INCLUSIVE PEACE AND SECURITY

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In much of Africa, war has become synonymous with famine. The glib commonplace, 'war plus drought equals famine' grossly understates the complexity and intimacy of the links between the two. Some writers are content to enumerate the physical destruction caused by war, the resources potentially diverted from 'development', and the obstruction to international relief efforts, to explain the links. While containing some truth, this is no more sophisticated nor comprehensive.

This article attempts a more wide-ranging, though still preliminary, analysis. War creates famine essentially for three reasons. The first is the consumption of armies and the destruction of battle. The second is that war is often designed to create famine; certain siege tactics and counterinsurgency strategies can have no other consequence when pursued in Africa. The most severe famines in modern Africa have been caused in this manner. Finally, we are seeing the rapid development of political economies based upon militarized asset-stripping. Though analytically separate from war, this sort of predation is often a facet of war, and is violent, hence it is included here. Somalia is the most salient example. This violence may have been silent at an earlier moment in Africa's history, now it is very noisy.

Throughout, a small selection of examples is presented to illustrate the main points made. These examples should not be seen in any sense as exhaustive; there are numerous instances from all parts of Africa and elsewhere which could also be adduced.

1 ARMIES AS CONSUMERS AND THE DAMAGE OF BATTLE

The nineteenth century Emperor of Ethiopia, Teodros, was once confronted with a complaint brought against a peasant farmer who had killer a soldier who was helping himself to the farmer's granary. The Emperor responded tersely: 'Soldiers eat, peasants provide' (Crummey 1986: 142).

The most direct and obvious ways in which war creates famine can be simply dealt with. Even former President Mengistu Haile Mariam of Ethiopia was compelled at one point to admit that his annual 'defence' budget could construct four major universities or ten hospitals (Mengistu 1988). Some of what has passed for an analysis of the origins of famine in Mozambique is little more than a catalogue of Renamo vandalism.

There is a long history of armies creating famine by requisitioning grain and other foodstuffs. This can take the form of forcible requisitioning or billeting soldiers on households. The fear of the impositions of troops may cause households to conceal or even destroy their food and possessions, or to abandon their homes and hide in inaccessible areas. In Mozambique, Renamo's practice of living off the land has meant that food is scarce, and rural people have gone hungry. During 1991 and 1992, much of Renamo's strategy consisted of trying to maintain control over productive rural populations, so as to keep its fighters fed. As the burden of exactions increased, more rural people began to try to flee Renamo-controlled areas, while Renamo tried to increase the size of the territory it controlled, particularly in the more fertile areas of the country (Africa Watch 1992: 126-30).

In recent times, armies have found that international food aid, donated for the relief of hungry peasants, is extremely accessible for requisitioning. In 1986, the US General Accounting Office found that in some places as little as 12 per cent of the international food aid destined for refugees in Somalia was finding its way to its intended recipients; much of the remainder was being taken by the Somali army and associated militias. Similar phenomena are familiar from the famine in northern Ethiopia in the 1980s, Mozambique, southern Sudan and elsewhere.

Armies are also prone to loot and pillage, in order to sustain themselves, or for profit or booty. The systematic raiding by Baggara Arab militias in Sudan of Dinka areas during 1985-8 was largely responsible for the catastrophic famine that overtook parts of southwest Sudan at that time. The raiders stole cattle and other livestock and household possessions, burned fields and villages, cut down trees, poisoned wells, killed tens of thousands of men,

women and children, and often took slaves as well (Africa Watch 1990: 81-91). A similar extremity of looting occurred on several occasions during 1991 and 1992 in Rahanweyn areas of southwest Somalia, when local farmers were dispossessed of most of their possessions by a succession of invading clan militias. The last and most brutal looting was carried out by forces loyal to the former dictator Siad Barre in March and April 1992, and directly precipitated the extremely severe famine that followed (Vaux 1992).

The conscription of large numbers of adult men may contribute to labour shortages, and measures taken by these young men to evade conscription, such as hiding themselves or running away, may also make it difficult for normal productive activities to progress. As Mengistu Haile Mariam stepped up his efforts to repulse rebel offensives in 1990 and 1991, the forcible press-ganging of young men for military service took on huge proportions; over 100,000 were seized for the army in under a year. This seriously disrupted productive activities in many southern parts of Ethiopia. Women may also be conscripted to serve as cooks, domestic servants, and prostitutes for soldiers. This was common in many parts of Ethiopia during the long wars fought by the Mengistu regime (Africa Watch 1991: 300-2).

