

Paolo Tripodi

THE COLONIAL LEGACY IN SOMALIA

Rome and Mogadishu
from Colonial Administration
to Operation Restore Hope

Foreword by Stephen Chan



The tragic events in Somalia in the 1990s, with the collapse of the Somali state and the failure of humanitarian intervention, have seen scholars analyze how Siad Barre's regime came to an end and how clanism has destabilized Somali society. Until now no extensive study has investigated a major factor in recent Somali evolution: its relationship with Italy over the last century. *The Colonial Legacy in Somalia* analyzes the consequences of this relationship from colonial administration to the present day. Tripodi examines the motives of Italian imperial expansionism and explains the role Italy played in the formation of the Somali state, why Italy supported Siad Barre's repressive regime and the controversial Italian position during the UNOSOM II. He explains the root of the disagreement between Italy, the US and the UN on the use of force and the Italian approach to peacekeeping in Somalia.

For a note on the author, please see the back flap

The Colonial Legacy in Somalia

**Rome and Mogadishu: from Colonial
Administration to Operation Restore Hope**

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First published in Great Britain 1999 by

MACMILLAN PRESS LTD

Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS and London

Companies and representatives throughout the world

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library. **PK 42**

ISBN 0-333-76351-3

UNIVERSITA' DEGLI STUDI "ROMA TRE"

BIBLIOTECA DI AREA

GIURIDICO - ECONOMICO - POLITICA

SP 2366

AL 107176

COLL



First published in the United States of America 1999 by

ST. MARTIN'S PRESS, INC.,

Scholarly and Reference Division,

175 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010

ISBN 0-312-22393-5

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Tripodi, Paolo, 1965-

The colonial legacy in Somalia : Rome and Mogadishu : from colonial administration to Operation Restore Hope / Paolo Tripodi : foreword by Stephen Chan.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references (p.) and index.

ISBN 0-312-22393-5 (cloth)

1. Somalia—Politics and government—1960–1991. 2. Somalia—Politics and government—1991– 3. Somalia—Foreign relations—Italy. 4. Italy—Foreign relations—Somalia. 5. Italy—Colonies—Africa—Administration. I. Title.

DT407.T75 1999

967.7305—dc21

99-21775

CIP

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08 07 06 05 04 03 02 01 00 99

Printed and bound in Great Britain by
Antony Rowe Ltd, Chippenham, Wiltshire

To the best friends of my childhood
Paolo Tripodi and Rosario Di Bartolo

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Foreword:

Tripodi's Ragamuffin Colonialism and Reflective Peacekeeping

When CNN cameras tracked US marines landing in Somalia the cameramen formed their only obstacle. On the beaches, no guns confronted the soldiers. Instead, they dodged floodlights and ran a gauntlet of requests to assume the poses of fighting men. In a way, this was prophetic. Soon they would be fighting, rather than keeping something called a peace. In a way it was also ironic, for the grand visual rhetoric that CNN purveyed prefigured the grander and hollower rhetoric of a great state declaring it would safeguard a peace and a people it could not understand. When it all seemed to grind to an ignominious close – no battalion of cameramen to watch the withdrawal – it seemed a triumph for anarchy and highly selfish localised interests.

Once look at it all from a slightly different lens, and a more complex – if not nuanced – history emerges. This is what Tripodi does in this book. Against a detailed background of Italian colonial thought – itself underdeveloped – we are able to see how superficial the governments of independence had to be. It was a parlous colonialism, what Tripodi calls a 'ragamuffin' colonialism. However, this too had its irony. As the second largest peacekeeping power in Somalia, Italian forces pointedly refused to take their lead from the US command. It may be that Rome had designs upon a future influence within Somalia, but Tripodi is persuasive in arguing that Italian policy reflected upon the earlier Italian experience in Somalia and balanced the possibilities of policy against the lessons of history – lessons that the US, never having been a colonial power itself, and certainly nowhere in Africa, could not have learned.

Tripodi's study makes use of a wealth of previously unavailable materials. It is an original corrective to the view of television, and a corrective to those who analyse Somalia outside history. In his Preface, Tripodi kindly calls me his Virgil. The Latin poet guided

Dante to the depths of hell. There, even the sorriest inhabitant has a story to tell. I think all I have done is to demand he bury himself in an inferno of archives and, for his sins, he had first to catalogue them before he could use them. Within their pages, however, earlier Dantes had regarded their expeditions to Somalia. If what they learnt did not chasten them then, it chastened their descendants in the Italian peacekeeping units. Tripodi's study is elegiac of a doomed colonialism, redeemed in style at least by the greater Italian sensitivity in Operation Restore Hope. In a way, there is the neatness of poetry here, but the case he makes is powerful, and we shall not view Italians or Somalis with floodlit simplicities again.

Stephen Chan

Preface and Acknowledgements

Between the end of June and the early days of July 1998 I was in Tirana to investigate the impact of the 1997 Italian-led multinational intervention in Albania, and the continuing Italian involvement with a delegation of experts – DIE Delegazione Italiana Esperti – after the international force had been withdrawn. I never expected that my trip to the 'Eagles' country' would be so important for my research on Somalia. I was aware that Brigadier General Luigi Cantone, the DIE's commander, had served in Somalia with UNOSOM, but I did not expect that many other members of the delegation would have also served there. Thus within a few days General Cantone, Colonel Severino Gorietti, Lieutenant-Colonel Raffaele Iubini, Captain Vittorio Biondi and Sergeant Luciano Cappelli had given me a detailed account of their experiences and their relationships with Somalia and its people.¹ They all regretted that, despite a strong commitment to fighting starvation and helping Somalis to restore democracy, the final outcome of the international mission was one of failure. Their personal stories and feelings added what I would describe as a human touch to my academic investigation. They also helped me to understand the Italian position during the intervention in more depth. This would not have been completed, however, without two important interviews with Major-General Bruno Loi and Major-General Carmine Fiore, commanders of the Italian troops deployed in Somalia in two different periods. In these interviews they gave me a detailed account of the events of 1993 and 1994 from a military, and also from a diplomatic, point of view. For their input into my investigation of the Italian involvement with UNOSOM, I must thank all of them, and also Colonel Giancarlo Rossi, the Editor of *Informazioni della Difesa* and Captain Igino Rugiero, aide-de-camp of the Army deputy Chief of Staff, for their friendly assistance over this period.

As regards my research at the Foreign Ministry Historic and Diplomatic Archive in Rome I owe special thanks to Counsellor Giandomenico Magliano, deputy director of the Direzione Generale per le Relazioni Culturali, for his advice and suggestions. Certainly,

all this research would have been much more difficult without the constant support of Dr Patrizia Rugieri, who assisted me in finding the AFIS documents. This was a particularly difficult job as these documents had never been catalogued before and were sitting in what at the foreign ministry is known as 'the bunker' waiting to be organised during the next few years.

Thus on more than one occasion I experienced the excitement of being the first to go through reports, letters, photos and a variety of documents that just yesterday had been handled by AFIS officials in Mogadishu.

For making this fascinating experience possible, I must thank Professor Stephen Chan who from the early stage of my research as PhD supervisor, decided to be my Virgil.

I could not conclude this without mentioning my gratitude to Professor Jack Spence, for his encouraging comments on an earlier version of this book, and to Professor William Mader, who has always been available to discuss with me any issue related to my research. I also owe a special thank you to David Riordan who edited most of this work in its various stages and to Janet Elkington who typed a large part of this book.

Paolo Tripodi
Nottingham

List of Acronyms

ACS	Archivio Centrale dello Stato
AFIS	Amministrazione Fiduciaria Italiana in Somalia
AMB	Azienda Monopolio Banane
AOI	Africa Orientale Italiana
ASMAE	Archivio Storico del Ministero Affari Esteri
BMA	British Military Administration
CLAMS	Commissione per la Liquidazione degli Arretrati ai Militari Somali
COU	Circuiti Operativi Umanitari
DIPCO	Dipartimento per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo
FAI	Fondo Aiuti Italiani
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GDS	Gruppo Democratico Somalo
GSL	Greater Somali League
HDM	Hisbia Digl-Mirifle
HDMS	Hisbia Destur Mustaqil Somali
MAE	Ministero Affari Esteri
MAI	Ministero dell'Africa Italiana
MPF	Multinational Protection Force
MSI	Movimento Sociale Italiano
NFD	Northern Frontier District
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
PBU	Patriotica Beneficence Union
PCI	Partito Comunista Italiano
PLGS	Partito Liberale dei Giovani Somali
PSI	Partito Socialista Italiano
PSO	Peace Support Operation
PRO	Public Record Office
ROE	Rules Of Engagement
SAIS	Società Agricola Italo Somala
SDA	Somali Democratic Alliance
SDM	Somali Democratic Movement
SNC	Somali National Congress
SNM	Somali National Movement
SNU	Somali National Union
SPM	Somali Patriotic Movement
SRC	Somali Revolutionary Council

SRSP	Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party
SYL	Somali Youth League
UNITAF	United Task Force
UNOSOM	United Nations Operation in Somalia
USC	United Somali Congress
WSLF	West Somalia Liberation Front
WO	War Office

1 Introduction

In November 1994 when this research on Somalia began, the country in the Horn of Africa was no longer a unitary state. The word Somalia generated images of starvation and bloody battles, it was evidence of the failure of the international community's attempt to halt famine and starvation through the humanitarian intervention launched by the US and UN in December 1992. Since 1993 there has been a proliferation of analyses which have attempted to understand how and why Somalia collapsed. Scholars, UN officers and military commentators have tried to identify and explain the many causes that led to such a tragedy. These interpretations have varied according to the analysts' background, but a common point among scholars has emerged. There is widespread agreement that the roots of instability in Somalia originate from clanism and from the weakening that pan-Somalism had suffered in recent years. Somalia became an independent state in 1960 with its constitution based on the Italian model. After nine years of troubled democracy, a military coup introduced a new regime. The high expectations of liberal and socialist intellectuals, who supported the military in its attempt to modernise the country, were frustrated following the war against Ethiopia in 1977–8. After the defeat over the Ogaden, Siad Barre's regime became a dictatorship which subverted the dream of 'scientific socialism' and led the country into a state of total civil war, of which we have learned from our TV screens.

After 50 years of Italian colonialism and nine years of British administration, from 1950 to 1960 South Somalia was administered by an Italian trusteeship mandate. Independence saw the union of the British protectorate of Somaliland and the territory under Italian mandate, and the beginning of a parliamentary experiment that lasted until 1969 – just nine years. Barre's regime, which followed the overthrow of the republic, can be divided into two main periods: before and after the Ogaden war. The first period was one of aspiration and illusion that Somalia, once embarked upon the project of 'scientific socialism', could become a leading country in Africa. The second was a time of political repression, when Barre's dictatorship combined with a strong resurgence of clanism. This element has been ever-present in Somalia's ancient and modern history; for brief periods its influence on Somali life softened, but it never disappeared

completely. After independence pan-Somalism grew significantly in an attempt to unify all Somali territories and overcome the divisions clanism caused. In this phase pan-Somalism was frustrated by an unstable administration and its cohesive power did not develop. The failure of the Somali republic came about as a consequence of its kleptocracy and inefficiency rather than the negative influence of clanism.¹ After independence, despite the fact that the idea of a united Somalia received wide support, nepotism, corruption and the evolution of the republic into a one-party state under the Somali Youth League (SYL) generated scepticism and disillusionment among the people.

As a consequence the Somali population considered the army to be the only institution able to guarantee the unity of Somalia. The support the military enjoyed after overthrowing the parliamentary regime was high, and pan-Somalism emerged invigorated from the army-led coup. Yet the same Barre, although apparently against clanism, relied on an informal alliance of three Darod clans: his own clan, Marehan; his mother's clan, Ogaden; and the clan of his son-in-law, Dhulbahante. Barre's regime still relied strongly on clan support. After the Ogaden defeat, however, clanism became a difficult problem to deal with and ultimately it led the country to its present situation. The influence of clanism on Somali society has been closely analysed by major scholars of Somalia. Abdalla Omar Mansur wrote that

the Somali population, which has a common language, culture and religion, is considered to be a real and unitary state and is given the title of nation-state within the African context, but in reality it is contrary to a nation; the Somali people are eternally broken up into clans and traditionally lack the concept of state as hierarchical power.²

Hussein Adam provided a clear explanation of the clan conflict when he stated,

in Somalia, like ethnic conflict elsewhere, [clan conflict] has an *instrumentalist* orientation. It is fuelled by struggles for concrete interest – water and grazing rights for example. Beyond material, economic interest there are non-material, psychic factors that serve to complement such interests. Somali poetry records numerous wars for *prestige* – broadly defined to include material and psychic interest and incentives.³

Clanism has deep roots in Somali society. The clan, now especially, is considered by its members to be the main social and political institution. What distinguishes a clan-based structure from a Western European political structure, such as a party, is the cohesive power of membership. A party or a political formation in the West has its cohesive power centred on an idea, a programme and a social class, while a clan is an expression of strong kinship ties. In 1960 the choice of a centralised state model contrasted with the nature of Somali society. Although the adoption of proportional representation was particularly appropriate for a country with a fragmented political dynamic, the administration of a centralised state could easily be exploited to establish the hegemony of one or a small number of clans over the others. Such a situation would result in high tension among those clans excluded from power and therefore generate a trend towards instability. The clan dominating power became increasingly obvious during Siad Barre's era. Analysing the causes of the Somali collapse Mohamed Aden Sheikh claimed that the reasons for the Somali tragedy had been a blind dictatorship; several clan-military based organisations, some of which wanted a hegemonic position for their own clan; other clans who tried to defend their own territory, although none of them could find a minimum common project, even when confronted with the risk of seeing Somalia disappear from the world map; the fact that religious extremists appeared everywhere and would not listen to proposals for the reconstruction of a secular state; and 'finally there is a growing clan-mania that does not concede any room for a rational debate.'⁴

Therefore clanism and the political and military developments following independence are all interrelated causes of Somalia's collapse. The tragic events of Somalia can be explained, as many scholars have already sought to do, through an investigation of domestic causes. However, several external factors aggravated the situation. In the decades of confrontation between East and West, the Horn of Africa proved to be a sensitive strategic area. In the 1970s and early 1980s the region became a pawn of Soviet and American diplomacy which, in different periods, attempted to bring Somalia under their hegemonic control. The end of the Cold War dramatically reduced the importance of the Horn and the strategic importance of states such as Somalia and Ethiopia. Peter Schraeder, in his study of US foreign policy in relation to Africa, reached the following conclusion. Although he reckons that from 1982 the East-West dimension of the tension on the Somali-Ethiopian border attracted the attention

of the Reagan administration, 'six years later, the intensification of the civil war – which had nothing to do with East–West relations – largely was ignored by the White House, and instead attracted the attention of a small but highly vocal group within Congress that was successful in forcing the State Department to declare a voluntary hold on all military aid to Somalia.'⁵ From the data on US military aid provided in Schraeder's research the influence of the relaxing of the Cold War is evident. US military aid to Somalia grew from \$20 million in 1980, to \$34.1 million in 1985. Yet by 1986 US military aid had dropped to \$20.2 million and the following year it fell by more than 50 per cent to \$8.2 million. Finally in 1989 it was under \$1 million.⁶ There is no doubt that the campaigning of human rights movements such as Africa Watch and Amnesty International against Barre for his massive violation of human rights at the end of the 1980s, had a strong influence on international attitudes towards the dictator. None the less, Washington's decreasing involvement in Mogadishu can still be explained by the significant change in the international environment and by the easing of the tension with the Soviet Union. Thus, after being a tool either of Soviet or American hegemonic power, Somalia was ignored until the launch of the unsuccessful humanitarian intervention 'Restore Hope'.

The USA and the Soviet Union were not the only powers seeking to cultivate a strong presence in the Horn of Africa. This region has represented an important area of concern for Italy too, which early in the twentieth century colonised the south of Somalia and then administered a UN mandate to prepare the country for independence. From 1960 Italy maintained close relationships with the Somali government and from 1969 with Siad Barre. Only in 1991, when the last Italian ambassador in Somalia was not allowed to return to Mogadishu, by then in the grip of a violent civil war, did relations between the two countries come to an end. The Italian presence in Somalia has been important, and fluctuations of Italian foreign policy in the Horn had more influence on Mogadishu than anywhere else. Political parties and politicians in Rome determined the Italian attitude towards the Horn of Africa. Christian Democrats played an important role during the Trusteeship Administration from 1950 to 1960. Following the military coup in 1969 the Communist Party (PCI, Partito Comunista Italiano) was the main political group to believe in the socialist revolution and in the left-wing intellectuals who supported Barre. As a consequence of the Soviet Union's decision to support Ethiopia in the Ogaden war, the PCI switched its support

from Barre to Menghistu, and as a result Christian Democrats regained the leading role in the relationship with Somalia. In the 1980s the Socialist Party (PSI, Partito Socialista Italiano) successfully challenged the strong position of the Christian Democrats and became a close partner of the Somali regime. Siad Barre was considered one of the best African partners by Bettino Craxi, the Secretary of the PSI and Italian Prime Minister from August 1983 to March 1987. The last Italian ambassador in Somalia, Mario Sica, stated, 'Somalia, like no other country, was an extension of Italian political life and of the [Italian] domestic debate among parties.'⁷

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

In order to provide an assessment of the Italian presence in Somalia, this book has analysed three main periods. The first, from 1905 to 1941, is important if one is to understand the main features of Italian colonialism, a late colonialism, which began after that of the British and French. When these two powers were expanding their empires in Africa, Italy was still dealing with a difficult domestic situation. Rome joined the Berlin Conference called by Germany to discuss the faith of the Congo in 1884 without a colonial policy or even a colonial ideology. According to Luigi Goglia Italian imperialism consisted of three main elements: direct rule, racism and demographic colonialism. He claims that the demographic element was clearly present from the beginning of Italian imperialism.⁸ This element gave rise to the definition of Italian imperialism as that of an 'imperial ragamuffin' or an 'imperialism of the poor'.⁹ Clearly, a colonialism that did not have any real capability of exploitation had less of an opportunity to promote the social, economic and institutional operations which, according to Giampaolo Calchi Novati, characterised colonialism in general.¹⁰ The period, analysed in the first chapter of this book, provides not only a necessary historical premise, but also an assessment of Italian colonial activity in Somalia; it aims to present a unitarian perspective on Italian colonialism. Martin Clark, in his *Modern Italy 1871–1995*, gives a pessimistic account of Italian historiography and academic commitment in this department. He states that:

history writing in Italy can be understood in [a] corporate context, Italian historians are rarely shy, retiring scholars, drenched in archival dust. They are far more likely to be busy professional

politicians.... The history they write is essentially 'committed' history, designed to cheer on their own team. Catholic historians write dutifully about the Church; Marxists historians write about trade unions and workers' parties; Liberal historians write in praise of Liberal Italy.¹¹

Yet he is right when he states that 'very few Italian historians wrote military or colonial history – a big gap in our knowledge of the past century.'¹²

In 1993 Italian universities finally introduced the *dottorato di ricerca*¹³ (a sort of state-funded PhD) in military history, while research on colonial studies is still undertaken by academics, by a restricted number of undergraduate students for their dissertations and rarely by research students in modern history or international relations.

This situation is largely the result of the Education Ministry's decision in 1961 to abolish from university syllabuses all modules in any way related to colonial tradition and to transform them into 'History and institutions of African and Asian countries' (*Storia e istituzioni dei paesi afro-asiatici*). Consequently research and academic output in this field has been penalised. Colonial history remained neglected, confined to a limited number of scholars, and detached from research on African history.

A major turning point was a conference on Sources and Issues of Italian Colonial Policy (*Fonti e problemi della politica coloniale italiana*) held in Taormina–Messina (Sicily) in October 1989. This meeting was an important opportunity to promote a new commitment to this field of studies, and stimulated a dialogue between Italian and foreign academics on Italian colonialism. However, it should be noted that the two volumes containing the main papers presented at the conference were published by the Cultural Ministry (*Ministero per i beni culturali e ambientali*) only in 1996 – a delay that demonstrates the lack of respect that is given in Italy to research on colonialism.

Therefore the first chapter of this book makes a contribution to the study of Italian colonialism within a historical perspective and gives the reader an overview of its evolution.

The second main Italian involvement in Somalia was with the AFIS, the Amministrazione Fiduciaria Italiana in Somalia, Italian Trusteeship Administration, from 1950 to 1960. This decade was momentous as Italy had the task of establishing the institutions of the new Somali state. The second and third chapters provide an investigation of this

period through the use of relevant and hitherto unresearched primary sources at the Italian Foreign Ministry Historical and Diplomatic Archive, ASMAE (*Archivio Storico del Ministero Affari Esteri*). In 1988, referring to this period, Ioan Lewis, one of the main scholars of Somalia, noted that no extensive study of the important role of the UN in Somalia had been published.¹⁴ More recently Pietro Petrucci, interviewing Mohammed Aden Sheikh for the book *Arrivederci a Mogadiscio*, stated that Italian historiography has paid very little attention to the AFIS administration.¹⁵ None the less, it is from the AFIS documents that the great impact and influence which Italy had on Somalia stems, as well as, in retrospect, the incongruity of the adoption of an Italian-based state model by a society which was alien to the western way of dealing with politics. During the administration, despite the attempt by Italy to introduce a political system supported by an efficient education structure, Rome failed to develop an effective, although basic, economic system. In 1950, Italy was badly afflicted by economic problems of its own and the administration of Somalia represented a challenge that, from an economic perspective, it could not afford to accept. However, what is most at issue in relation to the Italian administrators is their underestimation of the power of the clans and clan competition. The most nationalist party in Somalia, the Somali Youth League, was resolutely anti-Italian. In the first years of the administration, until the 1954 administrative elections, when the SYL emerged as the main party, Italians did not try to start talks with the League or promote a dialogue among the main clans. Initially, the administration supported pro-Italian groups and as a result tension between these parties and the SYL was exacerbated. Thus the opportunity to overcome clanism, in a period when nationalism was particularly strong, remained unexploited.

The fourth chapter of this study analyses the relationship between Rome and Mogadishu, from 1960 to the collapse of Siad Barre, which, with the exception of a few marginal events, has been excellent. From the 1960s, and in particular during the 1980s, Italy gave increasing financial aid to Somalia, even when Siad Barre transformed his regime into a dictatorship that ended in a violent confrontation between clans. Despite the numerous allegations of Siad Barre's violation of the most fundamental human rights,¹⁶ Rome did not withdraw its support from the regime. In the 1980s the Italian Prime Minister, Bettino Craxi, gave increasing aid to the Somali dictator, even when other governments, notably those of the UK and the USA, decided to isolate Siad Barre. As evidence of this privileged

relationship, the Italian embassy in Mogadishu was the last to abandon the country in 1991. As a result of this close partnership, Somalia was the developing country that received the largest amount of Italian aid, although often the Italian investments and grants of the Co-operation for Development were used as bribes and to support companies close to politicians in Rome. Thus Italian aid had little or no effect on the Somali economy.

In the 1990s some Italian magistrates opened enquiries into the involvement of politicians and bureaucrats in the political sleaze which also involved the Co-operation for Development, a scandal that became so politically significant that Parliament established a Commission of Enquiry to investigate the activity of the Co-operation for Development.

The last chapter analyses the fragmented Somali scenario in which more than ten clans are involved in a bloody civil war, a situation that is totally opposite that of 1950–60 when nationalist ideals were strong. The main focus is on the US-led UN intervention in Somalia and the difference between the American and Italian approaches to the use of force and the rules of engagement. Italian politicians and military personnel firmly opposed the use of force and the manhunt launched by the US against Aideed which eventually resulted in dozens of casualties among UN troops and hundreds if not thousands among Somali militia men and civilians. These tensions had severe consequences for USA–Italy diplomatic relationships, which suffered serious setbacks.

In this context, on 16 June 1993, the Foreign Ministry Under-Secretary Laura Fincato proposed a new UN mandate to solve Somali problems. Was the Somali situation so desperate that a new UN mandate was needed? Perhaps it was. Yet, proposing a resolution of the Somali situation by means of a new mandate for Italy was highly controversial.

2 An Historical Perspective on Italian Colonialism

THE DEBATE ON ITALIAN COLONIALISM

Any analysis, albeit a solely historical one, of Italian colonialism cannot be undertaken without considering the controversial debate that has characterised studies in this field in recent decades. Indeed, Martin Clark's complaint about the limited research in this area is not an isolated one. An increasing number of scholars have engaged in the study of Italian colonialism and have often voiced their regret that, from the 1950s, very little attention has been given in Italy to such an important field of study. In addition, many have emphasised that research into Italian commitment in Africa promoted by the Foreign Ministry, particularly in its initial stages, was undermined by a neocolonialist approach.

On 11 January 1952, Giuseppe Brusasca, the Foreign Minister's Under-Secretary, set up a research committee, based at the Ministry of Italian Africa (MAI Ministero dell'Africa Italiana; now defunct), to investigate and publish research on the government's activities in the African territories under Italian jurisdiction. This was called the *Comitato per la Documentazione dell'Opera dell'Italia in Africa*. The initiative was an excellent opportunity to start productive research and open a debate based on the important primary sources of the MAI and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAE Ministero Affari Esteri) on Italian colonialism. Francesco Caroselli, who was representative of colonial bureaucracy, was appointed chairman of the committee.¹ Angelo Del Boca, one of the most prolific and controversial scholars of the Italian presence in Africa, stressed that 15 out of the 24 members of the committee were former colonial governors or high ranking officers whilst the others, with the exception of Mario Toscano, were Africanists of 'colonial faith'.² As a consequence, according to Del Boca, most of the work produced by the committee, which stressed the positive achievements of Italian colonialism, lacked a serious scientific approach.³

In the first three decades after the end of the Second World War and Italy's ruinous defeat, research on Italian colonialism was entirely

characterised by a nationalistic approach and very little was published in this area. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s historical output on Africa remained poor and in voluntary isolation from the intense international debate on colonialism. In order to emphasise this point Umberto Triulzi drew attention to the fact that several major studies published during the 1960s in English had never been translated into Italian, including the prodigious output of work on Somalia of the anthropologist Ioan Lewis and the American historian Robert Hess's *Italian Colonialism in Somalia*.⁴ Triulzi's concern has a stronger impact if we consider that the first specialist study, by Fabio Grassi, published in the postwar period on the Italian presence in Somalia appeared only in 1980, even though Del Boca had started his monumental research on Italy in the Horn of Africa in the early 1970s.

It should also be noted that Pietro Pastorelli's contribution, 'Gli studi sulla politica coloniale italiana dalle origini alla decolonizzazione', presented at the 1989 conference at Taormina on 'Sources and Issues of Italian Colonial Politics' (*Fonti e problemi della politica coloniale italiana*) ignored Del Boca's significant output.⁵

In the 1990s Del Boca has often stressed the sterility of the debate generated by the study of Italian colonialism. In the introduction to *Le guerre coloniali del fascismo* he states that the book was intended as a contribution to the historical debate that has been overlooked so far.⁶ Two years later he devoted a chapter, 'Il mancato dibattito sul colonialismo' (The Missing Debate on Colonialism), to highlighting that colonialism was riddled with crimes and genocide but that these had been effectively removed from 'our country's culture'.⁷ More recently in an edited book on Adwa he emphasised the fact that in March 1996 the Italian media 'forgot' the important anniversary of the defeat of the Italian troops in Adwa in 1896. The fact that Italy avoided a serious and constructive debate on colonialism in the postwar period had caused a sort of collective amnesia and an unwillingness to face this most delicate of issues of national history.⁸

The striking fact is that, throughout its recent production, Del Boca ignored the Taormina conference and its importance in promoting research and a more academic and exhaustive approach to colonial studies. The 1989 conference was a turning point in the study of Italian colonialism as it was the first time in the postwar period that a large number of scholars had focused on this topic. It represented an opportunity to investigate the shortcomings, but also the positive aspects of past investigations in this area and at the same time an opportunity to look at the future of research. Contributions to the

conference from Denis Mack Smith, Pierre Guillen, Claudio Segre', Daniel Grange, Harold Marcus, Richard Pankhurst and Juliette Bessis gave it an unprecedented international standing.

Why in this case do scholars of such repute ignore each other?

What emerges from this scenario is that, in view of the large number of books and articles produced in Italian in the last ten years, the study of colonialism is actually progressing in an encouraging way. The slow development of this subject area in the decades since the end of the Second World War has been redressed. The problem today is represented by the consolidation of two main approaches to the study of Italian colonialism in Africa. One of them, of which we can safely say that Del Boca is the founding father, tends to emphasise the worst aspects of colonialism and its negative impact on local populations. The other, mainly the output of academics, tends to be objective and therefore does not condemn colonialism in all circumstances. Often these two different approaches have clashed, but have never sparked a productive confrontation or the missing debate so often mentioned by Del Boca.

During the humanitarian intervention in Somalia when the situation began to worsen Laura Fincato, an Under-Secretary at the Foreign Ministry, suggested that Italy might again consider taking a trusteeship mandate in Somalia provided that the local population was in favour of it and that the UN gave its approval to an international project. The suggestion was extremely controversial not only because of the difficulties that Italy had already faced in the past with the AFIS, but also because it was evident that a significant part of the Somali population would not accept a new mandate for Italy. Sergio Romano, a former Italian ambassador, wrote that in order to increase the UN's chances of success in Somalia, the Security Council had to establish an international trusteeship administration. He claimed that 'wherever decolonisation failed it is necessary, in the interest of local populations, to resume the old trusteeship administrations.'⁹ Del Boca was hostile to these proposals and, in his response, addressed in particular to the Under-Secretary, he wrote that his overriding wish was for all inept and dishonest officers to be eradicated from centres of power in Rome and for the Foreign Ministry to stop daydreaming of great power status.¹⁰ This conflict of opinion, in which academia has played only a minor role, has not contributed to serious and objective research. Writing on Italian colonialism in Italian often, although not always, means taking sides between bad and good, whilst research requires serious analysis and investigation.

This chapter, therefore, does not intend to add anything to the characteristically fruitless Italian debate on colonialism, but aims to provide an historical overview. It does not assess the positive or negative aspects of the Italian presence in Africa, but it does analyse the historical progression of colonies, and in particular of Somalia, in Italian colonial and foreign policy. It also adds a new phase to the traditional historical division of Italy in Africa; this is the period from 1950 to 1960 when Rome received the trusteeship administration of Somalia and showed evidence of maintaining a decisive colonial attitude.

A CHRONOLOGICAL APPROACH

Italian colonialism has been defined in many different ways; 'ragamuffin' or 'of the poor' are expressions frequently used to describe it. According to Antonio Gramsci, capitalism in Europe reached a level of development after which profit was starting to show a negative trend, and therefore capitalistic Europe needed to expand in order to increase its investments; for this reason after 1890 large colonial empires were created. However, according to Gramsci, Italy was not yet ready – not only did it not have capital to export, but it needed foreign capital for internal investment; Italian colonialism did not have a real incentive for imperial expansion.¹¹ Gramsci's assessment of Italian colonialism fits the first steps of Italian diplomacy on the international arena particularly well, but it does not solve the problem of identifying a theory that might be used to explain it. Claudio Segre¹² investigated this issue in order to identify a valid theory of the new imperialism which would be applicable to Italy. He considered works by Lenin,¹² Hobson,¹³ Schumpeter,¹⁴ Langer,¹⁵ Fieldhouse,¹⁶ Robinson and Gallagher¹⁷ and came to the conclusion that none of these theoretical approaches, for different reasons,¹⁸ can be adopted to analyse Italian colonialism. He concluded that theories formulated by these scholars are mostly focused on the colonial activities of the major powers. 'As colonial theories stand now,' he wrote, 'at best we have a theory of British, French or German colonialism, or perhaps, more generally, a theory of the colonialism of the great powers. But the small powers, too, were part of the colonial process. They too must be included before we can claim to have a valid general theory.'¹⁹ For Italy, therefore, the reasons that persuaded Rome to adopt an expansionist policy a few decades after unification originated more from the

field of politics than from the field of economics and thus the Italian case had features which made it distinct from the other European powers. For Alberto Aquarone the peculiarity of Italian conditions, its position as a latecomer on the international arena and its economic weakness, prevented it from adopting a successful imperial policy.²⁰ In a comparison of Japanese and Italian colonialism, Archibald Thornton describes briefly but succinctly the main features of Italian colonialism. He writes that 'Japan, like Italy, was a latecomer to the imperial field. She had no capital to export. Again like Italy, she tried to reverse the process. She hoped to utilise colonies to increase the economic power of the homeland... She was convinced that the possession of colonies would increase her prestige, her military strength, resources and power. This done, she would convert her have not status to a have status.'²¹

Thornton's analogy is useful for a better understanding of the Italian position at the end of the nineteenth century. There is no doubt that Italian colonialism had specific features which were different from those of the other European countries and they were the outcome of three main factors. First, colonialism in Italy started about 20 years after the country was unified, at a time when Italy was still committed to establishing its national identity and thus it lacked a strong ideological approach. In the European context, the young Mediterranean power was in competition with the much stronger France and Great Britain, so that Rome had to adjust its colonial aims to French and British interests. Finally, the African region, where Italy managed to launch its expansionist campaign, was extremely poor and consequently the advantage that Rome was able to obtain from its colonies was very limited. With these premises Rome began a colonial adventure that lasted for nearly 75 years and went through significant phases in its evolution.

In *Italian Colonialism in Eritrea, 1882–1941*, Tekeste Negash divides Italian colonialism into three main periods. The first starts with the Treaty of Wichale in 1889, coincides with the creation of Eritrea as a colony in 1890, and lasts until the defeat of Adwa in 1896. The second phase begins after the battle of Adwa in 1897 and lasts until the early 1930s when Italian troops managed to pacify all Italy's colonies and the project for an Ethiopian campaign begins to take shape. The third and final period begins after 1932 and lasts until 1941 with defeat of Italy in the Horn of Africa by British troops.²² Giovanni Naitza agrees that Italian colonial expansion can be divided into three main phases. In his view, however, the first starts in 1882

and lasts until the conquest of Eritrea and Somalia. Then, in 1911–12, Italy addressed its aims to conquering Libya; and in the third and last phase, 1935–6, Fascist Italy invaded Ethiopia.²³ Negash's analysis of Italian colonialism gives considerable emphasis to the most relevant event of Italian colonialism on the international scene.

The Wichale Treaty, Negash's starting point, is relevant and can be considered the corner-stone of the history of Italian colonialism; it was however a significant moment in the colonial process that Italy had already started at the end of 1860s. In Negash's view, therefore, the period preceding the treaty is not very significant; furthermore, the claim that Italian colonialism ended in 1941 is only partly true. Indeed, after the end of the Second World War Italy tried to keep control of its former colonies, particularly if they were occupied before Benito Mussolini gained power. The colonies were one of the most sensitive topics in Italian political life between 1945 and 1950, and were a further manifestation of a colonial mentality. In this respect Sergio Romano has emphasised that at the end of the war, and after reconstruction began, Italy needed its colonies more than ever in order to face the social consequences of the crisis and to provide a national outlet for would-be emigrants.²⁴

Naitza's chronological organisation of Italian expansion is highly accurate in that he identifies its inception as 1882, when Italy received the Assab Bay, in the Red Sea, from the Società di Navigazione Rubattino. This division reflects the period of Italian expansion; however, in his analysis Naitza follows this schema and does not give sufficient importance either to the period preceding the acquisition of the Assab Bay or to the period after the end of the Second World War, both of which are essential for a full analysis of Italian colonialism.

Therefore the chronology of Italian colonialism should be divided into five main periods. The first is a sort of pre-phase which preceded the beginning of the state's involvement in the territorial expansion of Africa and lasted some 15 years, from the end of 1860s to the beginning of 1880s. The second phase runs from the mid-1880s to the defeat of Adwa in 1896. As a result of this defeat, Italian colonial expansion proceeded slowly until the third relevant phase: the acquisition of Libya in 1911. Then the First World War and subsequent events, which were not helpful to Italy's 'mutilated victory', are the premise for the most aggressive phase of Italian colonialism: the Fascist period, which lasted until Italian troops were forced to abandon the Horn of Africa in 1941 and North Africa in 1943. The final phase is the period after the end of the Second World War. At

that time neither the authorities in Rome nor the Italian public could accept the loss of the colonies, and Italian foreign policy tried to keep control of its overseas territories. After five years of diplomatic efforts Italy obtained the administration of its poorest colony, Somalia.

The first four periods of Italian colonialism are analysed in the present chapter, whilst the last period, devoted to a detailed analysis of the Italian trusteeship administration in Somalia, is investigated in depth in the two next chapters.

A DIFFICULT BEGINNING

The first steps of Italian colonialism date back to the end of 1860s. On 15 November 1869 Giuseppe Sapeto, acting for the Società di Navigazione Rubattino, bought from Ibrahim and Hassan Ben Ahmed the Assab Bay on the Red Sea. From 25 April 1870 the territory was ignored for a considerable time.²⁵ The main reason for this lack of interest in adopting a colonial policy was the difficult situation in which Italy found itself. At the end of the 1860s the young state was engaged in a confrontation with the Papal State for the possession of Rome, while the Savoy Army was engaged in a repressive campaign in south Italy against the *brigantaggio* (brigandage). In a state of high tension, domestic policy absorbed the energy of politicians, whose aim was unification and the creation of a national identity. Indeed, Italian public opinion could not see the relevance of the events in the Horn of Africa. Cesare Marinucci states that only important events such as the French occupation of Tunisia in 1881 had an impact on the Italian public,²⁶ as from the early eighteenth century Tunisia had been an important destination for Italian emigration and a large Italian community had become established there. Despite the fact that the government was fully occupied with these domestic problems, from the early 1880s a colonial mentality began to develop among financial and business groups, and in particular among members of the shipyard industry and ship trade companies.²⁷ At the same time a large number of geographical societies committed to spreading better knowledge of overseas territories were created. These played a prominent role in stimulating interest in Africa. Besides organising expeditions, these societies published journals which often contained articles in favour of colonial expansion; in particular they aimed at involving the general public in this debate rather than just the specialists.²⁸

One of the most important was the Società Geografica Italiana (Italian Geographic Society), established by Cristoforo Negri in Florence, in 1867, which aimed at promoting Italian economic interests in trading and shipping.²⁹ The society published a scientific journal, *Il Bollettino*, which gave extensive coverage of Italian explorations. In the period from 1867 to 1875 *Il Bollettino* published 45 reports and memoirs on Africa and about 20 on Asia.³⁰ The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 revolutionised the trade route, and the Red Sea was no longer a cul-de-sac but the shortest route between Europe and India.³¹ The Italian government, which was still vacillating about its foreign policy, supported the creation of 'free colonies' formed by people who would help foster trade with Italy and the dissemination of its products; but any initiative of this kind had to be private. The main feature of Italian colonialism was thus that of an archaic and atypical policy of mercantile colonialism, as Rome was committed to establishing commercial bases through the organisation of seaports and emporia.

Naitza emphasises the fact that the first initiatives of Italian colonialism reflected the Italian domestic situation and therefore did not have an expansionist agenda. It delineated the domestic situation of a country that had achieved unification but still had an economy based predominantly on agriculture, with industry only starting to become significant in the Italian economy. Furthermore, there was a critical shortage of capital.³² In the years after unification there was a relevant, but still not strong, social movement in favour of Italian expansion. In 1877 Manfredo Camperio established *L'Esploratore*, a journal of travel and commercial geography and, in 1879, the Società di Esplorazioni Commerciali in Africa was created with the participation of members of the Italian industrial establishment. At the same time in Naples the Club Africano was established (three years later, in 1882, it changed its name to Società Africana d'Italia).³³ In 1876 under the chairmanship of Cesare Correnti the Società Geografica Italiana organised an expedition to the Shoa.

Despite the commitment of these societies and the impact they had on the Italian public, the problem of forging a national identity remained the main obstacle to overseas expansion. Indeed, a number of opportunities were missed. Italy could have played a more relevant role in the administration of the Suez Canal and in acquiring a degree of influence, if not territorial expansion, in northern Africa. According to Andrew Porter, for Italians 'the visible asset of colonial territory became important as an acknowledgement of their country's arrival as a nation state.'³⁴

Porter's assertion contrasts with Aquarone's. In 'La ricerca di una politica coloniale dopo Adua. Speranze e delusioni fra politica ed economia' he states that

the reasons for an active colonial policy, the real opportunities in the short and in the long period of economic improvement of the colonies already in the power of Italy, or eventually to be conquered, were considered not as an isolated matter but in a broader context in which there were a convergence of more issues of foreign and interior policy, needs of economic development and worries over social stability.³⁵

Aquarone provides a more exhaustive analysis of what the first steps of colonialism represented for Italy and for the Italians. In the first years of its existence as a state, Italy tried to develop itself as a nation working more to solve its domestic problems than in adopting an aggressive or even an assertive foreign policy. Certainly at a later stage, from the 1880s, Italy developed a colonial policy that would lead to its recognition as a great power on the international scene, but it is an overstatement to say that a weak country like Italy was, during the 1870s, thinking of adopting a colonial policy aimed at proving its credentials as a nation-state.

In December 1879, the Società di Navigazione Rubattino resumed its activities in Assab, but within a few years the Society decided to give the Bay to the Italian government as a consequence of the failure of an economic investment and financial difficulties and, on 5 July 1882, with Law no. 857, Assab became the first Italian political settlement. The discussion preceding the approval of this law was intense and revealed strong divisions within Parliament. In the end, though, the law was approved by 147 votes to 72, while in the Senate 39 senators voted in favour of it and 36 against.³⁶ During the run-up to the law being approved, strong differences within the Italian establishment on the benefits of a colonial policy emerged. Acquiring the Assab Bay committed Italian colonialism to African regions that were not important to its foreign policy in the first decades after unification. Indeed, the sharp division over Assab can be considered as the starting point of the confrontation between colonialist and anti-colonialist parties, not only in Parliament but throughout the country.³⁷

When the Società di Navigazione Rubattino offered the Assab Bay to the Italian government, it was clear to politicians that an indirect administration system, in the hands of private companies and with little support from the state, was not sustainable. When Italy began to

govern the colony, it was immediately apparent that it was worthless both as a seaport and as a base for commercial penetration into the interior.³⁸ However, Italy was joining the European scramble for Africa and economic considerations were not as important as further expansion in the continent. The foreign policy adopted by the Italian Foreign Minister Pasquale Stanislao Mancini, in the period preceding and during the Berlin Conference, basically addressed the protection of Italian interests in the Mediterranean.³⁹ Italian aspirations were frustrated in 1881 when France occupied Tunisia, and as a result Prime Minister Benedetto Cairoli was forced to resign. From the early 1880s Italy tried to compensate for French superiority in the Mediterranean basin by expansion in Tripolitania. However, in 1884, France's attempt to take over Morocco failed due to English opposition, and Italy had to put a break on its interests in Tripolitania.

Instead of allowing Italian expansion in northern Africa, Britain pushed Italy towards the Red Sea and Massawa, where Turkey and Egypt were unable to maintain a consistent degree of power to oppose the French.⁴⁰ On several occasions Unbar Pasha and Lord Granville suggested to Italian diplomats and political leaders that an Italian expansion towards Massawa would be tolerated by Great Britain and Egypt.⁴¹ On 17 January 1885 a contingent of 807 troops, *Corpo Speciale per l'Africa* (Special Corps for Africa), commanded by Colonel Tancredi Saletta, left Naples and on 5 February 1885 took Massawa. The occupation of Massawa had important consequences for Italian politics. Further expansion in the Red Sea was impeding the possibility of expansion towards Tripolitania. When Massawa was first occupied the Italian bourgeoisie were enthusiastic about what this annexation could represent on the European scene. Euphoria, however, did not last long as it became clear that to hold its position in the Horn of Africa would require a strong military presence and therefore Italy had to face increasing expenditure.⁴² The disadvantage of an involvement in the Red Sea was far more apparent than the economic advantage that Rome and the bourgeoisie might get out of it. Italian public opinion both inside and outside Parliament was strongly against further expansion in the Red Sea; it was felt that if Italy was going to commit itself in Africa, it should be more involved in the Mediterranean than in the Red Sea.⁴³ Wolfgang Schieder underlines this point: 'Not the Red Sea but the Mediterranean Sea was the central point of Mancini's foreign policy.'⁴⁴ Indeed, in a famous speech delivered to Parliament in January 1885, Mancini stated:

you are still afraid that our action in the Red Sea is shifting our interest from what you call the real and important aim of Italian policy, that must be the Mediterranean. But why do you not want to recognise that in the Red Sea, the closest sea to the Mediterranean, we can find the key of this last sea, the way that will lead us to a working protection against any new threat to its stability.⁴⁵

According to Sergio Romano, Mancini supported his foreign policy initiatives with a combination of ideological and economic arguments. Italy's international duty was to contribute, along with the other European powers, to the moral and social development of the African peoples. The Foreign Minister therefore emphasised Rome's commitment against slavery, but also to protecting trade routes, public order and European businessmen, and to improving economic relations with the population in the interior as well as raising the overall level of education.⁴⁶

Although Mancini tried to provide a plausible explanation and a strategic link between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, the first Italian expansion in Eritrea was determined by Italy's weakness and by its inability to compete with French expansion in the Mediterranean. Although there was a considerable divergence between Italian ambitions and its real possibilities, the expansion in the Horn of Africa at that time was simply the most convenient.⁴⁷ By the mid-1880s Italian politicians had learnt that to be recognised as a great power, Italy needed colonial expansion, but that this could not be achieved by confronting the other European great powers. Rome, therefore, adopted a two-pronged foreign policy. In Europe Italy's main partner was Germany, but in the Mediterranean, and in a broader sense in Africa, it was closer to Great Britain.⁴⁸ Mancini could not ignore the fact that Italian colonialism was, in its initial stage, a sort of British sub-imperialism.⁴⁹ On several occasions, Britain provided a real opportunity for expansion for the Mediterranean power. In many circumstances, such as in Massawa, this was determined by British foreign policy and its attempt to contain French expansion in Africa. For Italy, these first years of limited colonial expansion determined the next 30 years of foreign policy until the occupation of Libya.

AFTER THE BERLIN CONFERENCE: ITALIAN COLONIALISM BETWEEN FURTHER EXPANSION AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF ITS COLONIES

The colonial expansion of the young state was insignificant in comparison with that of other European powers, and the Berlin Conference (1884–5) exposed Italian weakness on the international scene. This was revealed by the decision not to invite Italy to the talks that preceded the conference.⁵⁰ At the Berlin Conference Italy was always caught between being on good terms with the main protagonists whilst having to accept compromises that could be directed against some of the main powers.⁵¹ By 1885 Rome was increasingly committed to further expansion in the Horn and to consolidating the territories already under Italian rule. However, on 26 January 1887, Italian troops fought a disastrous battle against Ras Alula's militia in Dogali and a contingent of 500 soldiers was wiped out. The consequences of this defeat were profound; Prime Minister Agostino De Pretis resigned and in July Francesco Crispi replaced him.⁵² Before his appointment as Prime Minister, Crispi had been vehemently opposed to colonial expansion, mainly because he was aware of Italy's economic and military shortcomings. On 7 May 1885, in a speech addressed to the Foreign Minister Pasquale Stanislao Mancini, he stated:

I understand Germany's colonial policy, which is occupying and colonising territories without fighting and not having any serious trouble: but I do not understand the policy that is forcing us now to send troops to the Red Sea and that in the future will force us to send there a bigger army.⁵³

However, on becoming Prime Minister, Crispi's attitude was reversed and his leadership was characterised by a strong commitment in favour of colonial expansion in the Horn of Africa. The motivation for such a colonial policy was a combination of national prestige together with the establishment of security in the colony. He planned to create new areas for Italian emigration and the colonies, in his view, could provide land for Italian peasants.⁵⁴ Deputy Leopoldo Franchetti supported this stance as he was already engaged in finding a solution for underdevelopment in southern Italy and felt that Eritrea could become an agricultural colony able to absorb large numbers of immigrants.⁵⁵

Towards the end of the century demographic growth in Italy had

become a social problem. Between 1800 and 1861, the population increased by about 7.5 million and from 1861 to 1911 the population increased by more than 10 million from 25,756,000 to 35,905,000. The first social consequence of this growth was a considerable increase in emigration. Between 1860 and 1880 100,000–150,000 people left the country each year, in 1887 the figure was 200,000, while in 1896 it topped 300,000. Emigration was particularly acute in south Italy where, in 1901, more than 500,000 people migrated.⁵⁶ Deputy Luigi Roux complained that the budget which Rome allocated to colonial expansion was a poor investment as Italy's southern regions were in desperate need of economic development; resources allocated to the colonies should have been employed to this end, he claimed. He pointed out that 'all those who travelled through Italy are aware that we have a bit of Africa in our country that needs to be colonised.'⁵⁷

In October 1887 two contingents of soldiers, led by General di San Marzano, were sent to the colony. From 1888 the General expanded territorial occupation up to the Ethiopian Highlands. On 2 May 1889, Italy and Menelik II, Emperor of Ethiopia, signed the Wichale Treaty. From the Italian perspective by this agreement Ethiopia would become an Italian protectorate, while in Menelik's view the treaty was no more than an agreement of alliance between two states that recognised each other's sovereignty.⁵⁸ The distance between the two parties could not have been greater, however; although Italy failed to establish a protectorate over Ethiopia, it was allowed to expand along the northern part of Ethiopia. Between May and August 1889 Italy increased its colonial possessions well beyond the treaty's provisions, without encountering any resistance.⁵⁹ In August 1889 Italian troops occupied Asmara.

Although the treaty can be considered a failure of Italian diplomacy in the long term, in the short term it created all the favourable conditions for the annexation of Asmara and for the creation of Italy's first political colony: Eritrea. On 1 January 1890, a Royal Decree established the juridical existence of Eritrea as a single political entity, the so-called firstborn colony, *la colonia primogenita*. The creation of the first political colony opened a debate about its future exploitation, concerning the role that it would play in Italian domestic and foreign policy. Basically, there were two different, although not completely incompatible, approaches. The first wanted Eritrea to be a colony of settlement able to absorb a considerable number of Italian migrants, particularly peasants from southern Italy. The second was aimed at the exploitation of Eritrea as a source of raw

materials for Italian industries, and at the same time the creation in Eritrea of a market for Italian products.⁶⁰ Negash states that, although at different times the colony was exploited in both ways, from 1890 to 1895 the colony was principally a settlement for landless Italian peasants, while from about 1895 it was a source of raw materials.⁶¹ Although this chronological organisation is accurate, it is so mainly through a coincidence of events. In fact while after Adwa's defeat in 1896 Eritrea was viewed differently in Italian colonial policy, the two tendencies concerning Eritrea were in conflict for the last decade of the century.

