend and protect clan interests and take revenge against other clans. Thus, instead of being a means of safety and protection, clannism became the agent of evil in spreading mischief, conflict, destruction, violence, and non-end civil war in Somalia.

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