At a national level, military budgets consume vast amounts of resources that would otherwise be available for services or development. This has been the case in Angola, where 'defence' expenditure ran at approximately $1 billion per annum during the 1980s, compared with a gross domestic product of under $5 billion (IISS 1989: 120). Alternatively, military expenditure bankrupts governments, bringing on economic and political crises. This was the case in Ethiopia and Somalia, and threatens to be the same in Sudan.

Armies also serve as disease vectors. Diseases such as AIDS are closely associated with the progress of armies. Some of the main epicentres of AIDS cases in Africa coincide with areas where armies have campaigned a few years previously. The Tanzanian occupation of southwest Uganda in 1979 may well be a case in point.

Battle itself can wreak enormous amounts of destruction, particularly if fought in economically important areas such as cities. There is the direct destruction of houses, crops, foodstores, livestock, and essential infrastructure such as roads, bridges, port and airport infrastructure, dams, irrigation channels, clinics, schools, etc. Instances of this type of damage to cities include the battle for Massawa in Eritrea in February 1990, the battles in Monrovia, Liberia, in late 1990, the fighting in Mogadishu, Somalia, in January 1991 and between November 1991 and February 1992, and the battles in Juba, Sudan, between June and September 1992. In rural areas, major mechanized battles around Keren, Eritrea, in 1978 and Cuito Cuanvale, Angola, on several occasions in the 1980s, notably 1987-8, have rendered useless important agricultural areas.

There is also the loss of land to mines and military infrastructure such as trenches and encampments. The trench warfare that was characteristic of Eritrea during the 1980s meant that many areas of importance for local herders and cultivators were out of bounds.

Land mines are a particular problem, as without systematic clearance efforts they continue to remain in the ground after the conflict has finished. In northern Somalia, large amounts of pasture remain unused due to the land mines planted by the Somali army during its 1988 campaign against the rebel Somali National Movement. Mines were planted around strategic military and economic locations, along most main roads, inside the city of Hargeisa, around wells and reservoirs, and were scattered in large numbers over fields and pastures. Even areas that are not in fact mined remain unused by the local population, because of the fear of mines. Angola is another example of a country, this time with enormous agricultural potential, where the widespread and often random dissemination of anti-personnel mines makes it impossible to carry out productive activities in many areas (Africa Watch 1993).

In the immediate vicinity of battle, normal economic activities are disrupted; farming and trade are usually impossible.

Battle can also cause extensive environmental damage. Trees can be knocked down by tanks or set ablaze by shellfire or bombing (particularly if incendaries or defoliants are used). Attacks on munitions dumps or oil tanks can cause severe local pollution. The destruction of forests by soldiers to build trenches and emplacements, for firewood, or to create clear sight lines can also be extremely damaging. In Eritrea, much deforestation has been caused by the former Ethiopian army, for each of these reasons.

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Sometimes, wholesale destruction can be a deliberate military strategy. For example, the retreating Soviet army in 1942 practised scorched earth tactics in the face of the invading Germans. Anything that could possibly have been of any economic or military value to the invader was removed eastwards or destroyed, including large amounts of food. Partly as a result of this, the Ukraine suffered severe famine during the following three years (Moskoff 1990: 22-9).

In Mozambique, the rebel Renamo forces practised a policy of 'conspicuous destruction', destroying bridges, railway tracks, clinics, schools and almost any form of infrastructure that existed except churches. The aim was to advertise the presence and strength of the rebels, cow the local population, and terrorize supporters of the government. The practice of mutilating victims by cutting off lips, noses, ears or sexual organs, and committing other spectacular atrocities, was a logical development of this strategy (Africa Watch 1992).

2 FAMINE AS AN INSTRUMENT OF WAR

The most severe famines in recent history have all been caused when famine was used, usually deliberately, as an instrument of war. War, fought in particular ways, not only destroys 'objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population' (in the words of the Additional Protocols of the Geneva Conventions (ICRC 1977)), but systematically prevents people from following coping strategies. It may rapidly also precipitate social collapse. The result is that frank starvation, possibly unknown in modern peacetime famines, has become familiar from war famines in Africa (de Waal 1990).

2.1 Sieges

During recorded history, armies have sought to use hunger as a weapon to force their enemies to submit. The classic instances of this occur during sieges.