The two tendencies were supported by Deputy Leopoldo Franchetti on one side, and by Ferdinando Martini, the first civilian governor of Eritrea from December 1897 to 1906, on the other. Franchetti was a strong proponent of the establishment of farming colonies in Eritrea, from which monopoly capitalism would be excluded, unlike the situation in south Italy. Martini was very sceptical about the feasibility of creating an agricultural colony in Eritrea that could absorb Italian emigration. When he was appointed Special Governor of Eritrea at the end of 1897, he had the duty of cutting the budget, thus starting a process of exploitation.⁶²

Although Franchetti's policy was considered controversial and generated adverse reactions – Oreste Baratieri, Military Governor of Eritrea from 1892 to 1896, for example, was not particularly enthusiastic about Franchetti's initiatives – Crispi did not oppose his initiative of not involving the capitalists in acquiring concessions in Eritrea, even though Crispi was sceptical of its viability. Between January 1893 and the beginning of 1895 400,000 hectares of land were made available to Italian colonists. Franchetti's first attempts to settle peasant families on the Eritrean highland failed though as they had to cope with a hostile climate, long periods of drought, frequent plagues of locusts and a poor communication and transportation system. Nevertheless, within a few years Baratieri had started his own settlement programme which was aimed at encouraging only peasants deemed to have sufficient capital.⁶³

THE DEFEAT AT ADWA: A TURNING POINT IN ITALIAN COLONIALISM

The debate about the best way to develop Eritrea was not the only concern in Rome, for the government had not given up its territorial

ambitions in Ethiopia. On several occasions Italy intervened in Ethiopian politics by supporting the Ethiopian leader who had the most favourable attitude towards Italian political aims in the Horn. As we have seen Italian commitment in the Horn led to the Wichale Treaty with the Ethiopian Empire, which, from the Italian perspective, made Ethiopia an Italian protectorate. The Emperor, however, made it clear that Ethiopia would never have renounced its sovereignty and that the Italian interpretation of the treaty was wrong. In 1893, one year before the fixed term for renewing the treaty, Menelik contested its validity and inevitably tension started along the unstable Ethiopian–Eritrean border.⁶⁴ From 1891 to 1893 Antonio Di Rudinì and Giovanni Giolitti held power and in this period they tried to halt military expansion in the Horn in an attempt to ease tension in relations with Ethiopia. When in December 1893 Crispi was again appointed Prime Minister he asked General Baratieri for a major commitment to further expansion.⁶⁵ In the meantime the colonial policy of land expropriation in Eritrea adopted by Governor Baratieri caused rising tension between the Italians and Eritreans. In December 1894, following an unsuccessful attempt to attack an Italian fort in Halay, the defeated Eritrean patriots fled to the Tigray region in Ethiopia. Using this event as a pretext for direct confrontation, Italian troops were sent to invade Tigray.⁶⁶ Initially these military operations were successful for Italy. But after two minor victories in Senafè and Macallè, Italy suffered a significant defeat in Amba Alagi in 1895 with the death in the field of Major Pietro Toselli. In January 1896 Italian troops suffered a further defeat in Macallè and in March 1896 they were seriously defeated in Adwa.⁶⁷ On that last occasion the Italian army lost more than 4,000 men – a traumatic shock for the Italian public.

The defeat at Adwa was the result of several events. The first was Crispi's expansionist policy. As Carlo Zaghi points out, Crispi did not take Italy to the Red Sea, yet he gave the modest and peaceful expansion in Africa started by Mancini an aggressive character. For Crispi the conquest of Ethiopia was not only a clear display of power, but also an important assertion of national pride and international prestige.⁶⁸ Yet an adequate and realistic colonial expansion needed economic stability as well as consistent and efficient military organisation. The Italian economy was in a critical state at the beginning of the 1890s but it grew worse in the period after 1895. In Parliament the enthusiasm for colonial expansion was limited by costs and risks that Italy could not afford to take at that time.⁶⁹ Crispi revealed his

concern about the economic situation in two telegrams sent to Baratieri in April 1895. In the first, dated 5 April 1895, he stated that

in high Italy, even among friends of the Ministry, there is opposition against any further expansion in Africa. The Minister of the Treasury is worried over the uncertainty about the expenses we have to sustain. This action could be accepted only if the colony could contribute with social taxes.

In the second, dated 13 April, he emphasised that 'even if [the military] capacity cannot be reduced, you must find from there the funds to cover exceeding expenses.'⁷⁰

In spite of these concerns and the army's defeats, Crispi sent a telegram to Baratieri on 7 January 1896, pressing him for further and decisive action. In it he said, 'the government sent you the troops you have asked for. The country waits for another victory and I am waiting for a real one, in a way that will conclude the troubles with Abyssinia.... I am not asking you for a plan of war. I am asking you that there will be no further defeats.'⁷¹

Crispi's aims were ambitious considering not only the economic situation but also the state of the young Italian army. During the last years of the century the army was not ready for a large-scale colonial campaign, it had been humiliated at Dogali, Amba Alagi and Macallè, and its technical and professional capability had often been questioned.⁷² In this situation of political and social instability, Italian colonial expansion and its attempt to acquire Ethiopia through military action were evidence of recklessness and political inexperience.⁷³ The defeat at Adwa, the first serious defeat of a colonial army, was the result of the Ethiopian Emperor's ability to gather together a large number of troops who overran the Italians, but also of the lack of experience of the Italian army in facing such an extended and unorthodox campaign. In addition, the defeat was a consequence of the disorder in Italian colonial policy and of a complete absence of an overall strategy. From its first steps in the Horn Italy had not developed even a short-term strategy in the acquisition of small territories, and its colonial policy evolved with a great degree of improvisation on an almost daily basis. Even the occupation of Massawa was planned in an ad hoc way when the opportunity to expand Italy's colonial territory came unexpectedly as a result of its diplomatic relations with Great Britain. Finally, Italy needed an efficient and reliable navy whereas in 1896 the fleet was inadequate for its tasks, the shipping industry was in crisis and the dockyards unprepared.⁷⁴

The defeat of Adwa had significant consequences for Italian colonial and foreign policy. One immediate effect was the termination of Crispi's colonial policy in the Horn of Africa and his resignation as Prime Minister.⁷⁵ Adwa had two contrasting effects on Italian public opinion. On the one hand there was a considerable reduction of interest in colonial expansion and the geographic activities related to colonialism and, more broadly, in foreign policy.⁷⁶ On the other, Adwa paved the way for the establishment of anti-colonial ideals, but also created, in a large section of the Italian public, anger and frustration which laid the basis for the rise of a strong nationalist movement.⁷⁷ After Crispi's resignation the anti-colonialist wave influenced the Italian government's and the public's attitude towards colonial policy.⁷⁸ Most liberal economists criticised African expansion as an irresponsible foreign policy which was too expensive and one that had forced the government to adopt disastrous financial policies, the consequences of which were that it did not allow capital accumulation, without which it was impossible to implement effective economic development of the country.⁷⁹ Carlo Maria Santoro adds that the battle of Adwa represented the end of a pre-modern blueprint of colonial expansion which until then Italy had adopted. This was based on the advance of small groups, on the creation of a chain of forts which in the long term were difficult to defend, mainly because they were garrisoned by a small number of troops, and on the concept that colonial powers in Africa were fighting an exclusively low-intensity conflict. From that point onwards Italy adopted a different tactic, employing larger numbers of troops in all its colonial campaigns.⁸⁰

The battle of Adwa with its negative repercussions concludes the second phase of Italian colonialism. On 10 March 1896, Di Rudinì, for the second time in less than ten years, replaced Crispi and signed a peace treaty with Menelik on 26 October. Italy now fully recognised Ethiopian sovereignty and the integrity of the Ethiopian empire, and Menelik recognised the Italian presence in Eritrea. Now the government had to provide an explanation and political justification for a colonial policy that, until 1896, had not produced any positive results. Italy remained the European power which had suffered the worst defeat at the hands of indigenous troops. When, on 17 March, Di Rudinì presented the new government he opted for a withdrawal of Italian positions to Massawa, but not for a complete disengagement in the Horn.⁸¹ By the end of 1896 Italy was absorbed in a serious social and economic crisis which led to turmoil in several cities, and which the government met with repression.⁸²

ITALY'S FIRST VENTURE INTO SOMALIA

At the same time that Rome was committed to establishing a colonial settlement on the shores of the Red Sea, it was also starting a slow process of expansion on the shores of the Indian Ocean, in a region which, after 1905, would be called Italian Somalia. Italian interest in this region increased between the end of the 1880s⁸³ and the beginning of the 1890s and followed a pattern remarkably different from the one Italy had adopted for expansion in Eritrea. There was not such a clamour, mainly because in Somalia Italy was not involved in a military engagement as it had been with Ethiopia along the Eritrean border. Rome succeeded in achieving its aims through successful contacts which it was able to establish with Yusuf Ali, Sultan of Obbia, and Sultan Osman Mahmud of the Mijertein.⁸⁴ The first steps of Italian expansion in this region, therefore, are similar to Crispi's aims in Abyssinia, but events in Somalia passed almost unobserved.⁸⁵

This situation, and its difference from the events on the shores of the Red Sea, were determined by the crisis and internal break-up that was afflicting the kingdom of Zanzibar. Following the collapse of Zanzibar, Italy and Great Britain set out to increase their influence on the shores of the Indian Ocean. In 1889 Italy reached an agreement with Yusuf Ali and Osman Mahmud and obtained the protectorate over Obbia and Mijertina. On 2 March and 16 May, Rome notified the signatory powers of the Berlin agreement of the protectorate over the two sultanates.⁸⁶ At the same time Italy expanded southwards up to the Juba River, thereby acquiring the territory of Benadir with the main cities Merca, Brava and Mogadishu. Rome had established protectorates in Obbia and Mijertina, in the south of Somalia and had acquired by contract with the Filonardi Commercial Society the administration of the territory. The administration was a particularly hard task due to the shortage of capital and the difficulty of keeping the whole area under control.⁸⁷ The territories of Obbia and Mijertina were threatened by insurrection organised by Mohammed Ben Abdalla, known as the 'Mad Mullah' by the British.⁸⁸ Although he represented a problem for the British colonial troops in the north, territories under Italian control were also in considerable turmoil. Effective occupation of the territory and the establishment of an adequate administration in Somalia were achieved only during the Fascist era, when clans and sub-clans were disarmed and the clan leaders were treated as collaborators with the Fascist colonial administration.⁸⁹ In November 1896 the Italian consul in Zanzibar, Antonio

Cecchi, was murdered at Lafole', while on an expedition. These were the strongest demonstrations of Somali opposition to the Italian aims of land expropriation.⁹⁰ Following Cecchi's death, the Filonardi Commercial Society decided to abandon its commitment in Somalia. Ludovica De Courten stated that the Filonardi Society not only did not have the economic power, but also did not have 'experience and organisation for administering a colony that ... was afflicted by poverty and chaos, where a considerable amount of territory still was unexplored, slavery was a widespread business and justice was administered by corrupted *cadì*.'⁹¹

For two years, until 1898, the Italian government administered the territory directly; the negative experience of the Filonardi Commercial Society was not used to create a more efficient system of indirect rule.⁹² It should be noted also that Rome's choice of direct rule was the result of its attitude towards its overseas territories, an expression of how the metropolis intended to administer the colonies in relation to the social and cultural features of the population. But above all to satisfy its objectives as a conquering nation.⁹³ When in 1898 Italy gave the administration of Benadir to the Benadir Commercial Anonymous Society many problems remained unresolved. According to the agreement this company had the administration of Benadir and of the hinterland⁹⁴ as well as the right to collect customs duties and to introduce new or different taxes.⁹⁵ The Benadir Society was committed to improving civil conditions and developing trade in the territory,⁹⁶ furthermore it had to keep 600 guards to maintain public order and the administration of justice.⁹⁷ Yet the absence of an economic programme as well as a shortage of capital guaranteed the failure of the second attempt at indirect rule in Benadir. Moreover, as Fabio Grassi has emphasised, 'this system ... was destined to create serious difficulties in the relationships not only between the colonial administration and the other subjects on which it had political jurisdiction, but also between the colonial administration and the Italian government.'⁹⁸

The shortage of capital did not allow the company to build up the infrastructure which the territory needed for agricultural improvement. The Benadir Society, which was established by textile entrepreneurs who aimed at the creation of cotton plantations to produce cheap cotton in Benadir, failed to achieve its aims, and in the end, the model it adopted for the administration of the territory was not very different from that of the Filonardi Society. Again, speculative aims and attempts at immediate exploitation prevailed over the

imposition of an efficient economic programme. The same cotton plantations, which should have been the main concern of the Society, were neglected.⁹⁹ The attempt to establish a commercial emporium in Benadir was also a failure owing to the poor communication and transportation systems and the inefficiency of the seaports. Improving the situation required more investment and the direct intervention of the state. In addition, the economic development of Benadir remained a problem as long as control of the region was limited to the coast. The attempts to expand Italian rule into the interior was frustrated by the presence of aggressive and independent clans.¹⁰⁰ In the areas of pacification and administration, the experience of indirect rule in Benadir was negative. According to Hess, from 1896 to 1900 the government ignored its responsibilities and tried to avoid increasing its commitment; as a result the two companies pursued their own interests, putting little effort into the creation of an efficient administration.¹⁰¹ Therefore the period following the defeat of Adwa was a time of uncertain colonial policy during which Rome avoided any serious commitment in Somalia. The years of expansion in Benadir and the negative experience of the agricultural-commercial attempt at exploitation represented the failure of indirect rule. In the first decades of Italian presence in Africa, Rome preferred indirect rule to colonial administration, believing that this was not only more economical, but also less compromising from an international perspective and the most productive for a peaceful expansion.¹⁰²

Thus the two commercial societies in Somalia failed to establish a system of indirect rule just as Leopoldo Franchetti failed in Eritrea, yet while in Somalia the Filonardi and Benadir societies' failure came as the consequence of company administrators' irresponsibility, in Eritrea the slow progress and final collapse of indirect rule was determined by the divergent goals set by the military and civilian administrators. Contrasts between the two groups with regard to their respective powers and competencies paved the way for differences that often paralysed progress in Eritrea. This contrast, however, was the result of a major flaw in Italian policy in its overseas territories as Rome had begun its territorial expansion in the Horn of Africa without an overall colonial policy. Widespread incompetence and improvisation prevailed among Italian politicians.¹⁰³ The issues of colonial policy were subordinated to foreign policy, and colonies, in Rome's view, were merely instrumental to the achievement of its international objectives. The Italian government conducted colonial expansion, both in Eritrea and in Somalia, aimlessly from a diplomatic

as well as a military perspective. At the end of the nineteenth century Italy's role on the international scene remained very limited, as Italian expansion had not achieved its main aim of gaining status for Italy as a great power; its colonial ambitions were disappointing considering the enormous investment and the poor results.¹⁰⁴

FROM THE RED SEA TO THE MEDITERRANEAN

Within the chronological schema, the third phase of Italian colonialism lasted from the defeat of Adwa until the beginning of Fascist colonial policy. Following the defeat of Adwa, colonial expansion slowed down. Adwa represented an important turning point, not only for colonial imperialism but also for Italy's foreign and domestic policy. The crisis that followed the defeat determined the end of a period of clumsy colonial and imperial ambitions.¹⁰⁵ At the same time the anger following the defeat laid the foundation for a growing nationalism. Fabio Grassi writes that 'there cannot possibly be objections in affirming that March 1896 represented the starting point of a nationalistic ideology.'¹⁰⁶ Therefore, in Grassi's view, the first steps towards a nationalistic ideology which focused on the consequences of Adwa were essentially mythological.¹⁰⁷ The development of a nationalistic policy was born of a strong desire for revenge and the redemption of Italian pride and international prestige.

This period was characterised by three main events: the creation and consolidation of a strong nationalist movement, the administration of the country by Giovanni Giolitti and the war against Turkey for Tripolitania and Cirenaica. The Libyan campaign launched in 1911 was evidence that, although Italy was trying to expand and consolidate its position on the Red Sea, the Mediterranean remained its primary concern.

The years following the defeat of Adwa were particularly difficult for Rome not only because of its failure on the international scene, but also because of its domestic problems. At the end of the century Italy was going through an economic crisis that was having deleterious social consequences. In particular in the north of the country there were the first spontaneous eruptions of class conflicts which on a number of occasions exploded into violence. The response from the government to the popular uprisings was harsh and repressive as the political and institutional system was shaken by these events. In addition, at the end of the century, Italy had to solve its institutional

problems by organising more efficiently the party system and the division of power.¹⁰⁸

At the beginning of this period Giolitti emerged as one of the leading players in Italian policy. Just as Crispi with his ambitions had characterised the main steps of Italian foreign policy until 1896, Giolitti determined Italian political life in the period following 1903. From the very beginning of his leadership he was engaged in addressing Italy's economic problems by increasing state expenditure and modernising the industrial system. Modernisation in Italy therefore embraced both the political and economic spheres. In the political field a significant number of intellectuals started developing a nationalist ideology; Luigi Federzoni, Enrico Corradini and Scipio Sighele committed themselves to laying the foundations of such an ideology. The many newspapers became a tool that nationalists used successfully to disseminate their ideas. As a consequence of all this activity the debate about Italian colonial aims became intense. From the very beginning, nationalists aimed at the creation of a strong national identity as well as the development of a modern industrial apparatus that could shift the emphasis from domestic policy to foreign policy, giving the latter a more important role. Nationalist intellectuals, such as Corradini, developed an imperial ideology based on the substitution of the concept of class with the concept of nation. *Il Regno*, a review established in 1903, became the main tool for the dissemination of a nationalistic vision of imperialism. In Corradini's view the nation was the main actor in shaping world history. All the positive energies wrapped up in the concept of the nation were destined to solve and overcome class conflict, moving it on to an international level where the conflict was no longer between classes but between nations. He pointed out that colonial expansion could not be peaceful and based on economic imperialism, but had to be conducted through military conquest.¹⁰⁹ The importance of nationalism and its social impact in Italian political life was growing mainly because large sectors of the Italian bourgeoisie shared the aspirations of the nationalists.¹¹⁰ Corradini theorised demographic colonialism stating that there are proletarian nations just as there are proletarian classes; Italy was one such proletarian nation. According to Corradini nationalist ideology was committed to instructing Italy about the value of international conflict just as socialism had instructed the proletariat about the value of class conflict.¹¹¹ The nationalist movement was in favour of any war which would destroy pacifism, internationalism, humanitarianism and democracy, all the negative influences which, in

its view, the reformist government had introduced into Italian political life.

There were two main streams in nationalist ideology. Although both were in favour of war, one was in favour of the acquisition of irredentist territories and the other, the imperialist one, supported colonial expansion. At the 1910 nationalist congress in Florence support for the second stream became overwhelming, voicing a strong commitment to colonial expansion.¹¹² Assessing the importance of the nationalist movement at this stage of Italian political life, one should recognise it as fundamental for the role it played in maintaining the interest of the Italian public in colonial expansion, but also for the influence it was able to exert on the government. Nationalist ideas provided justification for the government's decision in taking action against the Ottoman Empire for the conquest of Cirenaica and Tripolitania in 1911, although Francesco Malgeri claimed that 'affirming, as many do, that PM Giolitti with the war in Libya tried to gratify the nationalists, as he did in earlier stage with the socialists, to create a broader basis of political support, is a thesis that fits into the classical scheme of Giolitti's policy, but it is perhaps too simplistic and superficial to be accepted as completely valid.'¹¹³

Malgeri makes a precise reference to two Italian historians, Franco Gaeta and Brunello Vighezzi, who emphasised the influence of the nationalist movement on Giolitti's political decisions.¹¹⁴ Malgeri, however, believes that the influence of nationalism on Giolitti's decision to engage in conflict against Turkey over Libya was not so relevant. However, even though Giolitti's decision was only partly influenced by the nationalist movement, its commitment was responsible for public euphoria in favour of the Libyan campaign.¹¹⁵ The war for Libya was in fact a golden opportunity for nationalism to participate actively in political life. From the declaration of war against the Ottoman Empire, sectors of the industrial establishment took part in this movement as it promoted colonial expansion and protectionism.¹¹⁶

Any future attempt to identify a theoretical approach to Italian colonialism must begin with an analysis of the nationalist ideology in the early twentieth century.

The Italian aim in acquiring Libya preceded the nationalist campaign in favour of colonial expansion, as Rome had already signed an agreement with France about Morocco and an agreement with Great Britain about Egypt in 1902. With the first treaty Italy declared that it would not oppose French occupation of Morocco,

while France agreed not to oppose Italian occupation of Tripolitania. With the second agreement Italy and Great Britain recognised British influence over Egypt and Italian influence over Tripolitania. The war for Libya was essentially an attempt by Italy to prevent any possible chance for other powers to claim an interest in that region. The Italian commitment in the Mediterranean Sea had been the aspiration of the Italian bourgeoisie ever since France occupied Tunisia in 1881. Tripoli and not Massawa was the first aim of colonial policy in the years 1882–5; the expansion in the Red Sea was a makeshift solution that was surprising to many political sectors. Although nationalist commitment and diplomatic endeavour were the activities most in evidence in favour of Italian expansion in Tripolitania and Cirenaica, from 1907 Italy tried to enlarge its economic interest in these regions through a '*penetrazione pacifica*' – a peaceful penetration. This consisted of an attempt to establish the economic and financial activities of an Italian bank, the Banco di Roma, in Tripolitania and Cirenaica. In this case, which differed from the Eritrean and Somali cases, Italy, having affirmed its interest in the region on an international and diplomatic level, tried to realise in a discrete manner an enlargement of its interest by employing the Banco di Roma for economic expansion. In April 1907 the Banco di Roma opened a branch in Tripoli, and shortly afterwards branches in Bengasi, Derna, Tobruk, Solum, Misurata, Sirte, Homs and several other small towns. From the outset the Banco di Roma directed its investment towards the agricultural and industrial sectors and funded research for exploitation of mineral resources; it also got involved in several other financial activities which, even if unprofitable, were important in consolidating the presence of Italian capital in the territory. There is no doubt that the Banco di Roma began its business in Tripolitania under pressure from the Italian government. According to Malgeri, the 'Banco di Roma accepted the invitations and the pressure of the government, and all its activities in Libya were realised working together with the competent ministers.'¹¹⁷

However, once the Banco di Roma realised that its financial commitment in the region was bearing fruit, it began promoting Italian expansion in Tripolitania, as a stronger involvement in Libya would have improved its business. Yet, the major mistake that many made at that time was to think that a war against the Ottoman Empire would be easily won and of short duration.¹¹⁸

The attempt to create a network of interests in Tripolitania and Cirenaica was opposed by Turkey.¹¹⁹ Italy's aims in using the Banco di

Roma as a tool to establish an economic basis for territorial expansion were clear to the Ottoman Empire¹²⁰ and Rome used this opposition as a pretext to start a military occupation of Tripolitania and Cirenaica in September 1911. Malgeri emphasises that 'the Italian Foreign Minister's diplomatic preparations for a war against Turkey was mostly based on an exasperated presentation of Turkish hostility against Italian economic initiatives.'¹²¹

Following the Turkish government's rejection of the Italian ultimatum of 26 September 1911, Italy launched a military operation on 29 September against the Ottoman Empire; in October military operations began in Tripolitania and Cirenaica.¹²² The military campaign that followed the arrival of Italian troops in North Africa was not particularly successful; it was clear that the war was going to be long, expensive and painful. Italy managed to gain control of the region only at the beginning of the 1930s, 19 years after the first troops arrived in Libya, and after a bloody guerrilla war against Libyan patriots which culminated in the execution of Omar Al-Mukhtar on 16 September 1931, a confrontation that Mussolini had strongly supported.¹²³

In one of the many Italian paradoxes the war for the acquisition of Libya was opposed in particular by political movements from the left. Particularly significant was the determination of Mussolini, at that time a local leader of the socialist movement, to oppose colonial expansion in North Africa. In the days immediately before and after the beginning of the military operations in Tripolitania and Cirenaica, Mussolini organised demonstrations in Forlì against the Italian government. He reached an agreement with republicans and anarchists to launch a general strike on 26 and 27 September in the city of Emilia Romagna. As a consequence there were a few incidents and clashes with the police, and Mussolini was arrested. He was sentenced to one year and 15 days in prison although he was released after five and a half months.¹²⁴ The situation was determined by the war in Libya, and Mussolini's opposition gave him a new focus. Within the socialist movement he started to appear as the new man to head the battle against reformism and Giolitti.¹²⁵

At the same time that Rome was beginning its military campaign in Tripolitania and Cirenaica, it was also committed to consolidating its power in Eritrea and Somalia. In Eritrea the Italian government abandoned Franchetti's demographic and agricultural settlements as well as any further attempt at military expansion. One year after Adwa, the government decided to concentrate on commercial activity

in Massawa. According to the politicians Massawa had to become the centre of Italian economic penetration in the Horn. After Martini was appointed Governor of Eritrea in November 1897, civilian administration of the colony completely replaced military administration. Prime Minister Di Rudinì made it clear to Martini that his first task was to improve conditions in the colony with the aim of improving the efficiency of the administration. Martini had the difficult tasks of resolving the problems caused by the military administration and of slashing the budget.¹²⁶ Describing the period between 1897 and 1906, Negash states that '1897-1906, was both a period of uncertainty (1897-1900) and of consolidation for the colonial power. During these years, i.e. 1897-1900, Eritrea was perceived as a losing proposition ... During the 1897-1900 period, Italy was on the verge of removing colonialism from its foreign policy. Paradoxically enough, the second half of the period 1900-06 witnessed the consolidation of colonial rule.'¹²⁷

None the less, by 1898, under pressure from Martini, who asked for a better organised administration, the Italian government created a Colonial Office at the Foreign Ministry¹²⁸ and for several months Martini assumed control of the colony even though he had to confront opposition from the military who were not willing to cede power. As a result of this confrontation the Royal Decree N° 48 of 11 February 1900 established the civil governor's supremacy over the military administration in the colony as well as a centralisation of all power in his hands.¹²⁹ In the period 1897-1900 Martini laid down the main pillars of administration in Eritrea and, despite the fact that these three years can appear as a period of uncertainty, they represented the first move towards consolidating power in the colony. It would, therefore, be more appropriate to define this period as one of administrative organisation, and the years from 1900 to 1907 as a period of consolidation. So the events that took place during these seven years saw the outcome of Martini's commitment as Governor. On the economic side Eritrean natural resources were less than Italy expected, so it was clear that to extract more value from the colony it needed more investment. In addition, as a commercial base, Eritrea did not obtain significant results from trading with Ethiopia. Although in 1906, during a visit to Addis Ababa, Martini signed a trade and friendship agreement with Menelik, the relationship between Ethiopia and the colony did not change.¹³⁰ During the 15 years after Adwa, Eritrean exports increased, but its relationship with the metropolis was based on a traditional colonial system with the

importation of goods from Italy almost tax-free and goods from other countries taxed at about 8 per cent. At the same time Eritrean products received no special dispensation when imported to Italy.¹³¹ In simple terms Eritrea was neither a good market for Italian products nor did it play a significant role as a source of raw materials.

The situation in Somalia was little different, following the failure of the Filonardi Society and the Benadir Society as both colonies were administered by the military.¹³² None the less, Somalia and the Somalis themselves had very different features from Eritrea, making the task of the Italian administrators harder than it was in the Red Sea. The Somali people for centuries had been isolated and their contact with Europeans, due to the vagaries of the Somali coastline, were very limited. As a nomadic people, the Somalis did not have very strong feelings about having permanent settlements or a special affinity for their territory. They lived, and in many areas of the country they still live, with a feeling of freedom and independence, despite the fact that their social and economic system at the end of the nineteenth century was largely based on slavery. Traditionally, they recognise the clan and its leader, who is the firstborn male of the oldest family, as the only authority.¹³³ Lewis underlines this point, stating that 'with the absence of institutionalised hierarchical authority, Somali pastoral groups are not held together by attachment to chiefs. This principle of government, which is so important in so many other parts of Africa is here replaced by binding ties of patrilineal kinship.'¹³⁴

A further element of differentiation from the Eritrean people was religion. Eritrea's Coptic Church has a considerable degree of similarity with Catholicism. In this respect the Italians had the advantage in their relations with Eritrea; by contrast Somalis are Muslims. So the situation was difficult for Italian colonialists, and this helps explain the failure of the two societies committed to establishing indirect rule in Somalia. Italian historians and scholars of colonialism tend to explain this failure through an analysis of the Italian side and of mistakes, which originated from the desire for quick and direct exploitation of territories such as Somalia. While this is true, this explanation does not fully account for the difficulty that the Italians had in establishing working relationships with the Somalis as well as Somali reluctance to accept a system very different from their pastoral one. Between 1907 and 1910 a European 'could not venture outside any of the coastal towns without an escort of armed soldiers with fixed bayonets.'¹³⁵

At this difficult juncture, Rome decided to enter the First World

War against Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Italian politicians believed that, following a British and French victory, Rome would receive great benefits and further territory in Africa. The Treaty of London of April 1915 established that in the case of France and Great Britain enlarging their territory at the expense of Germany, Italy would receive compensation mainly in the areas close to the Eritrean, Somali and Libyan borders.¹³⁶ But the end of the Great War and the following diplomatic events frustrated Italian aspirations. Italy received only a small increase of territory in Somalia, the Jubaland in 1925,¹³⁷ and on the Libyan border. In comparison with Italian aims at the beginning of the war this was a bitter disappointment. However, by its participation in the war Italy's role on the international scene was enhanced. But in Europe the difficult situation of Germany, defeated and in serious economic difficulties, opened up new opportunities that Italy was not able to exploit. The war conferred on Italy a potential power much greater than its real power.¹³⁸ On the Libyan front, as a result of the Italian participation in the war, military operations ceased and troops were forced to withdraw to the coast, while in Somalia and Eritrea the process of agricultural development was neglected.¹³⁹ The frustration of the First World War and the resulting social and economic crisis that beset Italy became the premise for the advent of Fascism and for the fourth phase of Italian colonialism.

FASCIST COLONIAL AND FOREIGN POLICY

The advent of Fascism in 1922 did not change the main thrust of Italian foreign policy for almost all the 1920s. When Mussolini gained power the situation at home was difficult: the economy was in crisis and there was social unrest. The Fascist Party took power after the March on Rome, an event that surprised not only all major political parties but also the Fascist leadership. Thus until about 1929 Italian foreign policy played a secondary role, while domestic and economic problems absorbed Mussolini's time. In this period the importance of political, administrative and bureaucratic institutions was considerably reduced. Within a few years of taking power, *il Duce* had consolidated his control over the state, becoming the main protagonist in Italian political life. Once a totalitarian dictatorship had been established there was a strict relationship in the process of decision-making between Mussolini, Fascism and the state, but there is no

doubt that in these 20 years, and particularly from the late 1920s, the man was predominant over the state institutions and the party organisation. For this reason, when in the following pages the issue of colonial and Fascist policy is analysed, this phenomenon crops up as one of the most significant features of Italian political life. Before gaining power Mussolini's attitude towards imperialism was controversial. In an article published in 1919 he wrote:

Imperialism is the eternal and unchangeable law of life. It is nothing else than the need, the desire and the willingness of expansion, that a population living and vital has. Instruments adopted in exercising imperialism make the distinction between different kinds of imperialism. Imperialism is not, as many believe, necessarily aristocratic and military. It can be democratic, pacific, economic and spiritual.¹⁴⁰

On several occasions Mussolini expressed his opposition to the imperialistic ideology of nationalism. He stated that Fascism was expansionist more than imperialist, because expansionism did not have a military feature but was committed to spreading Italian culture in the world through trade and emigration. This distinction between nationalist imperialism and Fascist expansionism was affirmed continually until the March on Rome.¹⁴¹

According to Renzo De Felice, Mussolini did not immediately adopt a strong foreign policy for two main reasons; first, he needed to consolidate his power by improving social stability and increasing the electoral consensus; second, the international situation in the years following the end of the First World War was static.¹⁴² In addition, Mussolini did not have a foreign policy programme or a plan of expansion, as Fascist colonial and foreign policy grew out of ongoing policy. When Mussolini became Prime Minister he certainly did not have a foreign policy programme as Hitler had elaborated in *Mein Kampf*. Until the March on Rome, Mussolini considered foreign policy as a political tool of demagogic relevance; in the first years of power he considered it as secondary to his political aims.¹⁴³ As regards colonial policy the situation was the same; Mussolini and all other leading members of the Fascist Party prepared or worked on a programme of colonial policy to be followed and realised only after they gained power.¹⁴⁴ According to Luigi Goglia the Fascist regime introduced new elements in colonial policy in its ideological tendencies, programmatic directives, social and economic relationships but mainly in its policy towards native populations. These became more

and more evident in 1936 after the war with Ethiopia.¹⁴⁵ None the less, following 1922, the major change in Italian foreign policy was about style. Although Mussolini pursued the foreign policy of liberal governments for some years, he gave it a different and tougher face. He was probably aware that during the 1920s expansion in Africa was unlikely and therefore he was committed to consolidating Italy's position. Cesare Maria De Vecchi, one of the four leaders (Quadrumvirate) of Fascism before and during the March on Rome, was appointed Governor of Somalia in 1923; his task was to consolidate power in the colony and to occupy the territories that were still in the hands of clans, as well as disarming them.¹⁴⁶ From 1923 to 1928 De Vecchi adopted a repressive regime in Somalia. According to Goglia, 'De Vecchi with his arrogance, his provincial rhetoric, a narrow perspective of problems, was the worst representative of pompous and cruel fascism in the colony.'¹⁴⁷

The same repressive line was adopted in Libya to eradicate the tenacious Arab resistance to the Italian occupation. The task was a particularly hard one and military involvement with Libyan patriots lasted for nearly ten years until the capture and execution of Omar Al-Mukhtar in 1931. General Rodolfo Graziani was mainly responsible for the severity of the operations against the rebels, as he was the most experienced but also the most implacable of all the commanders who had been trained in the colonies.¹⁴⁸ The events in Somalia and Libya during the first ten years of Fascism cannot be analysed in isolation from the overall Fascist policy in the colonies. They were a consistent part of a policy of colonial authoritarianism that, although it had some seeds during the liberal period, became a doctrine during fascism, and the basis of any further action in the colonies. Thus Mussolini adopted a change of style in foreign and colonial policy during the first ten years of Fascism, even though the objectives and strategic and political priorities were not defined.¹⁴⁹ In the short term Libya was the focus of Mussolini's interest, although the whole Mediterranean basin was to become of great concern for Fascist foreign policy. According to Enzo Santarelli: 'Eritrea and Somalia were far from the centre, so that there were no other reliable power props in the Mediterranean.'¹⁵⁰

In the period after consolidation in the Italian colonies Mussolini pushed for a more determined demographic colonisation of territories under Italian rule. From 1936 to 1940 the number of Italians who settled in Cirenaica and Tripolitania doubled.¹⁵¹ Fascism exploited the demographic issue for two reasons. In the first instance,

Mussolini sought to create better conditions for Italian emigrants compared to those under the liberal regime. Demographic colonisation during that earlier period had had poor results since at the beginning of the century the largest stream of migrants went to America and the countries of northern Africa such as Tunisia. The conditions at the beginning of the 1930s were different; Italian troops had full control of all territories and only along the border between Ethiopia and Somalia were there minor skirmishes. In 1928 the *Ente per la colonizzazione della Cirenaica* and in 1932 the *Ente per la colonizzazione della Tripolitania* were established.¹⁵² In the second instance demographic colonisation became a propaganda tool. The achievements obtained were used by Mussolini to bolster his personal power in the country as well as to put pressure on the other powers to allow Italy further expansion. For a better understanding of this issue it is particularly interesting to recall his speech of 31 March 1923 when he stated that

We are 40 million people shut tightly in this narrow and adorable peninsula, that has too many mountains and a territory that cannot feed everybody. There are around Italy, countries that have a lower population than ours and a territory that is double. Then it is easy to understand that the problem of Italian expansion in the world is a problem of death or life for the Italian race. I say expansion: expansion in every meaning: moral, political, economic and demographic.¹⁵³

For ten years Mussolini adapted the various opportunities offered by foreign and colonial policy to further the aims of his domestic policy. As Carlo Jean pointed out Fascist foreign policy was a series of improvisations with the aim of achieving success in domestic policy.¹⁵⁴

AGAINST ETHIOPIA, AGAINST THE WORLD. FASCIST FOREIGN POLICY IN THE 1930s

In the early years of the 1930s Mussolini's leadership consolidated its power. Fascist foreign policy was characterised by a relationship between diplomacy and strength; during the 1920s diplomacy prevailed over strength, while in the following period strength became the instrument adopted in relationships with other powers.¹⁵⁵ From the end of the 1920s to 1936, after Ethiopia was conquered, features of Fascist colonialism emerged with the introduction of

different strategies that were directed towards the Red Sea, East Africa, Northern Africa, Yemen and Ethiopia. The process of defining an overall strategy was still ongoing, and was determined not only by Italian interests, but also by the international situation following Hitler's rise to power, as Mussolini opted for establishing closer relations with Germany. The war against Ethiopia was a turning point in Italian colonial policy.

Preparations for an attack against Addis Ababa had already begun in 1932 when Emilio De Bono, Minister of the Colonies, asked the Army Staff to assess a possible invasion of Ethiopia.¹⁵⁶ At the end of 1931 the number of troops deployed in Eritrea and Somalia was still insignificant, the communications system was not developed and military allocations for Eritrea were reduced.¹⁵⁷ Mussolini finally decided to invade Ethiopia during 1934, and by 30 December he had given General Pietro Badoglio, Chief of Staff, the directives and plan of action to deal with the issues of an Ethiopian campaign.¹⁵⁸

Naitza cites Italy's domestic, economic and political situation as the reasons for Mussolini's decision to invade Ethiopia. At the beginning of the 1930s investment and industrial production fell with a consequent increase in unemployment. The political situation now alienated the middle class, the class that traditionally supported Fascism; the peasants and workers were already disaffected.¹⁵⁹ Naitza writes that 'there was the risk for the regime that it could lose its main support in a moment in which Mussolini needed to consolidate his personal leadership.'¹⁶⁰ Renzo De Felice, however, maintains that 'to explain the war against Ethiopia with the economic situation in 1934-1935 is arbitrary.'¹⁶¹

This perspective differs from Naitza's, as he believes that Mussolini was receiving considerable support from the Italian public which only a war could jeopardise. He also excludes the possibility that the desire for prestige and success can fully explain Mussolini's decision. What determined Mussolini to take action against Ethiopia were considerations of foreign policy. From 1934, Mussolini believed that Germany was still from a military point of view too weak to take advantage in Austria of an Italian commitment in Ethiopia, and that France and Great Britain would never have allowed Italy to invade Ethiopia. For this reason Mussolini tried to force London and Paris to allow Italian initiatives in the Horn.¹⁶² It is interesting to see how the opinion of these two major scholars of Italian history can be so different. It is likely that these views of the same historical event can be explained by the interests on which the two scholars have been focused. Naitza is a

historian of colonialism committed to providing an analysis of events tied to the colonial phenomenon. De Felice, on the other hand, is the author of the most comprehensive biography of Mussolini ever produced; for this reason he often tends to explain historical events by means of Mussolini's attitude. Probably among the prevailing reasons that determined Mussolini to take action against Ethiopia were considerations of foreign policy. Even though from 1935 to 1936 he still aimed at consolidating his position in the country, Fascist foreign policy was becoming more aggressive, and the public's support for further expansion could be won only with a major success. When on 9 May 1936 he proclaimed the empire his personal prestige and leadership reached its pinnacle.

The war in Ethiopia was generated by an incident between Italian and Ethiopian troops in a small Italian garrison in Ual Ual, in the Ogaden, on 5 and 6 December 1934. Following a period during which the League of Nations tried to avert the conflict, on 3 October 1935 Italian troops invaded Ethiopian territory across the Eritrean and Somali borders. After seven months, during which Rome and Addis Ababa fought a bruising war, on 5 May 1936 Italian troops entered the Ethiopian capital thereby ending the war. However, the conquest of Ethiopia was not yet realised, for in the period following the fall of the Ethiopian Imperial Army a strong popular opposition remained very active in the country. Furthermore the traditional divisions among the clans were suspended to develop an efficient process of rebellion, in which even the civil population lent its support. Italian reaction to this was harsh. General Graziani, who had been appointed General Governor, adopted a repressive regime based on mass executions as well as military raids in which he employed modern military technology. The repressive response to the assassination attempt against Graziani on 17 February 1937 in Addis Ababa became an opportunity for the slaughter of whole tribes and religious leaders. For Ethiopians the Italian invasion was a tragedy that bordered on genocide. After the war the Ethiopian government wanted to try Graziani and Badoglio, who was Governor of Ethiopia for several days before Graziani, for war crimes.¹⁶³ Calchi Novati claimed that despite the violent face of repression, Italy adopted a policy of development in Ethiopia with a considerable use of men and resources. The aim was to provide evidence that Italy could achieve better results than Haile Selassie's regime. Slavery was abolished, infrastructures such as roads, schools and hospitals were built, and administrative and industrial conditions were improved.¹⁶⁴

The Ethiopian territory was annexed to Eritrea and Somalia, so that, apart from British Somaliland and French Djibouti, the Horn of Africa was almost completely under Italian control. This area was called Africa Orientale Italiana, AOI (Italian East Africa), and divided into six large provinces: Eritrea; Ahmara with Gondar; Galla-Sidamo with Jimma; Harar; Somalia and the autonomous government of Addis Ababa. For a second time Shoa was divided, several territories inhabited by the Tigrian people were attached to Eritrea and, most remarkably, the Ogaden became part of Somalia. From this union the pan-Somalism that emerged after the end of the Second World War received a considerable boost.¹⁶⁵

The conquest of Ethiopia represented a significant turning point for Fascist colonialism. Now Italy could play the part of a great power having a colonial empire in Africa of size similar to that of the French and the British.¹⁶⁶ The creation of an Italian empire increased the prestige of Mussolini's leadership but did not change the careless attitude towards the adoption of a broad strategy for the future. In the years after 1936, Italian foreign policy was mainly shaped in response to the main international events. After Fascist Italy allied itself with Nazi Germany, Rome focused its interests on the Mediterranean area, mostly in northern Africa, leaving the Balkans to the Germans.

In this context it should be noted that Galeazzo Ciano, recently appointed Italian Foreign Minister, visited Germany from 20 to 24 October 1936, where he had several talks with his German counterpart, Constantin von Neurath, on issues of international politics. The Italian minister emphasised that the most important talk he had was on 24 October with Hitler in Berchtesgaden. After the conclusion of this talk he reported that

Germany is fully engaged in the Spanish civil war without any territorial or political aim: the Mediterranean is an Italian Sea. Any future change of the balance of power in the Mediterranean has to go in favour of Italy, just as Germany has to have freedom of action towards the East and the Baltic.¹⁶⁷

In November, Mussolini, in a speech delivered in Milan, made clear Italy's position on the Mediterranean and its importance for Fascist foreign policy.¹⁶⁸ In order to emphasise the role that North Africa was going to play in his strategy, Mussolini visited Libya in March 1937. Mussolini's intention was to stress Italy's ambition to transform its colonies into a rich and peaceful empire as well as to emphasise the increasing importance that the Mediterranean had for Rome.¹⁶⁹

From the bibliography on Fascist foreign policy in the years preceding the Second World War it can be seen that historians give particular importance to the events of 30 November 1938. On this day Ciano and Mussolini addressed respectively the Chamber of Deputies and the Gran Consiglio del Fascismo. According to scholars these two speeches are particularly important because they provide the first strategic perspective of Italy's international aims. According to Romain Rainero when Ciano mentioned the importance of Italian 'natural aspirations' the members of chamber shouted 'Tunis, Djibouti, Corsica'.¹⁷⁰ In the edition of Ciano's diary prepared by Renzo De Felice, Ciano confirms that when he approached the issue of Italian aspirations the members of the chamber shouted 'Tunis, Corsica, Nice, Savoy'.¹⁷¹ De Felice wrote that Ciano's mention of Italian aspiration 'suddenly produced the foul deed'. A group of deputies applauded and shouted 'Tunis, Corsica, Nice, Savoy, Djibouti'.¹⁷² The lack of clarity around this historical event is useful as evidence that in 1938 Fascist foreign policy still did not have a precise plan of action. This particular event cannot be used as evidence of the members of the Chamber's commitment to Italian expansion in one direction more than another. Furthermore, it is interesting to note from primary sources the Parliamentary report of that day where, in Ciano's speech, it states that in the passage already mentioned isolated deputies shouted 'Tunis Tunis'.¹⁷³ The edition of the *Discorso di Ciano alla Camera dei deputati del 30 novembre*, published in 1938 by the Popular Culture Ministry reports the same text of the *Atti Parlamentari*.¹⁷⁴ On the same day Mussolini delivered a speech to the Gran Consiglio del Fascismo and stated explicitly that the next targets of Fascist foreign policy would be Albania, Tunisia, Corsica, Djibouti and Switzerland.¹⁷⁵

Until the end of 1938 the objectives of Fascist foreign policy remained improvised and confused; the process that pushed Italy towards the Mediterranean area can be explained from an historical perspective. Traditionally, Italy has been more oriented towards the Mediterranean basin than to the Red Sea. Although Eritrea was the oldest colony and Eritreans were the population to create fewest problems for the administration, Fascist Italy conceded Italian special citizenship only to the Muslim inhabitants of Libya.¹⁷⁶

It was only in the year before the beginning of the Second World War that Mussolini finally announced Fascist foreign policy aims. The Mediterranean was the centre of Italian expansion and, in the long term, it was intended as a route to give Italy direct access to one of the

oceans, Indian or Atlantic, to create a link between the fatherland and the colonial territories. On 4 February 1939, Mussolini explained his theory as well as his future objectives. He stated that populations that do not have direct access to the sea and that are surrounded by others are not independent. Populations that do not have access to the ocean, but like Italy have access to other seas, are semi-independent. In order to achieve full independence Italy had to have access to the ocean. Mussolini wanted to gain access to the ocean in two ways. The first, the Indian Ocean, by realising a link between the Italian territories of northern Africa and the AOI territories, and the second, the Atlantic Ocean, through Algeria and Morocco.¹⁷⁷ The 'March to the Oceans' was a programme too ambitious for Italian capabilities so it cannot be considered an accurate programmatic document, but more properly a declaration of intent.

We grasp weapons to solve, after having solved the problem of our continental border, the problem of our sea border. We want to break the territorial and military chains that repress us in our sea, because a population of 45 million souls is not truly free if it has no access to the Ocean.

On 10 June 1940 Mussolini delivered this speech to Italians explaining Italian intervention in the Second World War. In an attempt to achieve an impossible dream, Italy now embarked on the longest and most dreadful nightmare of its history.

THE MASSACRE OF MOGADISHU

After Italy went to war, its army was able, at first, to occupy the British Somaliland, but this was a transient victory of short duration. The British offensive in 1941 was successful and in a few weeks, between February and March, the whole of Somalia was conquered; with Mogadishu falling on 25 March. The territory of former Italian Somalia was separated from the Somaliland and placed under a military administration, the BMA (British Military Administration), which continued after the end of the war. The War Office, instead of the Colonial Office, remained in charge of the administration of the former Italian colony as London wanted to avoid suspicion on the part of its allies that it intended to annexe those territories permanently.

The defeat of Italian troops in the Horn of Africa in 1941 and in northern Africa in 1943 cut off the local Italian communities from

Rome. They remained isolated in a situation of growing hostility that persisted, or in some cases worsened, even after the conclusion of the conflict. For a few years after 1945, there were no official representatives of the Italian government in Mogadishu. Relations between the Italian community and British administrators became difficult as the latter decided to demolish or to transfer to the closest British colonies everything that could be moved. Thus the railway line connecting Mogadishu, Afgoi and the Villaggio Duca degli Abruzzi, the only line existing in Somalia, the Afgoi Bridge on the Webi Shabelle river and all the salt production machinery of Hafun were dismantled, and the Magiajan and Kandala mines were closed.¹⁷⁸ As a consequence an increasing number of Italians left the country. As the chief administrator of the BMA, Brigadier Dennis Wickham, wrote in 1947: 'the Italian population slightly decreased as a result of repatriation to Italy and at the end of the year [1947] there were 3,058 Italians in Mogadishu compared with 3,464 at the end of 1946 and 5,978 at the end of 1937.'¹⁷⁹

Another major problem for Italians in Somalia was the growth of a nationalist movement which had adopted a strong anti-Italian stance. The Somali Youth League (SYL), established under British rule as a Club in 1943, was adamant in refusing any Italian involvement in the future of the country.

Despite the fact that the SYL and its pan-Somali idea dominated Somalia's political life, several other parties, some pro-Italian, were established. On 6 June 1943 the Patriotic Beneficence Union (PBU), which supported Italian colonial aspirations, was created, and despite the fact that in 1947 the PBU political branch in Mogadishu nearly disintegrated, it became the rallying point for a new pro-Italian party, the Conferenza della Somalia.¹⁸⁰ Major Allen Smith, Civil Affairs Officer in Mogadishu, maintained that

it was clear from July 1947 onward that the political field in Somalia was rapidly falling into two camps. The body which was pro-Italian and favoured the return of an Italian Administration to this territory, and a large and more active group of nationalists who opposed the return of Italy to Somalia in any shape or form.¹⁸¹

Differences between the SYL and the pro-Italian movements became very tense in the first weeks of January 1948 when a UN mission visited Mogadishu. Earlier, in October 1947, the Arab community, who like the Indian community, had a positive attitude towards Italy, had been violently attacked.

From 6 and 7 January, following the arrival of the members of the UN mission in Mogadishu, several pro-Italian demonstrations, organised by representatives of the Italian community and Italian newspapers with a significant involvement of Somalis, crossed the capital.¹⁸² The situation escalated on 11 January when an SYL rally ran into an unauthorised pro-Italian demonstration. At first there was a clash between demonstrators and an assault on the League's main branch, followed by an attack by the anti-Italian demonstrators on Italians who were assaulted individually or in their homes. The police force under British command was overrun and in many cases Somali members of the Gendarmerie joined the rioters. For several hours the Italians became the target of an angry mob who did not spare them any possible violence, from rape to mutilation. Lieutenant-Colonel R.E. Thorne, Deputy Commander of the Gendarmerie stated that he was 'profoundly shocked by the nature of some of the killings. Bodies were badly slashed about, in some cases obviously after death. I have never seen anything approaching the ferocity exhibited in 23 years' police experience.'¹⁸³ By the end of the riots 54 Italians, mainly women and children, had been massacred, 55 badly wounded; with them 14 Somalis who had intervened to protect them had been killed and 43 wounded. Those members of the Italian community who survived the assault, because they found a shelter in the cathedral or in the two hospitals, De Martino and Rava, or at the Hotel Croce del Sud, did not dare to walk through Mogadishu. It took several weeks before the situation returned to normality. The British government, once informed of the events, appointed a Court of Enquiry to investigate how such a large-scale attack on the Italians had happened.¹⁸⁴ An additional problem for the British government was the infamous accusation from a member of the Italian community that British officers themselves were involved in the riots or, at best, that they had tolerated the slaughter of the Italians. Antonia Bullotta, an Italian who served with the BMA and was involved in the events of Mogadishu, emphasised that Lieutenant-Colonel Thorne bore the main responsibility for the massacre; he encouraged the SYL supporters to attack the Italians, assisted passively in the killing of an Italian man at the Central Police Station and finally gave weapons and lorries to the SYL.¹⁸⁵ Despite the fact that the official communiqué released by the Italian government blamed Somalis and not the British authorities for the massacre, the Italian press did not have any doubt in condemning London for what had happened.

