
Proceedings
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edited by
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— VOLUME II —

ARCHAEOLOGY
AND
HISTORY

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Editor's Preface

Three years after the first congress in Mogadishu, the Second International Congress of Somali Studies was held in August 1983 at the University of Hamburg. It attracted more than one hundred scholars from all over the world who are interested in Somalia and the Horn of Africa.

Once again we could prove that Somalia had gained additional importance and interest. Many papers represented innovations in the field of Somali studies. As for the diversity of the topics presented, it clearly indicates the progress which has been achieved between the two congresses.

Scholars and researchers came from Italy, Somalia, the United States, Great Britain, Sweden, France and Germany. Out of the 89 papers which were presented in Hamburg 80 are included in the four volumes of the Proceedings. The contributors have been allowed sufficient time to incorporate results of the discussions held at the congress into the final version of their papers.

A wide variety of topics was discussed in Hamburg. This broad range placed considerable demands on the participants. But fortunately, one could see the geographer in the meetings of the medical group, the linguist when problems of development were discussed. So the attempt to bridge the gaps from one discipline to the other proved successful. And it is to be hoped that multidisciplinary efforts will be transferred into the practical daily work.

Whereas it has been already difficult to put the programme of the congress together in a meaningful manner, it has been not less complicated to compile the four volumes of the Proceedings. The result necessarily represents merely a compromise. It is a sum of individual efforts, incorporating faults as well as splendid achievements. These

Proceedings are a mirror which reflects the state of our science.

As the editor I understood my job more as a documentarist - only taking care of the correct appearance of the articles. I carefully avoided taking any influence on the papers' content. Unfortunately, not every single paper has achieved "professional standard". Especially the lack of empirical work has to be mentioned. Sometimes even a deficit in theory is apparent. The results are rather frequently normative assertions which usually cannot contribute any positive steps in respect to the development process and the satisfaction of human needs.

Since we regard them mostly as documents our main concern was to publish the Proceedings as quickly as possible. This was necessary because some papers might lose their importance pretty soon. This will happen especially to those articles which outline the beginning or continuation of larger and more substantial work. In other parts the presented articles mark the conclusion of extensive research.

Somali studies have broadened enormously and include among other disciplines: social anthropology, linguistics, ecology, sociology, economics, public health, geology, archaeology, medicine, history, geography and political science. All these disciplines are represented within the four volumes. Sometimes it was difficult to place a certain article into a certain chapter or volume. And probably some authors might not be pleased to find their article included where it appears.

Volume I contains linguistics and literature. In volume II all those articles are incorporated which deal with the history or some aspects of history of Somalia and neighbouring territories. Volume III is named 'Aspects of development'. All the articles concentrate especially on the

development of Somalia which still is regarded as one of the poorest countries of the world. There is a well deserved special emphasis on the agricultural sector. It is of paramount importance for this development process. - Finally, one can find articles on social anthropology, refugees, traditional and modern medicine, education and science and geology in volume IV.

Instead of describing each article in detail I would like to discuss another topic. It is worthwhile to consider the relationship between science and those institutions which try to initiate the development process. A close linkage between these two sectors would be advantageous for a country like Somalia which has an overwhelming lack of basic data. Unfortunately, the intention of the organizers to make the congress a forum for the exchange of knowledge and experience failed to some degree. Governmental and private agencies, and international organizations did not participate at the congress (with a few exceptions). This is a pity as once again the chance of communication was lost. True, it is sometimes difficult for both, the scholar and the administrator, to cooperate. Administration usually expects clear, praxis-oriented statements. Quite often those cannot be given by science. On the other hand the scholar expects clear, methodological questionings; but this implies already a precise knowledge and understanding of the problem within administration. Anyway, it will be necessary that the communication will be improved as only a strengthened cooperative research and implementation between researchers and operating institutions can guarantee that any issue will be analyzed in its specific terms and so to become relevant to the nation's current needs. One final point, Galtung used the term of 'scientific colonialism' to describe the process which transfers the

main body of the acquisition of knowledge about one country outside its borders. Even though science and research in Somalia are still in a state of infancy we were glad to realize that the number of Somali colleagues is steadily increasing, diminishing the above mentioned danger of 'scientific colonialism'. It is to be hoped that this tendency will continue.

As the organizer of the congress I gratefully acknowledge the generous grant from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG), which helped to ensure the success of the congress. Additionally, I'm indebted to the University of Hamburg, the Deutsche Kreis für Somali Studien and the Deutsch - Somalische Gesellschaft.

As for the publication of the Proceedings I have to thank the Cultural Department of the Foreign Ministry of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Somali Academy of Sciences and Arts and Dr. Nottmeyer. And I have to point out especially that without the assistance, support and patience of Andrea Hauenschild-Franck, Evelyn Stöckle, Stefan Helming and Anneliese Altvater I would not have succeeded to publish these Proceedings in less than one year after the congress.

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