Probably the most severe siege famine of the twentieth century was the siege of Leningrad of 1941-4, in which somewhere between 600,000 and one million people died from the combined effects of hunger, exposure and disease (Moskoff 1990: 185-206). The surrounding German forces tried to starve the city into submission by firebombing food warehouses and, as far as possible, preventing supplies from reaching the city. Simultaneously, the Allied powers maintained a strict blockade of German-occu-

pied areas of the continent. This contributed to a severe famine in Greece during 1942-3, which was the occasion for the founding of the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief, later to become Oxfam (Black 1992).

Sieges have been widely used in civil conflicts in Africa. In the Nigerian civil war of 1967-70, the Federal Army's first response was to blockade the area controlled by the Biafran secessionists (Stremlau 1977). This involved shelling ships (twice in June 1967) and attempting to shoot down aircraft. The blockade extended to relief flights, and one aeroplane operated by the International Committee of the Red Cross was shot down in June 1969. The Federal Government refused to let relief agencies obtain free access to Biafra, arguing that relief flights were used as cover for arms shipments. This claim had an element of truth, as the main Biafran airstrip at Uli was fitted out by relief agencies, and relief and military flights arrived at the same time (by night) and used the same facilities. In addition, there is evidence that the relief food was used to feed the Biafran army and bureaucracy.

The siege of Juba in southern Sudan is the longest-running siege in contemporary Africa, having been first imposed by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in late-1984. Throughout the intervening eight years, the SPLA has regularly blocked food supplies to Juba. Commercial supplies were largely prevented by encircling the city and blocking movement, and by a ring of land mines on roads and paths. Relief supplies have also been blocked; road convoys have been attacked (on four occasions in 1987-8) and relief aircraft shot at (four occasions in 1986-8). On at least six other occasions, most recently in 1992, the SPLA has declared its intention to fire at any aeroplane, military or civilian, flying to the town.

An important and often neglected element in the way in which sieges create famine is the complicity of the besieged army or government. In the USSR during World War II, the Soviet government made inadequate preparations to preserve stockpiles of food in the months immediately before the siege, failed to take all possible measures to mitigate the impact of the siege, and concealed the true extent of the suffering from the rest of the Soviet population and the outside world. The Biafran secessionist government also used the fact that it was besieged to its military advantage, often at the expense of the civilian population. For example, it made it impos-

sible for relief and military flights to be separately identified, thereby facilitating its arms supply but making relief deliveries more difficult.

Juba is perhaps the most extreme example of the complicity of the besieged forces. The example of Juba differs from Leningrad and Biafra in that the civilian population of the besieged town is seen by the occupying army as actually or potentially hostile, and sympathetic to the SPLA. The northern-commanded army does little to protect the southern civilians - on the contrary, it engages in frequent sweeps to arrest, detain and execute residents. Army officers have also worked closely together with northern merchants to create and maintain artificial scarcities of items such as fuel, sugar and staple foods. This has been achieved by making overland convoys infrequent (during 1985-8), deliberately mixing relief, commercial and military supplies in these convoys so that food cannot be made immune from attack (and on one occasion in 1992, using an aeroplane with UN insignia to fly in arms and ammunition), blocking relief deliveries (for example soldiers fired at a relief aircraft in 1988), and preventing residents leaving the city to obtain food from outside (using patrols and land mines). Food prices have remained high; merchant-officer partnerships have made fortunes, while the residents of Juba have gone hungry. Other garrison towns in southern Sudan have similar stories.

2.2 Counterinsurgency

More insidious than sieges, but equally effective at creating famine, are the use of modern counterinsurgency strategies, intended to impose maximum control over a potentially hostile population. Mao Tse Tung famously described a guerrilla among the people as like a fish in water, leading to the description of counter-guerrilla warfare as 'draining the sea to catch the fish'.

The most systematic exponent of such counterinsurgency theories has been the French military. One of the first theoreticians was General Lyautey, who commanded the forces responsible for the pacification of Morocco during 1912-25. Lyautey's predecessors discovered that conventional military engagements could not hope to defeat an irregular army, such as those fielded by the tribes of the Moroccan interior. Instead, Lyautey developed what he called 'the policy of the smile'. He argued 'the pirate [guerrilla] is a plant which grows only in certain ground ... the most efficient method is to

render the ground unsuitable to him.' (Gottman 1944: 242). Lyautey characterized his army as '[civil] organization on the march'.

In the context of the French conquest of Morocco, Lyautey's policy meant establishing the centres of French control as centres of attraction, compared to the surrounding areas of anarchic rule. These centres then spread like an 'oil spot' throughout the countryside. Establishing personal security for ordinary people and expanding local commerce were central to Lyautey's overall plan, and as such, it promoted protection from famine.