While the British held the Italians and their propaganda

commitment responsible for the massacre, they probably underestimated the power and hostility of their antagonists.¹⁸⁶ London therefore rejected the accusations of the Italian press. Certainly the possibility of the involvement, intentional or not, of the British government in the events of 11 January 1948 would be serious, but such a hypothesis has never been substantiated. What probably happened is that the BMA officers in Mogadishu underestimated the impact that the clashes between the pro-Italian and anti-Italian movements might have had as – and this is the real issue – they did not consider that the conflict might end up in a clan fight in which the Italians would be the scapegoat. The 14 Somalis killed as supporters of the Italian community were all Abgal, a sub-clan of the Hawiye and traditionally opposed to the main component of the SYL, the Darod. On 11 January a large number of Somali from northern Somalia arrived in Mogadishu probably with the help of the British officers. Rosato Libero emphasised that lorries of the Gendarmeire were used to carry SYL supporters, and similarly Giovanni Toffaloni, who received severe stab wounds during the incident, stated that the Somali in Mogadishu on that day were 'imported'.¹⁸⁷ In addition, the Somali Gendarmerie, which was supposed to secure public order, in many cases joined the rioters. Captain A. T. Bevan of the British South African Police, at that time serving in Mogadishu, reported that he saw a Gendarmerie askari 'carrying a rifle and stopping to fire every now and again at a group of Conferenza supporters'.¹⁸⁸ Mr Wisher, Finance Officer with the BMA, who was attacked and had his life spared only after he made it clear that he was British, said, 'I could see Gendarmes armed with truncheons, either watching the looters without attempting to stop them, or actively helping them to move furniture through the door of houses being looted'.¹⁸⁹ Calchi Novati stressed that there was agreement in identifying the SYL as the political movement that organised the demonstration which sparked the incident and there was agreement to hold SYL members responsible for the violence against the Italians.¹⁹⁰ Certainly the police force was not the most reliable instrument to stop or control SYL violence. As the same Lieutenant-Colonel Thorne admitted: 'not less than sixty per cent of the Somali rank of the police force are actual members of the SYL'.¹⁹¹

As a result of the massacre of Italians Calchi Novati and Del Boca stressed that the M company of the Somali Gendarmerie, considered responsible for participating in the riots and looting of Italian houses, was disarmed and confined to barracks, as Major Smith stated: 'eight

gendarmes were found with looted property in their possession.¹⁹² Yet by the end of 1948 the BMA had taken much drastic action as 'the Field Force section of the Somalia Gendarmerie was broken up and the equivalent of 13 infantry companies entirely disbanded – some 600 Somali rank being retained for absorption into the Mobile Police Reserves. The Armoured Car Squadron was entirely disbanded.'¹⁹³

In conclusion the killing of innocent people came about due to the incompetence of those in charge of public order, the great tension that characterised the days and weeks before the arrival of the UN commission, but also because a conflict between clans was not even considered. On the diplomatic front Rome was successful in getting authorisation from the British authorities to appoint an Italian 'Liaison Officer' in Mogadishu, Raimondo Manzini. Soon the deaths in Mogadishu were forgotten since it was important for Italy not to compromise relations with London in a delicate phase in which Rome was deeply committed to obtaining at least some trusteeship administrations in its former colonies, and Somalia indeed looked like the frontrunner to satisfy Italian aspirations.

3 Italy and the Administration of Somalia: a Difficult Mandate

When Somalia proclaimed its independence in 1960 it had a form of state inspired by the Italian model. Its main political institutions were the fruit of the Italian trusteeship administration in Somalia – AFIS, Amministrazione Fiduciaria Italiana in Somalia – from 1950 to 1960. Its poor economy was the result of a seven-year development plan introduced in 1954 by the Administrator, Enrico Martino. The higher education system was created during the mandate with considerable involvement by Italian academics.

The task of leading Somalia to independence was too great a commitment for Rome. Italy did not have the economic and financial resources to establish a stable economy able to support Somalia's political structure after independence. In addition, most Italian officials did not have a clear understanding of the complex Somali clan system with all its political implications. They underestimated the dangerous impact that the adoption of a Western political model could have on Somali society. The establishment of a centralised state system based on the Italian experience of the second half of the 1940s proved to be unsatisfactory in laying the foundations that Somalia would need to begin the process of democratisation. In 1955, halfway through the mandate, very little had been achieved and the economy, which it was hoped would pave the way for political independence in 1960, was still in a state of disarray.

In 1950, after a five-year period of strained diplomacy, Italy returned to the African continent.¹ Italy's new mission in Somalia was to guide the country to independence. Of all Italian demands for trusteeship administrations in its former African colonies, Somalia was the only one accepted by the UN.²

Although Rome scored only limited success with the UN, it succeeded in winning over Italian public opinion, which showed a strong interest in the destiny of the colonies. The main political

parties, even those on the left, supported the campaign to establish trusteeship administrations in Africa. In 1949, the Foreign Minister, Carlo Sforza, stressed the ability of Italy to merge its cultural, economic and historical background with those of its former colonies. He stated that 'democratic Italy has always considered its colonies, not only as Italian interests, but mainly as Italian aspects of the world's interests.'³

In the same speech he underlined the support of many states for an Italian trusteeship administration in Somalia. He said: 'many countries agree with us that Italy still has many important tasks in Somalia. Somalia's economic and social development still needs a hard Italian commitment. This commitment cannot be interrupted or changed without any dangerous consequence in the process of Somali civilisation.'⁴

On 21 November 1949, the settlement of Italian colonies was arranged by UN Resolution 289. The resolution determined not only the territorial future of the colonies, but also gave guidelines for the Trusteeship Agreement, establishing that 'Italian Somalia has to be recognised as an independent state in ten years time since the adoption of a Trusteeship Agreement by the UN General Assembly.'⁵

The Italian Trusteeship Administration in Somalia began officially on 1 April 1950, and the Trusteeship Agreement was promulgated on 7 December 1951. AFIS was responsible to the UN for public order and the administration of the country, with precise guidelines to follow. Article 3 of the Trusteeship Agreement stated that the authority charged with the administration of the territory had to 'encourage the development of free political institutions promoting the evolution of Somali population towards independence.'⁶

The economy of Somalia had to be improved through greater exploitation of its natural resources and the creation of agricultural, industrial and trade infrastructures. The administration had the duty to protect the fundamental freedoms of the population without any distinction of sex, race, religion and policy.⁷ The Trusteeship Agreement placed special emphasis on the education system as the most important instrument for promoting Somalia's social, economic, political and moral progress.⁸ Mohamed Hassan El Zayyat, the Egyptian Chairman of the Advisory Council, maintained that, at the beginning of the mandate, it was necessary

to create gradually institutions of self-government; to develop a national feeling of unity of all elements of the population; to foster

harmony and co-operation; to survey economic possibilities; to reduce the territorial deficit; to establish better health facilities; to provide for reasonable wages and for a basis of social insurance, and last but foremost to fight illiteracy, adopt good educational plans, and create schools, more schools with better teachers.⁹

The situation in the former Italian colony was complicated by the existence of a complex system of clan groups, clans and sub-clans.¹⁰ Among them tension existed, often generated by competition over water and grazing rights which occasionally engaged them in conflicts which included violent warfare.¹¹

Lewis identifies two main collateral ancestors in the Somalis: Somali and Sab. Dir, Isaaq, Hawiye and Darod belong to the Somali group, while Digil and Rahanwin are Sab. Hawiye, settled in Mogadishu and for this reason historically close to the Italians, supported the Trusteeship Administration, while Darod were the backbone of the Somali Youth League, the popular anti-Italian and pan-Somali movement. Digil and Rahanwin, because of their interest in trading, gave their support to the foreign power, in this case to Italy, and to the Hawiye, while Isaaq remained outside the main events at the beginning of AFIS.¹²

Clan divisions appeared to be the most obvious and major differences in Somali society. Yet several lines of cleavage – occupation, class, physical type and dialect – divide the Somali population. These, Lee Cassanelli maintains, 'are as deeply rooted historically as those of clan identity, even if they are not as frequently invoked by Somalis in their political discourse.'¹³ In addition, during the colonial period,

the colonising countries drew up boundary lines that mutilated kinship units into bewildered fragments, and when colonial Administrations attempted to turn their boundaries into blockades, as happened at various times with various levels of success through the colonial period, this cut off entire clans from their traditional sources of water and/or pasture for their herds.¹⁴

During the colonial administration, Italy paid no heed to the complexity of Somali social structure. The clan system was not worthy of consideration for Italian officials such as Cesare Maria De Vecchi, who governed Somalia from 1923 to 1928, adopting a Fascist-based repressive system. Those times, when everything was possible for Italian colonialists, now belonged to the past. Italy faced a difficult task.

THE DEPLOYMENT OF ITALIAN TROOPS: THE CORPO DI SICUREZZA

On 25 November 1949, a few days after the UN approved Resolution 289, Giuseppe Brusasca, the Italian Foreign Ministry's Under-Secretary, Brigadier Arturo Ferrara,¹⁵ commander of the 'Corpo di Sicurezza' and Colonel Musco attended a meeting to organise the army contingent to be sent to Somalia. They agreed that 4,500 soldiers would be enough, but due to British pressure on the Italian government 6,500 troops were sent.¹⁶ The number of Italian troops in Somalia was determined by 'Plan Caesar', which required the Italians to replace British troops and maintain a contingent of the same size. Public order had become unstable and the clashes of January 1948 in Mogadishu, which saw 54 Italians killed, were still fresh in the memory. Furthermore, the situation on the Ethiopian-Somali border was causing concern. The protection of the Somali borders was one of the main tasks of 'Aerosomalia', the Italian Air Force contingent sent to Somalia with the Corpo di Sicurezza.¹⁷ The main issue was that neither Resolution 289 nor the Trusteeship Agreement had settled the border between the two countries.¹⁸ In addition, Italy had not yet established diplomatic relations with Ethiopia, and Addis Ababa was unhappy about the presence of the former colonial power on its border.

The transfer to Somalia of the Corpo di Sicurezza took two months, from 2 February to 2 April 1950. The main episode of hostility against the Italian troops was on 14 March, when a Carabinieri battalion arriving in Benadir Cassim (1,500 km from Mogadishu) had serious problems with disembarkation. Dockers, linked to the SYL, went on strike, forcing Italian troops to unload all their equipment and supplies by themselves.¹⁹ The presence of the Carabinieri in Somalia was particularly delicate; they had played a significant role in East Africa during the Second World War. During the colonial occupation of Somalia, the Italian army had established the Zaptiè, special troops formed by Somalis, while with the AFIS, Carabinieri were in charge of organising the Somali police force. The commander of Carabinieri Group with 26 officers, 154 non-commissioned officers and 341 soldiers, was also the head of the police force.²⁰ Beside a significant number of Somalis who served in the Zaptiè, CLAMS (Commission for paying off arrears to Somali soldiers) estimated that until 1941 nearly 6,000 Somalis had served as both civil servants and soldiers in the AOI.²¹ Lewis maintains that 'to Somalis the strong military forces

which were dispatched to support the establishment of the new Administration, gave the handover much of the character of a military occupation.'²² Indeed, Italy tried in all possible ways to reduce the number of troops in Somalia.²³ To maintain a force of more than 6,500 soldiers, as requested in 'Plan Caesar', was far too expensive for the Italian budget.²⁴ Before the beginning of the operation in Somalia, in fact, two battalions of Carabinieri were left behind in reserve. At the end of the movement of troops, the Corpo di Sicurezza numbered 5,791. Yet by the end of June 1951 there were less than half that number, 2,250. During 1952, the number was again reduced to 740. These significant reductions in such a short period were necessary because of the overstretched AFIS budget; however, they were also made possible by the increasing number of Somalis who joined the Corpo di Sicurezza. In 1952, there were more than 2,400 Somalis in the Corpo di Sicurezza.²⁵

SETTING THE ADMINISTRATION

Ambassador Giovanni Fornari was the first Administrator of AFIS. At the same time that the administration took over, the Advisory Council was established in Mogadishu. The Council consisted of three members – an Egyptian, a Colombian and a Filipino – and was in charge of putting forward suggestions to the Italian administration, in the economic, political, social security and educational spheres. Most important were the Trusteeship Administration's responsibilities for: (a) the creation and development of a regional government organisation; (b) economic and financial development; (c) improvement in the education system; (d) social progress and welfare; and (e) shifting of power from the administration to local government.²⁶ Mark Karp in his study, *The Economics of Trusteeship in Somalia*, explains that 'the Afro-Asian states insisted that an Advisory Council be formed to act as a kind of United Nations "watchdog" in Somalia under the trusteeship.'²⁷

In fact, although the Advisory Council had only consultative powers, it also had to aid and advise the administering authority,²⁸ so acting as a guarantor for the Somali people. The Council was responsible for making recommendations and reports on the progress of development promoted by AFIS, while it also provided 'tangible evidence of United Nations responsibility and concern'.²⁹

The relationship between the AFIS and the Advisory Council

remained good for the entire decade. Occasionally differences emerged between the Egyptian member of the Advisory Council and the administration. The Egyptian government had ambitions to become leader of African Islamic nations. Showing a positive attitude towards Italy would have undermined Egypt's image on the continent.³⁰ Mohamed Hassan El Zayyat maintained that

there was a good co-operation in general at all times, there were short misunderstandings in certain periods. Nevertheless the final conclusion is imperative that this historic experiment of a direct international participation in the development of a territory towards independence brought good fruits assisting usefully the Administering Authority as well as the people of Somalia.³¹

Immediately after the beginning of the mandate on 25 May 1950, Giuseppe Brusasca visited Somalia. He was in Mogadishu to deal with the political tensions and the anti-Italian activity of the Somali Youth League. The attitude of the SYL towards the Italian presence in Somalia emerged during a meeting Brusasca had in Mogadishu with Aden Abdulla Osman, an influential leader of the SYL. In the discussion with Aden Abdulla Osman, Brusasca underlined all the things Italy had established in Somalia as a colonial power in the first half of the century 'hospitals, public services, water installations practically everything.' Aden Abdulla Osman replied: 'This is true, but those who followed you [the British] gave us something much more important, they gave us the freedom to express our opinion, to create parties and to work for the future of our country.'³²

A stronger view was expressed by Hagi Mohamed Hussein in a letter addressed to Brusasca, stating the complete opposition of the Somali population to the Italian presence. He wrote that 'the Italian Administration caused serious moral and material damage to the country.'³³

A position in favour of Great Britain and against Italy was expressed by the principal leader of the SYL, Abdullahi Issa. Brigadier Ferrara reported secretly to Fornari about the opinion Abdullahi Issa expressed before leaving for the USA.

It is true that English are colonialists, he said, and for this reason they are worse than Italians, but for SYL they are preferable because they let us work freely. During the ten years of the British Administration they gave us many responsibilities in the government of the country. With Italians the situation is completely

different. They employ silly and incompetent people of inferior clans. AFIS, in order to keep the situation under control, pays clans' leaders. SYL members are outside the Administration because we opposed the return of Italians. This is, in any case, consistent with our ideas, and is confirmed by the scarce results AFIS is producing in Somalia.³⁴

Abdullahi Issa, comparing BMA and AFIS, emphasised that Italian officials stayed in Somalia for no more than two or three years, and never had any real involvement or competence in treating Somali problems, while BMA employed only competent officials in Somalia. They remained in Somalia for as long as possible.³⁵ In the Italian bureaucracy probably only a few officials had concrete knowledge of Somalia, many of them employed in Somalia worked for the Ministry of the Italian Africa, and still had a colonial outlook.³⁶

BETWEEN CLAN AND PARTY. THE EVOLUTION OF POLITICS IN SOMALIA

In the political history of Somalia it is often noted that, until the establishment of the colonial state and then independence, Somali society was 'quintessentially' stateless. 'Somalis of the precolonial age organised and managed their political life through kinship associations, conjoined with religious law.'³⁷ Therefore the organisation of political parties was very recent. In September 1951, there were eight national parties and several others with a regional dimension predominantly based in Mogadishu.³⁸

The political situation of the parties was complicated because, until 1951, there were no elections. Their real power, in terms of political support, was unknown and this added confusion to the overall situation. The UN *Rapport sur la Somalie sous Administration Italienne* stated that

certain parties pretend to have a composition of thousands of members and an influence spread all over the country. Others claim an influence exclusively in the main cities or in the rural villages, few others claim an influence just over small groups of people. Then there are parties created exclusively among tribes or small groups of tribes to oppose the influence of metropolitan parties.³⁹

According to the SYL, when Italy began its mandate in Somalia, the League had 150,000 members, composed mainly of Darod based in Mijertina, Lower Juba and Ogaden. The administration claimed that, in 1951, the League probably had no more than 12,000 members.⁴⁰ The SYL's attitude was strongly anti-Italian, it accused AFIS of not applying the Trusteeship Agreement and opposed the imposition of the Italian legal code. The reason for this was that the legal code would not be suitable for Somali society without serious modifications.⁴¹

Hisbia Digil-Mirifle (HDM) party members came mainly from Digil and Mirifle people settled in the regions between the Shabelle and Juba Rivers. According to the Administration, it had 45 branches in the country. The party, established on 25 March 1947, had the aim of demanding independence as soon as possible. The aims of Hisbia Digil-Mirifle were not only political – it supported the creation of a federal state – but also economic. It wanted equal treatment for Somali civil servants and soldiers.⁴² According to Mohamed Mukhtar 'the party aimed at practical measures for improving the general welfare of the country, which included the encouragement of agriculture and trade, raising the standard of education and guaranteeing the peace.'⁴³ The main difference between the SYL and HDM concerned their membership too. Although 50 per cent of the SYL's membership were Darods, 30 per cent were Hawiye and 10 per cent were Digil Mirifle. HDM membership was mainly Digil and Rahanwin clan families. The party expressed the sense of independence and identity of these two clans and was committed to the creation of a separate and autonomous Digil Mirifle state in southern Somalia.⁴⁴

The Lega Progressista Somalia (Somali Progressive League) had 14 local branches and supported the Administration. This party wanted to preserve the clan organisation and was opposed to the SYL because of its strong anti-Italian stance. The Unione Africana Somalia (Somali African Union) supported the Lega Progressista Somalia position. In fact, the main point of its programme was co-operation with the Administration. The party secretary stated that Italy was making a significant contribution to Somalia's economic development. Later he maintained that the SYL adopted an overly nationalist political line.⁴⁵ Also the Unione Africana Somalia was in favour of preserving the clan system which was, according to the party, the principal structure and best system of organisation of Somali society.⁴⁶ The main pro-Italian movement was the Conferenza della Somalia,

established at the end of 1947 by Vincenzo Calzia, a former executive official of the Ministry of Italian Africa. According to Del Boca, Calzia organised and financed not just the Conferenza but most of the pro-Italian groups in Somalia.⁴⁷ The remaining parties had less influence because of their small membership.⁴⁸ The existence of such a large number of political groups became a constant feature of Somali political life from the 1954 administrative election, through independence until Siad Barre's coup in 1969.⁴⁹ According to Hussein Adam, this situation could be explained by 'the fluid nature of clanism and the ability of the elites to politicise its various segments.'⁵⁰ Although the SYL, the strongest declared pan-Somali movement in this period, had a significant political supremacy, it could not eliminate clanism from political competition. Following independence, SYL failed to promote a process of real democratisation. The search for power, a traditional feature of clanism, eventually involved the government and the National Assembly. The degeneration of the political system, coupled with widespread corruption, paved the way for Siad Barre's military dictatorship.

On 8 June 1950, in order to improve AFIS's relationship with the Somali population, Fornari introduced an amnesty for all offences committed before the mandate started. Yet this initiative did not mollify the hostility between SYL and AFIS. The League continued with its accusations that the Italian Administration wanted to destroy the SYL and increase the clans' divisions, thus trying to suffocate Somali nationalism, while employing officials with a Fascist background.⁵¹

Giacomo Bona, the secretary of the Christian Democrats in Mogadishu, was concerned that, since the creation of AFIS, there had been a resurgence of Fascism in Somalia. In addition, AFIS officials not only did not have a democratic approach to their job, but they were also critical of the Italian government.⁵² On 13 January 1951, in a letter to Brusasca, Bona stated that AFIS's bureaucratic structure consisted of officials of a low quality, some completely unskilled. He also denounced the increase of Fascist publications imported from Italy.⁵³

The overall situation was particularly difficult for Fornari who had to begin the process of democratisation in a hostile environment. When, on 15 April 1950, the Administrator organised a meeting with the leaders of the Somali political movements, the SYL decided not to participate. Just one month earlier, several incidents had occurred in Mogadishu and Baidoa when SYL members clashed with members

of the Conferenza and the HDM. These differences could be interpreted as clashes between the pro- and anti-Italian factions. 'But it was evident that none of the clashes had any ideological basis; they were merely matters rooted in tribal differences and the influence of colonial policies in the region, and also the tensions and insecurities that prevailed at the time of transfer to the Italian administration,' claimed Mohamed Mukhtar.⁵⁴

Somalia was divided into six regions: Benadir, Mijertina, Mudugh, Upper Juba, Webi Shabelle and Lower Juba, which were further divided into 28 'districts'. The Administrator had full administrative and legislative powers and the commander of the *Corpo di Sicurezza*, relied on him. The Administrator organised AFIS into 17 administrative departments and this structure was the base for future ministries.⁵⁵ On 30 December 1950, Fornari gave impetus to the process of Somalisation with the creation of the Territorial Council. This represented an expression, for the first time in Somalia, of involvement of the local population in the Administration of the country.

The Territorial Council, composed of 35 councillors of whom 28 were Somali, was a consultative and representative central body with responsibility for all government activities, with the exception of foreign policy and defence. At the very beginning of its existence the Council was committed to preparing an internal statute and to providing suggestions for the creation of municipal councils throughout Somalia. The Council had to form an opinion about the adoption of the official language for education, and about company regulations.⁵⁶ According to Mario D'Antonio, all the different clans, traditions and classes were represented in the Council.⁵⁷ Until October 1951, the Council members were appointed by the Administrator, but thereafter the members were elected. It was only on 31 March 1955, however, that a proper electoral process was adopted for the Territorial Council. On that date it was stipulated that the Territorial Council had to be elected by male suffrage. Those living outside the municipal districts were represented by an indirect electoral system, expressing their choice through the *shir* (Councils summoned to debate the policy of a lineage group).⁵⁸

The Territorial Council held its meetings three times a year. During the period between meetings, a Council-elected Committee was in charge of preparing the meetings and monitoring political, economic and social progress in Somalia. The Committee, like the Council, was composed of representatives of the main political movements – even

though the percentage of political members in the Committee was not accurately representative of the political spectrum in Somalia. There were four delegates from the Conferenza della Somalia, one from the SYL, three from the clans, one Arab and one Italian.⁵⁹ The Italian member of the Committee was Bona.⁶⁰ Fornari warned Brusasca that the creation of the new institution would create tension between the Somalis and the Italian community. The Administrator explained that 'whenever the Committee and the Council treat problems concerning the relationships with foreigners, Italians included, there will be not one Somali, even those on good terms with us, so brave to defend openly our interests, if the protection of our interests is against Somali interests.'⁶¹

Fornari's main concern was that the Italians in Somalia were unaware of the international duties Italy had assumed under the Trusteeship Administration. AFIS adopted a progressive policy aimed at increasingly involving Somalis in the administration of the country, but the Italian community had serious difficulty in understanding the importance of AFIS's role. Fornari stated that 'they do not want to accept that they are not the masters any longer.'⁶² According to Fornari, the protection of Italian interests could be achieved only by encouraging Somalia to adopt a political constitution which would oppose Italian activities after the end of the mandate. To reinforce this point, he emphasised that, in a frame of collaboration, the Territorial Council decided to adopt both Arabic and Italian as official languages in schools.⁶³

A major factor in shaping the relations between the AFIS and Somalis was the establishment of the educational system. When Rome took on the mandate, Somalia had only 29 primary schools and about 2,850 pupils. As Giuseppe Costanzo explained, the AFIS education programme had three main aims: to provide the majority of Somalis with at least primary education; to offer the small intelligentsia already existing in the country higher education; and to promote the formation of a new, well-educated elite.⁶⁴ Yet the paucity of primary schools in 1950 was not the only problem. Somalia had very few teachers.⁶⁵ Therefore, from 1952, an increasing number of Somali teachers were sent to Italy to attend teaching courses. On 20 September 1950, the School of Political and Administrative Preparation was set up, offering a three-year course in administration, law, history of civilisation, Islam, international law, UN organisation, economy, geography and the international statute for the organisation of Somalia.

The School of Political and Administrative Preparation was particularly important, both for the training of Somali civil servants and for its political impact. Many of the students were members of the SYL who, after attending courses at the school, and in many cases after going to Italy for further education, softened their attitude towards the Administration. During their residence in Italy, they attended courses organised at Perugia University. On completion of their courses, Somali students were offered the opportunity to stay in Italy for a short time, so that they could get to know it better.⁶⁶ In 1953, the establishment of the Institute of Social Science, Law and Economics, with courses beginning in the 1954–5 academic year, paved the way for the creation of the University Institute of Somalia. The new institution was mostly run by Italian lecturers with limited participation from Somalis.⁶⁷

AFIS AND THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SOMALIA

The economic situation in Somalia was afflicted by Italy's domestic problems: both the Italian budget and the AFIS budget were in deficit.⁶⁸ Italy began its postwar reconstruction with the aid of the Marshall Plan; in 1952 it received US\$1,469 million.⁶⁹ The Italian economy, after suffering nearly total destruction during the war, was in an appalling condition. Industrial production in 1945 was only a quarter of what it had been in 1938. The individual average income, about US\$300, was the lowest in Europe.⁷⁰

The period from 1945 to 1950 was particularly delicate from a political perspective. Italy was building a democratic state, having adopted a new constitution in January 1948. Through the constitution it realised a convergence of all the political forces allied against Fascism.⁷¹ Italy's difficulties in setting up AFIS were not only related to the Somali internal situation, but also to Italian political and economic conditions. Pietro Petrucci in *Mogadiscio* states: 'nobody has ever provided an explanation of what irremissible national interest pushed Italy to come back to Somalia in 1950.'⁷²

As a consequence of Italy's poor financial resources, the Administrator's commitment was to invest the budget in the establishment of the social structures Somalia needed, instead of maintaining the expensive administrative organisation established in Italy. So, despite the fact that public order still remained one of the main concerns in the country, Fornari cut the military budget and

personnel, in order to increase investment in political and economic institutions. Therefore, with the support of the School of Political and Administrative Preparation, the first training school for policemen was organised. As a result, AFIS managed to increase the number of Somali policemen and repatriate more Italians.⁷³

However, the main problems for Fornari began in 1951 when the Italian government cut the AFIS budget by a quarter. The 1951–2 budget was cut from 8,000 million lire to 6,000 million lire. Fornari reacted immediately and, in a letter to Brusasca expressed his concerns about this decision:

a reduction of a quarter of AFIS budget is too much. I believe that having only six thousand million lire AFIS won't be able to cope with the routine expenses; just for these AFIS needs at least 6.5 thousand million lire, but the Administration needs between 7.5 and 8 thousand million lire to obtain any improvement in economic and social fields.⁷⁴

Fornari stressed that despite the fact that he had achieved consistent savings by cutting military expenses, the new budget reduction could stop many activities that Italy had agreed to undertake under the trusteeship. He asked Brusasca to describe this situation to the Prime Minister, Alcide De Gasperi, and to the Foreign Minister, Carlo Sforza. If AFIS's role and funds were to deal with administrative problems only, Fornari made clear that he was ready to resign as Administrator after 30 June 1951. Finally, he raised the problem of AFIS dependence on the Ministry of Italian Africa,⁷⁵ which he stated 'is an institution that is heading towards disintegration.'⁷⁶

In spite of all these difficulties, Fornari carried on. In September 1951, the School for Health Inspectors and, in May 1952, the Secondary School of Agriculture were established.⁷⁷ A further step towards Somalisation was the creation of the Somali Economic Council. Fornari appointed an Italian engineer, Anteo Mortara, as chairman of the Council, but the majority of the members were indigenous. From 1952, the Somali Economic Council had representatives of all social classes and a group of experts in the different economic fields from private and public companies as well as artisans.⁷⁸

In September 1951, the UN Trusteeship Council sent a mission to East Africa to visit and report on the situation in Rwanda and Somalia. On 19 September 1951, after visiting Rwanda, the mission arrived in Somalia. In 18 days the four members of the mission, Enrique de Marchena from the Dominican Republic, William Crago

from the USA, George Lacking from New Zealand and Mao Chao Dilakrit Kridakon from Thailand, visited Mogadishu, Merca, Brava, Kismayu, Baidoa, Belet Weyn and Benadir Cassim. At the conclusion of its visit, the mission drafted a report in which it took stock of the situation in Somalia.

One of the main issues highlighted in the report was the political tension caused by the presence in Somalia of a large number of parties divided in favour of or against AFIS.⁷⁹

At the end of 1951 rioting increased. In Ogaden the two clans of Marehan and Habr Gidir clashed over the possession of water sources in the region. The intervention of the Italian army to settle the dispute caused more problems. At the end of the turmoil there were several victims among the Somalis.⁸⁰ On 1 August 1952, during a demonstration organised against the local authority, a Carabinieri patrol was attacked. A sergeant, a soldier of the Carabinieri and a Somali inspector were stoned to death. The tension in the region and throughout Somalia had reached a dangerous level, although, according to Colonel Alfredo Arnera, the majority of Somalis condemned the killing of the three policemen.⁸¹ The events of Kismayu were the worst since AFIS began its international mandate, but also the last clash between the Somalis and the Italian Administration.

THE END OF FORNARI'S TERM

At the beginning of 1953, Fornari handed over his position to the new Administrator, Enrico Martino. With the conclusion of Fornari's term of office, the most difficult period of the Italian Administration in Somalia ended.

When Martino left Italy to assume his new appointment in Somalia, the Foreign Ministry's Under-Secretary, Paolo Emilio Taviani, gave him four principal directives. Martino had to govern Somalia by observing carefully the Trusteeship Agreement with two aims: respecting the mandate deadline and preparing Somalia for independence. He had to develop a policy to persuade the SYL to co-operate with AFIS. It was impossible, at that stage, to think of suppressing the SYL, which was the most active, most widespread and possibly most representative political movement in the country. Furthermore, it was already clear that the relationship between Rome and Mogadishu after independence would be influenced by the relationship between the SYL and AFIS. Martino had the difficult task of easing tensions

between the Italian community and radical Somalis. However, Martino's main commitment was to improve the economic situation in the country, exploiting the limited Somali resources in the best way possible.⁸²

Martino gave a positive assessment of the way Fornari had administered Somalia during the first and most difficult years of AFIS. In his concluding report to Foreign Minister Gaetano Martino, the new Administrator stated that he would continue the work initiated by his predecessor, 'not only because I think it was correct, but also because I believe that, considering the short time of the Mandate, I could not introduce any radical change.'⁸³

At the beginning of his term of office, Martino initiated action to improve relations between AFIS and the SYL, supporting the moderate wing of the party led by Aden Abdulla Osman. Pier Pasquale Spinelli, AFIS Secretary General, and Luigi Gasbarri, an AFIS official, increased their contacts with SYL members. The SYL's attitude towards Italy slowly began to change. According to Martino, the creation of the Credito Somalo and the setting up of the Institute of Social Science, Law and Economics, made significant contributions to improving the relationship between the Administration and SYL.⁸⁴

As evidence of the changed SYL attitude towards AFIS, Martino listed several events. He emphasised that for a long time the SYL had not petitioned against Italy at the UN. After the March 1954 administrative election, both Aden Abdulla Osman and Abdullahi Issa, thinking that Italy might pull out of Somalia before 1960, asked Martino to confirm that Italy would stay until the end of the mandate. Martino reported that Aden Abdulla Osman more than once requested that Italy continue assisting Somalia even after 1960.⁸⁵ In 1954, SYL members of the Territorial Council voted in favour of a motion to protect foreign investments in Somalia after 1960.⁸⁶

The improvements in relations between the Administration and the SYL came also as a consequence of the setback in relations between the League and the British, caused by the treaty London signed in 1954 with Addis Ababa. Under this treaty, the British government gave the territory of Ogaden and Haud to Ethiopia. The origin of the Somali-Ethiopian dispute over Ogaden dates back to 1897, when the frontier between Italian Somaliland and the Ethiopian Empire was traced on two different maps by Major Nerazzini and King Menelik. John Drysdale reports that 'neither map could subsequently be found and no living person can testify to the exact nature of the agreement.'⁸⁷ In 1908, a new convention between Italy and Ethiopia attempted to fix

the border between the two territories, but 'it was never implemented because it incorporated the 1897 agreement which had vanished'.⁸⁸ Following the Fascist invasion of Ethiopia in 1935, the Ogaden became part of the AOI and in 1941 after the defeat of Italian troops, Great Britain annexed the Italian Somaliland, including Ogaden and Haud, under the BMA. When the UN Trusteeship Council decided to give Italy the Administration of Somalia, Haud and Ogaden remained annexed to British Somaliland. At the very beginning of the British Military Administration in Somalia, Lancaster House showed a positive attitude towards the creation of a Greater Somalia including Ogaden and the territory of the Northern Frontier District, NFD. There was a similarity between the Bevin plan and SYL's aims. Yet the Bevin plan for the creation of a Greater Somalia was not successful. After the 1954 treaty, British influence on the SYL diminished remarkably.⁸⁹ The first point of the SYL programme, in fact, was the unification of all Somali people. As Lewis observed, the SYL 'from its inception has championed the cause of a Greater Somalia'.⁹⁰ After 1948, Abdullahi Issa, presenting the SYL programme, emphasised the overwhelming importance of this point for the League.⁹¹

SOMALIA'S FIRST DEMOCRATIC ELECTION

Beginning in February 1953 Martino started to prepare Somalia for the first democratic elections in its history. He ordered the Administration to prepare a census of 35 towns and villages in the territory. This work was a difficult but necessary preparatory task. Martino felt it was extremely important to create a body of representative institutions as time was running out and a period of five or six years was very short to assess how successful democratisation was in Somalia. The Administrator was aware of the importance of achieving a consistent process of Somalisation as well as of democratisation. In his intervention at the XIV session of the UN Trusteeship Council, Martino emphasised that

the most educated Somalis, of whatever political party, agree that the training of cadres must necessarily precede the 'Somalisation' so to speak, and that it would be dangerous and unjust to entrust to unprepared personnel positions of responsibility which must be reserved for those groups of people which are ready and prepared to fulfil their tasks with devotion.

He also underlined that at the beginning of the mandate only a small number of Somalis had had any formal education. In 1954, there were only about 3,000 students who had been educated in one of the 37 primary classes and in specialised courses.⁹²

Although the process of Somalisation in the administrative sphere achieved results, in the economic field progress was slow. Martino explained that there were several reasons why the economy was poor. The main one was the uncertainty about Italian and international economic aid flowing into Somalia; another was the uncertainty about the political and legal situation of Somalia once the mandate ended. Despite the fact that on 4 January 1954 the Territorial Council committed itself and future Somali political institutions to protect private and non-Somali economic activities, the situation remained ambiguous.⁹³ In addition, Martino had the difficult task of enforcing taxation on Somalis and the Italian community: the Somalis were unwilling to pay taxes, while the Italians believed they did not have to pay taxes on their economic activities in Somalia. As a result Martino, following Fornari's guideline, continued reducing everyday expenditures and investment in economic and social development.⁹⁴

'In order to meet the new expenditure', Martino stated, 'the Administration has made a considerable effort to achieve savings in the administrative field. Last year, the Italian staff, civil and military, was reduced by 273 units. It will be gradually reduced further.'⁹⁵

At the same time, the Administrator presented the development plan that he had already submitted to the Territorial Council. Martino outlined to the UN Trusteeship Council the work that the Administration was planning to do from 1954 until the end of the mandate. In agriculture, the main aim was to develop extensive production of cereals, in order to reach self-sufficiency in food. According to Martino's plan, this had to be achieved through the modernisation of farming methods. In Middle and Lower Shabelle the excavation of irrigation canals was planned, to ensure the regularity and the continuity of irrigation for some 30,000 hectares of land. For Middle and Lower Juba, an improvement in the irrigation system, by means of dams and dykes, was planned to prevent flooding.

Yet the most ambitious aim was to settle the population living between the two rivers, who were, in the main, working in the pastoral economy. This part of the plan had to be achieved through the creation of 240 reservoirs for rainwater and the installation of silos on each farm. The budget for agricultural development in 1954-60 was 20,844,000 somalos, about US\$3,000,000. By 1960, about 74,000

hectares, involving some 200,000 farmers, would be under cultivation, thus increasing production substantially.⁹⁶

By means of the development plans, AFIS intended to reduce nomadism, a tradition of Somali society related to cattle rearing. The Administrator stated that 'in the field of cattle rearing the Administration intends to check the phenomenon of nomadism, which is bound up with the well-known lack of water supplies for watering cattle. The Administration also proposes to transform cattle rearing into a stable activity.'⁹⁷

THE 1954 ADMINISTRATIVE ELECTIONS

The 1954 elections represented the first truly significant event in the history of the relationship between the Italian Administration and Somali political movements, as this was the first opportunity to test the true support of all parties. A high percentage of registered voters (more than 75 per cent) participated as a result of the vigorous campaign that AFIS and all political groups conducted. Out of 50,740 voters, 38,119 Somalis cast their vote. The electoral results were surprising. The SYL's success was predictable, but not its size. The League obtained a decisive victory, polling 47.7 per cent of the votes cast and returning 141 out of 281 counsellors. The Hisbia Digil-Mirifle achieved 8,198 votes and 57 counsellors. The remaining seats were divided among the many political groups in existence at that time. Fornari and Martino's prediction that the SYL would play a significant role in the future of Somalia was now confirmed.

One result of the elections was that the Administration had to change its attitude towards the SYL. The SYL's power increased remarkably, while the derisory results of the Conferenza parties was disappointing to the Italian Administration. The elections made the attitude of the Somalis towards the Italian presence in the country clear. The SYL extremist wing increased its power within the party, although Abdullahi Issa, the SYL leader of the anti-Italian faction, softened his position towards the Administration. Talking to other SYL leaders who were planning to ask for American, British or Egyptian involvement in Somalia, Abdullahi Issa stated that all governments are selfish and accept an involvement only to protect or increase their national interest. He held that the American government was the most colonialist of all because it allowed racial discrimination in its own country. Furthermore, according to

Abdullahi Issa, the US exploited any place where it intervened. Even though the Americans were investing a considerable amount of capital, 'they know how to take care of their interests, they do not aim at a military conquest of foreign country but an economic one.' As evidence of the British attitude towards Africans, Abdullahi Issa emphasised the negative aspects of the British government's relationship with the Mau Mau in Kenya. Finally Egypt was considered: 'it is not a rich country and it could give Somalia only moral aid, but in a very opportunistic way. It is preferable having the present situation, with Italy as Administrator. It is one of the few honest and generous nations.'⁹⁸

In his analysis of the relationship between AFIS and SYL, Abdullahi Issa said that one of the main problems for the democratic and peaceful development of Somalia was the presence of veteran Italian colonialists, who still occupied a prominent position within the Italian community and were able to exert a strong influence on the Administration. Very often they were the main cause of tensions between AFIS and the SYL. According to Abdullahi Issa, the Somali politicians close to AFIS were also a detrimental feature of Somali political life, because, in many cases, they acted in their own interests, with little regard for the real needs of the Somali population.⁹⁹ Despite the fact that Abdullahi Issa remained one of Martino's principal concerns, his new political line contributed considerably to the process of détente between AFIS and SYL. As a result, after the 1954 elections the SYL abandoned its suspicious and implacable position towards AFIS, even though, according to Del Boca, the Administration was still far from recognising the aspirations of the Somali population. The SYL, which considered itself as the only representative of Somali people and Somali interests, now decided to co-operate with AFIS to achieve a working independence for Somalia.¹⁰⁰

Hagi Farah Ali, SYL deputy President, during a religious ceremony, said that SYL accepted AFIS rule, and wanted to remain on good terms with Italy even after 1960, establishing a solid relationship of assistance and collaboration. He underlined that the SYL did not want other foreigners to interfere in Somali life; only Italy should play a prominent role in Somali relationships after 1960.¹⁰¹ In his concluding secret report, which Martino prepared for the Foreign Ministry in 1955, he wrote:

after the March 1954 administrative elections, Aden Abdulla Osman and Abdullahi Issa, having learned that Italy could leave its

mandate before 1960, told me that they wanted Italy to stay in Somalia until the conclusion of its mandate, and Aden Abdulla Osman said that he hoped that Italy would keep on assisting Somalia even after that date.¹⁰²

The Corpo di Sicurezza Intelligence Department reported that the Somali people felt that the political situation was improving. There was an unusual bias towards moderation. The report stated that this situation was generated by the positive impact of the students of the School of Political and Administrative Preparation. Although they were mainly SYL members, and some of them of its extreme wing, their ideological radicalism weakened during their residence in Italy.¹⁰³

At this time, in view of the easing of tensions between Italy and the SYL, the main commitment for AFIS was to lend support to the smaller pro-Italian political parties. The Administration was trying to force these parties to create a coalition able to compete with the SYL. Initially strong clan divisions posed the toughest obstacles. Yet following the heavy defeat the pro-Italian organisations suffered in the first Somali elections, AFIS attempts to achieve a working coalition were successful, because 'everybody agrees about the need to create a democratic political formation to oppose SYL and its further development that could bring the country to a totalitarian regime.'¹⁰⁴

In July 1954, an anti-SYL coalition was established under the title 'Gruppo Democratico Somalo' (GDS; Somali Democratic Group). After some initial doubts even the Unione Africana Somalia joined the Group. GDS was a coalition of the Unione Africana Somalia, Lega Progressista Somala, Unione Nazionale Somala, Unione Patriottica Somala, Partito Scidle e Mobilen and Associazione Gioventù Abgal. Within a few months, the new political coalition had taken the permanent title of Somali Democratic Party. Abdullahi Hagi Insania, a young primary school teacher who had recently returned from Italy, became leader of the new coalition. The creation of this group brought new worries to the SYL, since it could increase political support for Italy and the Administration. AFIS in fact never planned to confront the SYL directly, but always adopted a strategy of backing the pro-Italian groups and the moderate faction within the SYL. According to Martino, the Administration used all the best tactics to support the moderate wing of the SYL's campaign for the party leadership,¹⁰⁵ and, as a consequence, Aden Abdulla Osman was elected SYL President for more than two years.¹⁰⁶

Despite the AFIS's efforts to strengthen the pro-Italian movements, the most efficient parties to oppose the SYL remained the Hisbia Digil-Mirifle and the Gioventù del Benadir. In particular, the early differences between the Hisbia Digil-Mirifle and SYL deteriorated in May 1953, when members of the SYL extreme wing killed Osman Mohamed Hussein, an influential leader of the HDM and a member of the Territorial Council. As a consequence, the tension between the two movements escalated. In this respect, it is particularly significant to note the speech that Abdulkadir Mohamed Aden, a leader of HDM, delivered in a service of commemoration for Osman Mohamed Hussein. He said that the HDM had to respond to SYL terrorists by adopting the same methods, 'because the best way for fighting against violence is to assure respect for everybody's life.'¹⁰⁷

In 1954, the two major antagonists of Somali political life, AFIS and the SYL, realised that they needed each other. The Administration wanted the SYL's support to govern the country peacefully and the League needed to be on good terms with the Administration to strengthen its position. Del Boca, however, claims that this easing of tension was only superficial; neither of the two contenders had altered their position.¹⁰⁸

After the elections, and after Martino presented the development plan at the Trusteeship Council, the Council decided to send a new mission to Somalia. The mission's tasks was to evaluate Somalia's economic situation. In a letter to Spinelli, the AFIS Secretary-General, Martino disclosed his worries about economic improvement in Somalia. He feared that the mission would consider the Somali economic situation to be unsatisfactory, and that the mission would not give credibility to the economic development plan he had presented at the UN Trusteeship Council a few months earlier.¹⁰⁹ In fact, while Martino was trying to present a positive image of the Somali political situation, in reality it was worsening. Even the conclusion, in 1954, of an agreement between the United States and the Italian government for economic co-operation and technical assistance in Somalia, with the creation of an 8 million somalos fund, was not helpful.

The Somali economy remained stagnant. The first issue was the AFIS budget reduction from 9,000 million lire in 1950 to 5,500 million lire in 1954-5. It is significant at this point to recall the concerns Fornari had raised in 1951, when the 1951-2 AFIS budget was reduced to 6,000 million lire. And although year by year the process

of Somalisation was spreading widely and an increasing number of Italian officers were being repatriated, the Somali economy was such that it needed more than ordinary administration. Fornari had already stated that, for the Italian mandate to succeed in achieving economic and social development, it was necessary to provide the AFIS with an annual budget of 8,000 million lire.¹¹⁰ Secondly, there was a total absence of credit institutions in Somalia, and as a consequence private enterprises were paralysed. The last problem was represented by the huge development of banana plantations which were monopolised by Italian merchants.¹¹¹ Umberto Triulzi, in his study of Italy and the Somali economy during the mandate, emphasises that the decision by AFIS to increase banana production wasted three important commodities of the Somali economy: cotton, salt and leather. Although export volumes in the period 1950–9 increased from 23.2 million somalos to 103.7 million, this consisted almost entirely of bananas. According to Triulzi, the Administration lost the opportunity to exploit the land levelled, reclaimed and irrigated for banana production to plant other fruits which could have been more competitive in the overseas market.¹¹²

In his conclusion to the report to the Foreign Minister Martino stated, 'let me tell you all the things which have been done in favour of Italian commercial interest.'¹¹³ The Administrator listed with pride a number of initiatives AFIS had taken to protect or increase Italian economic activity in Somalia. The main companies involved were AGIP, Coniel and Italcable. AGIP was charged with rebuilding the gas storage facilities under special conditions. The company in fact did not have to pay any tax on its income for a ten-year period; moreover, it did not have to pay taxes for the importation of materials. Italcable was contracted to organise all the telecommunications services in Somalia and Coniel was charged with administering the electricity supply. Beside these companies, the Fatebenefratelli was awarded a ten-year contract for the management of the hospital of Kismayu.

'Many measures', Martino stated, 'have been adopted in favour of Italian companies. The main act was to extend until December 1955 the exemption from taxes of all machinery used by industries and farms.'

This initiative ran into opposition from the Territorial Council and the UN Advisory Council. As a consequence of the tax exemption accorded to Italian companies, AFIS lost about 100 million lire. When in 1953 cotton prices fell, the Administration helped all the companies which were in economic difficulties. AFIS intervention

cost about 16 million lire in assisting: Gatti, Boero, Della Nave, Codeco and SAIS (Società Agricola Italo-Somala). With the sole aim of helping Italian soap factories, taxes on soap importation were considerably increased, while taxes on raw materials for producing soap were reduced. SAIS, one of the largest and oldest farming enterprises in Somalia, was given considerable assistance. The Administration adopted a protectionist policy over sugar imports. Sugar was SAIS's main product. Protection was realised both through a ban on sugar imports and through the imposition of taxes for any quantity of goods which had to be imported to satisfy Somali needs. Furthermore SAIS was authorised to amortise expenses for the new factories by 1960.

The Administration granted a property of considerable size at very low cost to the Cotoniére d'Africa, a cotton manufacturing company. Moreover, to protect Cotoniére d'Africa products, it reduced the level of importation of cotton from the Sterling Area. With this initiative, the Cotoniére d'Africa could sell all its produce. Furthermore, while a 35 per cent duty was levied on imported cotton, Cotoniére d'Africa did not pay any excise tax. In the agricultural field, the Administration organised drainage in Shabelle and Lower Juba. In that region there were a conspicuous number of Italian farmers and Villabruzzi (SAIS).¹¹⁴ These details were provided by Martino in his secret report to the Foreign Ministry, and they constituted AFIS's main activities in favour of Italian economic interests in Somalia. There was a considerable number of small and medium-sized Italian industries which were protected and assisted by AFIS. In many cases a capitalistic exploitation of Somali resources was realised.

In September 1954, the Somali flag was introduced and presented to the UN mission in Somalia. This was a five-point star on a blue background. The star's five points symbolised the five territories of Greater Somalia: former Italian Somalia, British Somaliland, French Somalia, Ogaden and NFD. The national flag adopted by a decree of the Italian President was the strongest symbolic expression of ambitious Somali nationalism, and it also represented the only mutual agreement between the SYL and AFIS. The last task Martino undertook before leaving office was to plan the general election of 1956. The Territorial Council was to be transformed into an elective organ of growing importance in Somali political life. Martino could conclude his appointment by stating that a new era of collaboration between AFIS and the members of the Territorial Council and all political parties had been achieved in Somalia.¹¹⁵

CONCLUSION

In his study of Italian colonialism Robert Hess maintains that after Italy took on the mandate in 1950, its development of the territory was very different from the pre-war decades. Rome intended 'to demonstrate through its Administration its good faith in training an ex-colony for independence'.¹¹⁶ A dissenting opinion is offered by Lewis who claims that 'while in education the Italian Trust Administration built essentially upon the efforts of their immediate British predecessors, in economics the groundwork went directly back to the fascist period'.¹¹⁷ In 1955, halfway through the mandate, the economic development of Somalia did not mirror the Fascist model. The priority accorded to the production of bananas, protected during the Fascist colonial administration, was not part of a strategy aimed at restoring the pre-war situation in Somalia. During the first years of AFIS, the lack of resources and the lack of a programme of economic development show evidence of confusion and improvisation. Banana production was supported not only to protect Italian interests, but also because the banana crop was already the main product in Somalia. Therefore, even Hess's belief in an Italian commitment in favour of a varied agricultural development in its former colony is overestimated. In the first five years of administration, banana production doubled from 400,000 tons in 1952 to 800,000 tons in 1955. At the same time, cotton production, one of the main crops of the Somali market economy, halved from 25,000 tons in 1952 to 10,000 tons in 1955.¹¹⁸ However, Mark Karp emphasises that since the 1920s 'the increasing preference which has been given to bananas can be attributed in large part to the instability of cotton prices on the world market'.¹¹⁹ Yet at the beginning of the administration, very little, if anything, was done to promote crops other than bananas. The repeated complaints from Fornari about the budget cuts are evidence that the plan for the economic improvement of Somalia was destined to fail. In economic terms, the first four years of the Administration were wasted; in addition, the launch of a Seven Year Development Plan in 1954 was of little help in laying solid foundations for an independent Somali economy.¹²⁰

However, it was in the political field that AFIS's performance was weakest. This was due to the misjudged attitude of the Administration towards Somali society. From an Italian perspective, the process of modernisation had to follow a Western political model. Very little consideration was given to the division and 'political' organisation

that characterise Somalia. The main aim of the Italian Administration was to identify the strongest political formation and establish with it links that would remain strong even after the end of the mandate. As a result, AFIS gave up supporting the southern regional political parties in favour of rapprochement with the SYL.¹²¹ With this attitude, which failed to respect Somali traditional structure, Italy promoted the adoption of a form of state inappropriate to the Somali people. It should be noted that in March 1955, Gregorio Consiglio, the editor of *Affrica*, wrote with concern about the poor results achieved by AFIS in relation to the establishment of stable and efficient political foundations in Somalia. Consiglio stressed that in 1960 the chances that Somalia would become a free and truly independent state were limited. And this because 'Somalia has not now and it will not have in the next few years an infrastructure and economic productivity able to support even the poorest state balance.' According to Consiglio, Somalia still needed several decades before it could control a modern democratic system. All initiatives, structures, laws that can prepare a people for independence 'if imposed without harmonisation with social development and the economy, if not organised according to the needs and perceptions of the population, can be destructive'.¹²² The issues, highlighted by Consiglio, instead of initiating a debate, provoked a harsh response from Italian government representatives. Deputy Vittorio Badini Confalonieri, an Under-Secretary in the Foreign Ministry, in a written response to Consiglio's allegations, stated that both he and the government firmly rejected Consiglio's point of view.¹²³ As a result the opportunity to review critically AFIS's work up to 1955, at a very crucial moment of the administration, was lost.

