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Public Administration in Ethiopia--1974-1991:

Administrative and Policy Responses to Turbulence

by

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Synopsis

<u>Public Administration in Ethiopia -- 1974-1991</u>
<u>Administrative and Policy Responses to Turbulence</u>

This dissertation fills the theoretical gap in comparative administrative studies describing political turbulence. It examines how Ethiopia's public administrative system operated in a turbulent socio-political environment characterized by recurrent civil/ethnic wars, famines and political repression. I have examined important policies and programs of the military government between 1974-1991 and characterized the dominant political responses during this period to illustrate how its policies and external geo-political factors contributed to the turmoil that engulfed the Ethiopian state for nearly two decades. The main finding in this study is that the regime's policies, for example, the bureaucratic monolithic party and the Soviet-style command economy, progressively narrowed the 'civic' space where people could engage in independent political and economic activities beyond government control and exacerbated the turbulence.

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Preface

There is a theoretical gap in comparative administration and policy as regards the functioning of public administrative systems characterized by instability, fragmentation of central political authority and socio-economic crisis. One of the reasons for this gap has been the emphasis on formal institutional structures, such as civil service systems as units of analysis, rather than administration and governance in turbulent socio-political environments. This institutional-structural perspective has viewed public administration as a technocratic instrument for continuity, order and stability with little consideration to the external environmental challenges to the administrative system's capacity to formulate and implement public policy goals.

This dissertation is intended to fill the gap in comparative administrative studies describing political turbulence. It examines how Ethiopia's public administrative system operated in a turbulent socio-political environment characterized by recurrent civil/ethnic wars, famines and political repression. I have examined important policies and programs of the military government between 1974-1991 and characterized the dominant political responses during this period to illustrate how its policies and external geo-political factors contributed to the turmoil that engulfed the Ethiopian state for nearly two decades. The main finding in this study is that the regime's policies, for example, the bureaucratic monolithic party and Soviet-style command economy, progressively narrowed the 'civic' space where people could engage in independent political and economic activities outside of government control and exacerbated the turbulence.

Many people have contributed to the completion of this research. I would like to express special gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Dr. Holly Sims, who patiently guided this research. I appreciate her lively engagement in my academic progress and the several discussions that provided me with perspectives to write the dissertation research. I also would like to thank Dr. David McCaffrey for his constant encouragement and continued interest in my progress. I owe thanks to Professor Robert Nakamura for reading the dissertation and sharing his ideas on political instability in Ethiopia.

I wish to express my indebtedness to friends and acquaintances in the Ethiopian government bureaucracy for documentary and archival data. I am greatly indebted to officials and party functionaries of the defunct Derg regime, some of whom I interviewed in jail while conducting field work for the research in 1994. True to my promises to them, their names would remain anonymous. They provided me with an insider's view of the operation of the public bureaucracy during the country's turbulent period -- 1974-1991. In addition, I would like to thank officials of the new government – Ethiopian People's Democratic Revolutionary Forces (EPDRF) – in Region 14 (Addis Ababa regional government) and Region 3 (Amhara regional state) for their cooperation in allowing me access to important government data and sharing their experiences on governance and administration in territories they liberated from Derg rule. Errors in judgement and conclusions drawn on the basis of their confidential information are solely my responsibility.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this work to my family. My wife, Wube G/Meskel, daughter Kalkidan Meheret and son Metadel Meheret were deprived of my love and parental responsibility while I was away from home. It was

not an easy experience to write a dissertation away from them. They truly deserve this dedication.

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Chapter I. Introduction
Statement of Purpose

World politics in the post-cold war era have become turbulent with the collapse of nation-states and the heightening of inter-ethnic and religious tensions around the globe. Manifestations of this turbulence include the resurgence of ethnic nationalism, international terrorism, emergence of new states and the intensification of inter-state conflicts among the countries of the world. Since turbulence afflicts many contemporary states in the late twentieth century, it is necessary to study how their administrative and political institutions function in a turbulent socio-political environment.

A major problem with many works in the field of comparative administration is that they assume the environment is stable. For example, in <u>Political Order in Changing Societies</u> (1968), Samuel Huntington emphasized the importance of order, continuity and stability of political systems under authoritarian regimes. Furthermore, in <u>Public Administration: A Comparative Perspective</u> (1984,1991), Ferrel Heady provides a comparative study of the administrative systems of African, Asian and Latin American nations without considering the unstable and conflict-ridden socio-political environment within which their bureaucracies operate. Such perspectives which do not reflect reality are of limited use for analyzing administrative and political institutions in a post-cold war era characterized by economic and political disarray. This research attempts to use turbulence as a conceptual tool for analyzing contemporary political and administrative systems.

While the concept of turbulence is widely used in the physical sciences such as atmospherics, oceanographics and

fluid mechanics, there is a theoretical gap in comparative public administration as regards the functioning of administrative systems characterized by instability, fragmentation of central political authority and socio-economic crisis. One of the reasons for this gap has been the emphasis on formal institutional structures, such as central civil service systems as units of analysis, rather than upon administration and governance in turbulent socio-political environments. This institutional-structural perspective has viewed public administration as a technocratic instrument for continuity, order and stability with little consideration to contextual challenges to the administrative system's capacity to formulate and implement public policy goals (Nicholson & Connerley, 1989; Carino, 1991).