Most modern counterinsurgency takes place in a very different context. The society is already subject to administration by governmental structures, and these structures themselves are among the reasons for the insurgency. In the following quotation, from a French military advisor during the Algerian war, 'making the ground unsuitable' for the guerrilla carries very different implications.

> Anything that could facilitate the existence of the guerillas in any way, or which could conceivably be used by them - depots, shelters, caches, food crops, houses, etc. - must be systematically destroyed or brought in. All inhabitants and livestock must be evacuated from the [guerrillas'] refuge area. When they leave, the intervention troops must not only have destroyed the [guerrilla] bands, but must leave behind them an area empty of all resources and absolutely uninhabitable.
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> (Trinquier 1964: 85)

Some modern counterinsurgency campaigns have been closer to the spirit of Lyautey, stressing the need for the controlling forces to be subject to the law (and seen to be so) and ensuring the provision of compensatory assistance to the controlled population. An example of this was the British campaign in Malaya in the 1950s (Thompson 1966). However, these have remained exceptions. More commonly, military commanders have stressed the need to engage and destroy the guerrilla forces, and have treated the local population as though they were actual enemies rather than potential allies. Rather than winning the local population over from supporting rebel forces, campaigns have been more akin to meting out punishment.

In this context, counterinsurgency warfare in a poor area is tantamount to creating famine. Three main

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components of counterinsurgency are particularly relevant. They are:

1   Population displacement to 'protected villages' and related controls of the population;

2   Control of trade, especially in foodstuffs;

3   Control of movement of people.

The relocation of the civilian population to protected villages or secure zones is one of the commonest strategies used by counterinsurgency strategists. The rationale is that the population can then be kept under surveillance, so that guerrillas cannot infiltrate or obtain recruits and supplies. The imposition of counterinsurgency villagization is usually combined with curfews, perimeter patrols, mining of entrances, and other restrictions. Sometimes, scorched earth is practised to compel people to come to the villages.

This tactic has been common in Africa since the Boer War, when the concentration camp was invented. It was used by colonial armies fighting independence movements in Algeria, Kenya, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and elsewhere. Outside Africa, it is familiar from Vietnam and Guatemala, to name only two examples. On many occasions it has contributed to famine.

Eritrea is one example. In 1967, the Imperial government conducted a series of large military offensives in Eritrea, during which it burned over 300 villages, relocating the people to fortified villages (Africa Watch 1991: 42-6). Onerous restrictions were then imposed in these villages. This effectively prevented the inhabitants from carrying out the range of economic activities that had previously sustained them. Because of the curfew, many trading activities became impossible. Far fields had to be abandoned, and foraging for grass, wood and edible fruits in the bush became very limited. Animal herding was most difficult of all. Transhumance became impossible, the grazing of village-based animals was limited to the distance which the animals could travel during a few hours, and the long-established practice of grazing livestock at night (when it is cooler) had to be abandoned altogether. By these means, the viability of much of the lowland Eritrean economy was undermined, leaving it vulnerable to famine.

More recently, villagization was implemented as a counterinsurgency measure in western and eastern

Ethiopia during 1984-8 (Africa Watch 1991: 231-6). The rationale and consequences were very similar to the earlier programme in Eritrea. The villagization programme mounted by the Mozambican government in Zambezia province in 1986-7, ostensibly for the protection of rural people from Renamo attacks, also contributed to the creation of a severe famine in that area that was otherwise capable of producing surpluses (Africa Watch 1992: 78-83, 115-16).

Control of trade was instrumental in creating famine in Ethiopia in the 1980s. This has often been overlooked, because of the (misleading) paradigm of the self-provisioning peasant. In fact, no such peasants exist; all are dependent to a greater or lesser extent on exchanges with neighbours and neighbouring districts. Intended or not, preventing those exchanges proved an effective method of creating famine, largely invisible to outside observers.

Government restrictions on private trade, particularly trade in grain, were imposed throughout the country. In the centre and south, this was ostensibly for reasons of socialist transformation. Thousands of lorry grain traders had their licences revoked, and part-time pack-animal traders were subject to a bewildering range of requirements and taxes, to the extent that 'it is unclear whether small scale grain trade [was] illegal or not' (Lirenso 1987: 52). In insurgent areas, the roadblocks were more numerous, and the latitude given to soldiers to confiscate grain or animals was greater. Traders who were unable to convince the soldiers that they were not taking food to the rebels could also face arbitrary imprisonment and fines. The result was that the intra-regional food trade was choked off. The pockets of deficit - that always existed - could not make good their shortfalls, while in food surplus areas, the harvests could not be transported out. The price of grain in parts of northern Ethiopia rose to famine levels as early as 1982; the famine arrived earlier and struck harder because of these policies (Africa Watch 1991: 150-2). Meanwhile, in rebel-held areas, the air force carried out a policy of systematically bombing marketplaces. This forced markets to be held at night, and greatly restricted trade.