Finally, in 1955, the problem of border demarcation between Somalia and Ethiopia was still unresolved, although the UN had urged the Italian and Ethiopian governments to resolve this problem quickly. Drysdale emphasises that 'it was not, however, until 1955 that a real start to negotiations between Italy and Ethiopia began, but the impetus soon flagged when the Ethiopian government declined to permit Somalis to join the Italian delegation as expert'.¹²⁴

At the end of the first five years of the Administration, probably the most significant period for the preparation of independence in Somalia, the main issues were still unresolved. The economy, which was vital in order to guarantee Somalia's financial autonomy, was in its infancy and destined to rely massively on foreign aid after 1960. On the political side, the Administration had not even considered what

impact a Western political model on Somali society would have. The principal concern was to establish links with the main political actor in place after independence, even if this actor was the traditional enemy of AFIS: the SYL.

4 AFIS: Two Difficult Tasks – Democratisation and Somalisation

Following the League's strong showing in the 1954 local election, the Administration was under increasing pressure to transfer power to the Somalis. Although after four years of mandate the process of Somalisation had reached a considerable level, democratisation was proceeding slowly. Clearly the main reason to hasten Somalisation was the result of AFIS's limited financial resources. Therefore, at the beginning of 1956 there were more than 5,000 officials, of whom 4,380 were Somalis and only 621 Italians.¹ Comparing the British protectorate of Somaliland to the AFIS, John Markakis emphasises that, by the middle of the 1950s, there were nearly 5,000 Somalis employed in all branches of the AFIS, while in British Somaliland in the North there were no more than 300 officials and just 30 of them were Somali.² This difference between the two territories was determined by the different administrative and political context in which the British protectorate and AFIS operated. On the one hand, British officials kept the protectorate's bureaucratic structure small and efficient. On the other, British administrators were not under pressure, as Italian administrators were, to hasten the process of democratisation.³ As a consequence of Somalisation, the distance between the Somalis and the Italian community increased markedly. Many Italians decided to cut all ties with Somalis, and remained closed off in their community and isolated from any renewal process.⁴ Mohamed Aden Sheikh emphasises that, particularly in Mogadishu, there was a clear division between Somalis and the Italian community. They acted like two parallel societies without contacts, meetings and social events in common.⁵ Despite the fact that the Italian commitment to the process of Somalisation was determined by political and financial motives, there is no reason to doubt that the administrators were seriously committed to transferring increasing administrative powers to Somali hands. From 1950, Ambassador Fornari understood the urgency of democratisation and the setting up of main institutions Somalia needed to start its path towards democracy. In 1951, he established

the Territorial Council which was the first non-clan organisation in Somalia formed by Somalis. After four years, the Somalis were demanding legislative power. Moreover the education system was coming up with good results by developing a Somali intelligentsia. In addition, the 1954 administrative elections, held without incident and in a peaceful environment, provided evidence that the Somali population was ready to take another important step towards democracy. Furthermore, the Italian government decided to reduce AFIS's budget to 5 billion lire. As a consequence, after 1955, the Italian administrators, Anzilotti and Mario Di Stefano, governed the country in a race against time, transferring increasing responsibilities and power to the Somalis.

At this point, before analysing the process of democratisation in the former Italian colony, several elements need to be considered. In 1954, and even more so in 1950, Italy was a very young democracy. Although it had a 60-year-long liberal tradition, in the early 1920s Italy's democratic process had been interrupted. In 1922, Benito Mussolini, following the March on Rome, was appointed Prime Minister. In a short time he had turned his leadership into a dictatorship, and Italy was run by a totalitarian regime for more than 20 years. In 1915, Italy entered the First World War and in the years after the war, Italy was beset by turmoil and disorder from 1919 to 1922. With this background, at the beginning of the 1950s Italy might have had excellent scholars of democracy, but it did not have enough practical experience to teach democracy. Italy was at the beginning of a phase in which it needed to pursue its own journey towards democratisation, testing the efficacy of its own democratic institutions before proposing them as a model for any other country. In addition, the nature of politics in Italy was still controversial, not least because in 1953, just three years before conferring legislative powers to the Somali Territorial Council, the Christian Democrats had tried, unsuccessfully, to run the country by themselves with a dubious modification of the electoral system. The new electoral law was popularly called the fraud law, '*legge truffa*', because it declared that the political coalition that received more than 50 per cent of the vote cast would receive an automatic bonus. The Christian Democrats failed to reach their goal by just 2 per cent. Had they done so, the democratic process in Italy would probably have been badly undermined.

Furthermore, Italian politicians were strongly biased in favour of centralisation at that time. The Italian government had fought a strong battle against Sicilian separatism although, in the end, Sicily

was treated under the Italian constitution as an autonomous region. Therefore, in the 1950s, Italy could transfer to Somalia important theoretical notions about democratisation, but had a very poor empirical knowledge of the methods that would establish a working democracy in an environment like Somalia, and in a situation where the very word and concept of democracy did not make much sense if not related to clanism and to a social system with features very different from a Western one.

Yet, on 7 November 1954, the AFIS Domestic Affairs Office reported to the Italian Foreign Ministry that, in view of the next elections scheduled for 1956, the time was right to begin a process of gradually transferring powers from AFIS to the Territorial Council. The report stated that 'this measure – that would have a very good echo both in the country and on the international scene – is advisable mainly in consideration of the political progress of the territory. It would be appropriate that the Territorial Council, after four years of activity, could take this step to reach gradually complete independence by 1960.'⁶

Conferring legislative powers to the Territorial Council, beside satisfying the aspirations of the Somali elite, would increase the responsibility of the Territorial Council in administering the country. Furthermore, after the SYL achieved significant success in the administrative elections in March 1954, postponing for a later period the transfer of powers to the Territorial Council would create tensions and hostility between the Administration and Somalis.⁷ The report identified the Italian Parliament as the institution responsible for the drafting of an Act conferring legislative powers on the Territorial Council. More and more powers, in different fields and with an increasing degree of importance, needed to be transferred from the Italian Administration to the Territorial Council.⁸ In the summer of 1954, Ambassador Martino, in a speech delivered in Rome on the 'Political and Economic Aspects of Somalia', emphasised to the Italian public the strong demand in Somalia for the establishment of representative structures with legislative powers.⁹ However, only a few Italian officials had a clear view of the complexity of Somali society. In a book written by Mario d'Antonio and published in 1962 by the Italian government, the mistaken Italian attitude towards the Somali situation emerges. D'Antonio writes:

even in this circumstance it was necessary to proceed carefully in introducing radically innovative measures. Two main tendencies,

with differing social structures, style of lives and mentalities in Somalia had to be reconciled. On the one side old Somalia, tribal, traditionalist, pastoral, strongly tied to the past and to its ethnicity and religion, and on the other side modern developing Somalia, with its working people of cities and small villages, which created elective municipalities, organised in several political parties, which quickly adopted a modern style of life and tended to introduce the productive techniques of the West.¹⁰

This reflects perfectly the Italian attitude towards the situation in Somalia at that time. Italians officials considered Somali society to be archaic, where the clan system represented the negative aspects of the past, whereas the adoption of a political system fashioned on a Western liberal democracy was synonymous with modernity. Nothing could have been more dangerous than this prejudicial approach.

After this introductory explanation the first thing to analyse is the electoral law introduced for the election of the Territorial Council, which from 1956 was called the Legislative Assembly. The electoral law was promulgated on 31 March 1955 in a decree by Ambassador Anzilotti, who had replaced Martino.¹¹ The most relevant article of the electoral decree is the first:

The Territorial Council is elected with male universal suffrage: from people living outside municipal districts with second degree elections, through the *shir* and the electoral representatives, and from people living inside the municipal districts with direct elections. The preference of the electoral representatives and of voters resident in the municipal districts is direct, free and secret, and it goes according to the lists of candidates in competition. The representation is proportional.¹²

AFIS introduced a mixed election system. On the one side, people resident in the cities could express their preference directly, while Somalis living in the smaller villages and nomads were invited to appoint a representative to express the preference of a clan, or more than one clan. The preference expressed by an electoral representative would reflect the stance of all clan members that appointed him. D'Antonio agreed that this formulation was determined by the difficulties that AFIS had in organising a census for the nomadic populations.¹³ While people living in the municipal districts numbered 230,000, only 50,000 were entitled to vote as residing and registered in the districts. Meanwhile, people living outside the

districts numbered about 1.5 million and they were highly fragmented according to clan families.¹⁴ As a consequence of this decision, the clan system was reinforced. In fact, in this situation the clans' male populations were forced to find a representative party of the clan, and the coincidence between clan and party became intense. Moreover, when the *shir* began their work to appoint electoral representatives, a new problem emerged: the 'Arifato'. An institution of the Somali clan system, the Arifato was a special arrangement between a sub-clan, or more likely a family, and a clan. According to the Arifato, a clan took into its territory a family of a different clan that, for whatever reason, wanted or was forced to leave its ethnic group and then its own territory.¹⁵ The Arifato represented a serious problem, mainly because it was a traditional institution of Somali society. It had developed mainly in the regions of Upper and Lower Juba. During 1950 and 1951 in these regions the three groups of Emit, Disso and Uangel caused serious unrest which shook the clan order of the population of Baidoa, Bur Acaba and Oddur. On 22 March 1951, as a consequence of this turmoil, a Special Regional Assembly was called to restore public order in the region of the High Juba. After four days of discussions, the institution of the Arifato was reaffirmed. On 13 April 1951, the Administrator approved the Special Regional Assembly's assessment of the Arifato.¹⁶ AFIS considered the Arifato to be an even more ancient institution than the clan system, and for this reason destined to disappear in a short time. However, during the *shir* the problem emerged again. Under these circumstances, the Administration issued three directives. First, the Arifa could not hold *shir*. They had to participate in the *shir* held by the clan, and they had to confer their electoral preferences exclusively upon the representative belonging to the main ethnic group. Second, after the election of the leader, if the families within the *shir* numbered more than 50, they could elect their own leader. Third, the Administration declared that groups of Arifa belonging to the same ethnic group but fragmented into other clans could not combine together.¹⁷

Despite the fact that Italian officials justified the adoption of a mixed electoral system with the difficulties in registering all Somalis entitled to vote, AFIS's aim probably was to fragment the political scene, and to gain greater control over members of clans and sub-clans that were close to the Administration. With the introduction of the mixed electoral law, and the consequent fragmentation of the Somali political scene, the Administration intended to halt the SYL's successes in Somalia. After the comprehensive defeat of the

pro-Italian parties in the 1954 administrative election, the introduction of an indirect electoral system could help the clans close to the Administration to regain the support they had lost. With the introduction of the new electoral system, the clans' electoral representative could represent as many as 20,000 votes.¹⁸ In several *shir* held during the months before the election there were few problems. The Director of the Domestic Affairs Office requested all district heads to be particularly careful in checking the main political activities. Several irregularities were committed during August, albeit in just a few *shir*. The Director's main concern was that if this was repeated in other *shir*, the entire clan election process could be in jeopardy. The principal irregularity recorded was about the participation in the *shir* of people not belonging to a clan or sub-clan. The Director's letter states that in a few *shir* hundreds, if not thousands, of people had participated even though they were not entitled to do so.¹⁹

In a few other cases, some clan leaders joined more than one *shir*, with the aim of influencing people belonging to the same clan but to a different *shir*. The reason was that the *shir*, in certain areas of the country, were lying about their real composition, in order to obtain more seats in the Legislative Assembly.²⁰ Nevertheless, the overall electoral process of the *shir* was not compromised and this problem was restricted to a very small number of *shir*.

Somalis voted for the Legislative Assembly on 29 February 1956. The Assembly was comprised of 70 seats: 60 for the Somalis, four for the Italian community, four for the Arab community, one for the Indian community and one for the Pakistani. At the 1956 general election, there were four parties and six ethnic coalitions, while at the 1954 municipal elections there were more than 20 groups listed. In the 1956 elections the SYL again won a decisive victory, taking 43 out of the 60 seats. The Hisbia Digil-Mirifle, the second party in the country, obtained 13 seats, while the SDP, the pro-Italian coalition, gained just three seats. Finally, the Marehan Union elected one deputy. Yet when parliamentary groups were formed, the SDP and Marehan Union deputies joined the SYL, leaving the HDM as the sole opposition. According to Mohamed Mukhtar, 'this confirmed the northern tribal orientation of the first government.'²¹ The SYL, with its large membership of Darod and Hawiye, in fact represented northern nomadic interests, as opposed to southern pastoralists.²²

Aden Abdulla Osman was appointed Chairman of the Legislative Assembly. The Assembly, which began its work in April, had the task of preparing the law for the establishment of the first Somali

government. In the Legislative Assembly's opening speech, Anzilotti stated that 'the programme of Somalisation that [I] presented at the Territorial Council on 23 June is outdated since not only all districts but also all regions are run by Somali officials.'²³

In the same speech, Anzilotti mentioned that the problem of the Somali-Ethiopian border was still unresolved.²⁴ On 7 May, the Legislative Assembly decided that the Somali government would consist of five ministries: Domestic Affairs, Social Affairs, Economic Affairs, Financial Affairs and General Affairs. However, behind the pan-Somali and nationalist façade, the government adhered to clan logic. The Prime Minister was a Hawiye and the Ministries were conferred on Hawiye, Darod and Dir members. The Digil Mirifle minority, which numbered 10 per cent of SYL membership, were not given any major governmental positions. Abdullahi Issa was appointed Prime Minister and the SYL held the principal positions in the government. The move from the Territorial Council to the Legislative Assembly and the establishment of the government represented a significant step towards Somalia's political independence. Somalis had the opportunity to experiment with four years of self-government, although under continued Italian presence. Mario D'Antonio stated that in the introduction of the Legislative Assembly, which was 'simple and well organised', it was possible to see the influence of Italian constitutional organisation.

TOWARDS THE CREATION OF AN INDEPENDENT STATE

The first steps of the newly established Somali government had a significant influence on Somali political life. Although Mogadishu now had the political means to start the process of independence, AFIS continued to assert its importance in the process of democratisation and independence. After the introduction of the Somali government, the position of the Administrator in the Somali political structure changed significantly. The Administrator now became a figure more like a President of the Republic with limited powers,²⁵ although his influence was still considerable. After 1956, AFIS pushed ahead the process of democratisation, and on 30 September the Legislative Assembly approved a new organisation for municipal councils, based on the Italian model, and in December 1957, it introduced a new legal provision for Somali citizenship.²⁶

However, the most delicate issue of Somalia's journey towards

independence was the introduction of a constitution by 1960, when Somalis would take over all political and administrative functions from the Italians. In September 1957, Administrator Anzilotti established a Political Committee and a Technical Committee charged with making the necessary arrangements for the adoption of the constitution.²⁷ Aden Abdulla Osman, the chairman of the Legislative Assembly, was appointed chairman of the Political Committee with Prime Minister Abdullahi Issa Mohamud also a member. At the beginning of its work, the Technical Committee had greater importance because from the result of its work the Somali constitution would be shaped. During its first stage the Technical Committee was composed of nine Italians who held relevant positions in Somalia. One member of the Committee was an expert appointed by the Advisory Council; otherwise the Committee could appoint any member it believed could be useful to its work.²⁸

The Technical Committee had to consist of experts, and, therefore, 'it was impossible for Somalis to be members of it because even the best educated did not have enough qualifications.'²⁹

Only at a later stage, after November 1957, were seven Somalis accepted as members of the Technical Committee, while the Advisory Council appointed the Egyptian Professor Sayer Dayer of the University of Ein Sciams in Cairo as a member of the Committee.³⁰

In this situation, the Italian influence on the Technical Committee was overwhelming. The Italian constitution became the main model for drawing up the constitution of the Somali state. Together with the Italian constitution, however, the Committee considered several other parliamentary constitutions, such as the French one of October 1946 and the West German constitution adopted in 1949.

The Technical Committee also decided to consider presidential constitutions, such as the American one, as well as the Philippine constitution of 1935. Furthermore, the Committee considered it useful to analyse several Islamic state constitutions. Consequently it studied the Kingdom of Libya's constitution of 1951, the constitution of the former Egyptian republic of January 1956, two Syrian constitutions, those of September 1950 and July 1953, the Lebanese constitution of May 1926 and the Iraqi constitution of March 1925. Finally, the constitutions of the three country members of the Advisory Council and the Charter of the UN were also examined.³¹ D'Antonio stressed that the Italian constitution represented a perfect model 'because of its linearity and clarity, it is suitable to be easily assimilated by a young Assembly.'³²

Costanzo emphasised that there were two reasons to base the Somali constitution mainly on the Italian model:

it was the constitution of the State in charge of the administration that established or promoted the creation of the new institutions and the legal system already existing in the country, and because it was more suitable for the greater completeness of some sections, such as the rights and duties of man and citizen, a complete government and parliamentary system.³³

How this constitution would impact on the clans and their structure was not considered.

But, the Italian constitution was the result of an atypical Italian historical period, reflecting the experiences of the civil war and of the dramatic fight against Fascism. Under the shadow of 20 years of Fascist dictatorship, the organisation of the state was designed to protect democratic institutions. For this reason, the Italian constitution does not confer strong powers on a single high office of state. And, in particular, the Prime Minister must be supported by a consistent majority of the Parliament. The Italian constitution replaced in all respects the former organisation of the totalitarian state. Psychologically, the more it replaced of the former Fascist state, the better it was for the creation of a strong democracy.

On the surface, in the 1960s, the Italian political system and that of the Somalis were similar, but the general features of the two populations, their social and cultural backgrounds, were very different. Italian scholars and politicians did not take into consideration that while the Somali population had a common language, culture and religion, 'the Somali people are broken up into clans and traditionally lack the concept of the state as a hierarchical power.'³⁴

Hussein Adam writes that 'while there is a common and deeply-rooted belief in Somali society that all Somalis are descended from a single ancestor, there is little doubt that geography and history have created several distinct sub-cultures in Somalia.'³⁵

More clearly, Terence Lyons and Ahmed Samatar explain that Somali culture, with its complex and powerful system of ethical norms that regulate behaviour, was linked to the requirements of rural subsistence. 'The Somali pastoral system and the culture of kinship that supported it began to suffer distortions as commodity production for the international market was introduced. With the arrival of colonialism Somali traditions became less connected to underlying social and cultural forces.'³⁶

Italian scholars and politicians did not consider that pastoralism and clanism, strong features of Somali society, could simply be ignored in a new constitution based on a Western model. In addition, while the Italian constitution to some extent takes into account the regional system, the Somali constitution provided only for a state structure.

Salvatore Foderaro gives a positive assessment of the Somali constitution, stating that it followed the model of the Italian constitution in creating a parliamentary government system that is unique in Africa.³⁷ Nicolino Mohamed, on the other hand, in an interview with Angelo Del Boca on 23 June 1960, after stressing the strong influence of clanism in Somalia, stated that 'Somalis, and mainly nomads and semi-nomads, will carry on following the clan leaders and not the President of the Republic. I believe that it has been a big mistake not to introduce, as Ghana did, a Chamber of clan leaders together with the creation of the Legislative Assembly.'³⁸

In these first steps of Somali political life, while the Italian influence remained strong, the roots of the collapse of the democratic state can be identified. The Italian attitude of considering clanism as a negative feature of Somali social life, but using it when convenient to do so, influenced the new Somali politicians. Instead of establishing a political system that could allow the coexistence of clans, even the government was committed to eradicating it. On 27 July 1959, the Prime Minister, Abdullahi Issa Mohamud, presenting to the Legislative Assembly the programme of the new government, emphasised the government's commitment against clan division. He stated that this position, which was originally a fundamental part of SYL's programme, considered clanism as a national plague which increased division and tensions among Somalis. In order to resolve this problem, the government aimed at an improvement in education and diffusion of culture to create among fellow citizens a sense of shared identity. He emphasised that 'race differences, wherever they are in Somalia, have to find their point of peaceful and productive coexistence. In this field the government wants to adopt a proper political and administrative action with the aim of wiping out race and clan prejudices.'³⁹

THE FIRST TENSION IN THE SYL: THE CREATION OF THE GREAT SOMALI LEAGUE

In the period after the establishment of the Somali government, the constitution was the most important issue. After 1960 and after

independence, the constitution should have been an instrument contributing to stability in the country. However, in 1956 it was evident that the electoral law adopted for the general elections was inadequate. The double procedure of voting was not satisfactory and did not provide a sufficient guarantee of impartiality. It was reported that the composition of the *shir*, where electoral representatives had to be appointed, nominally was larger than reality.⁴⁰ The final result of the election, although with few irregularities, reflected the positive attitude of the country towards the SYL, but probably reduced the likelihood that the smallest groups would obtain better representation in the new Legislative Assembly. The adoption of a proportional system might have been a more efficient way to allow full representation of Somalia's smaller parties in the new chamber, as well as protection of the interests of the clans.⁴¹ However, the electoral law reduced the positive effect that the proportional system could have had. Angelo Del Boca underlines this point. He states that, although the first general elections were held peacefully, they were criticised by the UN Trusteeship Council and the Advisory Council. The two UN bodies suggested that the electoral law might be improved bearing in mind that the deputies elected in 1959 would be in charge of approving the constitution.⁴² The new electoral law, approved by the Legislative Assembly on 22 November 1958, was endorsed by the Administrator in December. Although the new electoral law was for the first time universal and direct, the problem remained how to register the population living outside the municipal districts. Following the problems that emerged during the 1953 census of the rural population, the Administration decided to adopt a mixed electoral system of a direct and indirect voting. This was highly criticised because of the difficulty in monitoring the voting operations of the *shir*. In 1958, the problem of the rural census was still unresolved. In 1956, following the first general election, the Trusteeship Council highlighted the shortcomings of the electoral law.⁴³ AFIS prepared a census project for the nomadic and semi-nomadic populations which would have been carried out in a short period of time, i.e. about one year. Every region and district would have a registry office, and the responsibility for this operation was given to the prefect and regional commissioners. However, the preparation for such a system took longer than the Italian officials expected; on the eve of the 1959 general election, the problem of the rural census was still unresolved. A detailed and accurate census, besides limiting irregularities during the election, would be decisive in estimating the correct number of

people belonging to each constituency. And, therefore, it would be possible to determine the right number of deputies for any single constituency. In 1957, the year during which the administration intended to complete the registration of all Somalis, the census failed to obtain accurate results in three major nomadic regions: Mijertina, Mudugh and Lower Juba. But it was extremely successful in Benadir, Hiran and Upper Juba. Mukhtar suggests that in view of the results showing that the population of these latter three regions was larger than the former three, the number of deputies allocated was not adequate.⁴⁴ For example, according to the 1957 registration campaign, 889,000 people were living in Mijertina, while the former census in 1953 estimated that the entire population of Somalia was 1,263,584.⁴⁵ Under these circumstances, one possible solution was that the person in charge of the polling station decide on the spot whether to allow a non-registered citizen to vote, and before he or she voted to mark the elector's hand with indelible ink. On 26 May 1958, the Legislative Assembly rejected this project, emphasising the need to proceed with the census and the need for the entire Somali population to be registered before the election. Costanzo stated that, despite the fact that the Administration recognised that the Assembly's position was logical and understandable, this position was not entirely legitimate, considering the local situation. 'Furthermore, Italy stated that, in order to promote an orderly and advantageous political development of the country, the general elections for the new assembly had to be held at the latest by March 1959.'⁴⁶

The Italian position prevailed and the project of completing the census before the election was abandoned. At the end of 1958, the Assembly decided that the next Legislative Assembly would be elected for five years. The general elections was set for 1 March 1959, and the use of indelible ink to mark the electors not registered was adopted. The electoral system adopted was proportional representation.⁴⁷

The introduction of the new electoral law became one of the main areas of tension between the SYL and the opposition parties. Moreover, after 1956 the SYL suffered a major crises. In 1957, Hagi Mohamed Hussein, one of the most radical members of the SYL, became its chairman. Hagi Mohamed Hussein owed his popularity to his stand against the Italians, the French, the British and the Ethiopians. While in Cairo to receive a scholarship from the Egyptian government, he broadcast from Radio Cairo against the new political line adopted by the SYL towards AFIS, and roundly criticised Aden Abdulla Osman and Abdullahi Issa Mohamud for softening their

attitude towards Italy.⁴⁸ But it is difficult to assess whether the attitude of these two leaders towards Italy was spontaneous or was the result of AFIS pressure. Mohamed Aden Sheikh wrote that as a consequence of the frequent talks between Administrator Anzilotti and Aden Abdulla Osman, the SYL leader was called a friend of the Italians, despite the fact that he was not a collaborator and 'he did not need to take lessons of nationalism from any one'.⁴⁹

Hagi Mohamed Hussein, as chairman of SYL, adopted a strategy directed against Italy and in favour of the Arab Egyptian factions of the SYL, and compromised irreparably his relations with the moderate wing of the SYL. Consequently his chairmanship lasted for only one year. The moderate wing of the SYL strongly believed that at that time co-operating with AFIS was important for the future of the Somali state. Anzilotti, the newly appointed Administrator, strengthened the relationship with the moderate wing of the SYL, continuing the process started by former Administrator Martino.⁵⁰

On 22 May 1958, Aden Abdulla Osman and Abdullahi Issa Mohamud managed to expel Hagi Mohamed Hussein from the party. As a result, Hagi Mohamed Hussein established the Greater Somali League (GSL), adopting the extremist and anti-Italian position of the SYL. Within a few months the new movement was able to participate in the administrative elections. In the 20 October 1958 administrative elections the SYL attained 416 seats, the HDMS 175 and the newly created GSL 36.⁵¹ Although the GSL's first result was not significant, its head became the leader of the coalition of opposition parties against the SYL. Furthermore, from the documents of the AFIS it emerges that from the time of the administrative election to the general election of March 1959 the opposition leaders repeatedly complained to the Administrator of what they called the bad conditions in which Somali political life was developing. The SYL's supremacy in Parliament and in the government left little room for the other political forces.

One month after the administrative election, in November 1958, the Administrator received Hagi Mohamed Hussein, Geilani Scek Bin Scek of HDMS, Abucar Mahmud Socoro' of UGB (Unione Giovani Benadir), Hagi Mohamud Boracco of PLGS (Partito Liberale dei Giovani Somali) and the general inspector of GSL deputy Mohamed Scek Iusuf. Mohamed Scek Iusuf claimed that the juridical and administrative authorities were overtly supporting the majority party. To substantiate his point, he said that in many places lists of the opposition parties had been overruled by the authorities

without good reason.⁵² In Dusa Mareb, the GSL list was rejected and party activity was forbidden. In the same city, the PLGS were not allowed any political activity. In Bosaso, the judge did not recognise the existence of the GSL, and in Baidoa the prefect, in the absence of the judge and the district commissioner, stated that he could not accept the lists.⁵³ The opposition leaders made it clear to the Administrator that they did not know what to do in order to present their lists. The PLGS chairman emphasised that he was forced to leave Belet Weyn, and his list was not accepted. Furthermore, all the people in charge of the polling stations, or at least the majority of them, were appointed by the SYL. In Margherita, there were 28 polling stations but in only two were HDMS members in charge. Hagi Mohamed Hussein claimed that the forthcoming general election was more important than the administrative one, and that it was of particular importance to Somalia to protect the interests of the entire nation, rather than that of a specific group. He demanded from the Administrator a greater commitment to valid elections, and insisted that the next election should be monitored by the UN.⁵⁴ Especially after the creation of the GSL, although the party did not attain a significant result in the administrative election, the SYL defended its position in adopting even an unfair system. The emerging Somali state was supposed to be based on democratic rules, but political life was being administered exclusively by the SYL. In this period, the relationship between the SYL and AFIS was excellent. The administration supported the party in power – in a country that was going to be more or less a one-party state – to maintain peaceful conditions. AFIS intended to conclude its mandate without major complications, protecting 'the big financial interests and mainly those linked to the exportation and trade of bananas.'⁵⁵

In the last years of the administration, Italian commitment was directed towards the creation of an independent and democratic Somalia, but at the same time Italy was trying to reduce the AFIS budget. After 1956, Italy withdrew the expensive *Corpo di Sicurezza* from Somalia. On 1 January 1956, the Administrator promulgated three decrees to organise the withdrawal of the *Corpo di Sicurezza*; to create a new organisation called 'Esercito Somalo' (Somali Army) and to establish the 'Corpo di Polizia della Somalia' (Somali Police Corps). All the Somali members of the *Corpo di Sicurezza* were transferred to the Somali Army.⁵⁶ Within a few months Somali officers were in charge of the Army.

1959: A RISING TENSION

At the end of 1958 and at the beginning of 1959, tension between the SYL and the opposition parties was growing dramatically. In the first days of 1959, there were several clashes involving police and members of the opposition parties. During the clashes a girl was killed in Mogadishu and two members of the GSL were killed in Coriolei and Merca.⁵⁷ Following these events, a delegation of the opposition parties visited Di Stefano. This delegation comprised Abdulkadir Mohamed Aden, Secretary General of the HDMS, Omar Hagi Banafunzi, deputy chairman of GSL, Salah Mahadu Abdi, a member of the HDMS committee, Abucar Hamud Socoro', Chairman of the *Unione Nazionale Somala*, Hagi Mohamed Borraco and Ahmed Muddei Hussein, respectively Chairman and deputy Chairman of the PLGS. Abdulkadir Mohamed Aden stressed to the Administrator their concern about the latest developments in Somali political life. He stated that the opposition parties had decided not to participate in the next general election, and he explained that the decision had been taken for two main reasons: 'there is no right of free speech and of political expression, and entire sections [of the opposition parties] disappear. The sections' leaders are forced to sign documents agreeing to their groups' closure or they are put in jail.'⁵⁸

The delegation emphasised that in Somalia there was little control over SYL political activity and that state officials overtly supported the SYL in view of the next general election. The members of the opposition parties asked the Administrator to intervene to restore the rule of law. Di Stefano emphasised that a similar issue was also raised by the Advisory Council members, but in the end he did not provide any guarantee of AFIS commitment to prevent such a situation.⁵⁹

On 24 and 25 February, just a few weeks before the elections, the most dramatic incidents since the creation of AFIS occurred. New clashes in Mogadishu caused two fatalities and 17 wounded; 280 members of the GSL, its chairman Hagi Mohamed Hussein and other members of the opposition parties were arrested. The main personalities were sentenced to periods ranging from one year, in Hagi Mohamed Hussein's case, to nine years in Abdulkadir Mohamed Aden's case.⁶⁰ The political opposition to the SYL was weakened. The opposition parties now decided not to participate to the election. When in March 1959 the Somalis voted for the new Legislative Assembly, the SYL, facing a nonexistent opposition, won 83 seats out

of 90, while the PLGS got two seats and a faction of HDMS that decided to stand in the election against the orders of its governing committee had five deputies.⁶¹

Although the Egyptian member of the Advisory Council reported to the UN all the problems concerning the election and suggested that new elections should be held with better control, the situation did not change.⁶² After the new Legislative Assembly began its work, the Administrator invited Abdullahi Issa Mohamud to create a new government. On 27 June, the Prime Minister formed the government, and in the next month he presented the government's programme. The first point of the programme was the independence of Somalia. He stated that 'the main point of the policy that the government want to follow is to obtain complete independence for Somalia within the deadline fixed by the Trusteeship Agreement. The government wants to reach this aim that is fundamental for the future of the nation.'⁶³

In the future Somalia was to be a democratic and parliamentary republic and a unitary state.⁶⁴ By 1959, the process of Somalisation was almost completed: Somali civil servants had replaced all the Italians and the main activity of the government was aimed at creating the young state's foreign policy. The establishment of embassies and consulates was one of the main concerns of the Somali leaders.

Italy was destined to play a crucial role in Somali foreign policy. Abdullahi Issa Mohamud stresses this point and gives a positive assessment of Italy's commitment in Somalia during the Administration. He claims that

it is fair that the Somali government wants to have its closest relationships with Italy, even after the conclusion of the mandate. The government recognises the Italian commitment and sacrifices of the Italian people in favour of Somalia and the Somali population. In all different fields, from social to technical, from education to the health, from economic to financial, Italy provided large moral and material aid.⁶⁵

The Prime Minister gave more than a positive assessment of AFIS. His former position, the one he held during the first years of the mandate, was completely overturned. After the split within the SYL and the creation of the GSL, the anti-Italian attitude that characterised the first steps of the SYL was forgotten.

Although AFIS was in charge of finding a solution for the border demarcation problem between Somalia and Ethiopia, in 1959 it was

still unresolved. Abdullahi Issa Mohamud underscores this point and its importance to Somali foreign policy:

the border issue between Somalia and Ethiopia is a pressing problem. The related procedures have been initiated in the last period. However, even with our best will, the procedure for a solution of the problem has not been quick, and this is not due to the lack of interest of our government or of the Italian's. The government of Somalia will put its commitment to reaching a solution of the problem as soon as possible, before the end of the mandate if it is possible, trying to find a solution that is respectful of the aspirations and of the self-determination of the populations involved.⁶⁶

The Somali Prime Minister did not blame Italy for the delay and apathy with which Rome dealt with the Somali-Ethiopian border issue. Italy, in fact, did not want to get too involved in this problem, despite the fact that Rome was committed to finding a peaceful and permanent solution. However, such a task would have created tension with Addis Ababa or with Mogadishu, and Italian diplomacy at that time was geared towards avoiding both scenarios. To remain on good terms with the young Somali state and to strengthen its relationship with Ethiopia, Rome adopted an ambiguous policy which, in the end, did not help the two countries to solve their border problem within the period of the mandate. On the one side, in its relationship with Somalia, Rome was often reassured that even after independence the new state would be close to Italy. At the same time good relations between Rome and Addis Ababa were essential for Italian foreign policy in the Horn of Africa. On 1 September 1960, Brusasca, appointed for the occasion as special ambassador, visited Haile Selassie, hoping to get his support over the Alto Adige.⁶⁷ Following its national interests, Italy did not contribute, as it could have done, to establishing peaceful relations between the two countries. The border issue remained the main cause of tension between Mogadishu and Addis Ababa, and it caused several limited conflicts and eventually led to the war over Ogaden in 1978. Although after the end of the mandate Italy was more supportive of Somali demands, from the end of the 1970s Italy was no longer overtly in favour of the Somali position in the Ogaden dispute.⁶⁸ Rome pursued a balanced foreign policy towards Mogadishu and Addis Ababa, in order to be on good terms with both countries. This aspect of Italian foreign policy, adopted not only in the Horn of Africa but everywhere Italian interests might be involved in a conflict, reduced considerably its influence in the region.

Probably the main concern for Rome was that in view of Somali independence, as a result of the unification of Somaliland with Somalia, the newly established Republic of Somalia might join the Commonwealth. This event, it was felt, would significantly reduce Italian influence in the country. On 9 February 1959, in Hargheisa, British foreign policy aims in the region were outlined by the British Colonial Secretary, Lennox Boyd. He indicated that his government was in favour of the creation of a unitarian Somali state, formed by Somaliland and the territory under Italian administration.⁶⁹ Lewis underlined that 'in 1959, delegates from all the parties and political groups in the Protectorate had participated in the formation at Mogadishu of the National pan-Somali Movement. In its charter, this organisation embraced the twin aims of campaigning by peaceful means for the independence and unification of all the Somali territories.'⁷⁰

But, apart from the unification of the two territories, Rome believed that the aim of British foreign policy was to attract the Somali Republic into the Commonwealth. According to a report of the Italian Foreign Ministry, British purposes went beyond what Lennox Boyd had declared in Hargheisa: in fact, by January, Italian diplomats had learned about London's intention to promote the union between the Somaliland and Somalia with the hidden aim of inviting Somalia-Somaliland to join the Commonwealth.⁷¹

Although this idea received US support, Italy was adamantly opposed to it. Italy did not want to lose its influence in Somalia as 'it had a considerable economic commitment to it.'⁷² However, the strongest opposition to the British project came from Ethiopia and France, the other two states significantly interested in the future of independent Somalia. Ethiopia was mainly concerned that Somali membership of the Commonwealth could create a strong state on its border. Furthermore, it was afraid that a stronger Somalia would confront Ethiopia over the Ogaden. France was interested in keeping Djibouti under its influence, and in the case of the creation of a strong Somalia this would lead to tensions. Probably even the railway link between Djibouti and Addis Ababa would be threatened.⁷³ The Italian Foreign Ministry report stated that

Italian, French and Ethiopian reactions suggest the English will not insist, at least not clearly, upon pursuing the project of Somalia-Somaliland joining the Commonwealth. Washington, after the strong Ethiopian reactions to the English project, also made it clear that the US do not want to support fully the English position, but

they want, above all, a guarantee of a peaceful and stable arrangement in the region. The United Kingdom, perhaps knowing the opposition of other members of the Commonwealth to the project and having learned of the military responsibility that such an event would have for the Commonwealth, has apparently given up on it. But, it is still not totally sure.⁷⁴

Lewis emphasised that at the beginning of 1960 in the protectorate the idea of some form of Commonwealth membership was dropped. On 6 April 1960, the Somaliland Legislative Council approved a resolution calling for immediate independence and union with Somalia.⁷⁵

At the end of 1959 and at the very beginning of 1960, it was clear that the protectorate would join Somalia, however it was equally clear that it was difficult for Somalia to acquire the other three territories of the Horn inhabited by Somalis. Ethiopia for the Ogaden, Great Britain for the Northern Frontier District and France for Djibouti made it clear that the creation of a Greater Somalia was extremely unlikely.⁷⁶ On 30 August 1959, the representatives of the five territories of Greater Somalia participated in a conference in Mogadishu. As a result of this meeting, the principles of the pan-Somali movement were laid down. The movement's programme was the union of all Somalis in Kenya, Ogaden, Somalia, Somaliland and French Somalia.⁷⁷ Haile Selassie let the government in Mogadishu know that Addis Ababa would never give up the Ogaden. He was ready to discuss a final definition of the border between the two countries, but insisted on preserving Ethiopian territorial integrity. The UK, even though it was in favour of a union between Somalia and Somaliland, insisted that the NFD territory would not join the Somali state. The French President Charles De Gaulle stated 'once and for ever' that France would not give up its control over Djibouti to Somalia.⁷⁸ As for Italy, Del Boca writes that it 'is the only nation that does not take a position. In the unlikely hope of not displeasing the Somalis and Ethiopians, this position is going to generate suspicions amongst both of them.'⁷⁹

Italian diplomacy was conscious that, because of Italian influence in Somalia, the future development of Somali nationalism represented a responsibility for Italy. However, Rome was determined to adhere to its policy of impartiality. Italian refusal to express a clear position, even when it concerned the union between the territory administered by AFIS and Somaliland, became clear. In the eyes of Italy, the issue concerned only Somalia and Somaliland, and they had to have a free choice.⁸⁰

At the same time Italy's position over Greater Somalia was totally neutral. Rome was apparently only concerned about the border issue between Somalia and Ethiopia. Italy wanted to take the border problem before the UN General Assembly and have it solved before independence, but this was tempered by Rome's concern that it could cause tension with Ethiopia. When Abdullahi Issa Mohamud presented the second Somali government to the Legislative Assembly it was clear that Somalia was facing difficult foreign policy problems.

AN ECONOMY BASED ON BANANAS

On 26 July 1959, in a speech to the Legislative Assembly, Abdullahi Issa Mohamud presented the government's project for the economic development of Somalia. In the first instance, following the economic initiatives introduced in Martino's development plan, the Prime Minister underlined the government's commitment to an improved irrigation system. A more efficient system of water pipelines was crucial to developing agriculture to attain self-sufficiency. The government also intended to increase livestock, as in the period from 1952 to 1955 the value of livestock products in Somalia's export trade had nearly doubled, from US\$940,000 in 1952 to US\$1,756,000 in 1955. Nevertheless, according to Karp, the level of commercialisation of Somalia's livestock was low both externally and internally.⁸¹ Abdullahi Issa Mohamud also underlined the importance of developing an industrial system that would take advantage of the local labour force. In order to achieve this, he stressed that Somalia needed a considerable amount of foreign investment, capital and experts. Consequently, in order to establish or improve the already existing embryonic industrial structure, Somalia had to extend and upgrade its communication and transportation system. In conclusion, he emphasised the extreme importance of developing: fishing and construction.⁸²

The Prime Minister's speech revealed considerable government commitment to economic development. The Somali economy was particularly poor, as Luigi Bruno writes, 'all the experts and missions that visited Somalia agree that, despite the investments realised by the Administration and by private companies, the territory will be able to have an autonomous economy only after a period of 15–20 years following the end of the Mandate.'⁸³

In the private sector there was limited economic activity because of the uncertain political and legal situation. Although in 1954 the

Territorial Council had committed itself to protecting foreign companies and capital, investors still had no confidence that the future development of Somalia would be peaceful and that Mogadishu's attitude towards foreign capital would remain the same. The SYL's pan-Somali and nationalist attitude, coupled with its electoral successes, did not encourage Italians to invest outside the banana market. In addition, as Triulzi points out, the Somali economy offered little return on investment; other regions of Africa were more profitable. The difficult environmental and climatic conditions of Somalia encouraged private entrepreneurs to invest in Western and Equatorial Africa.⁸⁴ Nevertheless, the Italian community, now reduced to about 2,000 people, was in control of 70 per cent of Somalia's economy. Italian farmers were responsible for three-quarters of Somalia's agricultural production; Italian industries produced just about the entire industrial output, while the activities of Italian entrepreneurs constituted more than 50 per cent of Somali trade.⁸⁵ Giuseppe Vedovato underlines the Italian commitment to help develop a viable economic system. He states that the Administration's efforts in this respect were impressive: private and public commitment together in Somalia came to about 237.8 million somalos. Moreover, the oil companies had invested 179.2 million somalos in R&D.⁸⁶ Although Vedovato emphasised the economic involvement of AFIS in Somalia, he had to admit that 'from a brief analysis of the perspectives of Somalia's economy – in order to carry on an economic, social and financial development in the first years following independence – it will need foreign aid.'⁸⁷

The Administration was charged with establishing a solid basis for Somalia to begin the process of economic development. If this failed the reason was due to the features of Somalia's economic background and to the difficulty of changing these features in just ten years.⁸⁸ In his analysis of the economic relationship between Italy and Somalia, Triulzi argues that Italy was not prepared for such a commitment, the main evidence being the fact that AFIS had not analysed conditions or prepared an economic development package until 1954. When the Administration formally began its activity, it was not able to take the first step towards an organised economic project with a precise programme. Instead, its efforts were undertaken without a clear view of how to build the foundations for economic development.⁸⁹

In the months before independence, Italy pledged to support Somalia's economy with a financial aid of US\$2 million per year. This money was to be divided in the following way: \$1.5 million for 300 experts to stay in Somalia and help the country with its economic

development; \$200,000 for about 100 scholarships for Somali students to study in Italy; and \$300,000 for Somalia's national balance. The US pledged \$2.7 million and Britain \$300,000 to assist Somalia's economy. But, as Vedovato points out,

Italy is helping Somalia in another way, it agreed to buy Somali banana production for a specified period. This production, amounting to 65 per cent of Somalia's exports, is the main pillar of the Somali economy. The main concern at the moment is to be able to send Somali bananas to the Italian market at a more competitive price than the other European markets of the European Economic Community.⁹⁰

Italy had to absorb Somalia's production of bananas for at least four years. After independence, such a commitment encouraged Italian farmers to stay on in Somalia. Without the special protection that Rome gave to the Somali banana production, it is likely that many Italian farmers would have quit.⁹¹ However, as Triulzi points out, because all the concessions were dependent on the export of bananas in a protective system introduced in 1930, this did not mean that it was suitable for or advantageous to Somalia.⁹² The conditions for the export of bananas were negative. The cost of packaging was adding about 15 per cent to the final price of the product and the cost of transportation about 50 per cent. Karp observes that

after delivery at Somali ports, bananas are transported to Italy in freighters hired by the AMB (*Azienda Monopolio Banane*) and sold to licensed wholesale distributors at a price which is designed to cover (1) the c.i.f. of the fruit, (2) the cost of land transport in Italy, (3) the administrative expenses of AMB, and (4) the 'profit' of AMB, which in reality is an indirect tax imposed by the Italian government and ultimately paid for by the consumer.⁹³

As a consequence bananas from Guinea were available on the Italian market at a price of 105–110 lire/kg, while Somali bananas arrived in Italy costing between 130 and 170 lire/kg.⁹⁴

The banana production also stimulated some industrial activity. A few small companies, mostly owned by Italians, produced all the necessary materials to pack bananas for export. Other attempts at establishing small companies in food production, for example oil mills and tanneries, were unsuccessful. In these circumstances, it was impossible to speak of real industrial development. Only a very few industries were efficient, and mainly because they were largely

protected by the Italian economy, or their production was strictly related to the banana market. Public investments in this sector of the economy remained very poor, while private investments (about 60 million somalos) were undertaken by just one company: SAIS.⁹⁵

Before the Second World War, Somalia's exports relied on four main products: bananas, cotton, salt and leather. They accounted for three-quarters of the total amount of exports. In the period following the end of the war, the situation changed considerably. The main facility of salt production, the salt mine of Hafun, was abandoned. Salt exports dropped from a value of 205,000 somalos in 1950 to 15,100 somalos in 1959.⁹⁶ During the ten years of the Administration, leather exports never reached a significant level. As a percentage of exports its share decreased from 30.3 per cent to 9.2 per cent. Finally, cotton exports dropped from 14.3 million somalos in 1952 to 1 million somalos in 1959. The situation in the banana sector was quite different. Banana exports increased in value from 6.8 million somalos in 1950 to 65 million somalos in 1959. At the end of the mandate, the total value of Somali exports had increased from 23.2 million somalos to 103.7 million, with the main portion (61.4 per cent) consisting of bananas.⁹⁷ In this situation, banana producers could realise high profits quickly. In fact, the banana trade was convenient because the Italian market was absorbing all the output. Since 1949, the AMB had undertaken the distribution of Somali bananas. The price of Somali bananas was higher than other countries', and for this reason could be sold only on a protected market. However, the situation was anomalous because, as soon as the system of privileges accorded by Italy ended, the main pillar of Somalia exports and its economy would collapse.⁹⁸

Clearly, Somali economy was in a poor condition, and even the future of its main production was dependent upon Italy. Triulzi criticises the Administration's attitude in restoring the market that had existed at the end of the 1930s. 'Somalia's economy in 1938–1939', he states, 'was not a normal economy, an economy able to join a normal, competitive market.'⁹⁹

The Administration did not appreciate that rectifying such a situation would contribute to developing a more efficient, although undeveloped, economy. The creation of the AMB, with impressive advantages for Italian farmers, also reflected Rome's commitment to protect Italian interests. But by protecting just one product, together with the uncertainty about the political situation after independence, induced farmers to aim for immediate profits without considering the

future of their companies or the Somali economy. In agriculture, the restoration of banana cultivation was the most impressive work undertaken by the Administration. However, it was more important at the beginning of the mandate not to go back to a system of monocultivation, but to create diversification. And as all economic and agricultural activities had to start from scratch, this was still possible. In particular all the land that was prepared, reclaimed and irrigated to start banana cultivation could have been turned over to the cultivation of products which, according to market research, would have been more profitable.¹⁰⁰

After independence, bananas remained the prime product of the national economy. The AFIS economic analysis about the future of Somalia described a positive trend in exports. In the few years following independence, the value of banana exports increased from 61 per cent to 65 per cent. According to Vedovato: 'the export of bananas is going to be about 65 per cent out of the total value of Somali exports, therefore it is evident that a future Somali economy will rely on continuing for a long time the trade in bananas.'¹⁰¹ However an economic mission from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development which visited Somalia in 1956 expressed a negative view about the possibility of bringing down the price of Somali bananas, to make them competitive in the European market.¹⁰²

Vedovato emphasised the importance, for the future of the Somali economy, of exporting one million quintals of fruit at a competitive price in the EEC (European Economic Community) area. This aim, he stated, 'is absolutely attainable', and by 1970, he said, it would be possible for Somalia to export two million quintals of fruit in competition with the same products from other African countries.¹⁰³

In their analysis of the economic situation in Somalia, Vedovato, Triulzi and Del Boca offer three different opinions but they all give a negative view of an agricultural economy based on bananas. The most moderate in this respect is Vedovato, and in one of his articles at the end of the mandate he wrote: 'it is not possible to affirm that Somalia can establish its economic future only by the production of bananas, but it is impossible to deny that the profit coming from bananas offers a better prospect for an immediate and safe development.'¹⁰⁴

Triulzi saw the development of a protected market for the Somali bananas as inappropriate,¹⁰⁵ while Del Boca claimed that the relationship between the AMB and the Italian farmers in Somalia was a scandal.¹⁰⁶ The events related to monocultivation in Somalia may certainly be seen as a 'scandal', because they reveal the Italian

administration's underestimation of the future of the Somali economy; however, a more accurate picture emerges from Triulzi's study in which the lack of preparation by the Italian government in assuming the mandate in Somalia is emphasised. Improvisation and lack of strategy are confirmed in the documents of the AFIS funds. They are telling in their explanation of Italian shortcomings in beginning a solid process of economic development.

THE END OF THE MANDATE AND THE INDEPENDENCE OF SOMALIA

After June 1959, following the creation of the second government in Mogadishu, Somali politicians began to press Italy and the UN for independence as soon as possible. Although the general election of March 1959 provided evidence that the situation in Somalia was still tense, the UN decided to accept Somali demands and grant independence on 1 July 1960. Italy supported Somalia's request from the very beginning, and presented the case for independence as early as 5 November 1959. Conceding independence in a short time was an advantage for Italy, because it meant giving up its duties in Somalia earlier than thought possible, and avoiding further political and economic commitments.

In January 1960, following these events, the Somali Legislative Assembly passed a law that gave itself the power to discuss and draft a new constitution. Independence was fixed for the end of June 1960. In the first six months of that year, Somali politicians worked hard to get everything ready. The constitution was approved, but not yet adopted, on 21 June, just a few days before the lowering of the Italian flag in Somalia. Yet the opposition of the GSL, HDMS and PLGS to the SYL increased. After the Legislative Assembly became a constituent assembly, it decided to establish a new and enlarged Political Committee to review the work of the Technical Committee. Because the Legislative Assembly was formed mainly by SYL members, it was decided to invite a few members of the opposition parties to join the Political Committee, but the three opposition groups refused to send any representatives. On many occasions, the representatives of the opposition parties protested against the SYL's attitude of governing the country and its allowing only a small role for the minority political forces.

