

throughout the country. Most of the ethnographic data that Smith collected during her fieldwork in Ethiopia are presented in this section, and create a more authentic tone for the book. However, while reading Smith's text, some might feel that her argument might have been stronger still if it included more ethnographic detail, and contained even more personal voices – including hers – throughout. Yet, it does not lessen the relevance of the work and the overall conclusion: that by using the concept of meaningful citizenship, we can better elucidate how existing formal political institutions in Ethiopia often fail or are less effective than informal ethnic institutions.

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**Crisis in the Horn of Africa: Politics, Piracy and the Threat of Terror** by  
PETER WOODWARD

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A culmination of more than thirty years of scholarship and profound knowledge and understanding of the inextricably intertwined complex factors that have been creating and perpetuating political instability, abject poverty and gross violations of fundamental human rights, loss of lives and destruction of property, as well as immense internal and external displacement, *Crisis in the Horn of Africa: Politics, Piracy and the Threat of Terror* provides an insightful and detailed political analysis of one of the most fragile regions on the African continent. Hunger often deteriorating into deadly famines resulting from a combination of adverse weather conditions and political failures; geo-strategic location along the Red Sea, the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean which precipitated super-power rivalry during the cold war period; unremitting violent conflicts; proximity to the world's largest oil-producing Gulf region; and mutual intervention in each other's internal political affairs of the governments in the region have conspired to render the region highly volatile and dangerous, argues Woodward.

During the cold war period, the violent conflicts that blighted the lives of millions of the regions' populations were invariably linked to super power rivalry. It was hoped therefore that the end of the bipolar division of the world would usher in a new era of peace, cooperation and tranquillity in the region. The developments that followed were partly positive and partly negative. On the one hand, one of the region's most depraved and tyrannical regimes, the Derg, was defeated at the hands of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and on the other, the Somali state collapsed, unleashing new and dangerous forces of destruction and instability, namely warlordism, terrorism and piracy. Another development, albeit unrelated to the end of the cold war but equally destructive, was the June 1989 coup in Sudan initially engineered from behind the scene by the National Islamic Front (NIF) and its leader, Hassan al-Turabi, which overthrew the democratically elected government of Sadiq al-Mahdi, the leader of the Umma Party. Contrary to the international community's and the citizens of the region's general expectation, the demise of the regimes in these

three countries did not lead to the establishment of pluralist multiparty democratic systems of government.

Some of the problems that used to wreak havoc in the region persisted unabated in spite of the demise of the cold war period and the removal of Nimeiri, Barre and Mengistu from power. The three regimes were based on personal rule and enjoyed the backing of the super powers (p. 47). The author uses the end of the cold war period as a reference point to analyse the developments that unfolded in the region subsequently. In Chapters 3 to 6, Woodward analyses the developments that shaped the politics of each country, including their relations with each other which can be described by the regional norm of what the late Lionel Cliffe (1999) refers to as the doctrine of 'mutual intervention'.

In the chapter on Ethiopia, Woodward discusses the model of federalism which 'draws on Stalin's ideas of discrete, established 'nationalities' rather than the complexity and fluidity of identity in many parts of the country – accompanied by a Leninist approach to political party building that limits bottom up initiatives' (p. 62). The federal structure was controlled from the centre leaving no room for multipartyism in the exercise of political power. As a result he states, '... some have questioned whether or not it amounts to federalism at all, and wonder if, in addition to eastern European ideology, it owes something to the divide and rule of European imperialism ...' (p. 62). Referring to a World Bank report, Woodward states that EPRDF-affiliated firms dominate the economy of the country.

The chapter on Somalia paints a bleak picture of the reality Siad Barre left behind: a society fragmented along clan lines and awash with small weapons which immediately facilitated the emergence and consolidation of warlords who vied for political domination and ruthless plundering and destruction of lives and resources. One of the many other consequences of the failed state was the flight of hundreds of thousands of refugees to Kenya, Ethiopia, Yemen and western Europe. In an attempt to stem the flow and to resolve the violent conflict that had gripped the stateless society of Somalia, the US government under President Bill Clinton intervened militarily, but in vain. His coverage of the problem of piracy is extensive and opines that the problem is likely to get worse until a government with the capability to maintain law and order is in place. However, there is evidence to show that the problem has been ebbing recently.

The chapter on Sudan provides a detailed account of the scenarios that unfolded from the 1989 coup d'état onwards, including the rise and fall of Hassan al-Turabi and the NIF, the gradual concentration of absolute power in the hands of Omar al-Bashir and his henchmen, the relationship between the South and North which gradually culminated in the establishment of an independent Southern Sudanese state following a referendum in which over 98 per cent of the Southerners voted in favour of independence. However, in spite of the peaceful separation of the two states, there are still large swathes of disputed border areas, namely Abyei, South Kordofan and Southern Blue Nile (p. 117). The issue of citizenship is another area of disagreement. More importantly, the distribution of the proceeds of oil is likely to prejudicially affect the future relations of the two governments.

The chapter on Eritrea gives an account of how the country achieved its independence after winning the costly thirty years war of liberation under the leadership of the EPLF. The latter in spite of its impressive track record and promises for democracy and constitutional government has over a short time degenerated into full-fledged dictatorship in which detentions without trial have become the norm. Woodward rightly observes, 'many supporters of Eritrea's successful fight for independence felt disappointed or worse at the direction Eritrea took once the war of liberation was completed' (p. 154).

*Crisis in the Horn of Africa* is a welcome addition to the burgeoning literature on the Horn of Africa by one of the leading authorities on the region.

## REFERENCE

Cliffe, L. 1999. 'Regional dimensions of conflict in the Horn of Africa', *Third World Quarterly* 20, 1: 89–111.

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**The Democratic Republic of Congo: Between Hope and Despair** by

MICHAEL DEIBERT

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The two decade long war and conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is of such complexity and with ever-changing alliances that one book is never enough. American journalist Michael Deibert has written a convincing re-run of the dramatic events leading up to the genocide in neighbouring Rwanda and the consequential two wars in the DRC resulting in ongoing rebellions by armed groups in the eastern part of the country. The book serves as an up-to-date history of the recent wars and the political dynamics in the DRC and the region to students, journalists and researchers interested in learning more about the 'Congo crisis', to borrow an expression from the early days of Congolese independence. However, it does not necessarily provide much new substance to those who already hold significant knowledge on this history and follow the political events in the country on an everyday basis. Nevertheless, Deibert manages to represent and highlight the most important political events in a detailed manner.

An important part of the picture in this history, as Deibert shows, is the difficult positioning of the United Nations represented with one of the largest peacekeeping missions in the world. The UN operation formerly (and still by many) known as MONUC and today MONUSCO has become deeply entangled with the Congolese armed forces and the current regime headed by President Joseph Kabila. Deibert shows (pp. 152–4) how military operations such as Kimia II in 2009, where MONUC supported an aggressive Congolese army to fight the Hutu militia known as FDLR, significantly impaired the image of the UN in the eyes of many Congolese civilians and human rights observers.

Deibert explains several important and potentially destabilising incidents such as the death of one of Kabila's closest advisors in 2012 – Augustin Katumba