Complementary to the restrictions on the grain trade, the then-Ethiopian government exercised strict control of movement. All people had to have travel permits before they were allowed to move outside their villages, or they could be arrested as a rebel suspect. This made labour migration, petty trade and mutual assistance networks almost impossible,

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and was also instrumental in creating the famine (Africa Watch 1991: 152-4).

In Sudan, restrictions on trade, movement and economic activities were the final straw which precipitated exceptionally severe famine among the Dinka migrants in southern Kordofan in 1988. These people, driven from their homes by the rapaciousness of the Baggara Arab militias, were forced to seek sanctuary in small towns controlled by those very militias. There, they were in effect kept in confinement, denied opportunities to help themselves (by working for money, gathering wild foods or seeking charity), denied access to the market on fair terms (they could not buy food, and could only sell possessions at extremely low prices), and denied the opportunity to escape. Death rates reached the unprecedented levels of one per cent per day in several camps during the summer of 1988 as a result (Africa Watch 1990: 128-30).

Counterinsurgency famines come about essentially because the levels of restriction imposed upon the population makes it impossible for that population to remain self-provisioning. The population is then reduced to a state of dependence. This can either lead to starvation, or total control by the force controlling the food supply. One particularly insidious element in the strategy can be the use of international relief.

By their nature, relief agencies search for destitute and dependent populations in need of assistance. Several African governments have realized that people displaced by counterinsurgency operations fit these criteria, especially if the agencies can be persuaded that the cause of the displacement is 'drought' or 'bandits'. The assistance provided by the relief agencies removes from the government the obligation and burden of supplying compensatory aid to the people it has displaced. This can allow it to maintain, extend or intensify a counterinsurgency campaign in ways that might not otherwise have been possible. It also gives a gloss of legitimacy to such a campaign. What is for a military commander a protected zone, may be for an inmate a concentration camp, but may appear to a relief agency (and hence the international media) to be a feeding shelter. Particularly striking examples of this come from Ethiopia and Mozambique.

3 STATES OF WAR
In recent years, states have emerged in Africa based upon the systematic asset-stripping of less powerful people. This is usually militarized and hence violent, though not always. Often, but by no means always, militarized asset-stripping occurs in the context of civil war. Including this form of political-economic predation as a category of war famine is therefore somewhat analytically misleading. However, because the most extreme and well-known examples, such as Somalia, are normally presented as war famines, and are indeed extremely violent, this must be excused.

One of the first examples of systematic asset-stripping was Zaire, whose rulers have been characterized as a 'kleptocracy'. Throughout the country and at all levels, government officials and military officers sustain and enrich themselves through stealing assets, increasingly often assets essential for the survival or rural people (such as cattle), often using force. For the most part, Zaire's abundance of food has prevented decline into outright famine.

Sudan is another example in which the state and those associated with it have sustained themselves by transfers of assets. Partnerships between army officers, militiamen (many of them cattle herders) and businessmen have meant that, for some, war has been extremely profitable. The raiding of Dinka cattle by the Arab militia, with military, commercial and political support, is one example; the creation of artificial scarcities in southern garrison towns is another. Outside the war zones, the expropriation of large swathes of land used by smallholders and pastoralists to create commercial farms is also rapidly creating a very poor and vulnerable class of labourers, who suffer famine in years such as 1990-1 when the price of food soars beyond their reach. This expropriation is carried out without outright violence (though the implicit threat of violence is always there), but is part of the same process.

In Somalia, these processes have gone a stage further. During the 1980s, under Siad Barre, a group of people with access to the state and foreign currency were able to enrich themselves through seizing assets and establishing monopolistic control of lucrative businesses. Using the provisions of the land reform act of 1975, those with connections in government were able to acquire title to land, over which others had customary rights. Commercial farms, registered as cooperatives, were established. In the Juba valley and adjoining areas, the beneficiaries were mainly the Marehan, members of the same clan as the President, and the losers were the Rahanweyn, the relatively deprived clan of farmers indigenous to

the area. Meanwhile, the most profitable businesses, which included both normal commercial activities and illegal activities such as arms dealing, cattle rustling, the transit of ivory and smuggled gems, and the diversion of foreign aid, were controlled by a mafia-like network, also with connections to government.