The situation at the end of the mandate was complicated by the

differences among Somali political parties. It was caused by the negative attitude adopted by the SYL in dealing with opposition parties, and by the lack of concern of the Italian administration over what was going on in Somalia. At the beginning of 1960, the Italian mandate was drawing to an end and Italian diplomacy did not want to compromise its future relationships with an independent Somalia and its strongest political party. So Italian involvement in the last important phase of the mandate was characterised by its low profile. Italy abandoned Somalia to its destiny before the official end of its commitment in the country. Italian foreign policy in this regard – not to get too involved and to avoid upsetting possible future partners – produced negative effects in the Horn of Africa.

This was the setting in which Somalia would celebrate independence. A few days before independence, the two legislatures of the former British protectorate of Somaliland and of Somalia met in a joint session in Mogadishu and formally amalgamated to form the National Assembly of the Republic. Everything was ready for 1 July (in fact, the celebrations started during the night of 30 June and 1 July). Euphoria over the event did not last long. On the same day, the opposition parties organised a protest march against the SYL which ended in street riots. In the clashes between members of GSL, HDMS and the police force two people were killed and 17 demonstrators were wounded. Prime Minister Abdullahi Issa Mohamud moved to impose censorship on the press and stop all telegrams from Somalia.¹⁰⁷ This highly criticised decision effectively compromised the Prime Minister's position, and in the following weeks President Aden Abdulla Osman decided to appoint Abdirasid Ali Scermache as Prime Minister. The new Prime Minister, thanks to his position in the SYL, enjoyed the GSL's support, and he was able to form a government on 22 July 1960. Angelo Del Boca noted that 'for Somalia 1960, its year of independence, is also year zero, the year everything has to start again. Everything has to be done.'¹⁰⁸

CONTROVERSIAL ASSESSMENTS ABOUT AFIS

In the four decades following the end of the Italian mandate in Somalia, very few studies have been made analysing and explaining the consequences for this country. The main reason is that, so far, the AFIS documents have been and still are not accessible to the public. Furthermore, it seems that Italian academics attach little importance

to the period of Italian administration. In his book *Il Corno d'Africa nella storia e nella politica*, Professor Giampaolo Calchi Novati dedicates just a short section of a few pages to the AFIS.¹⁰⁹ The main focus of Italian scholars has been the period between the beginning of colonisation of the Horn of Africa at the end of the nineteenth century and the defeat of the Italian troops in the Second World War. Only in the last few years has a younger generation of academics begun a serious analysis of the activity of the Italian Co-operation for Development and its involvement in Africa.¹¹⁰ In 1986, Luigi Gasbarri, Secretary-General of the Italian-African Institute and a former official with AFIS, underlined this point, stating that 'about the ten years of the Trusteeship Administration the UN gave to Italy from 1950 to prepare Somalia for independence, the history and politics of our country have paid little interest until Angelo Del Boca dedicated a few chapters of his work: *Gli Italiani in Africa Orientale*.'¹¹¹

Gasbarri is very critical of Angelo Del Boca's negative assessment of the mandate. For Del Boca presents an extremely negative view of Italian commitment in Somalia in two chapters of his book in which he reconstructs events from 1950 to 1960. The two chapters, *Fatti e Misfatti dell'AFIS* and *L'indipendenza della Somalia*, rely strongly on the sources that Del Boca collected while working as a journalist in Somalia towards the end of the mandate. In conclusion, he claims that Italy's attempt, in the ten years of Trusteeship Administration, to repair the damage caused during the colonial period was inadequate.¹¹² In 1988 Lewis, in his book *A Modern History of Somalia*, included a chapter *From Trusteeship to Independence: 1950–1960*, in which he reconstructs the events involving the AFIS in Somalia's transition from colonisation to independence. The author gives greater emphasis to the events involving the British protectorate of northern Somaliland; however, he highlights that 'no extensive study of the important role of the UN in Somalia has been published. For some valuable comments, however, see A.A. Castagno, *Somalia, International Conciliation*, New York, 1959, pp. 395–400'¹¹³ – a mere few pages.

Lewis gives a positive view of the political situation of Somalia in the aftermath of independence but a negative assessment of the economy. He writes that 'although the United Nations experiment in Somalia, as it has often been called, had certainly succeeded in providing the new state with an effective administrative and political framework, neither the southern nor the northern regions were yet economically viable.'¹¹⁴

Triulzi's article *L'Italia e l'economia somala dal 1950 ad oggi* concurs, and from his analysis it emerges that in the ten years of the Italian mandate, Rome did not succeed in improving Somalia's economic structure and production. Several factors contributed to this: the limited time available and Somalia's own scarce resources, but also the limited financial aid and the way it was invested. Triulzi concludes that 'although Somalia obtained political independence before the conclusion of the mandate, this did not mean that it had reached an equal level of economic independence.'¹¹⁵

Abdi Samatar and Ahmed Samatar support Triulzi's assessment, and state:

on the eve of independence, the emerging post-colonial state in Somalia was marked, *inter alia*, by 1) competition for lucrative jobs in the public bureaucracy by elements of the *petit-bourgeoisie*, the main supporters of the SYL; 2) economic foundations afflicted with a large and neglected subsistence sector, yet articulated to international and regional markets; 3) peasant productivity hobbled by usurious credit practices of middle traders; and 4) exceedingly poor infrastructures, chronic balance-of-payments deficits, and acute dependence on foreign beneficence to assuage annual deficits.¹¹⁶

With the exception of Gasbarri, these scholars concur in their negative assessment of what AFIS achieved before independence. The new republic would be destined to rely on foreign aid for a considerable period of time. Also, the main production in Somalia, bananas, remained in Italian hands. Vedovato notes that Italian commitment to absorbing the Somali production of bananas had the potential to provide the country with capital that could have played an important role in the future of its economy.¹¹⁷ Vedovato's view has been widely criticised and has been proved wrong by subsequent events. It is likely that Italian commitment to supporting banana exports would have been more successful if the majority of investors and farmers had been Somalis. Italians exploited the situation as long as they could and abandoned the country when the political situation changed and economic conditions became less profitable.

From a political perspective, the situation in the aftermath of independence was apparently different. In 1962, Professor Giuseppe Costanzo, Dean of the University Institute of Somalia, pointed out that the Italian attitude and results of the Administration's actions provided evidence that the interdependence of economic progress, social progress and education was successfully realised.¹¹⁸ In the same

year, the Under-Secretary of the Foreign Ministry, Antonio Folchi, in the preface to *Italia e Somalia*, observed that 'in Somalia, more than everywhere else, political freedom came as a ripe fruit, that the local population reached with the collaboration and co-operation of the West.'¹¹⁹

In the following period and from many analyses of Somalia's political organisation, evaluation of AFIS work has led to divergent conclusions, but more often than not to negative ones. Petrucci's assessment of the Italian commitment to the introduction of the new Somali constitution is particularly damning. In his book, based on his experience as a correspondent from Africa, he writes that 'the attempt of modernisation and democratisation in Somalia through institutions based on a constitution *made in Italy* never took off.'¹²⁰

He emphasises that for the majority of Somalis the state never existed. The main institutions, such as the National Assembly, had no real authority; the League continued to control the Assembly and create new government coalitions.¹²¹ However, according to Mohamed Aden Sheikh, who played a significant role during the first years of the Siad Barre dictatorship as a member of the Council of Secretaries, Somalia's problems started with the creation of the first government in 1956. Mohamed Aden Sheikh claims that during this period the Prime Minister, Abdullahi Issa, was unable to introduce economic reforms and was unwilling to create the basis for the social reconstruction of the country. He writes that 'the aspirations of building a national state broke up in the face of personal ambitions of building up a private stronghold in the region of his own clan.'¹²²

Terence Lyons and Ahmed Samatar maintain that 'the process of decolonisation created an independent state that remained aloof from society.'¹²³ But, in fact, the new state organisation were no more than a tool in the hands of the dominant clans to administer power in their own interests and, in the long term, it became a source of conflict between the clans.

In the light of the AFIS funds, and of the considerable amount of still unreleased documents which constitute a significant part of my research, it is now possible to provide a deeper and more exhaustive assessment of the consequence of Italy's mandate in Somalia.

At the beginning of the mandate, Italy was still a very young republic and lacked the necessary background to start a process of democratisation in an underdeveloped country. Even more problematic was Italy's economic commitment to establish a solid basis for the economy of Somalia. The economic shortcomings of the Italian

mandate can be divided into two main sectors. First, Italy did not have the competence to analyse and consequently start a process of economic development from the beginning of the mandate. For the first four years of the administration, the AFIS budget was absorbed in paying the Italian bureaucracy and military personnel in Somalia. Despite frequent warnings from Fornari, the situation did not change until 1954, when Martino put forward a plan of economic development. Even this was limited though and it involved an area of Somalia between the rivers Juba and Shabelle where the interests of Italian community were the strongest. Second, at the beginning of 1950 Italy did not have the economic resources to support a process of economic development in Somalia. From the very beginning Fornari informed the Under-Secretary of the Foreign Ministry that a lack of capital and the costs of running the bureaucracy were not producing positive results for the development in Somalia. On 7 April 1951, just one year after the mandate started, and following the Italian government's decision to cut the AFIS budget, Fornari protested that with such few funds any economic and social improvement would be problematic.¹²⁴ The Italian government, which at that time was more interested in modernising Italy, did not care enough, or more realistically, did not have enough resources to improve the economic situation in Somalia. Fornari's demands were ignored by the Italian government mainly because, while Somalia represented a short-term success for Italian diplomacy, Italy did not want to commit itself beyond its resources. Even a stronger commitment by Rome in favour of the Italian community in Somalia was not deemed worthwhile, considering that Somalia was one of its former colonies, and the one with the smallest Italian community. Furthermore, following the tragic events of January 1948 in Mogadishu, many Italian residents had left the country. Certainly Italy invested too little, if the aims of the mandate were to improve the economic situation in Somalia, but too much if the reasons for Italy's return to its former colony were political and for national prestige.¹²⁵

From a political and social perspective, the situation is more complex. From the AFIS documents it emerges that the Italians considered Somali society archaic. Italy tried to establish the foundations of the future Somali republic on a constitution based on the Italian model. Following a negative interpretation of the clan system, Italian scholars ignored its importance in Somali life. Ten years, or even a hundred years, are not enough to change the main feature of a population, especially in countries like Somalia where these

institutions are steeped in centuries of tradition. A Western constitutional model, rooted in Western mentality, could not replace a way of making *policy* through the clan and the *shir*. The Arifato, one of the oldest institutions of the clan system, was a serious problem in the general elections in 1956. In the political field the main problem was the attitude of Italian officials and scholars, and their belief that they could start a process of democratisation based solely upon the political experience of the West. In several circumstances, such as the constitution, the results were unsatisfactory and became the main causes of tension once Italy withdrew from Somalia.

Finally, during the mandate, Rome did not make any serious effort to resolve the border problem between Somalia and Ethiopia. On the one side, Italy did not want to lose its powerful position in its relations with Somalia. On the other, it did not want to jeopardise the possibility of establishing good relations with Ethiopia. Once Brusasca had visited Haile Selassie on 4 September 1951 and diplomatic relations between the two countries had improved significantly, Rome did not want to jeopardise the new situation. Italian foreign policy in the Horn focused on friendly relationships with both Ethiopia and Somalia; involvement in the border dispute between the two countries could compromise Italy's relations with one or the other. To serve the aim of its foreign policy, Italy completed its mandate and left the Ethiopian-Somali border an open wound which would lead to the Ogaden war of 1978.

5 Co-operation and Diplomacy

After independence the new republic of Somalia was one of the few African countries to have a democratic system and the only one based on the Italian political system. Yet the Italian model was far removed from the real needs of the government in Mogadishu, and as a consequence a significant distance between Somali society and the new institutions introduced by the Italians remained. This process continued in spite of the fact that AFIS had trained a large number of Somalis so that they could replace the Italian personnel in the administrative and bureaucratic departments. At the end of the mandate, when the so-called process of Somalisation was accomplished, Italy had to support the newly independent state both financially and through a limited presence of officers employed in the administration of the country. Ten years were not enough to establish an efficient economy as this was too short a time for the formation of a class of bureaucrats and administrators. During Italy's 50-year presence in the Horn of Africa, and particularly in Somalia, the Italian face of imperialism changed in character, but its main feature remained one of direct administration, in which all responsibilities were in the hands of Italian officers with limited participation from Somalis. Rome made little effort to establish an efficient class of colonial officers¹ as, at a later stage, it underestimated the need for preparation of the administrators, who had to tackle the economic, political and social challenges of a country such as Somalia. Rome relinquished its mandate six months before the expiry date, in the belief that Mogadishu was in a position to strengthen its democratic foundations single-handed. A hasty process of democratisation along Western lines and an inadequate programme of Somalisation were not enough to guarantee a long period of stability. On the surface Italy was successful in nurturing Somalia to independence in a shorter time than expected, but subsequent events revealed evidence that the foundations of the Republic of Somalia were weak. The difference between Angelo Del Boca and Luigi Gasbarri in their analyses of AFIS is the outcome of two different approaches to the study of the Italian presence in the Horn of Africa and, more generally, two

different methods of assessing and defining Italian colonialism and neocolonialism. But what comes out of the AFIS documents is that Italy was not able to give Somalia a satisfactory administration; moreover as a young democracy it did not have the experience and skills necessary to understand and confront the needs of Somali society. The clear perception is that, even during the years of the administration, Italy had a prejudicial attitude towards Somalia and its social system which stood in the way of an understanding of the substantial features and differences of its former colony.

In the aftermath of independence the Somali economy was extremely weak and relied heavily upon foreign aid. It had the lowest per capita revenue in the world and an economy based essentially on agriculture and bananas.² The Italian community was still in a strong social position and in control of the main economic activities.³ Mogadishu did not have any of the features of a modern capital, including a harbour or a system of transport and communication with the other main cities of the country. In the ten years of the administration Italy did not begin a real process of modernisation as the small Italian community and the uncertainty over the future of Somalia were not deemed worthy of the investment needed for the development of an efficient infrastructure.

The lack of stability in the country was caused not only by the frequent tension between the Somali Youth League and the members of the Great Somali League, but also by the growing dissatisfaction of the former Somaliland towards the government in Mogadishu. When the British protectorate ended in Somaliland and Hargeisa decided to join the territory under an Italian mandate, the union was voted for unanimously in the two Parliaments, but no treaty was ever signed. Nothing was agreed between the two regions on what the north had to give up as a consequence of the establishment of a unitarian state in which Mogadishu would play a vital role. The commitment of northern politicians was to obtain some ministerial positions in the new government. Nothing was agreed beforehand about the settling of the two territories and their political powers. As a consequence, the union was established on a misunderstanding and inevitably led to differences with the northern clan of Isaaq. Since then administrative and fiscal integration have been one of the most delicate issues to be dealt with by civilian governments.⁴ Hussein Adam observes that after unification the National Assembly strongly favoured the south, which was given key posts such as Commander of the Police Force and Commander of the National Army. 'The

north believed that they would be treated, at least informally, as a "federal entity". The south proceeded to take the posts of President, Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Minister of Interior and Minister of Foreign Affairs.⁵ By 1961, after the shortlived euphoria following independence, the situation had changed. On 20 June 1961, Somali people voted in favour of the constitution. The result was surprising because, although only 13 per cent voted against the constitution in total, in the former Somaliland the percentage voting against was as high as 54 per cent.⁶ This significant opposition of the north to the unitarian constitution was the first clear sign of growing tension in the new republic. It was the traditional problem of clanism, of the differences between clans from southern and central Somalia against the northern Isaaq.

This was not the only reason for tension in the new republic. Internal differences would add to the problems in the international arena with Kenya, Ethiopia and France over the territories that Somalia considered traditionally its own. None the less, the differences between northern and southern-central clans represented a domestic threat to the country's stability and to the creation of a unitarian nation. On 9 December 1961, a group of Sandhurst-trained junior officers organised a coup d'état in the north. The coup leaders received little support from the population and their plot failed, but the situation remained tense. The government in Mogadishu was facing open confrontation on two fronts: from abroad over unification of the five Somali territories and, from within, the dissatisfaction of the north. In the long term the differences between north and south Somalia were destined to make the life of the unitary state extremely unstable.

The origin of this opposition was that the north and the south were culturally alien. Somaliland had been a British territory and south Somalia Italian, and this was reinforced by the opposing clans from the two territories. Behind the infrastructure of the parliamentary state the power and influence of the clans would continue to play its traditionally strong role. Within a few years of independence the SYL was dominated by the Darod. The political leaders belonging to other clans, particularly the Hawiye in the centre and the Isaaq in the north, did not accept marginalisation from power and the administration of the country. A central complaint was that the leaders from Hargheisa did not agree with the proposition that Mogadishu would absorb all the financial investment of the young state. Tension between the two territories increased during the spring of 1963 when the Somali

government introduced a unitary system of taxation. Following the government's decision, a general strike was called for in April and on 1 May a demonstration against the central government was organised in Hargheisa. Mogadishu reacted strongly to the protest: nine demonstrators were killed and dozens wounded in clashes with the police. A number of motivations lie at the root of Somaliland's push for secession, but one prevails above all – clanism. Mauro Merosi stresses that Somalia would need massive cultural and anthropological change to defeat clanism and its system. In the years after independence, clans remained the real basis of political relationships, lurking behind the façade of the official parties.⁷ The growing antagonism between Somaliland and the central government was fuelled by the foundation of the Somali National Congress (SNC) in the north. In May 1963, Mohamed Ibrahim Egal established the SNC, largely supported by the Isaaq and Hawiye and with the main aim of counterbalancing the power of the SYL. The party did not have a clearly defined ideology, instead it represented the clans' desire to oppose the supremacy of Darod in the SYL and consequently in the government.⁸ The SNC soon became another factor in hastening clan competition. Following the example of the SNC several other clan-based parties were established and their number increased to 80, then 100, then 150.⁹ Even so the SYL continued to dominate political life as the newly elected deputies, in consideration of the advantages that they could receive by leaving their political group, joined the party.

In the general elections held in March 1964, the SYL won 69 of the 123 seats in the Somali National Assembly, the SNC 22, the Somali Democratic Union 15, Hagi Mohamed Hussein's party nine, and the Hisbia Destur Mustaqil Somali and the other smaller formations eight. However, in 1966, the SYL's number of deputies increased from 69 to 78 followed by another increase in July 1967 to 105. This can be explained by the other parties' lack of an ideological platform. The SYL and the opposition did not have a programme to refer to that could guide their members. Often the deputies were more concerned with the advantages they could obtain personally as members of the National Assembly, whether by joining forces with the opposition or with the majority.

From its inception the SYL's source of popularity was its opposition to the Italian administration. It was able to attract support from Somalis who believed that their country needed to be independent as soon as possible. The other issues that dominated the SYL were the opposition to clanism and the creation of a Greater Somalia.

Throughout the years of the mandate AFIS administrators were charged with bringing the SYL under Italian influence; the result was the loss of the SYL's main features. The clash with the GSL at the very moment the country was celebrating independence was evidence that the ideological purpose of the SYL had been lost. After independence the SYL aimed at consolidating its power with little consideration for the opposition. This attitude soon shifted towards the adoption of repressive measures. During its mandate Italy missed the opportunity to introduce a party system based on democratic competition and changes of administration. But, in a system like the Somali one, one has to wonder whether an Italian commitment to impose a western-style democracy would have been successful. None the less the importance of introducing appropriate political rules based more on consociationalism than on competition was not appreciated. From 1960 to 1969, Somalia had an illusory multi-party system which, according to Hussein Adam, 'did not take into account the pastoral democratic traditions based on power sharing concepts. These top-down imposed "democratic" mechanisms (a constitution and an electoral system) pushed competition to the point of conflict and inflamed clan and sub-clan rivalries.'¹⁰ Once under the influence of the administrators and Rome the SYL could bring its presence to bear on Mogadishu's post-independence politics, and the rule of 'competition' among political parties had to follow a consociational system in which all political formations, and therefore all clans, participated actively in the state administration in a power sharing context. By supporting a friendly SYL, the Italian position in Somalia remained unchallenged. In his analysis of the years of the republic, Mohamed Aden Sheikh states that 'nine years of pseudo-parliamentary democracy produced corruption and confusion, we saw these consequences as the outcome of a neo colonial domination of the western world all over Africa.'¹¹ The process of attracting deputies from the opposition to the SYL paved the way for a situation in which a multi-party system, with opposing political formations, was in effect a one-party system. Somali political organisation in those years was an 'imperfect' democratic system dominated by the most powerful clan or coalition of clans. Following the 1969 general elections, the SYL again obtained an absolute majority with 80 seats, with the remaining 43 seats divided among as many as 27 political formations. However, the most unusual thing, from a traditional perspective of Western liberal democracy, was that in a few weeks all the deputies of the opposition, with the exception of Abdirazak Hagi Hussein, had joined the majority. He

remains a rare example in the history of democracy: a single-member opposition.

A DIFFICULT FOREIGN POLICY

The domestic situation, although complicated by the tension between the two territories, was quickly added to by the problems Mogadishu faced in its foreign policy. Since independence and even before, with the creation of the SYL, Somalia had aimed at merging the five territories inhabited by Somalis. Independence and the unification of north and south Somalia was considered the first step towards the annexation of the other three territories. Article 6 of the constitution stated clearly Somalia's commitment to joining together 'peacefully' the Northern Frontier District under British rule, the Haud and Ogaden under Ethiopian control and the French colony of Djibouti. With these objectives the foreign policy adopted by Mogadishu was destined to create tension on Somalia's borders. In a pan-Somali perspective the three territories were equally important, but the Ogaden was the most sensitive area of Somali foreign policy. In the ten years of its administration Italy refused to settle the dispute between the two countries, so that when the mandate ended it left an open wound between Mogadishu and Addis Ababa. After the beginning of the mandate Rome wanted to obtain a 'normalisation of political and diplomatic relationships with Ethiopia'¹² while reinforcing its relationship with Somalia. Italy therefore adopted a position of neutrality. During the 1960s Italy found it very difficult to support Somali demands over the Ogaden as Ethiopia's relations with the USA were extremely good and Rome considered its partnership with Washington as one of the main pillars of its foreign policy.¹³ As a consequence, in the early 1960s Somalia found itself isolated in the Horn of Africa with a significant security problem to face. The resolute position adopted by the Somali government in its foreign policy caused tension with its leading ally, Italy. Until 1963, the relationship between the two countries was very good. With a little effort, involving limited participation in the development programmes of agriculture and water, Rome maintained its privileged position with Mogadishu. Yet between October and November 1963 the situation changed. Somali politicians began a desperate search for military support to create an army of at least 20,000 troops. On 2 October, Aden Abdulla Osman, the Somali President, had an official meeting

in Rome in an attempt to convince the Italian government that Somalia needed military assistance from the West to safeguard its national security. However, it was evident that the risk in satisfying such a request for a better armed Somalia would have increased tension throughout the Horn of Africa, particularly on the border with Ethiopia. In such a strained situation Italy, acting also on the behalf of the USA and West Germany, presented the Somali government with a proposal of multilateral military assistance in the creation of an army of 6,000 troops.¹⁴ Mogadishu rejected this and turned instead to the possibility of a partnership with Moscow as Somali leaders found the Soviet offer of military assistance more satisfactory.

On 11 November 1963 the Somali Foreign Minister declared his government's decision to accept Soviet support. This consisted of 20 billion lire worth of military aid to buy weaponry, 170 military instructors and the facility for 500 Somali officers to train in the Soviet Union. On 22 January 1964, the first of several conflicts between Somalia and Ethiopia erupted. Until 1988, when the Ethiopian and the Somali governments signed a non-aggression treaty, tension and conflict between the two countries characterised their foreign policy and their up-and-down relationships with the Soviet Union and with the United States. As a consequence of the Somali decision to accept Soviet military assistance, Rome withdrew its military experts from Somalia. For a few years the relationship between the two countries was cool until a new Somali Prime Minister, Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, stated his commitment on 15 July 1967 to reversing Somali foreign policy and reaching an agreement with neighbouring countries. This new attitude allowed Italy to reactivate its friendly relation with Mogadishu. In January 1968, the Italian Foreign Minister, Amintore Fanfani, visited the country to establish a period of co-operation with Somalia. His visit had the effect of putting pressure on the Somali government to adopt a friendlier attitude towards the West and weakening diplomatic links established with the Soviet Union. In addition, Fanfani wanted to halt the slide of Italian foreign policy towards the abandonment of the former colony.¹⁵ Maria Cristina Ercolessi highlights that, even with fluctuations, Italian aid to the former colony remained high from the 1960s. She states that 'from 1960 Somalia was the first African beneficiary country of Italian economic assistance, it received about four per cent of the quota Italy allocated to developing countries until 1980-81.'¹⁶ Somalia's change in foreign policy, however, had a direct effect on the level of arms

that Italy channelled to the former colony. Consequently, after being the major supplier from 1955 to 1960, Italy played a marginal role between 1961 and 1975, when Somalia enjoyed a privileged relationship with the Soviet Union.¹⁷

The aims of Fanfani's visit were difficult to attain. Although the new Somali political leadership adopted a different approach to foreign policy, the country's destiny lay with Siad Barre's revolution. The March 1969 general elections were characterised by violence, intimidation and crime.¹⁸ Mohamed Aden Sheikh states that the state was paralysed by corruption and inefficiency.¹⁹ In this situation the assassination of the President of the Republic, Abdirasid Ali Scermache, on 15 October 1969 generated the conditions that allowed the military to gain power. The situation was made worse by the absence of the Prime Minister, who was visiting the USA. The consequent power vacuum led to confusion. Siad Barre's coup on 21 October imposed a regime initially directed exclusively by the military, but subsequently backed by civilian support. In a few months, in fact, together with the Supreme Revolutionary Council, comprised solely of the military, the Council of Secretaries was established, formed by civilians with powers similar to those of ministers. Siad Barre was the chairman of both councils. At the beginning of the revolution it was difficult to forecast the events that would determine the collapse of Somalia. The population, and in particular the intellectuals, mainly from the left, expressed enthusiasm for the new regime and its so-called scientific socialism.²⁰ On 24 October Rome recognised the new government, the first state in the world to do so. Italy's decision to accept events in Somalia was probably driven by the belief that it would be able to wield considerable influence in the country. None the less the immediate recognition of the new regime was an unspoken admission of Italy's failure in Somalia. AFIS had spent ten years trying to set up democratic institutions and a multi-party system under Italian influence, and the Italians were the first to admit that this venture had failed. After Siad Barre gained power, a new chapter, and probably the most controversial in the relationship between Italy and Somalia, began. From the 1970s Italy inaugurated a programme of co-operation with third world countries; Somalia was the main beneficiary.

ROME AND MOGADISHU: A CONTROVERSIAL RELATIONSHIP

For a few years after the army-led coup d'état, the new regime received enthusiastic support from within the country and from abroad. The increasing level of corruption and maladministration that dominated the 1960–9 Somali republic was the main reason why the army drew widespread popular support. As Ahmed Samatar emphasises: 'few tears were shed for the end of the liberal politics of the 1960s.'²¹ Probably the most troubled period for the young democracy started in 1967 after Aden Abdulla Osman was replaced as President of the Republic by the newly elected Abdirasid Ali Scermache. He then appointed as Prime Minister Ibrahim Egal, Secretary-General of the Somali National Congress. In this period, which ended with the 1969 coup, only a few state institutions were not corrupt. State money was used for the leadership's political and private interests, while the police were lent on to use their resources and strength to help SYL's candidates in contested districts. Finally, the March 1969 general elections, in which more than 1,000 candidates for 60 parties ran for 123 seats, were marred by the deaths of nearly 40 people.²² The political scenario resulting from the election was so critical that once Abdirazak Hussein returned to the National Assembly he established a one-man opposition party, the Popular Movement for Democratic Action.

As a result of the establishment of the military regime Somalis appreciated the efficiency, as opposed to the corrupt democratic institutions, of the newly created Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) and the innovative spirit of members of the military institutions. These were backed by a large number of young Marxist intellectuals who sincerely believed that the new regime could represent a positive turning point for Somalia. And the first steps taken by the new leadership were encouraging. The Council of Secretaries, which was established to propose the best course of action to the SRC, put forward several important initiatives which had two effects. On the one hand, they improved the condition of Somalis in vital social areas, and on the other they involved all the Somali population so that a sense of national identity was enhanced. Mohamed Aden Sheikh emphasises the positive effects of the national campaign for literacy, the improvements in the health service, the condition of livestock, the state's commitment to halt desertification and achieve food self-sufficiency, and the establishment of an institute of higher

education to prepare the officials Somalia needed to improve the quality of the country's administration.²³ In the last instance Italian involvement was of extreme importance.

The positive reaction in Italy, with almost immediate recognition of the new regime, was not restricted to the government. The events in Somalia were viewed positively by the Communist Party (PCI)²⁴ and also by a large number of intellectuals and journalists. The PCI's support for Siad Barre was determined not only because it had chosen the path of 'scientific socialism', but also because in the previous decade Somalia had developed good relations with the Soviet Union. The PCI, as the Soviet Union's most co-operative political party in Western Europe, followed Moscow's line.

At the same time, journalists provided a positive account of the commitment of the Somali military to improving the condition of the people. Pietro Petrucci, who visited Somalia at the time, emphasised the new environment in which people, with government aid in the form mainly of cement and bricks, built schools and hospitals to create an infrastructure of social services that had not existed before. He also reported the positive results of the literacy campaign, and the achievements of the state farms established to help the poorest peasants.²⁵ For Luigi Pestalozza the 1969 revolution represented the beginning of a new era in Somali history, after nine years of weak and unconvincing independence. Its positive impact affected all the major social fields, and in particular education at all levels.²⁶

Despite the fact that, as a result of the revolution, the SYL leaders were removed and some of the army officers who seized power in Mogadishu had been trained in Moscow, the new President, General Siad Barre, had been trained in Italian military institutions. Within the Council of Secretaries appointed by the SRC some specialists had studied at Italian universities and a few, while in Italy, had established links with the Italian Communist Party. Mohamed Aden Sheikh, one of the most important personalities in the Council until he was arrested by Siad Barre, explains that, beside the ideological common ground, the attraction of the Italian Communist Party lay in the fact that it existed outside the government and therefore had little direct historical interest in the former colony. He records that in 1943 the Italian communists in Somalia had created a branch of the PCI in Mogadishu, which was also popular among locals.²⁷ The Italian communists gave their approval to Barre's government and emphasised the importance of the socialist model adopted by the Supreme Revolutionary Council. Although the new regime was recognised by

the Christian Democrat Foreign Minister, Aldo Moro, the new political scenario produced a situation in which Somalia had closer ties with the PCI. Despite the fact that the new republic adopted a strong socialist line, this did not spoil relations with Italy, which remained strong and even improved. Bruna Bagnato explains that Rome justified its commitment in Somalia and more generally in Africa to its Western allies, by claiming that it was defending the continent from communism. Had Rome been able 'to show evidence that its policy was aimed at freeing African peoples from the communist "contamination", Italy would have gathered support from European and American partners.'²⁸

THE OPENING OF THE SOMALI NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

It was in the field of education that co-operation between Rome and Mogadishu became significant in the early 1970s. In the previous two decades, and mainly during the mandate, Italy had played a significant part in laying the basis for Somali education. This had resulted in a large number of Italian academics working at the Mogadishu University Institute. The University, established in 1960, offered degrees in law and in economics. Before independence the Italian Technical Assistance, created to assist education in Somalia, gave Padua University the task of organising both degrees. From 1967 it was clear that Somalia needed a more efficient education system with the option for students to study other subjects. In the late 1960s a large number of Somalis studied abroad; nearly 500 in the Soviet Union, 272 in Italy, 152 in Saudi Arabia, 86 in the USA, 40 in Sudan, 34 in the UK, 32 in France and 29 in India.²⁹ The 1969 revolution emphasised the importance of education and the necessity of offering Somalis the opportunity of studying in their own country. As a consequence of the adoption of this political line, on 1 December the new regime introduced a law that transformed the Mogadishu University Institute into the Somali National University.

The major problem, however, considering the limited resources of the country, was to identify which foreign state or international organisation would be best suited and willing to help Somalia establish the new academic institution. This was important because it would determine the language of instruction at the University. The debate focused on two options, Italian and English, and this not only because the two languages were the best known in the country. If on the one

side it would have been easy recruiting English-speaking lecturers on an individual basis, on the other Rome had already offered to provide resources to establish several new faculties in Mogadishu. Susan Hoben explains that 'when the government sought assistance for establishment of a full-scale National University, English-language donors refused, while Italy made a generous offer.'³⁰ The clear advantage of adopting English as the language of instruction is that it is spoken world-wide. And, in fact, in the early 1960s the UNESCO Education Planning Group recommended English as the medium of instruction in Somalia from intermediate education on.³¹ However three major factors worked in favour of Italian, one was pragmatic, determined by the commitment of Rome to fund the creation of several faculties such as medicine, engineering, chemistry and veterinary surgery, for which it also provided and paid Italian lecturers. The second was the good knowledge of Italian in southern Somalia. Finally, Italy had already provided assistance in developing the education system in Somalia and therefore the feeling was that co-operation between the two countries in this department would provide a helpful basis to enlarge the programme. The institutions that had managed the programme so far were to be rearranged with more consideration for Somali needs, but also to meet the aims set by the revolution. Therefore the Technical Committee, which during the 1960s was in charge of deciding the adoption of programmes and recruiting lecturers for Somalia's academic institutions, was enlarged to include academics who had a better understanding of Somali education. Pestalozza records that in this era Professor Giuseppe Zwirner (in 1970) and Professor Elio Vianello (in 1972) became members of the Technical Committee.³² In addition, in 1974 the Committee became a mixed institution in which the chairman was an Italian and the deputy chairman a Somali. Yet although the Committee was in charge of managing the Somali National University, from then on Mogadishu gave final approval to the appointment of Italian lecturers in Somalia.

In order to make the University programme successful Mogadishu was committed to eradicating or reducing illiteracy. After the government had adopted the Latin alphabet to give the Somali language a written form in 1972, in 1973 and 1975 Mogadishu launched two major campaigns against illiteracy which achieved, in both the urban and rural areas, positive results with high public involvement.³³ The 1974-5 campaign was particularly successful. All schools were closed for the academic year and some 25,000 students, from grade six through to grade eleven, were charged with teaching the written

language to nomads and the rural population. Out of 1.25 million Somalis involved in the project, nearly 740,000 passed the literacy test.³⁴ Yet it was soon clear that despite these achievements, Somali students were still unprepared for university study. Pino Fasano emphasises that in order to help Somalia deal with the low standards in its secondary education, in which Mogadishu 'did not receive any help from any other country', Italian academics established a one-year preparation course for university degrees. The aim of this course was to teach Italian and basic scientific disciplines. In the organisation of this course, which required a strong teaching commitment, more than 40 lecturers were involved.³⁵ The programme became so important that, over its term of more than 20 years, it attracted 20 per cent of the entire budget allocated to the Co-operation for Development.³⁶

Italian commitment to the Somali National University initiated an important alliance that inevitably ended in the direct involvement of the military regime and allowed Rome to retain a stronghold in a country that was increasingly distancing itself from the West. Italy's aim in Somalia was to avoid a complete hegemony of the Soviet Union in Mogadishu. Calchi Novati emphasises that the Somali National University 'provided a strong opportunity to influence developments in a number of fields by creating an italophone intelligentsia and a Western-oriented bureaucracy'.³⁷

From the 1970s onwards relations between Rome and Mogadishu developed along two major paths: co-operation and diplomacy. These often overlapped and in several circumstances merged. Both were characterised by a serious lack of co-ordination and a general plan of action. As early as 1972, in his analysis of Italian aid policy to Somalia, Triulzi had recommended the adoption of a more rational and better planned use of the financial resources available.³⁸

According to Giorgio Giacomelli, who was one of the founders of Italian Co-operation and the first official responsible for the programme in 1970, the main problem of Italy's commitment to developing countries was the absence of an overall policy.³⁹

Co-operation and diplomacy therefore did not follow consistent and coherent directives because relations between Rome and Mogadishu, particularly after independence, were marked by the influence of different parties in successive governments and the opposition. For the Italian government Somalia did not just represent an important factor of its foreign policy, but was a major question among Italian political parties. Therefore more than once, Somalia was also a significant issue of domestic policy.⁴⁰

Giacomelli explains that at an early stage of the Co-operation's history Rome's efforts were more concentrated on Somalia than on other former colonies and this was because 'political reasons made that country more accessible'.⁴¹

From the 1970s, Italy provided significant support to Somalia, although Rome also aimed at increasing its influence throughout the Horn of Africa. Once the Italian government understood the great potential of the aid programme it made more resources available and took care to involve a large number of developing countries. Ethiopia was one of these. After Haile Selassie was deposed in the summer of 1974, and a communist regime took power, Addis Ababa lost its privileged partnership with the United States and adopted a foreign policy aimed at forging closer links with the Soviet bloc. But Italian co-operation with Somalia and Ethiopia remained strong even when these two countries established close links with Moscow. In a situation characterised by both countries' lack of resources, Italian co-operation made a significant impact. According to Ambassador Aloisi, it continued to support governments in Addis Ababa and Mogadishu because the people derived direct benefit from it.⁴²

The fund of the Co-operation became an important instrument of Italian foreign policy in the Horn of Africa. Italy persisted with its line of not taking sides in the Somali-Ethiopian dispute. Rome played at two tables as it managed to maintain good relations with Somalia by recognising Barre's government almost immediately and provided support for the establishment of the Somali National University. The normalisation of relations with Ethiopia was finalised in 1970 when the Italian Foreign Minister, Aldo Moro, visited Addis Ababa and Haile Selassie visited Rome.⁴³

From the early 1970s the Co-operation for Development showed great potential as a tool of foreign policy.⁴⁴ It allowed Italy, at that time a financially and militarily immature country, to wield significant influence in the region.⁴⁵ Rome was able to establish relations in regions of the world traditionally outside its sphere of interest and strengthened ties with those countries with which it had already forged links.

Rome maintained a privileged relationship with Somalia while Mogadishu, during different phases of its foreign policy, was always able to maintain political contact with the main political parties in Italy. After 1960, the Christian Democrats had a complete monopoly on the relationship with Somalia, despite a few years of tension between 1964 to 1967 caused by the decision of the Somali

government to improve its relations with Moscow and accept Soviet military support. In the decade after independence Somalia received \$47 million worth of military assistance from the USSR. As a result Mogadishu was able to increase the size of its armed forces from 4,000 in 1961 to 20,000 in 1970.⁴⁶ None the less, after Ibrahim Egal was appointed Prime Minister, the Christian Democrats were again able to normalise relations. The official visit of the Italian Foreign Minister, Amintore Fanfani, to Mogadishu in 1968 was evidence of this. But the supremacy of the Christian Democrats in the relationship with Somalia was compromised once Siad Barre launched the project of 'scientific socialism'. Italian communists gave their approval to the Somali Democratic Republic and emphasised the importance of the socialist model that the Revolutionary Supreme Council had adopted.

Despite the fact that the new regime was recognised through the influence of the Christian Democrats, the new international conditions saw Somalia favouring the PCI. In these years Italy was experiencing internal differences in dealing with its former colony. On one track ran the official diplomacy of the Foreign Ministry under the Christian Democrat hegemony, on the other the communists were establishing cultural and technical co-operation.⁴⁷ The relationship between Rome and Mogadishu suffered a setback when, on 21 October 1972, Siad Barre announced the nationalisation of private schools, their buildings and teaching materials. Until then, nearly 40 per cent of primary education, instead of being in the hands of the state, was in the hands of Italians, British and Egyptians of Catholic and Protestant origin.

In the years before the war in Ogaden, the Communist Party passed to Somalia its experience of co-operatives. The communist administrators of regions such as Emilia Romagna established permanent contact with Somali local administrators.⁴⁸ On several occasions the Communist Party was in direct competition with Rome in maintaining Somali relations.⁴⁹ The strict link between Somalia and the PCI began to drift after Menghistu imposed the Derg regime in Ethiopia. Inside the PCI two streams of thought regarding the Horn of Africa emerged. One was in favour of Somalia, and this group was formed mainly by deputies and intellectuals. The other, supportive of the new regime in Ethiopia, was expressed by the PCI's International Relations Department. In 1974, at the time of the Ethiopian revolution, the ideological motivations of 'scientific socialism' in Somalia softened, with the result that the PCI saw the Derg as more trustworthy than

Siad Barre. Moreover, as a consequence of the new situation the Soviet Union strengthened its links with Ethiopia, finally ending a long period during which Addis Ababa enjoyed a close partnership with the USA. By the mid-1970s the situation in the Horn of Africa had become unstable, with the Soviet Union increasing its presence in the region. Although the USA considered Menghistu as part of the Soviet expansionist plan,⁵⁰ Italian foreign policy in the Horn did not conform to the USA's. After Menghistu took power, the relationship between Italy and Ethiopia grew distant over a period of time, but this cooling of relations took longer than Italy's Western partners expected. Rome decided not to follow the logic of the Cold War by taking sides with the USA and totally abandoning the possibility of maintaining a good relationship with Mogadishu and Addis Ababa. For four years Rome adopted an extremely low-profile foreign policy in the Horn of Africa, but it managed to avoid jeopardising its position in the region. In May 1978 Luciano Radi, Under-Secretary at the Foreign Ministry, visited Addis Ababa and reactivated the programmes of economic assistance and technical co-operation with Ethiopia.

The resumption of co-operation with Ethiopia came after the Ogaden war and was partly a consequence of the Somali defeat. On this occasion Rome pursued two main aims. First, Italy wanted to avoid marginalisation in a region where it had traditionally played a significant role. In this regard Italy sought to adopt a stabilising role, by finding a political solution to the Somali-Ethiopian conflict over Ogaden. The main aim was to maintain or create an open and balanced dialogue with both sides and as a result Italy was not concerned about the significant presence of the Soviet and Cuban military in Ethiopia. Second, Rome did not believe, as its main Western partners did, that abandoning Ethiopia to Soviet influence was the best approach for the West to take. It saw events in Ethiopia differently. Italian diplomacy was directed by the belief that the stabilisation of the new regime, the reduction of the tension between Addis Ababa and Mogadishu and, above all, a greater commitment from Western states to developing economic co-operation could reduce the Soviet influence in Addis Ababa. Therefore, Italian foreign policy rejected the policy of isolation adopted by the USA and several other Western countries towards Ethiopia. Italy remained the first donor country to Somalia even after the US embargo on Mogadishu imposed after several ships bearing the Somali flag had delivered cargo to North Vietnam during the war.⁵¹ In 1980, when the USA decided to halt aid to Menghistu, with the

exception of humanitarian assistance, the Italian government signed an important agreement of co-operation with Addis Ababa.

As a consequence of the new foreign policy adopted by Siad Barre with the shift from East to West, the USA began to support the dictator. Italy, now determined to play a larger role in the entire region, continued its friendly relations with Somalia, but the importance of the former colony in its foreign policy decreased. Rome strengthened its links with Ethiopia and aimed at involving in its foreign policy other countries, such as Sudan. At the end of the 1970s one thing was evident and that was that the Co-operation for Development had to play an important part in making it easier for Italy to adopt a wider scope in its foreign policy in the Horn. Nevertheless, in 1979 the Co-operation programme was just a tiny component of the Foreign Ministry organised according to the 1222 law of 1970.⁵² In addition, the first steps of Co-operation in the Horn of Africa were difficult because of the delicate situation in which Italy found itself and because of resistance from its diplomats, who, in the initial stages of Co-operation, were unable to understand the importance of this instrument of foreign policy. The Italian embassies had serious problems in dealing with these innovations and the diplomats accepted the new role with indifference or perplexity.⁵³

Under the pressure of confronting the needs of Italian foreign policy and adapting its co-operation to that of a more mature donor country, the Italian Parliament adopted the first well-organised law on co-operation. Law No. 38 of 1979 came about under pressure from the Foreign Ministry, and also as the outcome of interior policy in the 1970s and specifically of the *compromesso storico* historical compromise. During this period the traditional entrenchment between the Christian Democrats and the Communists softened and Rome could adopt a bipartisan foreign policy and channel significant funds to developing countries. The 1979 law established the Department for Co-operation for Development (DIPCO) and provided it with ample financial resources.⁵⁴ At the beginning of the 1980s the new institution contributed to the strengthening of Italian policy towards its traditional partners and opened up new networks in regions of the world, such as, for example, sub-Saharan Africa (Chad, Burkina Faso, Nigeria and Senegal), far from Italian geopolitical interests.⁵⁵ This course of action raised serious doubts about its efficacy. Giacomelli criticised the new policy of widening the number of countries involved in the Italian Co-operation while he stressed that, in order to achieve some results, it was important to invest at least 80 per cent of the

funds in no more than ten countries.⁵⁶ At the beginning of the 1980s the new department still needed a structure devoted to analysing the needs of developing countries and the best way to allocate Italian aid. Throughout its existence the Co-operation programme lacked economists and realised individual projects without having an advance programme of intervention in developing countries. The realisation of such a project should normally follow an enquiry into the needs of a country and the adoption of a programme tailored to the requirements of that country. Italy was not able to adopt this approach because the Co-operation employed a significant number of agronomists, doctors and engineers, but no economists. By adopting only single-issue projects the ability to make systemic and rational choices was severely handicapped.⁵⁷ Although Italy became one of the main donor countries in the 1980s, it allocated few financial resources to the administration and management of the department. The Italian Co-operation invested in its administration 1.6 per cent of its overall resources, while the US invested 7.2 per cent, Canada 6.3 per cent, the UK 3.4 per cent, France 3 per cent, Japan 4 per cent and Germany 3.1 per cent.⁵⁸ The law adopted in 1979, which gave the Co-operation programme a more efficient organisation, left unsolved the problem of providing it with an advisory body to help inform the Department of the best course of action.

CO-OPERATION THE ITALIAN WAY

The new opportunities and the increased financial resources the Italian government allocated to the Department for Co-operation for Development stimulated the interest of other political parties, while the PCI confirmed its positive attitude towards Menghistu under Soviet direction and distanced its relationship with Siad Barre. However, domestic events in Italy with the end of the historical compromise limited the PCI's ability to influence foreign policy. The Christian Democrats regained full control of diplomacy in the Horn of Africa and the administration of the funds devoted to the region. At the end of the 1970s two Christian Democrat Foreign Ministers, Arnaldo Forlani and Emilio Colombo, stated Italian commitment to bring Somalia under the influence of the West and to find a peaceful solution for the dispute over Ogaden.⁵⁹ The privileged position of the Christian Democrats was soon challenged by the Italian Socialist Party (PSI). Although the socialists initially criticised Siad Barre's

coup and the decision of the Italian government to recognise the new regime and continue support for post-revolutionary Somalia, their attitude changed after the war in Ogaden. In 1978 the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party (SRSP) youth organisation invited a delegation of the PSI to Mogadishu. Claudio Martelli, at that time a young leader of the PSI and close to Bettino Craxi, headed the delegation. As a result of the meeting Mohamed Aden Sheikh saw the Italian Socialist Party as a potential and valuable partner and therefore recommended that contact with the PSI be reinforced.⁶⁰ When Siad Barre visited Rome on 11 September 1978 he received the warmest welcome from the President of the Republic, the socialist Alessandro Pertini. Socialists now modified their approach to Barre's regime and tried to identify similarities between the Somali version of scientific socialism and the PSI. The new attitude towards the Somali regime was a significant element of the PSI's commitment in Africa which aimed at improving the international image of the party.⁶¹ At the beginning of the 1980s after the PSI decided to establish a close partnership with Siad Barre's regime, it promoted the approval of the new law for co-operation, and the creation of a large budget allocated to co-operation with third world countries. The bilateral co-operation with Somalia absorbed most of this fund. From 1981 to 1983, 220 billion lire were channelled to the former colony and 63 million dollars were given to Somalia for its balance of payments deficit.⁶² In 1978, Paolo Pillitteri, a member of the PSI hierarchy and Mayor of Milan, together with Pietro Bearzi established the Camera di Commercio italo somala (Italian-Somali chamber of commerce). The aims of this Milan-based institution was, according to Pillitteri, exclusively cultural. Its main commitment was to support Somali citizens in Italy in dealing with the problems of living in a foreign country.⁶³ Bettino Craxi, the secretary of PSI, often emphasised the importance of third world countries to Italy. However, he had a special concern for Siad Barre's regime. In October 1982 the socialist Minister of Defence, Lelio Lagorio, visited Mogadishu, where he signed an agreement of military assistance, of which not even the Parliament in Rome was informed, committing Italy to supporting the defence capability of Somalia.⁶⁴ The commitment of the Italian government was evidence of the growing interest that the PSI had in improving relations with Somalia. Although this initiative contradicted the aims of the Foreign Ministry as at the beginning of the 1980s, the aid programme with Ethiopia increased significantly. After Foreign Minister Colombo visited Addis Ababa in April 1981 bilateral

co-operation was institutionalised and a mixed commission was set up to define a three-year co-operation programme. For the three-year term, starting in 1984, Italy allocated to Ethiopia 140 billion lire as a grant and 150 million dollars in credit aid.⁶⁵ In this period the increase of aid to Ethiopia was a basic choice of the Italian Co-operation which conformed with the overall line of foreign policy towards the region.⁶⁶ The decision of prioritising Addis Ababa in the programme of Co-operation for Development came about as a result of the Christian Democrats' intention of playing a stabilising role in the region. Until 1985, therefore, Italian foreign policy was characterised by the coexistence of two contrasting policy lines, one established by the Christian Democrats, which was by then supportive of Addis Ababa, and a growing socialist one in clear support of Mogadishu. Following the visit of Lagorio, on 6 January 1983, the socialist secretary met Siad Barre in Mogadishu. The meeting was particularly significant as Craxi appeared to share the Somali perspective on the right to self-determination and the possibility of changing border fixed during the colonial era. Moreover, he underlined his commitment in favour of greater co-operation between the North and the South in world politics. In other words, it became evident that Craxi supported greater Italian involvement in Somalia. Although the Christian Democrats tried to maintain a privileged relationship with the Somali establishment, the welcoming attitude shown towards the regime by the PSI's secretary made the party the main Italian partner of Siad Barre. When on 7 April 1983 the Christian Democrat Foreign Minister, Emilio Colombo, received the Somali Foreign Minister, Abdulrahman Giama Barre, in Rome, he suggested that Italy act as an intermediary in the Somalia-Ethiopia dispute over Ogaden. In the same meeting Colombo and Abdulrahman Giama Barre signed an 'execution rule' for Somali-Italian co-operation. The definitive supremacy, however, of the PSI in the relationship with Somalia was consolidated after Craxi became Prime Minister in August 1983.

The only political formation in Italy which was strongly opposed to the political use of the Co-operation for Development was the Radical Party. The Radical deputy Marcello Crivellini and the senator Mario Signorino attacked the entire Italian aid policy as 'a failure'. At the end of 1983 they stated that the country's aid intervention was too widespread and, for this reason, ineffectual. More than 77 countries received some form of aid from the Co-operation for Development but often this was so little as to be insignificant. Signorino and Crivellini challenged the department over the absence

of a strategy of intervention and the adoption of an inadequate system of checks and controls. They also emphasised the poor quality of the food aid, as their main concern was to tackle starvation.⁶⁷

The Radicals' opposition to the aid policy in the Horn and in particular in Somalia was powerful in influencing Italian public opinion over Rome's commitment to supporting a repressive regime. From the early 1980s it was evident that Siad Barre's dictatorship was characterised by a strict crackdown on the opposition and a disturbing violation of human rights. The grave situation of the 1970s became even worse after the constitution adopted on 21 October 1979 was suspended in November 1980 when Barre declared a state of emergency.⁶⁸ After defeat in the Ogaden war, Siad Barre's prestige was compromised, as was the stability of his regime. In addition, as a consequence of the defeat more than one million people fled to Somalia from Ogaden, Bale and Sidamo. After Somali troops left Ogaden the activity of the West Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF) was temporarily suspended and a large number of refugees left the Ogaden. In 1979 after the WSLF renewed, on a smaller scale, its attacks on Ethiopian troops, the Derg launched a campaign of reprisals which caused a flood of refugees heading towards Somalia. Even with international aid, this was a serious problem for the Somali economy. After the defeat, the army was frustrated and many officers regretted the poor military strategy. Two colonels and several other officers in Baidoa attempted a coup on 9 April 1978. They tried to march on Mogadishu, but were stopped on the outskirts of the capital after violent clashes with loyalist troops. Probably the most serious consequence of the defeat was the creation of the first armed opposition movement to the regime. The Mudugh-based Mijerten clansmen established the Somali Salvation Front (the name was changed to the Somali Salvation Democratic Front in 1981). This Ethiopian-based group relied on help from the Ethiopian government. By 1981, even the Somali National Movement (SNM), established by the Isaaq from the former Somaliland, had launched a campaign against Siad Barre and the Marehan, Barre's clan. The situation in Somalia at the beginning of the 1980s was one of high tension exacerbated by the repressive attitude of the dictator. From October 1981 Siad Barre assumed all powers for an indefinite period.

Even if Rome was well aware of this situation, there was no real opposition to the aid programme. Throughout the 1980s the Radical Party organised a number of demonstrations against human rights violation by the Somali government. One of the most infamous events

in this period was the arrest in 1982 of six members of the Somali establishment, including Mohamed Aden Sheikh. This episode was particularly important because Siad Barre was attacking those intellectuals and politicians who had supported the Somali revolution and his regime during the 1970s. It was all the more sensitive for the Italian political establishment as Mohamed Aden Sheikh had established friendly relations with members of different political parties on the left. Even so, Rome decided not to intervene or try to link the Co-operation programme to the release of the six men. In the mid-1980s the strengthening of the socialist line improved relations between Siad Barre and the Italian government. On 8 March 1985 the Italian Parliament approved Law 73 which established the Fondo Aiuti Italiani (FAI; Italian Aid Fund) which was allocated a budget of 1,900 billion lire to be spent on emergency humanitarian aid in a period to last no longer than 18 months. The creation of the FAI was intended to provide a fast and direct response to starvation and for this reason FAI's lifespan was limited, even though it was given a significant budget. The law was approved under pressure from two political forces: the socialists, who wanted more financial resources available to extend their influence in the Horn of Africa, and the Radicals who were pushing for the creation of a fund to realise Italy's serious commitment to addressing starvation. Clearly the Radicals' claim that the Italian aid programme was biased was a strong one. They were adamant that the new allocation of funds was devoted to help developing countries to deal with starvation, but they could not influence the government's decision on how best to organise the FAI and the aid programme. In fact a socialist deputy, Francesco Forte, was appointed Under-Secretary responsible for the FAI. At the beginning of 1985 the budget grew significantly and the political pressure to spend quickly was unrelenting. The new law changed the procedure through which aid contracts funded from the FAI budget were assigned to Italian companies. From now on all those cases considered to be an emergency or extraordinary were assigned without an invitation to tender. The new procedure was adopted also for Law No. 49 introduced in 1987 to improve the organisation of the new General Directorate of the Co-operation for Development. The new procedure was adopted in order to make intervention quicker and more effective in those regions of the world where starvation had reached a crisis. However, this mechanism, once extended from the FAI to the Co-operation for Development, made it easier for politicians in control of the two structures to assign the contracts to the companies

with which they had the best contacts. Probably not all the shortcomings of the Co-operation, but a significant number of them, can be identified in this organisation of emergency aid.⁶⁹ Aloisi emphasises the inadequacy of the FAI and DIPCO organisations in dealing with such large sums of money.⁷⁰ As a result of the increased budget for aid intervention, Italy became one of the principal donor countries in sub-Saharan Africa. In 1977, Italy was not even among the top ten donor countries, yet in 1983–4 it had climbed to fourth, behind France, the USA and Germany. In 1986–7 Italy was the second donor country after France, providing 8.4 per cent of overall aid in the sub-Saharan region. In 1988, Italian aid represented double the value of aid provided by the USA and was equal to 50 per cent of French aid.⁷¹ In September 1985, a few months after the establishment of the FAI, Bettino Craxi and Francesco Forte visited Siad Barre in Mogadishu. Craxi, the first Italian Prime Minister to visit Somalia, strengthened the relationship between the two countries, granting Somalia 400 billion lire from the FAI and 150 billion lire from the Co-operation for Development. Specifically aid from the FAI had to be addressed to starvation or any similar emergency. However, these funds were to be whittled away on mammoth projects. Most of the funds were spent on building a road from Garoe to Bosaso and to the rehabilitation of Johar farm. The building of the 450 km road was the most controversial, as it was expensive: it was estimated at 240 billion lire and eventually cost 330 billion, and diverted a significant proportion of the resources from what was the main aim of FAI – fighting starvation. In addition, the Foreign Ministry reported that, in order to achieve the project, the time necessary for the planning, about 12 months, and the time needed to realise the project, not less than 36 months, was much longer than the lifespan allotted to the FAI. According to the Foreign Ministry, the FAI would have expired before the work began.⁷² The building of the road attracted diverse reactions, the Italian press speculated about why Somalia really needed such a road, and the possible use that Siad Barre could make of it to move troops from central Somalia to the north to fight the SNM militia. The truth was that the FAI budget was being used in a different way from that originally intended, now that the socialists were dominating the administration of the fund. In the end, the FAI assigned the contract to build the road to four main Italian building companies: Astaldi, Lodigiani, Cogefar and Montedil.⁷³

Johar, a farm based on the old Italian farm of Villaggio Duca degli Abruzzi, was given 38 billion lire for rehabilitation. Even in this case

the investment invited serious criticism. Pietro Ugolini, an expert of the Co-operation for Development,⁷⁴ stated that as a consequence of Italian investment in Johar, the Somali government employed people from the villages in the region who were often forced to work by the Somali army and treated as slaves. Therefore, with the aim of helping companies that had to share the 38 billion lire, Italy invested this money for an illusory social rehabilitation programme which increased the practice of the enforced movement of populations. Often these people responded by damaging the companies' property.⁷⁵

The Johar rehabilitation and the Garoe–Bosaso road were not isolated events, but were just two of the many mistakes made by the Italian Co-operation in Somalia. They are particularly significant in understanding that often the main aim of the Co-operation was not to help the local population. Even the FAI, whose budget was intended to be exclusively used to eradicate starvation, was used to increase the amount of money channelled into political and economic corruption in Italy.⁷⁶

Following the meeting between Craxi and Siad Barre in Mogadishu, the Italian commitment in Somalia grew significantly for a number of years and more money was devoted to co-operation with the dictator. Whilst many other countries were isolating him, Italy still supported his regime. Nevertheless tension in Somalia was heading towards the brutal civil war that eventually destroyed the Somali state. The confrontation between Siad Barre's troops and the Somali National Movement in the north became particularly violent. From 1985 to 1987 the Co-operation allotted more than 1,000 billion lire to Somalia, as well as 70 billion lire in commodity aid. At the end of 1987, the Co-operation set aside 500 billion lire for the three-year period 1988–90. Yet 1988 was the year when the isolated clashes between the SNM and Siad Barre escalated into an open conflict. In April the old enemies, Menghistu and Siad Barre, signed a treaty of non-aggression and non-interference. The agreement was intended to end military tension and conflict between the two countries over the border dispute. Believing that this was the case, Italian diplomacy congratulated itself on creating the conditions for the treaty. Giulio Andreotti, the Foreign Minister at that time, stated that Italy was committed 'to patient and prudent diplomatic initiatives to remove the causes of the conflict'.⁷⁷ Although the Italian commitment was undeniable, it soon became evident that the aim of the treaty was to stop the two regimes undermining each other by supporting the armed opposition across the border. As a consequence, Menghistu

agreed to close opposition military bases in Ethiopia and forced the SNM to change its strategy.⁷⁸ After the loss of Ethiopian support, the SNM decided to launch an offensive in the north involving the three major cities of Hargeisa, Berbera and Burao. Siad Barre reacted harshly and the repression of the opposition in the north turned to bloodshed. In the summer of 1988, he ordered the airforce and artillery to bombard Hargeisa and Burao, resulting in heavy civilian casualties. As a consequence of the military operation in the north and the casualties sustained by unarmed civilians, Rome faced strong opposition at home to the Co-operation programme and the allocation of 500 billion lire to the programme had to be suspended. On 26 February 1987 a new law on co-operation, No. 49, was approved by Parliament and the Co-operation became an integral part of Italian foreign policy. However, set against the growing Italian commitment in Somalia were the continuous allegations of human rights violations. Although in 1989 the civil war in Somalia was a pressing problem, the Italian President, Francesco Cossiga, and the Foreign Minister, Giulio Andreotti, decided to visit Mogadishu during a trip to Africa. On 10 February, the two Italian politicians met Siad Barre, but it was clear that Rome was having difficulties supporting a regime that was internationally condemned for its violation of human rights. Italy remained the only Western country to support Siad Barre when Somalia was already engaged in a civil war. After Salvatore Colombo, the Bishop of Mogadishu, was killed in July 1989, the relationship between Italy and Somalia suffered its first serious setback. When, in March 1990, Mario Sica replaced Mario Manca as Italian ambassador to Mogadishu,⁷⁹ the situation in the Somali capital was one of great tension. The opposition movements were growing stronger by the day and the dictator's power had been significantly weakened. Before Sica was appointed to this difficult post, Italian diplomacy had decided to promote, albeit unconvincingly, the beginning of a democratisation process. In September 1989 the Somali Prime Minister, Mohamed Ali Samantar, on a visit to Rome, asked for Italian commitment to helping Mogadishu adopt a multi-party system and a policy of national reconciliation. Rome promoted the creation of a commission which, in November 1989, gathered in Mogadishu Somali experts, many of whom had studied at Italian universities, to prepare the drafting of a new constitution and to introduce a multi-party system.⁸⁰ Once the constitutional project was drafted it was arranged that the commission of Somali experts were to go to Rome to discuss the project with Italian constitutional experts and eventually introduce

some final revisions. Early in 1990 it was clear that the military regime did not want let the experts continue the constitutional process. This situation became clear when the Italian Under-Secretary of State, Susanna Agnelli, visited Mogadishu on 10 and 11 May. Despite the fact that the Council of Secretaries had approved the new constitution, the experts made it clear to the Italian envoy that Siad Barre and his regime intended to resist any reforms that might weaken his power.⁸¹ A few days after Agnelli left Mogadishu the opposition prepared a document, the 'Manifesto', levelled against Siad Barre, and sent it to all embassies and the public in Mogadishu. The document, which was signed by 114 personalities, mainly Darod and Hawiye, roundly condemned the climate of civil war in which Somalia was rapidly heading. It also emphasised the lack of security and rule of law in the country, the repeated violation of human rights, the malfunctioning of the government and the dire economy. The 'Manifesto' demanded an end to the repressive regime and also a conference of national reconciliation which would aim at establishing a government of national unity. The 'Manifesto' was, as Ahmed Samatar emphasises, 'one of the last attempts to salvage the country from impending total ruin'.⁸² For the newly appointed Italian ambassador in Mogadishu, the document represented an opportunity to reopen a dialogue between the Somali government and the opposition. While Rome did not want overtly to side with the opposition, it could show sympathy for the initiative, and in fact Sica invited the 'Manifesto' supporters to the Italian embassy on the 2 June Italian Republic Day celebrations. The political impact of his decision was momentous, and provoked an immediate reaction from Siad Barre's government. The Somali National Security Service tried to stop members of the 'Manifesto' group from reaching the embassy, and only 15 of them managed to join the celebration.⁸³ In the following days about 80 of them were arrested and some 30 were jailed in Lanta Bur prison. Despite protests from the Italian ambassador, the Somali Prime Minister justified the arrests. The move was a final blow to Siad Barre's already poor credibility and to Rome's commitment to promote a peaceful process of reform in Somalia. Yet a major setback in relations between the two countries came about only when an Italian biologist, Giuseppe Salvo, working in Mogadishu, disappeared on 17 June. The following day, a Somali police officer informed the Italian embassy Counsellor, Claudio Pacifico,⁸⁴ that Salvo had been apprehended inside the 2nd armoured brigade compound. He was arrested and detained overnight. In the early morning, according to

the Somali officers, he committed suicide. When it became clear that Salvo had been beaten to death by soldiers of the 2nd armoured brigade and Somali authorities had tried to hide what had happened, the Italian media demanded that Rome adopt a tough line.⁸⁵ Handling relations with a schizophrenic regime was becoming increasingly difficult for Rome, while the Italian public did not understand why the government was still supporting a regime that was unable to protect Somalis and foreigners alike. In particular, the main concern was that Barre was losing control over large parts of the territory and also over his own subjects. At the end of June, when the Somali Foreign Minister, Ahmed Giama Abdulla, met Gianni De Michelis in Rome, the Italian Foreign Minister stated that the Somali government's 'credibility was zero'. He protested at the poor investigation of Salvo's case, but, more significantly, told the Somali minister to free those who had supported the 'Manifesto' in early June.⁸⁶

In July Rome withdrew its 56 experts from the military mission in Mogadishu and ceased co-operation with the Somali National University.⁸⁷ As a result Italian lecturers did not go to Mogadishu for the second academic term. Now Siad Barre realised that events in Mogadishu and his repressive line were compromising the relationship with his only international partner. In July, the members of the 'Manifesto' group were freed and in the next few days the government announced the adoption of a new constitution, with a referendum to be held in October, and general elections in February. Despite these initiatives, which once again received Italian support, the opposition did not believe that Somalia could start a process of democratisation as long as Barre remained in power. In addition, although Rome was committed to promoting a series of reforms, some opposition movements remained extremely sceptical about Italy's real intention in Somalia. During the previous 20 years of the regime, Italy had supported Siad Barre despite the international community's allegations about his regime's constant violation of human rights. In addition, although several opposition movements were established in Rome, such as the USC (United Somali Congress), the Italian Foreign Ministry never considered opening a dialogue with them. Furthermore, the Somali National Movement was firmly against Italy for the role it had played in the 1988 treaty between Mogadishu and Addis Ababa. It also criticised Italy's aid policy which, according to leaders in Hargeisa, had been too generous to southern Somalia while overlooking the northwest region of the country.

Somalia was rapidly falling apart. While several scholars have analysed and defined this phase of Somali history as the collapse of a state, it was in fact a personal dictatorship that was ruinously disintegrating. The adoption of a new constitution on 12 October made no difference, and an Italian and Egyptian initiative to hold round-table discussions to be held in Cairo at the end of the year was opposed by Aideed and Omar Jess, respectively leaders of two major wings within the USC and Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM). However, the final blow to the failure of the meeting in Cairo was the strong opposition of the SNM. Angelo Del Boca observes that in the months preceding the round-table talks a Somali delegation formed by Soleiman Mohamed and Ibrahim Megag Samatar of the SNM, Nicolino Mohamed of the Somali Democratic Movement SDM/USC and Mohamed Awale Hassan was received at the US Congress and the Department of State. The Somali delegation asked Washington to intervene to stop the Italian-Egyptian-sponsored Cairo conference.⁸⁸ The conference was destined to failure not only due to the differences between Italy and the various opposition movements, but also because by then the country was heading towards a bloody civil war. In the last days of December, Mogadishu was in the grip of an insurrection by all opposition movements against the troops still loyal to Siad Barre.

This was the prelude to the violent battle for Mogadishu. In January 1991 the Italian ambassador in Somalia, Mario Sica, offered his mediation, proposing to Siad Barre and the opposition the creation of a new government to start a process of national reconciliation. This process would involve conferring on Siad Barre the title of constitutional head of state, allowing him to remain as interim head of state.⁸⁹ Such an attempt, at a time when Siad Barre was considered the number one enemy of the majority of Somalis, was destined to failure. The ambassador's initiative raised suspicions that the covert aim of Rome was not reconciliation in Somalia, but to save the dictator from catastrophe. However, it should be noted that, according to Sica, after he sent his proposal to the two main sides in the Somali dispute, the USC appreciated the initiative and gave a positive reply, although the government never responded.⁹⁰ On 12 January, in the middle of dramatic street fighting, the Italian embassy and its personnel abandoned Mogadishu.

After Siad Barre was forced to flee Mogadishu on 28 January, Ali Mahdi was 'elected' President of the Republic, and established a government that Aideed and the SNM refused to recognise. On

19 February, a joint statement issued by the SNM and Aideed's wing of the USC attacked Ali Mahdi's government as no different from Siad Barre's regime.

The end of Barre's regime and his exodus from Mogadishu did not heal the differences between the clans and armed factions. As long as the opposition had a common enemy, unity was easily achieved, but once the dictatorship collapsed the power struggle began again. The differences between Aideed and Ali Mahdi, respectively leaders of two Hawiye sub-clans – Habr Gidir and Abgal – showed evidence that tension in Somalia remained a matter of concern. In the early months of 1991, Italy and Egypt again attempted to hold a conference for the main Somali factions but to no avail. On 5 June, the representatives of the major movements (with the exception of the SNM⁹¹ and Aideed, who remained opposed to the democratisation process led by Ali Mahdi) met in Djibouti. Egypt, Italy and 30 other states attended the conference as observers. Aideed's opposition and the secession of Somaliland, promoted by the SNM in May 1991, limited the impact of the conference in Djibouti; however, the intensity of clashes decreased and the Italian government decided to reopen its embassy in Mogadishu. On 6 August the commitment of Hawiye's elders bore fruit and Aideed and Ali Mahdi reached an agreement. Aideed accepted Ali Mahdi as President of the Third Somali Republic, while the Abgal leader pledged to follow strictly the political line of the USC and to consult Aideed before appointing any high-ranking officer.⁹² Again, Mario Sica was called to handle the difficult task. The Italian ambassador in Mogadishu had two main aims. On the one hand, he was committed to reactivating the allocation of humanitarian aid, on the other, to normalising relations between the two warlords. In September the ceasefire was broken and Mogadishu once again was a battlefield.

Rome then decided to promote mediation between the two Hawiye sub-clans involving an Under-Secretary of the Foreign Ministry, Andrea Borruso. Mario Sica organised a meeting in which, even though Aideed was invited, the major emphasis was on Ali Mahdi, as he was nominally head of the government. The Habr Gidir leader did not disguise his hostility to the Italian initiative and reluctantly accepted Borruso's visit to Mogadishu. However on 29 October, when Borruso's mission had already set out and his aircraft was ready to land in Mogadishu, Aideed's troops occupied the road to the airport and ordered the control tower to refuse landing permission. It was a final blow to any possible mediation carried out under Italian

diplomacy. In November, Sica left Mogadishu for Nairobi where a G222 of the Italian air force was awaiting instructions for the distribution of humanitarian aid in south and north Somalia. The ambassador was never allowed to return to Mogadishu.

On 17 November, the Somali capital was in the grip of violent street fighting between militias loyal to Aideed and Ali Mahdi. The only thing the Italian officials in Mogadishu could do was to evacuate the embassy once again.

When Sica left Somalia, of the structures built with the 1,600 billion lire Italy had granted to the country,⁹³ very little was still in working order. Corruption and extortion had crippled the efficacy of the Co-operation in Somalia. The budget of the Co-operation for Development and the FAI was largely devoted to building structures of questionable utility.⁹⁴ Italian politicians, businessmen and members of the Somali establishment were in a privileged position to take advantage of Italian aid for Somalia – a 'perverted triangle' in Pietro Petrucci's view.⁹⁵

The Camera di Commercio italo-somala, for example, was an organisation committed to developing trade and commerce between the two countries, but Gemma Gualdi, a magistrate in Milan, explained that the Somali and Italian representatives agreed that for any deal completed they had to share 10 per cent of the entire business. Despite the fact that this is consistent with Italian public law, the anomaly was that the Italian representatives of the Chamber of Commerce held important political positions and therefore should not have been involved in such a deal.⁹⁶ The projects supported by the Camera di Commercio italo-somala were funded by the FAI or by the Co-operation for Development, and often they were controversial.⁹⁷

The last chapter of the Co-operation for Development started with a parliamentary enquiry which aimed at assessing all the malfunctioning of the institutions from its inception to the present, and in particular the 1980s. The parliamentary commission which has recently completed its investigation into the Co-operation, has been able to identify areas in which Italy was responsible for poor management of such a delicate instrument of foreign policy, but it has not been able to estimate what damage the Co-operation did in Somalia.

Pietro Ugolini states that it was Italian policy that led to the civil war.⁹⁸ Ugolini's verdict on the Co-operation is particularly severe and is the outcome of direct experience, and probably stems from the frustration at dealing on a daily basis with an inefficient system. A more reasoned assessment of the Co-operation and of Italian foreign policy

in Somalia and in the Horn in general has to consider the larger picture. To start with, Italy's decision not to take sides in the confrontation between East and West was not unique to the Horn. From the end of the 1950s Italy had adopted a low profile in its foreign policy with the aim of keeping all its options open to maintain or establish good relationships with countries under Soviet influence. Rome followed this approach even when its main ally, the USA, was following a different path.

The attempt to identify a specific Italian strategy in the Horn, outside the general framework of foreign policy, is in part artificial. Since the 1970s, when Menghistu took power, Italy was determined to maintain or improve its relationship with the Derg. At the same time it never relinquished its partnership with Somalia. The relationship between Italy and Somalia following Barre's coup suffered some setbacks yet it always remained good. Calchi Novati maintains that 'Italy pretended to be neutral – a friend to all, an enemy to none – and sought to side with those regimes in the Horn that disliked being constrained by the alignments of the Cold War.'⁹⁹

At the beginning of the 1980s Rome achieved its aim of maintaining good relations with Addis Ababa and Mogadishu. Due to its traditional standing Italy could not play a hegemonic role, but it could be an influential medium or even a mediating power. In addition, the strong link between the Derg regime and the Soviet Union limited the possibility of Italy increasing its role in the region.

However, from the mid-1980s, Moscow's commitment in the region decreased and the USA elected not to become involved in the Horn because of Siad Barre's reputation. This situation came about in the same period in which Italy allocated substantial financial resources to the Co-operation for Development and Rome made clear that the Department was going to be a major instrument of its foreign policy. As a result Italy had the opportunity to become the most influential medium-sized power in the Horn of Africa. It was an opportunity that Rome would miss. Its obstinate support for the two governments, even though they were transparently violating human rights, alienated the opposition movements. Italian diplomacy has always been reluctant to open dialogue with opposition movements. In Somalia, Italy was blamed for supporting Siad Barre even after all the other powers had isolated the dictator. Italian attempts to influence Somalia's domestic policy, and promote a process of national reconciliation and democratisation in the early 1990s, came too late. And Rome's initiative was viewed with suspicion. Italy lost the chance to play a more

assertive role when the funds distributed by the Co-operation to the Horn of Africa could have been a valuable instrument in pressuring the Somali government. Currently it is impossible to state whether Italian diplomacy was aware that the April 1988 agreement between Siad Barre and Menghistu was directed against the opposition movements. But it would be consistent with the Italian stance to speculate that Italian diplomacy and politicians supported the treaty in full knowledge of the consequences. The Foreign Ministry probably knew that such an agreement would have stopped armed opposition in the two countries, resulting in the strengthening of Italy's position in the Horn.

However, beyond its direct support to both governments, Italian foreign policy in the Horn never adopted a detailed strategy. During the 1980s Italy did not have long-term objectives. In the end, the massive financial commitments did not produce any benefits for the Mediterranean power. The statements by Ambassadors Giacomelli and Aloisi reveal not only the lack of an economic programme in the Horn, but also the absence of any overall policy. Often, financial intervention was not part of a pre-arranged plan, but decided on an ad hoc basis and lacked focus. Aloisi's revelations concerning the absence of economists in the Co-operation for Development was surprising, to say the least. In a situation in which the Co-operation did not have a general programme and a valid system of control, corruption increased. During the 1980s, the budget for the Co-operation increased, but African countries, such as Somalia, saw little benefit. Some of the funds from the original investment aimed at developing countries lined the pockets of Italian politicians and members of the Somali establishment, while the allocation of contracts was given to those companies that could offer the most lucrative bribes. This mechanism lasted as long as Siad Barre was presented to the Italian public as the lesser of possible evils in Somalia. Today it is evident that widespread corruption dramatically reduced the possibility of improving the conditions of the Somali people.¹⁰⁰ Siad Barre was not pressured to change the repressive face of his regime because Italian politicians also used the Co-operation as a means of creaming illicit funds from state coffers. As long as Barre remained in power this system would survive, whereas a change in government would be a blow to corruption.¹⁰¹

6 Mogadishu versus the World

From November 1991 clashes between Ali Mahdi Mohammed's and General Mohammed Farah Aideed's militias spiralled into a vicious and bloody civil war. The situation in the devastated Somali capital was further complicated after two other major clans, the Hawadle and the Murasade, which previously had been neutral, took sides. The Hawadle's control of the airport was an advantage for Aideed while the Murasade, holding the port, supported Ali Mahdi. Despite the fact that the civil war in Somalia was mostly perceived as a personal confrontation between Aideed and Ali Mahdi, many clans and sub-clans were taking sides with one or the other faction or, as in the case of the Isaaq Somali National Movement, were following their own objectives. The apparently solid coalition, which had driven Siad Barre out of Mogadishu, was falling apart along clan lines and the logic of clan competition. The major problem faced by Somalia in the years from 1990 to 1992 was the fragmentation that took place among clans and sub-clans. The longer factions were fighting among themselves the more the only cohesive power in Somalia, nationalism, was becoming exhausted. With it the possibility for the international community to reverse the situation of total internal conflict was also disappearing. The main factor that promoted the clan coalition during the 1980s – opposition to Siad Barre and his dictatorship – soon disappeared. General Bruno Loi estimates that more than 500,000 guns were available in Somalia at the beginning of Restore Hope, and the large number of guns and other weapons which became available to warlords during this period hastened the collapse of the country. Devastation in Mogadishu and in other major cities, such as Kismayo or Baidoa, was only the most evident, although terrible, sign of the fighting. The hidden effect of the civil war was the wave of hatred that permeated the clans making any agreement, any ceasefire or possible mediation initiative, extremely shaky. In Mogadishu, Jeffrey Clark claims, 'most of the remaining infrastructure of the city was totally destroyed: virtually every building in the central city was ripped apart by artillery shelling; bridges and water lines were blown up; underground utility lines were dug up for the

copper wiring they contained.'¹ Mogadishu was a battlefield where civilians were paying the highest price.

In the middle of 1992 Somalia had a major problem to deal with: famine. Figures coming out of Somalia relating to the numbers of people dying or suffering badly from malnutrition were dreadful. In 1992 more than 300,000 died and nearly 1,000,000 fled to refugee camps in neighbouring countries. In addition, as a consequence of the civil war, Somali warlords were in control of the humanitarian aid arriving in the country. As food became a vital resource, control over its distribution had an important political impact. Therefore, despite the fact that by the end of 1992 food was flooding into Somalia in great quantities, the relief effort was achieving little results. Several thousand people a day were dying, and the value of life was diminished. General Luigi Cantone emphasises that, although the destruction of Mogadishu was appalling, it was shocking to discover that the hundreds of humps close to the pavements on which children used to play were graves where people killed during the clashes had been buried on the spot.

As a result of mounting international public awareness of what was going on in Somalia, pressure for intervention increased significantly. As Clark points out 'the "CNN factor" simply did not allow the UN and the international community to continue avoiding action as the situation deteriorated.'² The American public strongly supported the initial aim of providing humanitarian aid and an international commitment in Somalia. In December 1992, following the deployment of Restore Hope troops, 66 per cent of the American public surveyed by *Newsweek* were in favour of the mission.³ Adam Roberts in *Humanitarian Action in War* considered news coverage of major crises, especially television, and the subsequent public pressure on governments to act, to be one of the main factors triggering humanitarian action.⁴ In addition, cinema stars decided to focus the attention of world public opinion on the Somali drama by visiting the country. At the end of November, Sophia Loren, the world famous actress, visited Somalia, and despite the fact that the Italian press gave controversial coverage of the event, it was important in making the Italian public aware of famine and starvation in the former colony.⁵ Yet the main impact on Italians was the speech that Pope John Paul II delivered on 5 December at the first meeting on nutrition at the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), in Rome, in which he claimed that humanitarian intervention should be compulsory wherever the survival of a population was threatened.⁶

From a military perspective from March 1992 the situation in Mogadishu was relatively peaceful as the two major warlords had agreed to a ceasefire which held longer than the previous ones. It is likely that both factions were exhausted and therefore a pause in fighting was essential to give them time to recover from the loss of men, but mainly of ammunition. The situation was one of stalemate in which neither Aideed nor Ali Mahdi was able to defeat the other. So the respite was valuable not only to reorganise the militias, but also to establish new alliances, as during this period no agreement among the many factions was reliable or stable. As a result of the ceasefire, on 24 April, the Security Council approved resolution 751 which established the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) in charge of monitoring the ceasefire in Mogadishu, to protect UN personnel and the distribution of humanitarian aid. The Security Council authorised the dispatch of 50 unarmed military observers to Somalia. Yet in principle a larger commitment of a UN security force of 550 had already been agreed, and in September the US air force airlifted 500 UN Pakistani troops. At the end of July the UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, emphasised that, while the ceasefire had achieved significant results in stopping the fighting, Mogadishu still had serious problems in returning to normality. Public order, in a situation of anarchy that had lasted more than two years, was a real concern. Consequently, on 27 July, the Security Council approved resolution 767 which called 'upon all parties, movement and factions in Somalia to co-operate with the United Nations with a view to the urgent deployment of the United Nations personnel.' It also stressed 'the need for the observance and strict monitoring of the general and complete embargo of all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Somalia.'⁷ Finally, on 28 August, resolution 775 authorised the deployment in Somalia of 3,500 troops, instead of the 7,000 previously requested by Mohammed Sahnoun, the Secretary-General's special representative in Mogadishu.

Between the violent battle of Mogadishu in January 1991 and the first significant deployment of UN troops in Somalia, two years had elapsed. According to Oliver Ramsbotham and Tom Woodhouse this delay in taking action came about because 'the great powers no longer perceived vital security interests in the area, and were preoccupied with the Gulf War and the worsening situation in Yugoslavia.'⁸ Yet Somalia represented the first important peacekeeping commitment of the post-Cold War era, a new generation of peacekeeping never before tested. Therefore, the main international actors, the UN, and

the only remaining superpower, the USA, did not yet have a strategy or plan of action. On the one hand, the schemes adopted in 1992 by the international community to stop the civil war and deal with starvation in Somalia were novel – they had to be tested on the ground and often adapted to a quickly changing situation. The use of force, which was meant to facilitate the peacekeepers' action, became a major problem with Somalis. How to use force was a source of major controversy among the coalition members, often raising differences between national headquarters, such as the Italian, and UNOSOM. On the other hand, the violence and determination of the main protagonists of the clan confrontation in Somalia were unprecedented, as was the difficulty of achieving a lasting and reliable ceasefire accepted by all factions.

Clark rightly emphasises that 'the Council's avoidance of decisive action during 1992 contributed to the catastrophe that unfolded and has left unmasked its poor capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies stemming from political disarray in the post-Cold War era.'⁹ Yet the uncertainty of the Security Council, although not justifiable, could not be blamed as it was the result of a transitional period during which the consolidated balance and practice of the Cold War shifted. In Somalia, intervention represented a significant move from a traditional way of understanding and carrying out peacekeeping, mostly as a light interposition force, to massive intervention in a country devastated by civil war. Somalia characterised the shift from the traditional and consolidated non-interventionist approach to humanitarian intervention carried out with a strong military input. The shift was to be painful for both the local population and intervention forces.

Apparently one of the main reasons that eventually determined President George Bush to promote Operation Restore Hope came about after the many reports he had received from Somalia that depicted the situation as extremely serious. In November, more than 80 per cent of the commodities sent to Somalia were confiscated and the humanitarian action was hampered by the difficult situation in which NGOs had to work. However, the idea that something had to be done had already been expressed by the President after the American ambassador in Kenya had visited a Somali refugee camp and gave Bush a dramatic description of the conditions.¹⁰ In addition, Mohammed Farah Aideed's militia was hostile to the 500 UN Pakistani 'blue helmets' who were forced to deploy themselves at Mogadishu airport.

Consequently, the US State Department submitted a proposal to the President to deploy troops in Somalia, in order to protect humanitarian aid. In November, the Pentagon also recommended the dispatch of a coalition force under US leadership. The mission's objective would be to improve and ensure the distribution of humanitarian aid. Once that aim was achieved, US troops were to be replaced by UN troops. On 25 November, President Bush appointed the then acting Secretary of State, Lawrence Eagleburger, to submit to Boutros-Ghali a plan for humanitarian action in Somalia under US command. The Bush Plan consisted of deploying a 30,000-man force with the aim of ensuring the security of ports, airports and roads which were essential for the distribution of humanitarian aid to central and southern Somalia.

The mission aimed at the re-establishment of a safe environment; its only purpose was tackling mass starvation.¹¹ The Bush administration decided to deploy troops in Somalia with the sole commitment of clearing the relief channels that could avoid mass starvation.¹² Boutros-Ghali, right from this initial stage, requested that an international force be deployed to disarm Somali factions and promote nation-building. Yet Boutros-Ghali's demands were rejected by the US. The Defence Secretary, Dick Cheney, restated that active disarmament did not fall within the operational remit of Restore Hope.¹³ There was an evident divergence between Boutros-Ghali's views and the American plan. According to the UN Secretary General, for the mission to succeed the coalition troops were empowered with peace-keeping and also peace-enforcing tasks, while UNITAF (United Task Force), the American headquarters, would limit operations in Somalia to protecting the crucial channels for distribution of humanitarian aid to the central and southern areas of Somalia.

Therefore resolution 794, of 3 December 1992 was approved in a difficult context characterised by differences between the US and the UN. 'The US-led invasion', as Adam Roberts called it, began on 9 December, with extraordinary media coverage. Resolution 794 explicitly authorised for the first time a massive military intervention in a country without a prior invitation from its government.¹⁴

THE IBIS' FLIGHT

As resolution 794 also welcomed 'offers by other member states to participate in that operation',¹⁵ Rome decided to send a large

contingent of troops to Somalia to support the humanitarian intervention. Speculation and criticism about the Italian decision was immediate. By the end of November representatives of the United Somali Congress, the Somali National Movement, the Somali Democratic Movement, the Somali National Union (SNU), the Somali Patriotic Movement and the Somali Democratic Alliance (SDA) in Rome had issued a statement which said that the intervention of Italian troops in Somalia would be considered an act of war. The Somali representatives welcomed the deployment of troops of any country acting 'under the UN flag', with the exception of Italian and Egyptian soldiers. According to the statement Italy was blamed for the support it had provided in the past to Siad Barre and for the assistance it was currently giving to factions still loyal to the former Somali dictator.¹⁶ A similar position was expressed a few weeks later by Aideed who had already disrupted a number of Italian and Egyptian mediation initiatives. In December, after a meeting with the Italian Foreign Ministry special envoy, Ambassador Enrico Augelli, the Habr Gidir leader claimed that 'it would be a mistake if Italy sent troops [to Somalia] in these difficult circumstances while Somalis are starving.' Aideed did not oppose, although he did not particularly welcome, UNOSOM and the deployment of US troops. He explained this position saying that 'Somalis have not forgotten that Americans stopped supporting Siad Barre when he was murdering the population, while Italy carried on sending aid.'¹⁷ Italian diplomacy had a difficult task to face not only because of the open hostility of some major Somali factions, but also due to some doubts raised by Washington about Rome's commitment in Somalia. The US Department of State was concerned about the deployment of Italian troops with Restore Hope.¹⁸ Robert Oakley, a former US ambassador to Mogadishu and special envoy to Somalia of the US administration, emphasised that the Italian contingent was destined to maintain a low profile, and despite the fact that Italy had important tasks to perform, its troops were going to have logistic duties only,¹⁹ while General Robert Johnston, the UNITAF commander, maintained that the Italian contribution was of vital importance for the operation in Somalia. In an interview to *il Corriere della Sera* the American commander said, 'I value the Italians as the most important members of the coalition. Italy could not send better soldiers.'²⁰

On 12 December, the Italian code-named operation Ibis was in its operational stage. The first soldiers of the Col Moschin battalion arrived in Mogadishu to arrange the deployment of the Italian

contingent. From late December to early January 1993, the paratroopers of the Folgore Brigade, and the lagunari²¹ of the San Marco battalion took up positions in Somalia. In January 1993, Rome deployed 2,300 soldiers, 1,290 vehicles, 78 armoured vehicles and 36 helicopters. The region under the control of the Italian troops ranged from the northeast area of Mogadishu to the Ethiopian border; they were in charge of security along the 'strada imperiale' (imperial road), Mogadishu-Addis Ababa. Italian soldiers were also deployed in Balad, where a tactical headquarters was established, Johar, Jalalaxi and Bullo Burti.²² Ibis' main tasks were: to create and maintain a safe environment for the distribution of humanitarian aid, to sustain the process of national reconciliation and to get directly involved in initiatives aimed at helping the population, such as reopening hospitals and other major social infrastructures.²³ Finally, Ibis was committed to encouraging members of the local population to hand in guns in their possession or at least not to carry them. As a result of the Italian raids over a period of several months, more than 3,500 guns were confiscated. Searching for weapons in Mogadishu was particularly difficult, as Italian officers had been instructed to avoid direct confrontation with civilians while undertaking such operations. General Loi maintained that the soldiers always showed determination and kindness, and the main goal achieved in the area under Italian control was that nobody was actually carrying guns of any sort. 'People, after two years of civil war', Loi said 'were resuming a normal life.'²⁴

ITALY AND THE US

Following US criticism which was provoked by the Italian commitment in Somalia, Senator Fabio Fabbri, Minister of Defence during the most sensitive stages of mission Ibis, stated that Rome's involvement in Somalia was initially viewed with a perplexed, distrustful and critical attitude. Fabbri was making a clear reference to Robert Oakley, who had expressed his strong reservations about the Italian presence in Somalia, due to its colonial history and the good relations it had had with Siad Barre almost until the last days of his regime.²⁵ The criticism surrounding Rome's decision to participate in Restore Hope was a serious issue for Italian diplomacy and the military. Yet by the end of January, General Giampiero Rossi, the commander of the Italian contingent, could claim that despite the fact that at the

beginning of the operation the Somali people, faction leaders and the USA had not wanted any Italian involvement, 'now we are welcomed everywhere. There is a constant positive change that can be perceived day by day. At the present people trust us.... I believe that the initial hostility came about as a result of political choices.'²⁶

Italian troops had focused on humanitarian operations: convoy escorts, food and drug distribution and healthcare. The Benadir and De Martino hospitals in Mogadishu and the hospital in Jalalaxi were rehabilitated, and a field hospital was established in Giohar. In addition, Ibis was committed to offering assistance to people living in small villages and, in several cases, hundred miles distant from any health centre. Healthcare for these people was difficult because of the great distances and the bad conditions of the few roads. Often the assistance had to be given by employing helicopters: 'as we could promptly rely on helicopters, we managed to save the life of people in situations which even in Italy would have been difficult to face.'²⁷ With small-scale projects, Ibis re-established a rudimentary postal service and a refuse-collection service. An education project was launched and some school books in the Somali language were printed and distributed. Two initiatives, Radio Ibis and the COU (Circuiti Operativi Umanitari; Operational Humanitarian Channels), the first established almost spontaneously and the latter promoted by the three commanders of Ibis, were decisive in strengthening relations with the Somalis. Radio Ibis was set up with the resources that Italian troops had available in Mogadishu. Rome was not directly involved in setting up the radio station, although later it became clear that Radio Ibis was having an extremely positive impact on locals. Initially radio programmes were tailored to entertain Italian soldiers but, due to the close cultural links, Somalis enjoyed and appreciated the broadcasts. Mauro Merosi has observed that the radio is the only real mass media in Somalia and listening to it is an important means of socialisation as people gather together in small groups.²⁸ Some Somalis also began broadcasting and soon new programmes were launched for the local people, making radio Ibis extremely popular in Mogadishu.

The COU were introduced to provide assistance to the small villages in the Savannah. They were made up of 50 or 60 soldiers, with a military doctor, food and health supplies. Ibis headquarters identified villages to which the COU would be sent for a week or ten days. The aim of COU was to reach the most isolated villages in the region crossed by the *strada imperiale*. They provided assistance by restarting basic infrastructures such as water drills and pipelines. This

experience, as General Carmine Fiore noted, was extremely useful for Somali people and for the creation of good relations, but also for soldiers who understood the importance of carrying out humanitarian tasks beyond the merely military.²⁹

As public order was extremely unstable, Ibis stressed the need to reorganise the Somali police force. The perception was that the task of providing public security could not be carried out by members of the coalition, but should be entirely in Somali hands. The Carabinieri battalion 'Tuscania' of the Folgore Brigade was in charge of training the new police force. In order to join the force, policemen were accepted only if they had already served with the Somali police before November 1991. The police corps that became operational in early February 1993 numbered 3,000 men and 50 women, with transportation and communication systems provided by the UN. Initially the force was unarmed but, when police stations were attacked by criminal gangs, guns were given to protect the stations. Later, Somali policemen were allowed to carry guns when on duty.³⁰

'In the Italian-controlled areas', wrote reporters Giovanni Porzio and Gabriella Simoni, 'people have now almost given up their initial mistrust of military men.'³¹

The immediate effect of the massive deployment of force in Somalia was to reduce isolated clashes and guerrilla warfare overall. Sture Normark, of the Life and Peace Institute, maintains that after 'the arrival of UN troops in Somalia, the desperate situation changed for many Somalis. The famine was halted and the UN brought new hope to the Somali people. But at the same time there was considerable pressure on the UN to find a quick solution to the Somali problem.'³² The situation of calm in Mogadishu, in fact, was just illusory. The years of civil warfare had made cleavages of hatred between clan and sub-clans that were impossible to fill at least in the short term. The deployment of the military multinational force lowered the confrontation level, but it could not settle the causes of inter-clan conflicts.

In the complex Somali clan pattern, there were more than a dozen factions; drawing up a detailed map of them was extremely difficult, as alliances were short-lived.

In addition, stating that the most representative factions in Somalia were Aideed's or Ali Mahdi's or any other warlord's was rather far-fetched.

In the early 1990s, Mogadishu was like a ghost town where there was no law, nor any resemblance of social life.

MOGADISHU VERSUS THE UN

The first clashes in which members of the multinational force were involved resulting in Somali casualties occurred when French soldiers opened fire on a van that ignored a roadblock and subsequently attempted to run the soldiers over. This event gave rise to a debate in the press about the military powers to be assigned to the men involved in Restore Hope. On the following day, UNITAF redeployed the French contingent in Baidoa.

Isolated and limited clashes such as the one involving the French troops characterised the early days of the mission. This was to be expected as, by launching small attacks on the UN troops, Somali militias could test the reaction and determination of the 'blue helmets'. The first military operation came on 25 January when American helicopters and Belgian troops attacked the southern town of Kismayu, held by General Mohamed Said Hersi Morgan, son-in-law of Mohamed Siad Barre, who had been accused of repeatedly assaulting humanitarian convoys. The operation was the first direct military action by the troops of Restore Hope and benefited General Morgan's enemy, Colonel Ahmed Omar Jess, an ally of Aideed's. At the beginning of the humanitarian action in Somalia, Aideed was considered by UNITAF as a possible party for initial talks to begin the peace-making process.

In February 1993, there was a total reversal in the situation and Morgan regained Kismayo. General Aideed blamed the US and the UN for allowing Morgan to return to Kismayo. After the town fell into the hands of Morgan, on 22 February, people in Mogadishu demonstrated for two days against the US troops. Simmering hostility often turned into direct attacks against the international troops and the personnel engaged in the humanitarian organisations.

In addition, the period between December and March was marked by some important events. Most significantly, President Bush was replaced by President-elect Bill Clinton, a supporter of assertive multilateralism. With the new President, the pressure by Boutros-Ghali to make the international coalition engage in the disarmament of the struggling factions was leading to its first results. The most significant was the approval in March of resolution 814, which made clear references to Chapter VII of the UN Charter and emphasised 'the crucial importance of disarmament.'³³ On 4 May, as Restore Hope came to an end, General Johnston, UNITAF commander, was relieved by the Turkish General Cevik Bir, in charge of UNOSOM II.

The overall UN force was composed of 28,000 men and the US left 8,000 logistic troops and a 1,000-man rapid-reaction force in Somalia and maintained a controversial autonomous headquarters. Ramesh Thakur stated that during the intervention in Somalia 'the US was criticised for operating under a separate command, and for launching raids inconsistent with the basic tenets of UN peacekeeping.'³⁴

One day before the appointment of Cevik Bir, General Loi replaced General Rossi as commander of the Italian contingent.

The events that took place in June and July 1993 were crucial in the story of the humanitarian action in Somalia and in opening differences between American and Italian diplomacy in the continuation of the 'humanitarian' operation. On 5 June, Pakistani troops were ambushed by Habr Gidir militia – an attack for which Aideed was held responsible. Yet the attack was presumably caused by suspicion on the part of Aideed that the Pakistani troops wanted to seize Radio Mogadishu, thus depriving the Habr Gidir leader of an important propaganda tool. Gerard Prunier stresses that the incident of 5 June

is far from clear. Presented at the time as a deliberate attack by SNA forces on the UN, it seems in fact to have been a UN attempt, both belated and ill designed, to hit at the heart of Aideed's strength in Mogadishu by confiscating his heavy weaponry and shutting down his radio station.³⁵

Twenty-four Pakistani soldiers were killed and 57 wounded. UNOSOM Headquarters asked Ibis to take action to raise the siege in which Pakistani soldiers were caught, despite the fact that the area in Mogadishu where the Pakistani soldiers were seized was outside Italian control. Obviously, in order to operate outside the assigned area General Loi and Ambassador Augelli needed authorisation from the political authority in Rome. As a result, Italian soldiers could not take immediate action, as the authorisation from Rome was given two hours after the UNOSOM request. The Italian attitude towards UNOSOM orders made the UN Headquarters mistrust Ibis.³⁶ Yet the Italian intervention on 5 June was definitive from a military point of view, as the Pakistani soldiers and ten American marines were rescued by Italian troops. As a consequence of the violent clash Italian troops were also in charge of patrolling large areas in south Mogadishu throughout June.³⁷ Aideed's attack on the Pakistani troops was strongly censured by the White House and the United Nations, and the Americans retaliated militarily against some Pentagon-determined military targets. The attack launched on 12 June, in which

AC-130H Spectre planes and Cobra helicopters of the Quick Reaction Force were employed, was against Habr Gidir weapon sites. In this period General Loi became extremely critical of UN-US-led reprisals as they resulted in a large number of civilian casualties. UN orders were in stark contrast to what Italy perceived as the aim of the humanitarian intervention. In such a situation Loi made clear that Italian soldiers would join UN military operations only after they were approved by the Italian government.³⁸ According to Loi the UN retaliation campaign was a blunder as the UN was now fully engaged in the Somali war as a belligerent party.³⁹

On 13 June Somali people took to the streets in protest at the UN-US action. To disperse the crowd, Pakistani soldiers opened fire, killing dozens of civilians, amongst whom were women and children. At this point the opposition of the Italian government became momentous. Humanitarian aims – a priority since the beginning of Restore Hope – had now effectively been set aside. Aideed, held responsible for the 5 June attack against the Pakistani 'blue helmets', was banned by the UN and accused of crimes against humanity. A fruitless manhunt thus started, whose only result was the killing of dozens of UN troops and hundreds or possibly thousands of Somali people. Rome made it clear that both the government and Parliament were going to take an unequivocal stance over humanitarian intervention in Somalia.

On 15 June, Fabbri met the UN special representative, Admiral Jonathan Howe, and the UNOSOM II commander in Mogadishu. The Italian Minister of Defence again stressed that a humanitarian mission was not compatible with action which resulted in civilian victims. Rome had roundly condemned the events in Mogadishu as well as the situation concerning law enforcement, and advocated the adoption of a different strategy in which civilians would not be involved. In his report to the Italian Parliamentary Defence Committee, on 17 June, Fabbri insisted on a proposal to set up an international informal board, including the coalition members most significantly involved in the humanitarian intervention, to co-operate with the UN representative in Somalia.⁴⁰ Italy also regretted that it had neither a political nor a military representative with a key position at the UNOSOM II Headquarters. As the situation in Somalia worsened, Rome wanted to play a major role in the decision-making process. In taking this critical stance, though aimed at the adoption of a more constructive course of action, the Italian troops were being progressively excluded from the UNOSOM II command. Italian diplomacy was thus engaged in the difficult task of maintaining a

position in contrast with the management of the humanitarian operation, although Rome's determination meant straining relations with its closest partner, the US.

None the less Rome's point of view was strongly supported by the Italian public and the military of other member states of the coalition in Somalia. General Loi stated that 'informally the Italian approach in Somalia was beginning to gather support in particular from other European colleagues, the main problem was that internationally Italy was still isolated.'⁴¹ Loi's statement is backed by several interviews which Gerard Prunier had with French officers in Somalia. They told him that France hoped for a friendly solution to the differences between the UN and Italy; at the same time they were as concerned as Italy was about receiving more information and better co-ordination on the ground. 'The Americans keep us in the dark, push us around and take for granted that we will go along with whatever they want us to do,' they stated. Prunier observed that this was a common feeling among the French military and that they therefore sympathised with the plight of the Italians.⁴² Charles Dobbie commented that as a consequence of deterioration in the security situation in Mogadishu, 'US units sought to coerce co-operation – using force that was sometimes pro-active and far from discriminating in its effect. Commonwealth and European armies, on the other hand, tended to adopt approaches that were not so confrontational, relying less on the explicit use of force and more on fostering local support for the UN's long-term peace objectives.'⁴³

Loi noted that the issue of the use of force and the different attitudes displayed by Italy and some of the European military on the one side, and the US on the other, had mostly a psychological explanation.