As armed opposition to the regime intensified from 1988 onwards, trade (especially in cattle) and the plantation-commercial farming economy became increasingly militarized, initially for self-protection, and then as a way of acquiring more trade goods and assets. Cattle rustling merged into cattle raiding. Commercial food traders kept competition at bay with armed roadblocks demanding extortionate payments, and other violent deterrents. The powerful businessmen and politicians were able to acquire weaponry for themselves and their clansmen. The Rahanweyn, Digil and Bantu as the most politically marginal groups in the country, were unable to acquire armaments to match their neighbours, and were less well organized. As farmers, they were also easy prey for the mobile pastoralists.

This process of the militarization and commercialization of government continued after Siad Barre was driven from Mogadishu in January 1991. The fact that Somalia no longer had a recognized sovereign government closed off some avenues for wealth acquisition - for instance, former government officials could no longer demand kickbacks for awarding contracts, and the Ministry of Finance could no longer print money. However, the essentials of the process continued unchanged, even heightened.

All the parties, including Siad's Somali National Front (SNF), the two factions of the United Somali Congress now occupying different parts of Mogadishu, and other factions in the south, engaged in an orgy of looting. This was a highly organized orgy, financed by traders with international connections. In the cities, electrical goods, furniture and household fittings, industrial equipment, copper wiring - in fact, anything with a resale value - was liable for looting and export to Kenya, Sudan or Arabia. In the rural areas, looting started with livestock, diesel pumps and household valuables such as jewelry, but as the base of easily resaleable assets diminished, the looters turned to ordinary household items, clothes, and food. Some of this was freelance looting by disaffected young men with guns, but much of it was carried out by the militia armies of Siad Barre and the other factions.

Much of the time, these armies were not paid, and sustained themselves through looting. When they were paid, it was by commercial financiers with specific interests, often in acquiring cattle or other tradeable commodities.

The final, most systematic and most brutal round of rural looting was carried out by the SNF in Rahanweyn areas in March-April 1992, as the SNF forces faced military defeat by the USC and flight to Kenya. Large areas of Rahanweyn countryside were stripped of everything that could be taken. The area immediately descended into a famine of almost unequalled severity.

During the Siad Barre years, the diversion of foreign aid was a major source of income for the government and those associated with it. The refugees in the country received only a small part of what the international community donated for them. After Siad fell, most of the aid flows dried up, but insofar as relief programmes continued, they were often exploited by the merchant-politicians. The most important way in which this occurred was through protection rackets. Because of the low level of personal security, relief agencies were obliged to hire armed guards to protect themselves. They usually hired guards from the very same factions that were responsible for the political turmoil in the country, thereby helping to enrich them. This became a major factor in the second half of 1992, when many more aid agencies rushed to the country to start programmes, in the wake of the belated media attention. The factions also ensured that, when possible, relief was provided first to members of the relevant clan, thereby ensuring that less accessible and powerful clans, such as the Rahanweyn, were last in the line. There was also looting of relief shipments, though not on the scale often claimed by the media and some of the less responsible relief agencies.

The victims of the 1992 Somali famine were very largely the Rahanweyn, and to a slightly lesser extent Digil and Bantu. Those displaced by the fighting also suffered severely. The pastoral clans for the most part escaped severe hunger. The gradation of suffering faithfully reflected the relative political and military power of different groups, established over the years.

The Somali famine is therefore a war famine, but with important differences from the conventional and guerrilla wars discussed earlier. The famine is

not created by specific military strategies as such, but instead by the military and predatory nature of the political-economic structures in the country. The famine is created, not by the way in which the contending militias fight each other, but by the way they sustain themselves as political and economic forces. This type of war famine therefore falls into a new category in the typology of war-created famine.

4 CONCLUSION

War is and will continue to be the major cause of famine in Africa. Compared to other contributory causes such as drought, environmental degradation, inappropriate development strategies, etc., it has received far less attention than it deserves. The hazards of doing field research during wars, and the unreliability of governmental, media and relief agency accounts of war famines, on account of ignorance, censorship and political sensitivity, means that war famines will probably continue not to receive sufficient analytical scrutiny. However, war famines have now become so depressingly commonplace that it is possible to establish simple typologies and analyses. This article has attempted to do that in a preliminary fashion. It is a first step towards seeking some solutions.

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