As we were carrying out a humanitarian intervention we believed that even if under attack, a military response was not always the best course of action. Even if our soldiers were under a heavy bombardment of stones they waited hoping that it could stop and give the possibility of taking control of the situation just by threatening Somalis, but hopefully without shooting at them. All the exchanges of fire in which Ibis soldiers were involved were unavoidable. We were forced to reply with fire from the Somali insistence on keeping us under fire. Despite the fact that the rule of engagement allowed an immediate response, if under attack, Italian soldiers did not open fire at once.⁴⁴

For US troops in Somalia to give an immediate and tough response if

under attack was not an issue. For the US military, in fact, the issue was about how to organise the use of force as an instrument of 'preventive self-defence'. This attitude is clearly explained by Jonathan Dworken who maintains that 'the use of deadly force against a hostile act is straightforward – if being attacked, soldiers can use deadly force to protect themselves. The use of force against hostile intent, which is called anticipatory self-defence, is more complex.'⁴⁵ It should be noted then that, whereas the US military were engaged in how to use and justify force in an anticipatory context, other members of the coalition, Italy among them, were trying to identify the best course of action if under attack. The Italian military concluded that force was not always the best response. This different approach was used instrumentally to blame one of the components of the coalition force as 'weak'. The truth is that armies and soldiers, although they might have received similar training, are trained in different military cultures. As a result, soldiers from different military backgrounds, when faced with identical situations and governed by the same rules of engagement, will probably react in very different ways.⁴⁶

Therefore from the beginning of intervention the different interpretation and employment of the Rules of Engagement (ROE), became an issue which, in the long term, created confusion and uncertainty for the coalition members.

The attitude to be taken grew even more uncertain when the Italians were faced with the opportunity of seizing Aideed. The Minister of Defence said that on 10 June he had been informed by the Ibis headquarters that the Italian troops could capture the Somali warlord. Loi said that Ibis was informed of Aideed's movements on a road under Italian control on which it was possible to organise an ambush to arrest him. All the necessary measures to carry out the operation were arranged⁴⁷ and an option was left open until 16 June. Fabbri visited the Italian troops on 15 June, when the seizure was still possible and reported this opportunity to the UN Headquarters. According to the Italian minister, in those days the UN officials in Somalia did not have a clear policy on the approach to be taken concerning Aideed and therefore UNOSOM II requested the Italians not to pursue the plan to arrest him.⁴⁸

UNOSOM was in disarray and uncertain about how to deal with Aideed.

After 17 June, as a consequence of a further inconsistent but resolute attempt to strike at Aideed, the conflict with the Somalis grew irremediably worse. The manhunt resulted in a strong solidarity

in favour of the Somali leader. In this situation, talk of a humanitarian intervention was obviously difficult.

On 2 July, during a search operation around the area of Checkpoint 'Pasta', Ibis men were attacked by Habr Gidir militiamen. Three men fell in the ambush, and 'Pasta' passed into the Habr Gidir's control. The Italian public were stunned by this event. The three Ibis soldiers were the first men killed in action since the end of the Second World War. The pictures of Italian troops under Somali fire strengthened the belief that the Italian government had been right. In mid-July, Fabbri acknowledged that a real divergence existed between the Italian government and the UN about the means used and the objective to be reached in Somalia. The disagreement concerned the extent, the limits and the methods within which military force could be used and reasonably applied by the UN in the execution of its humanitarian missions. Fabbri stressed that the indiscriminate fighting and urban guerrilla operations, which also led to civilian victims, strengthened the spirit of the Somali population and delayed the attainment of the objectives for which the government and the Parliament had decided that Italian military units should take part in the mission.⁴⁹ Frances Kennedy, the BBC correspondent in Rome, explained that the ambush against Italian-controlled checkpoints was a retaliation for the US air raids 'that had enraged and alienated the local population and not just followers of General Aideed.'⁵⁰ Loi, who was directly involved in the ambush, provides a different point of view of the events. He said that probably when the Italian soldiers began the search for guns, Aideed was inside the surrounded area and as troops were seizing him he asked all militiamen and civilians belonging to his faction to attack the Italians.⁵¹

In the days following 2 July, the UNOSOM II Headquarters commanded General Loi to regain Checkpoints 'Pasta' and 'Ferro' as quickly as possible. As Italians had lost control of the two checkpoints UNOSOM ordered that all checkpoints were to be reinstated from 10 July. The Ibis commander reported to the Minister of Defence, and made clear that, despite the fact that Ibis had the military resources to regain control of the two checkpoints by force, the operation would result in hundreds of Somali and probably dozens of Italian fatalities. At the same time Loi stressed that he was already in contact with clan leaders and elders of the area, with whom he was discussing the incident. As a result Fabbri ordered General Loi to attempt to retake the two checkpoints through mediation with the clan leaders in the area before launching a military operation.

Fabbri's course of action received immediate approval from the Foreign Minister, Beniamino Andreatta, the Prime Minister, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, and President of the Republic, Oscar Luigi Scalfaro.⁵² As a consequence of the decision of the Italian government, General Loi adopted a line which was in contrast with the UNOSOM directives and prompted a stern reaction from the UN. Kofi Annan, then Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping, and Admiral Howe asked the Italian government to dismiss Loi as Ibis commander, but he continued to receive the full support of the Italian government. Fabbri in fact maintained that Loi had acted to the best of his professional ability, scrupulously applying the criteria set out by the Italian authorities concerning consistency between the use of force and the humanitarian aims of the mission.⁵³

The Italian soldiers who had been ambushed by Somalis did not return fire, because snipers were hiding among civilians. From the very beginning of the attack, Ibis troops had an impressive firepower available, as they were in the final phase of a weapon search supported by helicopters and tanks. 'Had we returned fire heavily,' Loi said,

nobody could have blamed us for causing tens or more likely hundreds of Somali deaths. When we spotted a sniper we did not hesitate to shoot him with any gun available, but we did not feel we could shoot at civilians, although many of them were responsible for our losses. Although we were all outraged and furious we never felt that killing civilians would have solved anything.⁵⁴

Frances Kennedy wrote that resisting pressure from UNOSOM to launch a retaliatory attack, Loi

negotiated with neighbourhood elders and clan representatives to retake the post. The atmosphere was tense as the Italian tanks crawled through a potentially hostile crowd, but the barricades were dismantled one by one. Had the Italians used force, the result probably would have been another bloodbath. It was this independent behaviour that incurred the wrath of the Secretary General, who tried to have General Loi taken off the job.⁵⁵

In the evening of the attack, the elders of the area went to the Italian headquarters to apologise and thus a mediation process had begun by 2 July.

After a week of negotiations, on 9 July, the day before UNOSOM deadline to restore all checkpoints in Mogadishu, the Italian troops peacefully reoccupied Checkpoint 'Pasta'.

A few weeks later *Newsweek* blamed the Italians for tipping off Aideed about a US helicopter attack on 12 July against a villa in Mogadishu where the warlord was supposed to be meeting his top aides. In the attack more than 50 Somalis, many of them not involved in the meeting, were killed, and four journalists were lynched by an enraged crowd. According to the American magazine,

a US-run surveillance network has more than once caught members of Italy's United Nations contingent warning Aideed about operations against his forces, three Western sources told *NEWSWEEK*. The day after the raid, the top UN official for peacekeeping Kofi Annan, announced that the Italian commander Bruno Loi, was being relieved. Did the Italian warn Aideed? 'Draw your own conclusion,' said a senior US official.⁵⁶

The original difference between the US/UN headquarters and Italy created an atmosphere of mistrust. Commenting on the attack of 2 July, General Goffredo Canino, the Army Chief of Staff, explained that it was difficult to understand why Somalis attacked Ibis soldiers so violently after several months during which relations had been good. About the UNOSOM order to retake the checkpoints by force, he added, 'we believe that there was a systematic intention of getting us involved in violent actions.'⁵⁷

Over the following months, the situation in Somalia worsened and differences between the UN and Italy did not improve. From the end of July and throughout August it became evident that the two approaches to peacekeeping could not coexist. Beniamino Andreatta emphasised that, as the situation deteriorated, the coalition might have launched other disastrous military actions which would start a new senseless and bloody retaliation campaign from all sides.⁵⁸ Italy firmly wanted to avoid this scenario and it strongly supported the idea that, in order to stop the fighting in Mogadishu and reverse the situation, it was vital to open a dialogue with all faction leaders.⁵⁹

In August, Rome decided that, over the next few weeks, Ibis troops would leave Mogadishu to deploy in the four other areas under Italian control. Fabbri explained that the decision was taken as Italy's request to drastically review the implementation methods of the mission had not borne any fruit at the United Nations. Therefore in such a situation it was appropriate that Italian troops be redeployed outside Mogadishu.⁶⁰ Italy could choose between two options: staying in Mogadishu in disagreement with the other main coalition members, or leaving the Somali capital; it opted for the latter.⁶¹

Fabbri observed that even the worse possible scenario had been overtaken, and as a result of the daily massacres of Somali people the humanitarian aims of the intervention were lost. 'Shooting at the crowd', he stated 'is antithetical to any humanitarian operation.'⁶²

On 6 September, a few days before Italian troops left Mogadishu, General Carmine Fiore replaced Loi as Ibis commander. Fiore stated that after he arrived in Mogadishu he could sense a strong lack of trust from the UNOSOM II Headquarters and US officers. In particular he was concerned about the ambivalent attitude of Admiral Howe.

This lack of trust in the Italian troops and its commander became clear during the days when checkpoints under the control of Ibis were to be handed over to other troops of the coalition. Fiore made clear to UNOSOM that, in order to undertake the replacement of the Italian troops it was important to organise preparatory meetings with local Somali leaders and to inform the Italian headquarters at least a few hours in advance. This was because, from a military point of view, such an operation had to be carried out in a framework of security in which a larger number of soldiers than usual had to be involved. Yet Fiore was informed by chance during a visit to UNOSOM Headquarters in the middle of September, that the change was going to take place in the next half hour. Fiore protested but he could sense that UNOSOM officers believed that had Italy been informed in advance, it would have created unsafe conditions for the takeover.⁶³ In this tense atmosphere Italian soldiers left their position in the Somali capital, leaving just a small garrison at the former embassy.

The humanitarian intervention in Somalia approached its end on 3 October 1993 when, during yet another of the several American attempts to catch Aideed, two US helicopters were shot down and the troops sent to retrieve the missing men were caught in an ambush in which 18 men were killed. The situation required the intervention of tanks. As Ibis was the closest contingent to have such a force available, the commander of the US troops, Tom Montgomery, asked General Fiore for a quick intervention of armoured vehicles. The immediate reaction of Italian tanks was decisive in relieving the American and Pakistani soldiers under siege, and in changing, at least on the field, the attitude of UNOSOM Headquarters towards the Italians.⁶⁴

However, following this, as US public opinion was exposed to the horrifying television images in which the body of an American soldier was pummelled and mutilated by an angry Somali crowd, the United States decided to disengage from the difficult and hostile land of

Somalia. The US administration decided that from then on US soldiers in Somalia would act less like a sheriff and more like a clan leader ready to engage in compromises if it believed they were necessary to stabilise the country. Thomas Friedman emphasised that the new strategy reflected a policy that Rome had urged for several months. He stated that the new approach 'is based on what officials are calling "constructive ambiguity", to coax, squeeze and cajole the local warlords into co-operating with each other and the United Nations just enough that a functioning political authority will be in place by the time the United States wants to pull out.'⁶⁵ President Clinton declared his intention to withdraw US troops within six months. On 14 October, he told a White House news conference that 'The United States being a police officer in Somalia was turned into the waging of conflict and a highly personalised battle which undermined the political process. That is what was wrong, and that is what we attempted to correct in the last few days.'⁶⁶ In the period between October 1993 and March 1994, most military contingents, including the Italian and the US ones, left Somalia. At the end of 1994, 18,000 UN troops were still deployed in Somalia, mostly from African and Asian countries. In March 1995, the last Pakistani and Bengali 'blue helmets' left Somalia permanently. Thus, in a withdrawal escorted by US and Italian troops, the humanitarian intervention to Somalia came to an end. However, this has been a significant and relevant experience for future humanitarian interventions, when military force is needed to re-establish the conditions required ensuring peace and protection of the civilian population.

HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION!

The humanitarian intervention in Somalia represented one of the few cases of peace enforcement since the UN was established and the first to employ such a large number of troops. In the postwar period, 'blue helmets' have been deployed as a light-equipment interposition force between two opposing fronts, pending an inter-governmental agreement: the so-called peacekeeping. The end of the Cold War and the emergence of a new geopolitical world order have made it possible for the UN Security Council to launch peace-enforcing operations by authorising the use of force even with offensive actions, as envisaged by Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Some Security Council Resolutions had already authorised peace-enforcing operations in the

past. Resolution 688, of 5 April 1991, in defence of the Kurdish people, resolution 770, of 7 August 1992, concerning the creation of seven protected areas in Bosnia and resolution 814, of 26 March 1993, authorising the disarmament of the warlords in Somalia. Somalia represented a symbolic case, not only because of the failure of the humanitarian intervention, but also because of the bitter conflicts between UNOSOM Headquarters and the Italian government over the use of military force. Since June 1993, through its Defence Minister, the Italian government has pointed out its disagreement on the approach taken by the UN in the operations in Somalia. Since then, UNOSOM Headquarters has emphasised the military aspect of the intervention in Somalia, making the defeat of Aideed and his militia the main objective of the mission. Rome was well aware that, by passing resolution 814, UNOSOM II operations would fall within the scope of Chapter VII of the UN Charter, thus making them peace-enforcing operations. The risks of transforming a peacekeeping mission into a peace-enforcing operation were evident. According to Loi, when such a change takes place troops which have been involved in the peacekeeping should be replaced. Those who have been peacekeepers should not be asked to act as peace-enforcers. In addition, it should also be taken into account that once the mission's aims have shifted and acquired the features of a peace-enforcing operation it is extremely difficult to return it to peacekeeping. This was a contradiction that Ibis refused to accept in Somalia.⁶⁷

Fabbri stated that the way operations in Mogadishu had been conducted made it impossible to make a distinction between civilian and military targets in what became urban guerrilla actions. This approach did not help to pursue the mission objectives and at same time revealed strong differences between the civilian population and the UN forces.⁶⁸

In the summer of 1993 during the most difficult period of the intervention, Rome wanted a change that, though maintaining resort to force to promote peace, could control and organise the use of it, so as to make it consistent with and instrumental to the humanitarian and conciliatory purposes of the UN.⁶⁹ Italy was not against the use of force; it was against its indiscriminate and disproportionate use. In addition, throughout the intervention, the Italian government wanted to promote an action to reconcile the different Somali factions rather than imposing an armed peace. There were serious doubts as to whether and how long a peace imposed by force could actually last, lacking a real reconciliation process, once the UN troops had left

Somalia. During their placement in Somalia, the UN troops were almost totally absorbed by the manhunt for Aideed and by the arrangement of all defensive measures to confront the urban guerrilla attacks launched by the Habr Gidir. In this period, some elementary but significant measures useful for the country's economic reconstruction failed to be taken. Neither the electricity nor the water supply networks were re-established. The civil war debris was not removed and freshwater wells were not reopened, nor were markets reorganised. General Loi observed that as a consequence of the UN attitude Somalis' expectations were frustrated, 'they just could not understand what the UN had come to do in their country'.⁷⁰

In addition Rome criticised the fact that the patchy, incoherent and highly bureaucratic UNOSOM headquarters replaced the harmonised, efficient and well-organised UNITAF headquarters.⁷¹ The experience in Somalia clearly showed that peace-enforcing missions should have a more streamlined and efficient command.

A few years after he left his government office, Fabbri addressed the subject again and, any divergence with the UN leadership being now over, reaffirmed that the UNOSOM headquarters were not suited to the operational conditions in Somalia. It would have been wiser to continue operations under the UNITAF command or under the experienced command of a multilateral military organisation.⁷² These are the reasons behind Italian dissent about the conduct of humanitarian operations in Somalia. Actually, one of the main faults – arguably the reason why humanitarian actions in Somalia failed – was the ambiguous attitude with which the UN conducted its operations. Not only did the lack of a single and coherent military and political approach confuse the Somalis about the real UN intentions in Somalia, but it also generated uncertainties and doubts in the other members of the coalition. The fluctuating attitude towards Aideed, the uncertainty over the disarmament of the factions in the first months, the different reactions of the various troop units in employing the rule of engagement, the lack of co-ordination and of a single stance to be taken with the 'representatives' of the Somali people were all evidence of the schizophrenia involved in the UNOSOM management of the humanitarian intervention, which determined its failure.

A FAILURE TO FORGET OR A LESSON TO REMEMBER?

The debate will continue for some time whether the humanitarian intervention in Somalia was a success, a qualified failure or a complete disaster. These perspectives will vary according to the background of those who are assessing the initial US-led phase of intervention, the United Task Force, and the second UN Operation in Somalia. We have seen a proliferation of reports and analyses by scholars in universities and non-governmental institutions, as well as by leading members of the UN and the multinational coalition UNOSOM I and II. In all these reports the controversial Italian position has been neglected. Yet even after so much investigation into the two-year effort by the international community to help Somalia overcome starvation and begin a process of conflict resolution, it is still not possible to find widespread agreement among scholars as regards the respective successes and failures. All these different views none the less generated an important debate on peacekeeping and peace-enforcing. Thus many lessons have been learned from what happened in Somalia and most of them have been instructive for multinational military intervention in other parts of the world. Italy showed that it had benefited from events in Somalia when it took up the leadership of the Multinational Protection Force (MPF), in Albania in April 1997. Rome has been particularly concerned that all the coalition members involved in Albania had representatives at all levels of the command chain and participated in the determination of the political aims. In addition it stressed that the rules of engagement be strictly respected and that soldiers should not interfere with the police force and political evolution in Tirana. The successful outcome of intervention in Albania in 1997 came about as the result of the painful lessons learned in Somalia.

It is likely that the main result the international community achieved was to be able to overcome the shock of being involved militarily in a bloody civil war. Any country that suffered casualties launched an enquiry into whether humanitarian intervention was worth the risk. In countries such as the US, although this represented and still represents a delicate topic, there is acceptance that it must fulfil the role of being an active international leader.⁷³ The US is thus prepared to commit itself not only financially but also militarily to promote hazardous peace support operations (PSOs). This attitude is far from that of many medium powers, such as Italy, who, although willing to undertake an international role, want to avoid significant

losses among troops and civilians. The Italian public strongly supported the government decision to send troops to Somalia but did not understand why there were so many deaths during a mission which had humanitarian aims. Luigi Caligaris wrote that whenever a soldier serving in a multinational force is killed his national origin becomes an issue.⁷⁴ All the main Italian newspapers emphasised that the three soldiers who died in July 1993 were the first Italian soldiers killed in a military action since the end of the Second World War. Moreover, the ambush took place in a period when the Italian government was becoming adamant that the aims of the humanitarian intervention were not compatible with the use of force and the killing of civilians.⁷⁵ Several scholars have highlighted the difference of political aims between the UN, the US and other military forces. Ramesh Thakur claims that

there was sufficient international agreement for a peacekeeping force to be emplaced in Somalia. But the circle of consensus was narrow rather than broad, its scope restricted rather than expansive, and its strength brittle rather than durable. Other members of the multinational force were less than happy at American imperiousness.⁷⁶

Terrence Lyons and Ahmed Samatar underline the weakness of the incomplete and inconsistent US-UN political strategy to encourage political reconciliation mainly after the attack by Aideed's militia on Pakistani troops in June 1993.⁷⁷ The intervention in Somalia was carried out in the absence of a general strategy and with political and military aims in a constant state of flux.⁷⁸ As a consequence, the military side of the operation, which became predominant in a few months, suffered from lack of co-ordination. The UNOSOM II command chain was inadequate and weak in the extreme, and thus every contingent relied on its own national directives in order to undertake its tasks in Somalia.⁷⁹ As soon as UNOSOM II replaced UNITAF the lack of political and diplomatic co-ordination among the coalition members, coupled with poor strategy in the field, resulted in the negative course of events in Somalia. Although these aspects have been dealt with elsewhere, a few points may be added to the discussion. From the intervention in Somalia, there emerged a lack of co-ordination, combined with the presence of several diverse aims which were held by the respective members of the coalition. But above all, the main mistake was to underestimate the different attitudes that the states that joined the coalition held before and during

the intervention. There are two main facts that have to be pointed out. First, the negative consequences of the change of the mission aims from peacekeeping to peace-enforcing, thereby producing different reactions in the many military contingents in Somalia. Charles Dobbie has observed that the fundamental differences between combatant-oriented peace-enforcement operations and a third party peacekeeping mission make them incompatible. He writes that 'Peace enforcement measures cannot therefore be sprinkled onto peacekeeping theatres of operations.'⁸⁰ The second is the limited interest paid to harmonising the different troops' attitudes at an earlier stage before the launch of the operation. It is true that momentous differences emerged among the various military leaders in Somalia for several important reasons, but many of them can be explained by their different cultural backgrounds. After the clashes with the Somali factions became bloody, the military followed different patterns that were evidence of their initial differences. General Fiore stated that

the cultural problem is fundamental in particular when rules of engagement have to be employed. The cultural background and approach to the mission is paramount to an understanding of how important is the role of peacekeepers. In peace support operations it is important to have cultural harmony among the multinational military force and cultural affinity with the population involved in the mission.⁸¹

The Americans can sacrifice financial and human resources in line with US foreign policy; for the Italians, as with many European medium powers, soldiers' lives cannot be sacrificed to achieve political aims. In these states, public opinion has difficulty in understanding why a humanitarian operation has to be carried out with the massive use of force. Italy sent volunteer soldiers from its army, who were mainly conscripts, to Somalia. The importance of these lives is even more evident in comparison with those of professional soldiers because, although they freely chose to participate in the operation, they were military conscripts. Many might argue that for such a mission it would be better to employ professional troops; it is undeniable that they would be more efficient, but the advantage of having both professional and conscript troops serving in a humanitarian intervention is that conscripts have the training, though probably inadequate, of soldiers but the attitude of civilians who have chosen to join a humanitarian operation. Nevertheless Loi maintains

In Somalia, the United States' preoccupation with a new global order did not always coincide with the more limited objectives of the contingents. The most evident problems of internal management arose from the presence of an Italian contingent, that the Italian government attempted to use as a means of re-establishing an Italian presence in its former colony, and which had a different agenda from the rest of the force. In order to maintain relations with the Somali factions, and also to protect its own soldiers, it paid faction leaders not to attack it, and failed to support other contingents when these were under attack.⁹³

On several occasions the intervention of Ibis soldiers was decisive in rescuing coalition troops in difficulty. In particular, on 3 October, the intervention of Italian armoured vehicles was crucial in rescuing Pakistani 'blue helmets' and American marines,⁹⁴ but also on 5 and 17 June when after participating in a joint operation with Moroccan and Pakistani soldiers, Italians intervened to support some 80 French 'blue helmets' besieged by militiamen in the Accademia Militare in Mogadishu. On the other hand, General Loi has denied that any officer from the Ibis headquarters ever paid faction leaders.

As regards the reasons that pushed Rome to join the intervention in Somalia, they are more complex than might appear at first. Italian involvement in Somalia was determined by Rome's intention of complying with its international responsibility, but also supporting its international status.⁹⁵ In early 1992 Italian foreign policy could not rely effectively on one of its major tools: the Co-operation for Development. The corruption of politicians during the 1980s coupled with a limited availability of resources in the early 1990s dramatically reduced the role of the Co-operation until eventually it ceased. Many politicians and administrators were under investigation and the Department was blamed for having wasted conspicuous resources which ended in funding political parties. As a result the international visibility of Italy, in particular in third world countries, was severely damaged. For Italian foreign policy, humanitarian intervention represented an opportunity to improve its international standing; it was more beneficial to channel resources into this area than into the compromised Co-operation for Development. In other words, the Italian commitment to peacekeeping replaced the traditional role played by the Co-operation for Development. In Somalia, Italy adopted definitively a new tool of its foreign policy. Therefore, to explain Rome's commitment in Somalia as part of a neocolonial

attitude is superficial. More than reinforcing its position in Somalia, in a difficult situation such as the one in Mogadishu in the early 1990s, Rome aimed at strengthening its international position. The campaign it launched against the indiscriminate use of force gave Italy a greater chance to achieve its aim. From Somalia onwards Rome's commitment in peace support operations has been decisive in slowing down the American proposal to reform the UN Security Council of which Italy would not be a permanent member. The successes achieved by Italian involvement in the peace processes in Mozambique and more recently in Albania have emphasised the value of the Italian way of understanding PSOs. In this respect Somalia represented a success for Italian diplomacy and the Italian military, but more than this, it has been important in stimulating an Italian debate and approach to peacekeeping. Since 1993, despite the fact that Italy has not been able to develop a doctrine of peacekeeping, it has developed a model of peacekeeping which, after a few important tests, can be considered successful.

7 Conclusion

In the first chapter of this book I stated that Italian colonialism had different features from any other model: it was poor and 'ragamuffin', and basically it remained marginal to the majority of the Italian public. The expansionist aims of politicians at the beginning of the twentieth century were a tool with which Rome could try to gain the status of a great power. Italian colonialism began in the Red Sea, despite the fact that there was no historical link between Italy and the Horn of Africa, but as Italy was a latecomer, it could start its expansion more easily in this region. Italian attempts at economic exploitation of its colonies were mostly unsuccessful, not only in terms of raw materials, in which Eritrea and Somalia (the oldest colonies) are poor, but also in the attempt to settle large Italian communities in those territories. This was particularly true in the case of Somalia, the colony with the smallest Italian community. In an economic sense the colonies of the Horn of Africa became a handicap which generated intense debate among politicians concerning the real benefits from investing in the colonial effort. During the first decade of the Fascist era the features of Italian colonies remained generally unchanged, but the repression of anti-Italian movements such as the one in Libya led by Omar Al-Mukhtar became bloody and unforgiving.

The attitude of Fascist foreign policy towards the colonies was little different from that of the liberal period. Only at the end of the 1930s did Mussolini begin to consider the Italian colonies in a wider imperial perspective. However, his ambition to find a new way to the oceans for Italy through its colonies was folly.

Following the end of the conflict and its defeat, Italy tried to regain the colonies it had held before the Fascist era: Eritrea, Libya and Somalia. The reasons behind the commitment of the Italian political and diplomatic community to regain control over the colonies were not economic or even cultural ones. In the case of Libya and Eritrea, where two Italian communities were established, the connection with Italy was such that concern for the destiny of these two colonies was probably justified, whereas the case of Somalia was different. During almost 50 years of colonisation the Italian community remained small, and established few cultural links with Somalis. In the postwar period Italy was a country on its knees in economic terms. The

mandate in Somalia was a passive issue; attention to it could only be justified by the belief that by administering a former colony, Italy could maintain the status of a great power. It is evident that Italian colonialism and neocolonialism until the 1960s was upheld strictly for reasons of prestige. Not even the commitment of the nationalist movement in the early century, supported by the publication of several journals and newspapers with an expansionist view, gave strong cultural foundations to colonialism. In Somalia in particular Italy did not develop a substantial colonial policy, and never had a truly colonialist class to rely on.

Following Somalia's independence, Rome remained close to the young democracy. Italian foreign policy, shaped by several political parties, dealt with Somali leadership in all the phases of its history. Italy was the first country to recognise Siad Barre's regime and in so doing admitted the failure of its attempt to build a democratic state during the decade of the AFIS. The most scandalous period came in the 1980s when, although Barre was internationally condemned for his regime's atrocious violation of human rights, the Italian government, and particularly the Socialist Prime Minister Craxi, supported the dictator. Before Mogadishu fell into the grip of a vicious civil war, the last Italian ambassador in Somalia promoted the beginning of a new democratic process, but with Barre as constitutional President. It is difficult to understand how and why Craxi and many other politicians in key positions gave Barre the support he needed to remain in power. What is even more surprising, however, is that this support was another opportunity exploited by politicians in Rome to drain state money through the large network of corruption that dominated Italy until 1992. The Co-operation for Development and the FAI had become sources of money to fund Italian political parties and bribe Somali politicians. When in 1991 Aideed sued Craxi for not giving him the 10 per cent of a commission agreed between them, the Italian public justifiably could not believe Aideed's assertion. After Tangentopoli, the scandals over political bribes which erupted in 1992, and the investigation against corruption launched by Milan's magistrates, Aideed's allegation was looked at again. Franco Oliva and Pietro Ugolini often denounced the corruption of the Co-operation for Development and the negative consequences of supporting Barre's regime, but Barre was probably the one who could guarantee that the bribery system would be preserved. A new Somali government would probably have dealt with Italian politicians administering Italian funds in a different way. Therefore the support for the Somali

dictator was guaranteed by Barre's involvement and by his commitment to maintaining the bribery system. At present Italy is searching for a more reliable and efficient organisation for the Co-operation for Development, as it was a serious mistake to jeopardise this institution which proved to have great potential as an instrument of foreign policy. The rules of the game also have to be different, because the financial resources currently available are not comparable to the funds enjoyed by the Co-operation in the past.

In conclusion, Italy became a colonial power without having the economic resources and a colonial ideology or cultural background. The colonies which formed the Italian empire were mostly poor and Somalia was the poorest; consequently the demographic policy of settling large Italian communities in that region was unsuccessful. The first years of Fascist rule in Italy did not change Italian foreign policy, not least because Mussolini concentrated on consolidating his personal power. Therefore, until the 1930s the colonies were neglected. The first signs of Fascist concern for the colonies was the beginning of a repressive action against the anti-Italian armed movements.

At the end of the Second World War, Italian economic weakness contrasted with its aspiration of regaining its colonies. Through an unfortunate combination of historical factors Italy, as at the beginning of its colonisation, recovered the only colony it was not interested in – Somalia. The AFIS's four administrators struggled to govern Somalia with limited economic resources. Although Italy educated thousands of young Somalis in its universities, it did not understand Somalia's pastoral and clan features. The democracy based on the Italian model lasted just nine years.

Having said this the reader can easily judge the impact Italy had on Somalia. However, the conditions in which participation in the humanitarian intervention in 1992 was decided were significantly different.

The fight against corruption began in February 1992, and the entire political class was under observation. Somalia was in the grip of a bloody civil war whose outcome was difficult to predict objectively and Italy had hardly any interest left in Somalia. Therefore it is possible to rule out the notion that Italy might have decided to send its troops to Somalia to restore a neocolonial position or to protect colonial interests. Without wishing to take an apologist stance for a country which over a century has never made a real effort to understand and comply with the features of Somali society, it is none the

less fair to state that during the humanitarian intervention Italian soldiers, diplomats and politicians developed an approach to conducting humanitarian operations which refused to countenance the use of force in any case in which civilians might be involved. Rome also pressurised the other UNOSOM members to deal with clan dynamics in a more effective way, through dialogue rather than war. Probably Italy wanted to protect its own soldiers, but it was of also of benefit to the Somalis. Today, very few observers would argue that Italy was wrong. Considering the positive results obtained by the Italian-led humanitarian intervention in Mozambique, and more recently in Albania, Rome has set a valuable pattern for military multilateral humanitarian intervention which cannot be ignored.

ITALY AND THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY ON DEVELOPMENT – IGAD

In the last few years Italy has resumed an active foreign policy commitment in the Horn of Africa although in a different fashion from its previous experience. From March 1996 Rome has been committed to revitalising the IGAD; playing a more significant role inside the organisation and therefore in the region. It is evident that Italy wants to pursue its foreign policy aims acting in a multilateral context rather than individually.

IGAD, a regional organisation of seven states, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda, and a small Somali delegation, has identified three main areas of concern: food security and environmental protection; conflict prevention, management and resolution, and humanitarian affairs; and infrastructure development. Since November 1996 Rome has promoted the establishment of a Joint IGAD Partner Forum (IPF) of which it has the chairmanship. The first ministerial meeting of the Joint IPF was held in Rome on 19 and 20 January 1998.¹ On this occasion Lamberto Dini, the Italian Foreign Minister, stated that the commitment of IGAD and IPF members is 'to strengthen the organisation, to foster peace, political stability, economic development and social progress in the region.' As regards Somalia he claimed that Italy has adopted two specific rules of conduct: first, to bear in mind that the reconciliation process is primarily the task of the Somalis themselves, and second, that it aims at working in full co-ordination with the international organisations and primarily with the OAU, Organisation for Africa Unity, and IGAD.²

The IPF members appreciated the progress made by the peace initiatives in Somalia conducted by Ethiopia, as mandated by OAU and IGAD, and they emphasised that the creation of political, economic and social structures in the country is the responsibility of the Somali people. IPF intended to continue to support the political process, but 'warned the Somali leaders that time has come to put an end to their conflicts in order to enable Somalia to regain its dignity and position in the international community.' Finally, the IPF decided to establish a committee to support the IGAD peace process initiative in Somalia.³

The Italian commitment with IGAD Partners Forum, with the Committee on Somalia of the IPF and the appointment of a diplomat, Giuseppe Cassini, as non-residential special representative in Somalia, show evidence of Rome's renewed interest in the Horn of Africa. Inevitably this region remains central to Italian foreign policy, and it is likely that in the future Rome will attempt to maintain a significant position inside the IGAD, thus avoiding a close and isolated involvement with any country in the region. The negative consequences of past experience coupled with the poor financial resources available to any project of co-operation has certainly discouraged Rome from promoting any individual initiative. Better than adopting a low-profile foreign policy, Italy is actively involved in a multilateral context in which it can play a more assertive role.

Notes

PREFACE

1. Several officers and soldiers of the Italian Army, following a number of allegations by Somali people, were charged with violating human rights. A special Commission of Enquiry appointed by the Italian government to investigate these events concluded that many of the accusations were false.

As these events have a marginal importance in the relations between Italy and Somalia I have decided not to include them in this research. They will be considered in a more detailed analysis of peacekeeping mission and peacekeepers behaviour in a future publication.

1 INTRODUCTION

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2 AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON ITALIAN COLONIALISM

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- focused on the British case ... Fieldhouse treated Italy as a minor competitor.' C. Segre, 'Italy and Classical theories of the "New Imperialism": the Missing Italian Case', in *Fonti e problemi della politica coloniale italiana*, op. cit., pp. 537-8.
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55. L. De Courten, 'La storia come scienza e come cultura: la nascita dell'imperialismo coloniale italiano negli scritti di Alberto Aquarone', in A. Aquarone, *Dopo Adua: Politica e Amministrazione coloniale*, op. cit., p. 24.
56. W. Schieder, op. cit., p. 10.
57. *La politica estera dell'Italia negli atti, documenti e discussioni parlamentari dal 1861 al 1914*, edited by G. Perticone (Roma: Grafica Editrice Romana, 1978) p. 35.
58. G. Calchi Novati, *Il Corno d'Africa nella storia e nella politica*, op. cit., p. 54.
59. T. Negash, op. cit., p. 2.
60. A. Aquarone, op. cit., p. 44.
61. T. Negash, op. cit., p. 32.
62. A. Aquarone, op. cit., pp. 45–7.
63. T. Negash, op. cit., pp. 34–5.
64. G. Calchi Novati, *Il Corno d'Africa nella storia e nella politica*, op. cit., pp. 54–6.
65. G.B. Naitza, op. cit., pp. 18–19.
66. T. Negash, op. cit., p. 125.
67. G.B. Naitza, op. cit., p. 19.
68. C. Zaghi, *L'Africa nella coscienza europea e l'imperialismo italiano*, op. cit., pp. 222–3.
69. W. Schieder, op. cit., pp. 18–19.
70. Ministero della Guerra, Ufficio Storico del Comando del Corpo di Stato Maggiore, *Storia militare della Colonia Eritrea*, Vol. II (Roma: Tipografia regionale, 1935) p. 203. Telegram from Crispi to Baratieri, Roma, 5 aprile 1895: Ogni ulteriore espansione in Africa trova opposizione nell'Alta Italia, anche fra gli amici del Ministero. Il mio collega del Tesoro se ne preoccupa per l'incertezza delle spese a cui andremo

- incontro. L'impresa potrebbe essere tollerata solamente se la colonia concorresse anch'essa coi tributi locali; Telegram from Crispi to Baratieri Napoli, 13 April 1895: Se la forza non può essere ridotta, bisogna che tu trovi costì il denaro necessario a coprire la spesa eccedente.
71. Ibid., p. 208 Telegram from Crispi to Baratieri, Rome 7 January 1896: Il Governo ti ha mandato quanto hai chiesto in uomini ed in armi. Il paese aspetta un'altra vittoria ed io la aspetto autentica, tale che definisca per sempre la questione abissina... Io non ti chiedo il piano di guerra. Ti chiedo solamente che non si ripetano le sconfitte.
 72. C. Zaghi, *L'Africa nella coscienza europea e l'imperialismo italiano*, op. cit., p. 253.
 73. Ibid., p. 254.
 74. Ibid., p. 253.
 75. G. Calchi Novati, *Il Corno d'Africa nella storia e nella politica*, op. cit., p. 55.
 76. C. Jean, *Geopolitica* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1995) p. 236.
 77. G.B. Naitza, op. cit., p. 20.
 78. W. Schieder, op. cit., p. 20.
 79. A. Aquarone, op. cit., p. 81.
 80. C.M. Santoro, *La politica estera di una media potenza* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1991) pp. 130–1.
 81. A. Aquarone, op. cit., p. 85.
 82. W. Schieder, op. cit., p. 20.
 83. M. Gabriele wrote that during the 1870s the possibility of an Italian expansion on the coast of the Indian Ocean was stressed from several missions in the region. From the late 1870s and during the 1880s several ships of the Italian Navy 'Rapido', 'Vettor Pisani' and 'Barbarigo' made an important contribution to establishing contact with the Zanzibar Sultan. M. Gabriele, 'La Marina militare, le esplorazioni geografiche e la penetrazione coloniale', in *Fonti e problemi della politica coloniale italiana*, op. cit., p. 1083.
 84. R.L. Hess, *Italian Colonialism in Somalia* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1966) pp. 24–6.
 85. G.B. Naitza, op. cit., p. 21.
 86. R.L. Hess, op. cit., p. 26.
 87. G.B. Naitza, op. cit., p. 22.
 88. Ibid., 22–3.
 89. G. Calchi Novati, *Il Corno d'Africa nella storia e nella politica*, op. cit., p. 57.
 90. L. Goglia and F. Grassi, *Il colonialismo italiano da Adua all'Impero* (Bari-Roma: Laterza, 1993) p. 120.
 91. L. De Courten, 'L'amministrazione coloniale Italiana del Benadir', *Storia Contemporanea*, Vol. IX, No. 1 (January 1978) p. 121.
 92. F. Grassi, *Le origini dell'imperialismo italiano: il caso somalo (1896–1915)* (Lecce: Milella, 1980) pp. 101–2.
 93. For an analysis of the Italian adoption of the direct rule system in its colonies see C. Ghisalberti, 'Per una storia delle istituzioni italiane', in *Fonti e problemi della politica coloniale italiana*, op. cit., pp. 379–412.

94. Gazzetta Ufficiale del Regno d'Italia, No. 304, 31 December 1898, Art. 1.
95. Ibid., Art. 7.
96. Ibid., Art. 1.
97. Ibid., Art. 8.
98. F. Grassi, op. cit., p. 105.
99. A. Aquarone, op. cit., p. 65.
100. Ibid., p. 67.
101. R.L. Hess, op. cit., p. 84.
102. L. De Courten, L'amministrazione coloniale italiana del Benadir, *Storia Contemporanea*, Vol. IX, No. 2, February (1978) p. 119.
103. C.M. Santoro, op. cit., p. 118.
104. Ibid. Giuseppe Maione provided a detailed description of the Italian financial expenses during its colonial campaign from the conquest of Eritrea to the war against Ethiopia in 'I costi delle imprese coloniali italiane' in A. Del Boca, *Le guerre coloniali del fascismo*, op. cit., pp. 400-20.
105. C.M. Santoro, op. cit., p. 118.
106. L. Goglia and F. Grassi, op. cit., p. 3.
107. Ibid.
108. C.M. Santoro, op. cit., p. 133.
109. L. Goglia and F. Grassi, op. cit., pp. 5-6.
110. A. Gramsci, *Scritti Giovanili* (Torino: Einaudi, 1958) p. 158.
111. L. Goglia and F. Grassi, op. cit., p. 8.
112. F. Malgeri, *La guerra libica* (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1970) pp. 37-8.
113. Ibid., p. 258.
114. F. Gaeta, *Nazionalismo italiano* (Napoli: 1965); O. Malagodi, *Conversazioni della guerra 1914-1919*, a cura di B. Vighezzi (Napoli: 1960).
115. G.B. Naitza, op. cit., p. 29.
116. L. Goglia and F. Grassi, op. cit., p. 9.
117. F. Malgeri, op. cit., p. 19.
118. Ibid., p. 35.
119. Ibid., pp. 23-5.
120. G.B. Naitza, op. cit., p. 27.
121. F. Malgeri, op. cit., p. 105.
122. A. Del Boca in *Gli Italiani in Libia: Tripoli bel suol d'amor. 1860-1922* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1988) provides a precise reconstruction of military events in Tripolitania and Cirenaica.
123. E. Santarelli, G. Rochat, R. Rainero, L. Goglia, *Omar Al-Mukhtar* (London: Darf, 1986) p. 92.
124. R. De Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario 1883-1920* (Torino: Einaudi, 1965) pp. 107-11.
125. F. Malgeri, op. cit., p. 222.
126. A. Aquarone, op. cit., pp. 149-51.
127. G.B. Naitza, op. cit., pp. 53-4.
128. A. Aquarone, op. cit., pp. 153-4.
129. Ibid., p. 203.
130. Ibid., p. 59.

131. Ibid., p. 60.
132. Seminario di studi per la rinascita culturale e socio-economica della Nazione Somala, Perugia, 1994, p. 27.
133. Ibid., p. 28.
134. I.M. Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia* (Boulder & London: Westview Press, 1988) p. 10.
135. Ibid., p. 87.
136. L. Goglia and F. Grassi, op. cit., p. 183.
137. For a detailed analysis of the transferr of Jubaland from British control to Italian see R. Hees, op. cit., pp. 156-9 and G. Calchi Novati, 'L'annessione dell'Oltregiuba nella politica coloniale italiana', *Quaderni della Rivista Africa* (Roma: Istituto Italo-Africano, 1985).
138. C.M. Santoro, op. cit., p. 144.
139. L. Goglia and F. Grassi, op. cit., p. 184.
140. In R. De Felice, *Mussolini il duce I* (Torino: Einaudi, 1974) p. 333. 'L'imperialismo e' la legge eterna e immutabile della vita. Esso in fondo non e' che il bisogno, il desiderio e la volonta' di espansione che ogni popolo vivo e vitale ha in se. E' il mezzo con cui viene esercitato l'imperialismo, cio' che distingue, sia negli individui come nei popoli, l'uno imperialismo dall'altro. L'imperialismo non e' come si crede, necessariamente aristocratico e militare. Puo' essere democratico, pacifico, economico, spirituale.'
141. L. Goglia and F. Grassi, op. cit., p. 13.
142. R. De Felice, *Mussolini il duce I*, op. cit., p. 323.
143. Ibid., pp. 331-2.
144. L. Goglia and F. Grassi, op. cit., p. 203.
145. Ibid.
146. G. Calchi Novati, *Il Corno d'Africa nella storia e nella politica*, op. cit., p. 68.
147. L. Goglia and F. Grassi, op. cit., p. 205.
148. E. Santarelli, G. Rochat, R. Rainero, L. Goglia, op. cit., p. 28.
149. C.M. Santoro, op. cit., p. 162.
150. E. Santarelli, G. Rochat, R. Rainero, L. Goglia, op. cit., p. 18.
151. G. Calchi Novati, *Il Corno d'Africa nella storia e nella politica*, op. cit., p. 68.
152. L. Goglia and F. Grassi, op. cit., p. 221.
153. R. De Felice, *Mussolini il duce I*, op. cit., p. 344. 'Siamo quaranta milioni serrati in questa nostra angusta e adorabile penisola, che ha troppe montagne ed un territorio che non puo' nutrire tutti quanti. Ci sono attorno all'Italia paesi che hanno una popolazione inferiore alla nostra ed un territorio doppio del nostro. Ed allora si comprende come il problema dell'espansione italiana nel mondo sia un problema di vita o di morte per la razza italiana. Dico espansione: espansione in ogni senso: morale, politico, economico, demografico.'
154. C. Jean, op. cit., p. 239.
155. C.M. Santoro, op. cit., p. 168.
156. F. Minniti, 'Oltre Adua. lo sviluppo e la scelta della strategia operativa per la guerra contro l'Etiopia', *Societa' di Storia Militare*, Quaderno (1993), pp. 85-6.

157. R. De Felice, *Mussolini il duce I*, op. cit., p. 603.
158. Ibid., p. 606.
159. G.B. Naitza, op. cit., p. 34.
160. Ibid.
161. R. De Felice, *Mussolini il duce I*, op. cit., p. 613.
162. Ibid., pp. 614–15.
163. G.B. Naitza, op. cit., pp. 40–1.
164. G. Calchi Novati, *Il Corno d'Africa nella storia e nella politica*, op. cit., p. 75.
165. Ibid., p. 73.
166. L. Goglia and F. Grassi, op. cit., p. 207.
167. R. Mosca, *L'Europa verso la catastrofe* (Milano: Il Saggiatore, 1964) p. 101, talk between Ciano and Hitler on 24 October 1936.
168. R. De Felice, *Mussolini il duce II* (Torino: Einaudi, 1981) p. 354.
169. Ibid., pp. 393–7.
170. R. Rainero, *La rivendicazione fascista sulla Tunisia* (Milano: Marzorati Editore, 1978) p. 303.
171. G. Ciano, *Diario 1937–1943* (Milano: Rizzoli, 1988) p. 197.
172. R. De Felice, *Mussolini il duce II*, op. cit., p. 557.
173. ACS Archivio Centrale dello Stato (Italian National Central Archive), Atti Parlamentari, Camera dei deputati, Volume V delle discussioni della Camera dei Deputati, seduta del 30 novembre 1938, p. 5224.
174. *Discorso di Ciano alla Camera dei deputati del 30 novembre 1938* (Roma: Ministero della Cultura Popolare, 1938).
175. G. Bottai, *Diario 1935–1944* (Milano: Rizzoli, 1982) p. 139.
176. L. Goglia and F. Grassi, op. cit., pp. 213–16.
177. G. Bottai, op. cit., p. 141.
178. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle Colonie* (Milano: Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 1992) p. 170.
179. Public Record Office, War Office, 230, 251 Somalia annual reports for 1947 and 1948 by the Chief Administrator.
180. PRO, WO, 230, 123, Findings of a court of enquiry to investigate disturbances at Mogadishu on 11 January 1948. Witness of CAO (Civil Affairs Officer) Major Alen Olaf Smith.
181. Ibid.
182. G. Calchi Novati, 'Gli incidenti di Mogadiscio del gennaio 1948: rapporti italo inglesi e nazionalismo somalo', *Africa*, Vol. XXXV (September–December 1980), p. 330.
183. PRO, WO, 230, 123, Findings of a court of enquiry to investigate disturbances at Mogadishu on 11 January 1948. Witness of Lieutenant-Colonel R.E. Thorne.
184. The Court of Enquiry, appointed on 19 January 1948, was chaired by Colonel H.J.M. Flaxman and after a momentous pressure from Italian diplomacy the Italian consul Renato della Chiesa was accepted as observer.
185. A. Bullotta, *La Somalia sotto due bandiere* (Milano: Garzanti, 1949) pp. 227–8.
186. G. Calchi Novati, 'Gli incidenti di Mogadiscio del gennaio 1948: rapporti italo inglesi e nazionalismo somalo', *Africa*, op. cit., p. 334.

187. PRO, WO, 230, 123, Findings of a court of enquiry to investigate disturbances at Mogadishu on 11 January 1948. Witnesses of Rosato Libero and Giovanni Toffaloni.
188. PRO, WO, 230, 123, Findings of a court of enquiry to investigate disturbances at Mogadishu on 11 January 1948. Witness of Captain A.T. Bevan.
189. PRO, WO, 230, 123, Findings of a court of enquiry to investigate disturbances at Mogadishu on 11 January 1948. Testimony of Mr Wisher.
190. G. Calchi Novati, 'Gli incidenti di Mogadiscio del gennaio 1948: rapporti italo inglesi e nazionalismo somalo', *Africa*, op. cit., p. 345.
191. PRO, WO, 230, 123, Findings of a court of enquiry to investigate disturbances at Mogadishu on 11 January 1948. Testimony of Lieutenant-Colonel R.E. Thorne.
192. PRO, WO, 230, 123, Findings of a court of enquiry to investigate disturbances at Mogadishu on 11 January 1948. Witness of CAO Major Alen Olaf Smith.
193. PRO, WO, 230, 251 Somalia annual reports for 1947 and 1948 by the Chief Administrator.

3 ITALY AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF SOMALIA: A DIFFICULT MANDATE

1. Italian diplomatic commitment to obtaining its colonies has been analysed in depth by Gian Luigi Rossi in *L'Africa italiana verso l'indipendenza (1941–1949)* (Varese: Giuffrè Editore, 1980).
2. The Italian position towards its colonies was stated by Giuliano Cora in a presentation on 'Il Problema Coloniale Italiano' on 1 September 1945. Cora upheld that 'there is no doubt that the solution Italy should pursue for its colonies is to get them back in full sovereignty'. G. Cora, *Il Problema Coloniale Italiano*, *Rivista di Studi Politici Internazionali*, January–December (1945), pp. 3–20. For the British position towards this issue, see S.H. Longrigg, 'Disposal of Italian Africa', *International Affairs*, January (1945) pp. 363–9.
3. C. Sforza, *Cinque anni a palazzo Chigi* (Roma: Atlante, 1952) p. 173.
4. Ibid., p. 180.
5. UN Resolution 289, 21 November 1949.
6. Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana, Anno 92, No. 282, 7 December 1951 art. 3.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., art. 4.
9. Mohamed Hassan El Zayyat, 'Statement of the United Nations Advisor Council for Somalia under Italian Trusteeship', in *La cooperazione internazionale in Africa. Atti del Convegno di studi tenuto a Mogadiscio dal 14 al 16 gennaio 1960* (Milano: Giuffrè Editore, 1960) p. 87.
10. Abdalla Omar Mansur provided a detailed description of clan system in 'The Nature of Somali Clan System', in Ali Jimale Ahmed, *The Invention of Somalia* (Lawrenceville: The Red Sea Press Inc, 1994), pp. 117–34.

11. The main sources of clan conflicts within the Somali context are analysed and explained by Hussein M. Adam, 'Clan Conflicts and Democratisation in Somalia', in H. Glickman, *Ethnic Conflict and Democratisation in Africa* (Atlanta, Georgia: The African Studies Association Press, 1995) pp. 197–226.
12. I.M. Lewis, 'Nationalism and Particularism in Somalia', in P.H. Gulliver, *Tradition and Transition in East Africa* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969) pp. 342–4.
13. C. Besteman and L.V. Cassanelli, *The Struggle for Land in Southern Somalia* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1996) p. 14.
14. D.D. Laitin and Said S. Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in Search of a State*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987) p. 61.
15. Brigadier Ferrara was appointed to this position because of his past experience in Somalia. From 1925 to 1926 as Commander of the 3rd Company of the 3rd Eritrean Battalion he explored Southern Somalia. During the Second World War he was chief of the Ministry of Italian Africa Military Office. Virgilio Ilari, 'La storia della presenza militare italiana in Somalia', in Ruggero Stanglini, *1992–1994 Operazione Somalia* (Firenze: EDAI, 1994) p. 31.
16. A Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale, Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 55.
17. S. Bronchini, 'L'Aeronautica della Somalia (1950–1960)', in *Fonti e problemi della politica coloniale italiana*, op. cit., pp. 1111–15. Aerosomalia employed a flight of P51 Mustang and 13 L51 Sentinel, Douglas C47 and C53. Aerosomalia followed the same destiny of the Corpo di Sicurezza. As a result of the constant budget difficulties in March 1951, the P51 were repatriated. By October 1950 the number of transport aircraft had been cut to seven. On 31 December 1958 1 C53, 2 C47 and 2 C45 Beechcraft were operating in Somalia.
18. In 1950 Great Britain was still administering Haud and Ogaden, which both belonged to Ethiopia, even though they had large Somali communities. In 1935–6, when Italy invaded Ethiopia they became part of the Italian empire. In 1941, after the defeat of the Italian troops, they remained under British Administration.
19. A. Arnera, 'I carabinieri in Somalia durante l'amministrazione fiduciaria italiana', *Il Carabiniere*, No. 5, (1980) p. 46.
20. A. Arnera, 'I carabinieri in Somalia durante l'amministrazione fiduciaria italiana', *Il Carabiniere*, No. 4, (1980) pp. 46–7.
21. ASMAE Archivio Storico del Ministero Affari Esteri, AFIS Amministrazione Fiduciaria Italiana in Somalia, CLAMS Commissione per la Liquidazione degli Arretrati ai Militari Somali, Box 2, File 7.
22. I.M. Lewis, *The Modern History of Somaliland* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965) p. 140.
23. V. Ilari, op. cit., p. 31.
24. A Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale, Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 209.
25. Stato Maggiore Esercito, Ufficio Storico, *Somalia*, Volume II (Roma: 1960) pp. 257–86.

26. ASMAE, AFIS, *Rapport sur la Somalie sous Administration Italienne*, 3 June–24 July 1952, New York pp. 6–9, Box 1 File 4.
27. M. Karp, *The Economics of Trusteeship in Somalia* (Boston: Boston University Press, 1960) p. 15.
28. Mohamed Hassan El Zayyat, op. cit., p. 86.
29. I.M. Lewis, *The Modern History of Somaliland* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965) p. 139.
30. ASMAE, AFIS, Secret Memorandum, Box 2, File 3. Egypt provided a base for SYL anti-Italian propaganda. The Italian Embassy in Cairo followed SYL activity carefully, with a particular interest in its President Hagi Mohamed Hussein, who was the most radical leader. On 25 June 1950, *Al Mistri*, an Egyptian wafdist newspaper, published Hagi Mohamed Hussein correspondence from Mogadishu. In the article, Mohamed Hussein protested against Italians' bad treatment of Somalis and he charged the Administration with spreading discord among the population, in ASMAE, AFIS, Report from the Italian embassy in Cairo, Box 2, File 21.
31. Mohamed Hassan El Zayyat, op. cit., p. 88.
32. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale, Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 224.
33. ASMAE, AFIS, Report from the Italian embassy in Cairo, Box 2, File 21.
34. ASMAE, AFIS, Secret Documents of Mr Spinelli, Secret Report, 14, October, 1952, Box 2, File 3.
35. Ibid.
36. Mohamed Aden Sheikh, *Arrivederci a Mogadiscio* (Roma: Editori Associati, 1991) p. 24.
37. Ahmed I. Samatar, *The Somali Challenge* (Boulder, London: Lynne Rienner, 1994) p. 109.
38. ASMAE, AFIS, *Rapport sur la Somalie sous Administration Italienne*, p. 13, Box 1, File 4.
39. Ibid., p. 13.
40. Ibid., p. 14.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
43. Mohamed H. Mukhtar, 'The Emergence and Role of Political Parties in the Inter-river Region of Somalia from 1947 to 1960 (Independence)', in A. Puglielli, op. cit., p. 309.
44. I.M. Lewis, Modern Political Movements in Somaliland, *Africa*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 3, pp. 244–61.
45. ASMAE, AFIS, *Rapport sur la Somalie sous Administration Italienne*, Box 1, File 4, p. 15.
46. Ibid.
47. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale, Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., pp. 172–3.
48. They were: Unione Nazionale Somala (Somali National Union), Unione Maniferro Somalia (Somali Maniferro Union), Hidalet Islam Schidle et Mobilen, Lega Mussulmana della Somalia (Somali Muslim League), Unione Difesa della Somali (Union for protection of

- Somalia), Associazione Gioventu' Benadir (Benadir Youth Organisation) and Unione Giovani Benadir (Benadir Youth Union).
49. At the 1954 administrative elections participated more than 20 lists. At the 1956 general elections there was a reduction of number there were four parties and six ethnic coalitions. The situation definitely worsened after independence. Eighteen parties took part in the 1964 general elections and 60 parties in 1969.
 50. Hussein M. Adam, 'Somalia: Federalism and Self-Determination' in P. Woodward and M. Forsyth, *Conflict and Peace in the Horn of Africa* (Dartmouth: Hants, 1994) p. 114.
 51. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale, Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., pp. 226–7. Del Boca claims that the presence in Somalia of a large community of Fascists was a matter of concern. In Mogadishu, MSI had 260 members. Somalia was considered a safe territory for the Fascists who were persecuted in Italy by a harsh anti-Fascist law. *Ibid.*, p. 229.
 52. *Ibid.*, p. 228.
 53. *Ibid.*, pp. 228–9. In a letter to Brusasca, Fornari provided a dissenting opinion about the MSI activity. He stated that 'The worries about MSI and its development are simply exaggerated.' ASMAE, AFIS, Letter from Mr Fornari to Mr Brusasca, 7 April 1951, Box 2, File 3.
 54. Mohamed H. Mukhtar, op. cit., p. 310.
 55. M. D'Antonio, *Italia e Somalia dieci anni di collaborazione* (Roma: Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, 1962) p. 56.
 56. ASMAE, AFIS, *Rapport sur la Somalie sous Administration Italienne*, pp. 11–12, Box 1, File 4.
 57. M. D'Antonio, op. cit., p. 51.
 58. ASMAE, AFIS, Ordinanza of the 31 March 1955, Box 2, File 10.
 59. ASMAE, AFIS, Letter from Fornari to Brusasca, 16 February 1951, Box 2, File 3.
 60. *Ibid.*
 61. *Ibid.*
 62. *Ibid.*
 63. *Ibid.*
 64. G.A. Costanzo, 'L'Educazione chiave dello sviluppo della Somalia', *Africa*, Vol. XV, No. 3, May–June (1960) pp. 141–2.
 65. In 1950 only 170 teachers were in Somalia: 71 Italians, 62 Somalis and 37 Arabs, of whom just a small percentage were women. G.A. Costanzo, op. cit., p. 142.
 66. ASMAE, AFIS, Box 1, File 1.
 67. G. A. Costanzo, op. cit., pp. 139–45. On 21 January 1970 the technical co-operation between Italy and Somalia established the National University of Somalia with a strong presence of Italian lecturers, so that the language of the University was Italian. Giampaolo Calchi Novati, in a recent book explained that Italy, administering the University, had a strong influence on the Somali intelligentsia: *Il Corno d'Africa nella storia e nella politica*, op. cit., p. 261. The quality of the education offered by the University remained poor so that the Ambassador Giacomelli, in charge of the Co-operation for Development until 1985, admitted that the preparation of Somali

- students after they received a degree from the University was more similar to a Italian secondary school than to a University. Commissione Parlamentare d'Inchiesta sull'attuazione della politica di cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo. 9° Resoconto Stenografico, Seduta di giovedì 27 aprile 1995, p. 15. (Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry into Co-operation for Development with developing countries, 9th session, Thursday, 27 April 1995.)
68. The Italian economy had collapsed following the Second World War and it was still weak in the early 1950s. Travelling from southern Italy to the northern regions, it was possible to see that the ruins of the war crossed the country. The overall situation was so bad that in November 1946, the Italian Prime Minister, Alcide De Gasperi, urged Enrico De Nicola, the Italian President, to ask President Truman for economic aid. De Gasperi stated that Italy needed at least 240,000 tons of wheat in the first months of 1947. Without this aid the individual bread ration (200–25 grams) would have been further reduced. Adstanti, *Alcide De Gasperi nella politica estera Italiana (1943–1953)* (Verona: Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 1953) p. 81.
 69. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
 70. U. Triulzi, 'L'Italia e l'economia somala dal 1950 a oggi', *Africa*, Vol. XXVI, No. 4, (1971) p. 443.
 71. In the years after the end of the war, a considerable number of secessionist movements developed. These movements flourished in Valle d'Aosta, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Trentino-alto Adige and in Sicily. In the latter region the state fought a crude war against the Sicilian secessionists up to 1950. C.M. Santoro, op. cit., p. 185.
 72. P. Petrucci, *Mogadiscio* (Torino: Nuova ERI, 1993) p. 94.
 73. A. Arnera, 'I carabinieri in Somalia durante l'amministrazione fiduciaria italiana', *Il Carabiniere*, No. 6, (1980), pp. 46–7.
 74. ASMAE, AFIS, Letter from Mr Fornari to Mr Brusasca, 7 April 1957, Box 2, File 3.
 75. Although AFIS depended formally on the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Italian Africa still existed in Italy and the AFIS officials sent to Somalia belonged to it. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale, Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 222.
 76. ASMAE, AFIS, Letter from Mr Fornari to Mr Brusasca, 7 April 1957, Box 2, File 3.
 77. ASMAE, AFIS, Box 2, File 14.
 78. *Ibid.*
 79. ASMAE, AFIS, *Rapport sur la Somalie sous Administration Italienne*, pp. 13–17, Box 1, File 4.
 80. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale, Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 236.
 81. A. Arnera, 'I carabinieri in Somalia durante l'amministrazione fiduciaria italiana', *Il Carabiniere*, No. 7, (1980) p. 38.
 82. ASMAE, AFIS, Report Top Secret from Martino to the Foreign Minister Deputy Gaetano Martino, 9 April 1955, Box 2, File 3.
 83. *Ibid.*
 84. *Ibid.*

85. Ibid.
86. Ibid.
87. John Drysdale, *The Somali Dispute* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1964) p. 88.
88. W.M. Reisman, 'Somali Self-Determination in the Horn: Legal Perspectives and Implications for Social and Political Engineering', in I.M. Lewis *Nationalism and Self Determination in the Horn of Africa* (London: Ithaca Press, 1983) p. 156.
89. ASMAE, AFIS, Report Top Secret from Martino to the Foreign Minister Deputy Gaetano Martino, 9 April 1955, Box 2, File 3.
90. I.M. Lewis, Modern Political Movements in Somaliland, *Africa*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 3, p. 257.
91. G. Calchi Novati, *Il Corno D'Africa nella storia e nella politica*, op. cit., p. 96.
92. ASMAE, AFIS, Speech of Martino at the XIV Session of the Trusteeship Council, 4 June 1954, Box 1, File 3.
93. U. Triulzi, 'L'Italia e l'economia somala dal 1950 a oggi', *Africa*, Vol. XXVI, No. 4, (1971) p. 446.
94. ASMAE, AFIS, Report Top Secret from Martino to the Foreign Minister Deputy Gaetano Martino, 9 April 1955, Box 2, File 3.
95. ASMAE, AFIS, Speech of Martino at the XIV Session of the Trusteeship Council, 4 June 1954, Box 1, File 3.
96. Ibid.
97. Ibid.
98. ASMAE, AFIS, Report of the Corpo di Sicurezza Intelligence Department, April 1954, Box 2, File 30.
99. Ibid.
100. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale, Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 242.
101. ASMAE, AFIS, Report of the Corpo di Sicurezza Intelligence Department, April 1954, Box 2, File 30.
102. ASMAE, AFIS, Report Top Secret from Martino to the Foreign Minister Deputy Gaetano Martino, 9 April 1955, Box 2, File 3.
103. ASMAE, AFIS, Report of the Corpo di Sicurezza Intelligence Department, May 1954, Box 2, File 30.
104. Ibid.
105. ASMAE, AFIS, Report Top Secret from Martino to the Foreign Minister Deputy Gaetano Martino, 9 April 1955, Box 2, File 3.
106. Ibid.
107. ASMAE, AFIS, Report of the Corpo di Sicurezza Intelligence Department, July 1954, Box 2, File 30.
108. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale, Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 243.
109. ASMAE, AFIS, Letter from Martino to Spinelli, 19 October 1954, Box 2, File 27.
110. ASMAE, AFIS, Letter from Fornari to Brusasca, 7 April 1951, Box 2, File 3.
111. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale, Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., pp. 247-8.

112. U. Triulzi, 'L'Italia e l'economia somala dal 1950 a oggi', op. cit., pp. 443-61. The author clearly explains that because of the difficult environmental conditions, the cost of packaging and transportation Somali banana production was not competitive with production from countries such as the Canary Islands. From the 1930s Somali banana exports were favoured by a preferential and protected market (the Italian market), but this situation was not particularly convenient for Somalia.
113. ASMAE, AFIS, Report Top Secret from Martino to the Foreign Minister Deputy Gaetano Martino, 9 April 1955, Box 2, File 3.
114. Ibid.
115. Ibid.
116. R. Hess, op. cit., p. 192.
117. I.M. Lewis, *The Modern History of Somaliland* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965) p. 142.
118. Mark Karp, op. cit., p. 33.
119. Ibid., p. 106.
120. L. Bruno, in his study *La Somalia alla vigilia della sua indipendenza* (Milano: Stab. Tip. Commerciale, 1959) p. 9, states that all the experts that visited Somalia agree that, despite the investments realised by the Administration and by private companies, the territory would be able to have an autonomous economy only after a period of 15-20 years following the end of the mandate. Triulzi in 'L'Italia e l'economia somala dal 1950 ad oggi' argues that 'the sum we [Italy] spent, in the end, was too little if the aims that we wanted to reach with the Administration of Somalia were truly those of improving the economic and social conditions, and too much if the reasons that pushed us to go back in the former colony were political and of national prestige', op. cit., p. 461.
121. L.V. Cassanelli, 'Somali Land Resource Issues in Historical Perspective', in W. Clarke and J. Herbst, *Learning from Somalia* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1997) p. 70. Cassanelli explains that 'The SYL had its strongest support among Darod, Hawiye, and Isaaq clans, and it was these groups who came to dominate the national army, police force, and civil service as Somalia moved toward independence in 1960', ibid.
122. G. Consiglio, 'Insistiamo: attenzione alla Somalia!', *Affrica*, Vol. X, No. 3, March (1955), pp. 65-8.
123. Vittorio Badini Confalonieri, letter to the Editor of *Affrica Gregorio* Consiglio, in *Affrica*, Vol. X, No. 5 May (1955) pp. 137-8.
124. John Drysdale, op. cit., p. 89.

4 AFIS: TWO DIFFICULT TASKS – DEMOCRATISATION AND SOMALISATION

1. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 270.
2. J. Markakis, *National and Class Revolution in the Horn of Africa*

- (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) p. 53.
3. I. Lewis emphasised that 'While in Somalia the limitation of the period of trusteeship to ten years imparted a strong sense of urgency, in British Somaliland, where no date had been set for independence, and where indeed the matter had scarcely been raised, progress proceeded at a much more leisurely pace. This coincided with the general view prevalent in British circles that development was likely to be all more effective if conducted at a slow and steady pace.' *The Modern History of Somaliland*, op. cit., p. 148.
 4. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 255.
 5. Mohamed Aden Sheikh, *Arrivederci a Mogadiscio*, op. cit., p. 28.
 6. ASMAE, AFIS, Department of Internal Affairs, Telespresso N 589136, 27 November 1954, Box 2, File 31.
 7. Ibid.
 8. Ibid.
 9. 'L'Italia prepara i somali ad amministrarsi', *Il Globo*, 25 June 1954, and 'Realizzazioni e programmi del Mandato italiano in Somalia', *Il Tempo*, 25 June 1954.
 10. M. D'Antonio, op. cit., p. 193, The book was promoted by two under-secretaries – Deputy Gustavo De Meo and Senator Giovanni Giraudo.
 11. ASMAE, AFIS, Decree of Anzilotti on 31 March 1955, Box 2, file 10.
 12. Ibid.
 13. M. D'Antonio, op. cit., p. 193.
 14. *Le prime elezioni politiche in Somalia* (Mogadiscio: AFIS, Stamperia del governo, 1956).
 15. M. D'Antonio, op. cit., pp. 142–3.
 16. ASMAE, AFIS, Report for the 'comitato interpartitico', Box 9, File 9.
 17. Ibid.
 18. Mohamed Aden Sheikh, 'Origini e conseguenze di una tragedia africana', *Micromega*, January (1993) p. 208.
 19. ASMAE, AFIS, Troubles which occurred during the *shir*, 9 September 1955, Box 9, File 9.
 20. Ibid.
 21. Mohamed H. Mukhtar, op. cit., p. 312.
 22. I. Lewis stressed that this was 'the basis of the intense rivalry between the SYL and the Hisbia Digil-Mirifle'. 'Modern Political Movements in Somaliland. II', *Africa*, Vol. XXVIII, (1958) p. 354.
 23. *Il Corriere della Somalia*, 30 April 1956.
 24. Ibid.
 25. M. D'Antonio, op. cit., p. 196.
 26. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 273.
 27. G.A. Costanzo, *Problemi costituzionali della Somalia nella preparazione all'indipendenza* (Milano: Guiffre', 1962) p. 18.
 28. Ibid., p. 19.
 29. Ibid., p. 20.
 30. Ibid., p. 21.
 31. Ibid., pp. 22–3.

32. M. D'Antonio, op. cit., p. 195.
33. G.A. Costanzo, op. cit., p. 22.
34. Abdalla Omar Mansur, 'Contrary to a Nation: The Cancer of the Somali State', in Ali Jimale Ahmed, op. cit., p. 107.
35. Hussein M. Adam, 'Somalia: Federalism and Self-Determination', in P. Woodward and M. Forsyth, op. cit., p. 114.
36. T. Lyons and A.I. Samatar, *Somalia* (Washington DC: Brookings Institute, 1995) pp. 7–8.
37. S. Foderaro, *La costituzione degli stati africani* (Padova: Cedam, 1973) p. 467.
38. Interview of Nicolino Mohamed with Angelo Del Boca, Mogadiscio, 23 June 1960, quoted in A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 283.
39. ASMAE, AFIS, Statement of the Prime Minister, Abdullahi Issa Mohamud, to the Legislative Assembly, 26 July 1959, Box 9, File 6.
40. G.A. Costanzo, op. cit., p. 27.
41. Although so far there is no exhaustive study about the attitude of the clans towards political parties during the administration, it is possible to state that the clan remained the main link between voters and representatives elected to the Legislative Assembly. The HDM opposition party was a clear expression of this phenomenon. The party changed its name only after 1956 to support the state-launched campaign against clanism, although it became the Hisbia Destur Mustaqil Somali (HDMS; Somali Constitutional Independent Party).
42. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 249.
43. United Nations, Report of the Trusteeship Council covering the period from 23 July 1955 to 14 August 1956, General Assembly, Official Records: eleventh session, doc A/3170, New York, 1956 p. 93, quoted in A. Costanzo, op. cit., p. 27.
44. Mohamed H. Mukhtar, op. cit., p. 313.
45. A. Costanzo, op. cit., p. 28.
46. Ibid., p. 30.
47. Ibid., p. 32.
48. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 276.
49. Mohamed Aden Sheikh, *Arrivederci a Mogadiscio*, op. cit., p. 29.
50. Mohamed Aden Sheikh expressed a positive judgement about Anzilotti. He stated that 'In 1955 the AFIS direction was given to an open minded diplomatic officer Anzilotti. He was the first one to understand and admit that AFIS wasted half of the mandate without providing a solid political basis for independence of Somalia. Anzilotti decided to improve the situation although the other AFIS officers tried to stop him.' Ibid., pp. 24–5.
51. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 277.
52. ASMAE, AFIS, Meeting of the representatives of the four opposition parties with the Administrator. Box 9, File 4.
53. Ibid.

54. Ibid.
55. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 275.
56. Stato Maggiore Esercito, *Somalia*, op. cit., p. 277.
57. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 278.
58. ASMAE, AFIS, Audience of the Administrator to the opposition parties' members, 9 January 1959, Box 9, File 4.
59. Ibid.
60. ASMAE, AFIS, Verdict of 21 September 1959, Box 9, File 10.
61. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 279.
62. Ibid., p. 279.
63. ASMAE, AFIS, Statement of the Prime Minister, Abdullahi Issa Mohamud, to the Legislative Assembly, 26 July 1959, Box 9, File 6.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid.
66. Ibid.
67. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 304.
68. M.C. Ercolessi, *Conflitti e mutamento politico in Africa* (Milano: Franco Angeli, 1991) p. 56.
69. ASMAE, AFIS, Telespresso no. 19348, Box 9, File 8.
70. I.M. Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965) p. 155.
71. ASMAE, AFIS, Telespresso no. 19348, Box 9, File 8.
72. Ibid.
73. Ibid.
74. Ibid.
75. I.M. Lewis, op. cit., p. 162.
76. ASMAE, AFIS, Telespresso no. 19348, Box 9, File 8.
77. Ibid.
78. A. Del Boca, op. cit., p. 285.
79. Ibid.
80. ASMAE, AFIS, Telespresso no. 19348, Box 9, File 8.
81. M. Karp, op. cit., p. 48. Karp claimed that 'a higher level of commercialisation of livestock resources therefore appears greatly desirable. Certainly it would require many changes in the conditions of supply, such as, organisation of range management along modern lines, improved breeding practices, and establishment of new processing industries.' All technical problems of which none of them 'would seem to be insoluble'. Ibid., p. 73.
82. ASMAE, AFIS, Statement of the Prime Minister, Abdullahi Issa Mohamud, to the Legislative Assembly, 26 July 1959, Box 9, File 6.
83. L. Bruno, op. cit., p. 9.
84. U. Triulzi, 'L'Italia e l'economia somala dal 1950 ad oggi', *Africa*, Vol. XXVI, No. 4 (1971), p. 446.
85. G. Vedovato, 'La Somalia, Stato indipendente', *Rivista di Studi Politici Internazionali*, XXVII, No. 3, July–September (1960).

86. Ibid., p. 325.
87. Ibid., p. 326.
88. U. Triulzi, 'L'Italia e l'economia somala dal 1950 ad oggi', op. cit., p. 447.
89. Ibid., pp. 447–8.
90. G. Vedovato, 'La Somalia, Stato indipendente', op. cit., p. 326.
91. G. Vedovato, 'La Somalia di fronte al 1960', *Rivista di Studi Politici Internazionali*, Vol. XXVI, No. 2 April–June (1959) p. 207.
92. U. Triulzi, 'L'Italia e l'economia somala dal 1950 ad oggi', p. 451.
93. M. Karp, op. cit., p. 90.
94. U. Triulzi, 'L'Italia e l'economia somala dal 1950 ad oggi', p. 451.
95. Ibid., p. 453.
96. Salt, before the war, was exported exclusively to Japan. The latter eventually turned to other sources of supply, and in consequence salt export from Somalia ceased altogether. M. Karp, op. cit., p. 44.
97. U. Triulzi, 'L'Italia e l'economia somala dal 1950 ad oggi', p. 455.
98. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 257.
99. U. Triulzi, 'L'Italia e l'economia somala dal 1950 ad oggi', op. cit., p. 459.
100. Ibid.
101. G. Vedovato, 'L'avvenire economico della Somalia indipendente', *Rivista di Studi Politici Internazionali*, Vol. XXVII, No. 4, October–December (1960) p. 371.
102. Ibid.
103. Ibid., p. 377.
104. Ibid.
105. U. Triulzi, 'L'Italia e l'economia somala dal 1950 ad oggi', p. 451.
106. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 260.
107. Ibid., p. 295.
108. Ibid., p. 344.
109. G. Calchi Novati, *Il Corno d'Africa nella storia e nella politica*, op. cit., pp. 94–9.
110. See, for example, M.C. Ercolessi, *Conflitto e mutamento politico in Africa*, op. cit.
111. L. Gasbarri, 'L'AFIS, una pagina di storia italiana da ricordare', *Africa*, Vol. XXXI, No. 1, March, (1986) p. 73.
112. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 598.
113. I.M. Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1988) p. 281.
114. Ibid., p. 165.
115. U. Triulzi, op. cit., p. 461.
116. Abdi Samatar and Ahmed Samatar, 'The Material Roots of the Suspended African State: Arguments from Somalia', *The Journal of Modern African Studies* Vol. 25, No. 4 (1987) pp. 669–90.
117. G. Vedovato, 'L'Avvenire economico della Somalia indipendente', op. cit., p. 376.

118. A. Costanzo, op. cit., p. 13.
119. A. Folchi, in M. D'Antonio, op. cit., p. 8.
120. P. Petrucci, *Mogadiscio*, op. cit., p. 49.
121. Ibid.
122. Mohamed Aden Sheikh, 'Origini e conseguenze di una tragedia africana', op. cit., p. 209.
123. T. Lyons and A.I. Samatar, op. cit., p. 8.
124. ASMAE, AFIS, Letter from Fornari to Brusasca, 7 April 1957, Box, File 3.
125. A. Triulzi, op. cit., p. 461.

5 CO-OPERATION AND DIPLOMACY

1. For an analysis of the preparation of colonial officers from the second decade of this century to the first years of Fascism, see G. Melis, 'I funzionari coloniali (1912-1924)', in *Fonti e problemi della politica coloniale italiana*, op. cit., pp. 413-37.
2. Seminario di studi per la rinascita culturale e socio economica della nazione somala, Centro Studi 'La Colombella', Perugia, 5-6 February 1994, p. 40.
3. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 344.
4. D. Compagnon, 'Dynamiques de mobilisation dissidence armée et rébellion populaire: le cas du mouvement national Somali (1981-1990)', *Africa*, Vol. XLVII, No. 4, December (1992), pp. 507-8.
5. Hussein M. Adam, 'Somalia: Federalism and Self-Determination', in P. Woodward and M. Forsyth, op. cit., p. 120.
6. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 344.
7. M. Merosi, *Somalia* (Roma: Seam, 1995) p. 84.
8. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 345.
9. M. Merosi, op. cit., p. 84.
10. Hussein M. Adam, op. cit., 1994, p. 118.
11. Mohamed Aden Sheikh, *Arrivederci a Mogadiscio*, op. cit., p. 46.
12. G. Calchi Novati, 'Italy in the Triangle of the Horn: Too Many Corners for Half Power', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (1994), p. 374.
13. P. Tripodi, 'A Half-Century of Italian Foreign Policy', *Contemporary Review*, Vol. 269, No. 1568, September (1996), pp. 118-20.
14. Roberto Aliboni, 'Italy and Africa South of Sahara Security Views and Perspectives', Paper prepared for the Institute für Politik und Internationale Studien, Munich, April 1996.
15. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 372.
16. M.C. Ercolessi, *Conflitti e mutamento politico in Africa*, op. cit., p. 55.
17. Ibid.
18. Mohamed Aden Sheikh, *Arrivederci a Mogadiscio*, op. cit., p. 44.

19. Ibid.
20. Mohamed Aden Sheikh, one of the first members of the Council of Secretaries, explained that the adoption of scientific socialism in Somalia was to mark a clear distinction with Arab, African or Islamic socialism. Ibid., p. 55.
21. Ahmed I. Samatar, *The Somali Challenge*, op. cit., 1994, p. 115.
22. Ibid., pp. 114-15.
23. Mohamed Aden Sheikh, 'Origini e conseguenze di una tragedia africana', *Micromega*, January (1993) pp. 210-11.
24. R. Aliboni, op. cit.
25. P. Petrucci, *Mogadiscio*, op. cit., pp. 40-3.
26. L. Pestalozza, 'Somalia, la scelta dell'Università', in A. Puglielli, op. cit., p. 349. Luigi Pestalozza provided a detailed illustration of the military coup in his *Somalia Cronaca della Rivoluzione* (Bari: Dedalo, 1973).
27. Mohamed Aden Sheikh, *Arrivederci a Mogadiscio*, op. cit., p. 155.
28. B. Bagnato, 'Alcune considerazioni sull'anticolonialismo italiano', in R. Rainero and E. di Nolfo, *L'Italia e la politica di potenza in Europa (1950-1960)* (Milano: 1992) p. 302.
29. L. Pestalozza, op. cit., p. 350.
30. S. Hoben, 'Language Issues and Education in Somalia', in A. Puglielli, op. cit., p. 407.
31. Shamis Hussein, 'The Transition of the Education System in the Somali Democratic Republic in the Post Colonial Years' in A. Puglielli, op. cit., p. 413. Susan Hoben also emphasised that the UNESCO commission, which recommended that English be used for university education, 'noted the lack of standardisation of language use in the secondary system. In addition to English in northern schools and Italian in the south, several secondary schools used Arabic as the language of instruction', op. cit., p. 406.
32. L. Pestalozza, op. cit., p. 356.
33. M. Tommasoli, 'Aggiustamento strutturale e sviluppo in Somalia: il negoziato con le istituzioni finanziarie internazionali', *Africa* Vol. XLVII, No. 4, December (1992), pp. 479-80. Pestalozza emphasised that the level of illiteracy in 1969 was as high as 98 per cent, of whom 95 per cent were nomads; op. cit., p. 351.
34. S. Hoben, op. cit., p. 405.
35. P. Fasano, 'In Somalia alla vigilia della guerra civile', *Politica internazionale*, Nos 1-2 January (1996), p. 63.
36. Ibid.
37. G. Calchi Novati, 'Italy in the Triangle of the Horn: too Many Corners for Half Power', op. cit., p. 376. Calchi Novati stated that 'Italy believed that her assistance was more palatable to nationalistic forces in Africa than either American or British aid, not least because developing countries had little or nothing to fear from a middle-size power.'
38. U. Triulzi, 'L'Italia e l'economia somala dal 1950 ad oggi', *Africa* Vol. XXVII, No. 1, March (1972) p. 641.
39. Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry into Co-operation for Development with developing countries (Commissione Parlamentare

- d'Inchiesta sull'attuazione della politica di cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo). Thursday, 27 April 1995, interview with Ambassador Giorgio Giacomelli, p. 10.
40. M. Sica, *Operazione Somalia* (Venezia: Marsilio Editore, 1994), p. 20. Mario Sica was the last Italian Ambassador in Mogadishu.
 41. Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry into Co-operation for Development with developing countries (Commissione Parlamentare d'Inchiesta sull'attuazione della politica di cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo). Thursday, 27 April 1995, interview with Ambassador Giorgio Giacomelli, p. 10. Giacomelli also stated that, at the beginning of his experience as manager of the programme, he performed his tasks relying on the means provided by a law that did not give recommendations in the political field but only administrative criteria.
 42. Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry into Co-operation for Development with developing countries (Commissione Parlamentare d'Inchiesta sull'attuazione della politica di cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo). Wednesday, 15 February 1995, Interview with Minister Francesco Aloisi, pp. 28–9.
 43. As a consequence of this improvement in the relationship between the two countries a programme of economic and technical co-operation was launched. From 1970 to 1971 Ethiopia received 2.8 per cent of total Italian aid to developing countries and became the second largest benefactor, after Somalia, in the Italian aid programme in sub-Saharan Africa. M.C. Ercolessi, op. cit., p. 57.
 44. P. Tripodi, 'A Half-Century of Italian Foreign Policy', op. cit., p. 122.
 45. Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry into Co-operation for Development with developing countries (Commissione Parlamentare d'Inchiesta sull'attuazione della politica di cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo). Wednesday, 15 February 1995, Interview with Minister Francesco Aloisi, p. 5.
 46. Paul B. Henze, *The Horn of Africa* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991) pp. 95–9.
 47. A. Del Boca, *Una sconfitta dell'intelligenza* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1993) pp. 15–16.
 48. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., pp. 476–7.
 49. A. Del Boca, *Una sconfitta dell'intelligenza*, op. cit., p. 16.
 50. M.C. Ercolessi, op. cit., pp. 57–8.
 51. Calchi Novati, *Il Corno d'Africa nella storia e nella politica*, op. cit., p. 260.
 52. Maria Cristina Ercolessi, in her book *Conflitto e mutamento politico in Africa*, reports that in 1980/1 Italy allotted to the Co-operation for Development 713 million dollars, in the period 1987/8 the sum was 2,939 million dollars, Ibid., p. 183.
 53. Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry into Co-operation for Development with developing countries (Commissione Parlamentare d'Inchiesta sull'attuazione della politica di cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo). Thursday, 27 April 1995, interview with Ambassador Giorgio Giacomelli, p. 6.

54. In 1982 Italy distributed 75.4 million dollars to the IGADD (Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development) country members (Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Kenya, Djibuti and Uganda) in 1984 170.3 million dollars, in 1986 478.7 million dollars and in 1988 581.3 million dollars. M.C. Ercolessi, op. cit., p. 198.
55. C.M. Santoro, op. cit., p. 206.
56. Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry into Co-operation for Development with developing countries (Commissione Parlamentare d'Inchiesta sull'attuazione della politica di cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo). Thursday, 27 April 1995, interview with Ambassador Giorgio Giacomelli, p. 27.
57. Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry into Co-operation for Development with developing countries (Commissione Parlamentare d'Inchiesta sull'attuazione della politica di cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo). Wednesday, 15 February 1995, Interview with Minister Francesco Aloisi, p. 7.
58. Ibid., p. 22.
59. A. Del Boca, *Una sconfitta dell'intelligenza*, op. cit., p. 17.
60. Mohamed Aden Sheikh, *Arrivederci a Mogadiscio*, op. cit., pp. 158–9.
61. A. Aruffo, *Dossier Somalia* (Roma: DataneWS, 1994) pp. 102–3.
62. A. Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa Orientale. Nostalgia delle colonie*, op. cit., p. 498.
63. Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry into Co-operation for Development with developing countries (Commissione Parlamentare d'Inchiesta sull'attuazione della politica di cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo). Tuesday, 13 June 1995, Interview with Dr Gemma Gualdi, Public Prosecutor in Milan, p. 11.
64. P. Petrucci, *Mogadiscio*, op. cit., p. 100.
65. M.C. Ercolessi, op. cit., p. 60.
66. Ibid.
67. A. Del Boca, *Una sconfitta dell'intelligenza*, op. cit., p. 29.
68. For an investigation of the 1979 Somali Constitution see G. Ajani, 'La costituzione della Repubblica Democratica Somala del 1979', *Africa*, Vol. XXXVI, Nos 3–4, September–December (1981).
69. Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry into Co-operation for Development with developing countries (Commissione Parlamentare d'Inchiesta sull'attuazione della politica di cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo). Wednesday, 15 February 1995. Interview with Minister Francesco Aloisi, p. 6.
70. Ibid.
71. M.C. Ercolessi, op. cit., p. 29.
72. P. Petrucci, 'Somalia, la nostra vergogna', *Micromega*, January (1993), p. 200.
73. Ibid.
74. Pietro Ugolini, an agrarian economist, was an expert with the Italian Co-operation for Development in Somalia from 1986 until 1990.
75. Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry into Co-operation for Development with developing countries (Commissione Parlamentare d'Inchiesta sull'attuazione della politica di cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo). Thursday, 27 April 1995, interview with Ambassador Giorgio Giacomelli, p. 6.

- via di sviluppo). Wednesday, 8 March 1995. Interview with Dr Franco Oliva e Pietro Ugolini, p. 21.
76. Franco Oliva, an expert with the Co-operation for Development from 1986 to 1990 and then in 1993 for a few months before being severely wounded in an attack in Mogadishu, listed the poor investment by the Co-operation in an article: 'Io c'ero: vi racconto lo scandalo dei miliardi alla Somalia', *Avvenimenti*, 25 January 1995.
 77. M.C. Ercolessi, op. cit., p. 67.
 78. T. Lyons and A. Samatar, op. cit., p. 18.
 79. Mario Sica in his memoirs published in 1994, *Operazione Somalia*, op. cit., emphasised that despite the fact he did not have any experience of Africa and the Co-operation for Development, in Gianni de Michelis's view he 'was a homo novus (a new man) not involved with previous Italian politics in Somalia', p. 17.
 80. The mission was called La Pergola after Professor Antonio La Pergola head of a commission of constitutional scholars appointed by the Italian Foreign Ministry.
 81. The most important personalities among the Somali experts were Ahmed Ashkir Botan, a former Vice-Chancellor of the Somali National University, and Ismail Giumale Ossoble, who was elected to Parliament in March 1969 and appointed Minister for Information. Following the military coup Ismail Giumale Ossoble was arrested and held in jail until 1974.
 82. Ahmed I Samatar, op. cit., p. 119.
 83. M. Sica, op. cit., pp. 42-3.
 84. For a detailed account of Pacifico's experience in Somalia, see Pacifico C., *Somalia, ricordi di un mal d'africa italiano* (Perugia: Edimond, 1996).
 85. It is likely that the murder of the Italian biologist was the result of the chaos into which Mogadishu had descended. On 28 June, a Lufthansa technician was killed and his girlfriend raped. Yet worse was to come during Siad Barre's last summer in Mogadishu. On 6 July, during a football match played in Mogadishu stadium, Barre's guards, the red hats, for no apparent reason, opened fire on the spectators, killing probably dozens.
 86. M. Sica, op. cit., pp. 55-6.
 87. As a result of this decision Italian lecturers did not go to Mogadishu for the second academic term.
 88. A. Del Boca, *La trappola somala* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1994) pp. 22-3.
 89. M. Sica, op. cit., pp. 116-17.
 90. Ibid., pp. 115-17.
 91. In May 1991 the SNM central committee declared independence of northern Somalia along the border of the former British Somaliland.
 92. M. Sica, op. cit., p. 186.
 93. M. Merosi, op. cit., p. 137.
 94. Franco Oliva, 'Io c'ero: vi racconto lo scandalo dei miliardi alla Somalia', *Avvenimenti*, 22 January 1995, pp. 22-8.
 95. P. Petrucci, 'Somalia, la nostra vergogna', op. cit., p. 194.
 96. Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry into Co-operation for

- Development with developing countries (Commissione Parlamentare d'Inchiesta sull'attuazione della politica di cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo). Tuesday, 13 June 1995, Interview with Dr Gemma Gualdi, Public Prosecutor in Milan, p. 5.
97. Both Gemma Gualdi, in her address to the Parliamentary Commission, and Pietro Petrucci in 'Somalia: la nostra vergogna', op. cit., stated the uselessness of the Afgoi agrarian and zootechnical centre, the creation of which had the strong backing of the PSI.
 98. Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry into Co-operation for Development with developing countries (Commissione Parlamentare d'Inchiesta sull'attuazione della politica di cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo). Wednesday, 8 March 1995. Interview with Dr Franco Oliva e Pietro Ugolini, p. 22.
 99. Calchi Novati, 'Italy in the Triangle of the Horn', op. cit., p. 378.
 100. P. Tripodi, 'Berlusconi's improbable coalition', *New Zealand International Review*, Vol. XX, No. 5, September-October (1995) p. 21.
 101. P. Tripodi, 'From Right to Left: Italy Searches for Political Stability', *New Zealand International Review*, Vol. XXI, No. 6, November-December (1996) p. 22.

6 MOGADISHU VERSUS THE WORLD

1. J. Clark, 'Debacle in Somalia: Failure of the Collective Response', in L.F. Damrosch, *Enforcing Restraint* (New York: Council on Foreign Relation Press, 1993) p. 211.
2. Ibid., p. 213.
3. A. Kohut and R. C. Toht, 'Arms and the People', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 6, November-December (1994) p. 51.
4. A. Roberts, 'Humanitarian Action in War', *Adelphi Paper* No. 305 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) p. 16. Professor Roberts has listed two other factors contributing to humanitarian action 'There has been a hope that ... humanitarian action could constitute a basis for united and effective responses to a wide range of crises, and could even point the way to a new order which transcends some of the limits of the system of sovereign states.
Some peace agreements have contained provisions to repatriate refugees and rebuild social and economic institutions - tasks which in many cases involve assistance from humanitarian organisations.'
5. A. Del Boca, *Una sconfitta dell'intelligenza*, op. cit., p. 157.
6. 'Obbligatorio intervenire in Somalia', *La Stampa*, 6 December 1992.
7. UNSC Resolution 767, 27 July 1992.
8. O. Ramsbotham and T. Woodhouse, *Humanitarian Intervention in Contemporary Conflict* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996) p. 200.
9. J. Clark, op. cit., p. 223.
10. Ibid., p. 226.
11. J.R. Bolton, 'Wrong turn in Somalia', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 1, January-February (1994) p. 58.
12. Ibid., p. 56.

13. P. Petrucci, *Mogadiscio*, op. cit., p. 177.
14. A. Roberts, op. cit., p. 22 Roberts maintained that 'however there was no Somali government to give or refuse consent, so the intervention by the United Task Force (UNITAF) in December 1992, and its continuation by the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) in May 1993, was hardly a classic case of humanitarian intervention.'
15. UNSC Resolution 794, 3 December 1992.
16. 'Se intervieni sara' guerra', *La Stampa*, 30 November 1992.
17. 'Italiani state a casa, vi conviene', *La Stampa*, 19 December 1992.
18. Ibid.
19. R. Cianfanelli, 'I signori della guerra firmano la pace', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 12 December 1992.
20. A. Baglio, 'Somalia primo scontro per la Folgore', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 31 December 1992.
21. The *lagunari* are a highly trained corps of the Italian navy. They share similarities with the US marines and the UK Royal Marines.
22. G. Porzio and G. Simoni, *Inferno Somalia* (Milano: Mursia, 1993) p. 143.
23. C. Graziano, 'Lineamenti e consuntivo dell'operazione', in R. Stanglini, *1992-1994 Operazione Somalia*, op. cit., p. 221.
24. Present author's interview with General Bruno Loi, Ibis commander from May to September 1993, Rome, 10 July 1998.
25. F. Fabbri, Crisis management and Defence-Foreign Affairs co-ordination in the intervention in Somalia, Conference at the Centro Alti Studi per la Difesa, Rome 2 March 1994, in *Informazioni della Difesa*, No. 2, March-April (1994) pp. 3-9.
26. M. Nava, 'Ora i somali si fidano di noi', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 28 January 1993. Rossi stated that the USA's attitude towards Italian troops was the result of the American determination to manage Restore Hope on their own. As a result of this attitude Somali mistrust increased.
27. Present author's interview with General Luigi Cantone, Tirana, 2 July 1998.
28. M. Merosi, op. cit., p. 270. Merosi emphasised that during Siad Barre's dictatorship the BBC broadcasts, although forbidden, were extremely popular among Somali population.
29. Present author's interview with General Carmine Fiore, Ibis commander from September 1993 to March 1994, Rome, 9 July 1998.
30. R. Stanglini, op. cit., p. 76.
31. G. Porzio and G. Simoni, op. cit., p. 148.
32. S. Normark, 'The Life and Peace Institute in co-operation with UNOSOM political division', in M.A. M. Salih and L. Wohlgemuth, *Crisis Management and the Politics of Reconciliation in Somalia* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1994) p. 43.
33. UN SC Resolution 814, 26 March 1993.
34. R. Thakur, 'From Peacekeeping to Peace Enforcement: the UN Operation in Somalia', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (1994) p. 388.
35. G. Prunier, 'The Experience of European Armies in Operation Restore Hope', in W. Clarke and J. Herbst, op. cit., p. 147.
36. P. Petrucci, *Mogadiscio*, op. cit., p. 197.

37. On 8 June paratroopers of the Folgore intervened to rescue 56 Pakistani soldiers from an ambush.
38. Present author's interview with General Bruno Loi, Ibis commander from May to September 1993, Rome, 10 July 1998.
39. B. Loi, An actual case: Somalia, Conference on: possible forms of international intervention: peace-keeping, peace-building, peace-enforcing, peace-making, Rome, 19 January 1994, in *Informazioni della Difesa*, supplement to No. 2, March-April (1994) pp. 35-48.
40. F. Fabbri, Report to the Defence Committee of the House, 17 June 1993.
41. Present author's interview with General Bruno Loi, Ibis commander from May to September 1993, Rome, 10 July 1998.
42. G. Prunier, op. cit., pp. 143-5.
43. C. Dobbie, 'A Concept for Post-Cold War Peacekeeping', *Survival*, Vol. 36, No. 3, Autumn (1994) p. 127. Dobbie also emphasised that 'this difference in approach had a crucial effect on how contingents interpreted UNOSOM mandates. The American commanders of UNOSOM, for example, believed that their mandate allowed them to disarm the Somali militias by force without exhausting peaceful remedies first.'
44. Present author's interview with General Bruno Loi, Ibis commander from May to September 1993, Rome, 10 July 1998.
45. J.T. Dworken, 'Rules of Engagement. Lessons from Restore Hope', *Military Review*, September (1994) p. 27.
46. R.H. Palin, 'Multinational Military Forces: Problems and Prospects' *Adelphi Paper* 294 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995) p. 34.
47. Present author's interview with General Bruno Loi, Ibis commander from May to September 1993, Rome, 10 July 1998.
48. F. Grignetti, 'Altro che Caporetto. E' una sfida all'ONU', *La Stampa*, 13 August 1993.
49. F. Fabbri, Report to the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee of the House, 15 July 1993.
50. F. Kennedy, 'In Somalia, Macchiavelli vs. Rambo', *The New York Times*, 22 July, 1993.
51. Present author's interview with General Bruno Loi, Ibis commander from May to September 1993, Rome, 10 July 1998.
52. F. Fabbri, Speech delivered at the presentation of the book *Il volo dell'Ibis*, Rome, 26 October 1995.
53. F. Fabbri, Report to the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee of the House, 15 July 1993.
54. General Loi emphasised that when a group of militiamen gained possession of an Italian carrier vehicle, as soon as it was far from the crowd, helicopters destroyed it at once. Present author's interview with General Bruno Loi, Ibis commander from May to September 1993, Rome, 10 July 1998.
55. F. Kennedy, op. cit.
56. T. Masland, J. Barry and J. Hammer, 'The Pitfalls of Peacekeeping', *Newsweek*, 26 July 1993.
57. F. Grignetti, 'Fabbri all'Onu, non si spara sulla folla', *La Stampa*, 11 September 1993.

58. F. Squillante, 'Somalia, l'Europa si schiera con Roma', *La Stampa*, 20 July 1993.
59. F. Grignetti, 'Altro che Caporetto. E' una sfida all'ONU', *La Stampa*, 13 August 1993.
60. F. Fabbri, Report to the House Assembly, 16 September 1993.
61. V. Ettore, 'Ci impedirono di catturare Aidid: non ci hanno ancora detto perche', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 13 August 1993.
62. F. Grignetti, 'Fabbri all'Onu, non si spara sulla folla', *La Stampa*, 11 September 1993.
63. Present author's interview with General Carmine Fiore, Ibis commander from September 1993 to March 1994, Rome, 9 July 1998.
64. Ibid.
65. T. Friedman, 'Mission in Somalia: Dealing with Somalia: Vagueness as a Virtue', *The New York Times*, 15 October 1993.
66. Ibid.
67. Present author's interview with General Bruno Loi, Ibis commander from May to September 1993, Rome, 10 July 1998.
68. F. Fabbri, Report to the Senate Defence Committee, 22 July 1993.
69. F. Fabbri, Intervention at the Defence Committee of the House, 28 July 1993.
70. B. Loi, op. cit.
71. Ibid.
72. F. Fabbri, Speech delivered at the presentation of the book *Il volo dell'Ibis*, Rome, 26 October 1995.
73. J. Hirsch and B. Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on peacemaking and peacekeeping* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995) p. 173.
74. L. Caligaris, *Paura di Vincere* (Milano: Rizzoli, 1995) p. 8.
75. P. Tripodi's review of J. Hirsch and B. Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: reflections on peacemaking and peacekeeping*, op. cit., in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (1996) p. 725.
76. R. Thakur, op. cit., pp. 397-8.
77. T. Lyons and A. Samatar, *Somalia* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995) p. 58.
78. P. Tripodi, La catena di comando nelle forze militari multinazionali, *Informazioni della Difesa*, No. 3, May-June (1996) p. 13.
79. Ibid.
80. C. Dobbie, op. cit., p. 141.
81. Present author's interview with General Carmine Fiore, Ibis commander from September 1993 to March 1994, Rome, 9 July 1998.
82. Present author's interview with General Bruno Loi, Ibis commander from May to September 1993, Rome, 10 July 1998.
83. Present author's interview with General Carmine Fiore, Ibis commander from September 1993 to March 1994, Rome, 9 July 1998 and in Video 'Our Goal is Peace' (*La 'Legnano' in Somalia*), P. Agnetti, Italy (1994).
84. P. Tripodi, 'A Half-Century of Italian Foreign Policy', op. cit., pp. 118-20.
85. R. Chiaberge, 'Angioni: la differenza col Libano? Gli USA scelsero un profilo basso', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 16 July 1993.

86. J. Hirsch and B. Oakley, op. cit., p. 118.
87. T. Lyons and A. Samatar, op. cit., p. 58.
88. R. Thakur, op. cit., p. 398.
89. J. Hirsch and B. Oakley, op. cit., p. 119.
90. J.S. Corum, 'Operational problems in peacekeeping and humanitarian operations', in J. Cilliers and G. Mills, *Peacekeeping in Africa*, Vol. 2 (The Institute for Defence Policy, South Africa, 1995) p. 119.
91. Ibid.
92. J. Hirsch and B. Oakley, op. cit., p. 79.
93. C. Clapham, 'Problems of Peace Enforcement: Some Lessons from Multinational Peacekeeping Operations in Africa', in J. Cilliers and G. Mills, *Peacekeeping in Africa*, Vol. 2, op. cit., p. 143.
94. Present author's interview with General Carmine Fiore, Ibis commander from September 1993 to March 1994, Rome, 9 July 1998. General Fiore said that the resolute intervention of Italian troops paved the way to a more friendly relationship between Italian troops and other coalition members.
95. R. Aliboni, 'Italy and Africa South of Sahara Security Views and Perspectives', *Documenti IAI*, Paper prepared for the Institut für Politik und Internationale Studien, Munich, April 1996.

7 CONCLUSION

1. At the first meeting of the Joint IGAD Partners Forum, the participating nations were Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, The Netherlands, Norway, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States and the representatives of the European Commission, UNDP and UNHCR.
2. L. Dini, 'L'Italia e la cooperazione regionale nel Corno d'Africa: l'appoggio all'IGAD', *Relazioni Internazionali*, No. 42, January-February (1998) pp. 6-10.
3. First Ministerial Meeting of the Joint IGAD Partners Forum, Rome, 19-20 January 1998, Final Declaration.

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Inv. n.º 2366

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The jacket-design reproduces a photograph of the Italian Embassy, Mogadishu, during Operation Restore Hope (*courtesy of the photographer, Luciano Capelli*).

Printed in Great Britain