A second reason why turbulence has been ignored by administrative scholars reflects their inadequate attention to the role of the environmental factor in development and governance. This study of the operation of Ethiopia's bureaucracy under the turbulence that afflicts much of the post-cold war international system seeks to further understanding of contextual challenges to the public administrative systems' capacity to formulate and implement public policy goals.

For nearly two decades, Ethiopia was one of the most turbulent and strife-torn states in the world. The term 'turbulence' will be used to denote the instability and ethnic turmoil that engulfed the Ethiopian state between 1974-1991. This is a watershed period in Ethiopian history because national unity was challenged by powerful ethnic-based centrifugal forces.

Ethiopia was ruled by a military dictatorship known as

the Derg (military committee) between 1974-1991. The 120-
men Derg seized power in 1974 as a collective body of
military officers after deposing the Haile Selassie I
monarchist regime which was in power for nearly half a
century. The Derg's collective leadership degenerated into
a military dictatorship under colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam
in 1977 following a series of purges and assassinations in
its ranks. Collective leadership was dealt a final blow
with the establishment of a military- Stalinist state
masquerading as the dictatorship of the working class and
peasantry in 1987. Since the mid-1970s, Ethiopia under the
Derg was embroiled in turbulence and instability due to
civil war, secession, regionalism and famine.

To narrow the gap in public administration literature
describing political turbulence, I will discuss internal and
external dimensions to turbulence in Ethiopia and examine
the regime's responses. I argue that the political and
administrative responses of the regime, such as the
monolithic vanguard party that led the regime, progressively
limited the scope for societal economic and political
participation and resulted in further instability and
exacerbation of the state-society crisis in Ethiopia. To
provide a tool of analysis for understanding the Ethiopian
experience in turbulence, a review of the general concept of
turbulence is in order.

The Concept of Turbulence

The concept of turbulence is well-developed and widely
used in the fields of international relations and
organization theory. According to one school of thought in
international relations theory, the term turbulence is used
as a metaphor for discontinuity, disorder, crisis and
instability in the political-administrative system. As an

analytic concept, it denotes a highly unstable and conflict-ridden situation involving the contributions of several actors or influences. Patterns of interaction among the actors do not follow established procedures or sequences and the outcome is highly unpredictable (Rosenau, 1990).

In international relations theory, turbulence has internal (micro) and external (macro) dimensions. The internal (micro) actors include individuals, political organizations, ethnic and tribal groups, national government policies and other societal sub-groups that compete for control of the state and its economic and political resources. In other words, it consists of domestic social and political forces that influence the actions of states and governments. External elements of turbulence may involve states, regional groupings of nations and other trans- or multi-national organizations. Turbulence sets in when the relationships among the internal and external actors are marked by conflict rather than cooperation. Because several factors inter-relate in a number of direct and indirect ways to produce a turbulent political environment, any attempt to treat the contributing factors in isolation may distort the picture (Rosenau, 1990).

From a different perspective, turbulence can be discussed as a cause and effect phenomenon. M. Campanella (1988) and B. Jancar (1989) consider turbulence both as a cause (independent variable) and an effect (dependent variable) of the changes shaping the world system. When turbulence is treated as an independent variable, it refers to the dynamism, complexity and interconnectedness of the international system. When it is treated as a dependent variable, it refers to consequences arising from this relationship, for example, shifts in economic, military or technological power at the national and regional levels. By

treating turbulence as both cause and effect, Campanella's and Jancar's approach underscores the importance of considering the ways in which its consequences feed back on its causes, and vice versa.

In addition to the preceding conceptual framework for turbulence in world politics, the debate about the African state-society crisis will be reviewed to provide an analytical and comparative dimension to this discussion of political turbulence in Ethiopia. The erosion of central government authority, civil strife and ethnic irredentism, agricultural decline and economic deterioration that began to unfold throughout much of the continent starting in the late 1970s define the African crisis. An analytical framework treating cause and effect and feedback mechanisms will be employed in this thesis to facilitate discussion of Africa's political and economic crisis. Such an approach will help analyze the causes and consequence of socio-economic and political degeneration in many African states. In this study, it will be argued that there is a link between Africa's dire socio-economic condition, for example, the sharp increase in sub-Saharan Africa's crushing debt from $85 billion in 1980 to $213 billion in 1994/1995 and the drop in foreign direct investment from 13.8 per cent to 5.3 per cent of the world total between 1982/1986 and 1992/1994, and the turbulence that engulfed many African states in the 1970s and 1980s. The manifestations of this widespread turbulence have obvious internal and external dimensions (World Bank, 1995).

As the ensuing chapter elaborates, much of the debate about the African development crisis has concentrated either on internal or external causal agents. The solutions suggested reflect competing perspectives that do not consider the inter-relationship of the several factors. The

argument in this study is that internal and external dimensions to turbulence are intertwined in precipitating the African crisis. Before pursuing this question any further, it would be useful to consider turbulence from the perspective of administrative and organization theory to assess its possible utility for the study of the African state.

In the field of organization theory, the concept of turbulence refers to a condition of instability and unpredictability that organizations face due to challenges from the external environment. Examples of such environmental challenges include pressures to cut organizations' budgets and other resources, competition from rival organizations, political demands to restructure or 'downsize' the agency and constituent demands for more services. Often, these factors are inter-connected to create the uncertain environment to which the organization must respond in order to survive. When confronted with such challenges, public managers and administrators ideally respond by redefining policies, formulating strategies and working out a contingency plan of action to minimize adverse effects on the concerned organizations (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1973; Karpik, 1978).

In this study, certain assumptions about turbulence will be borrowed from organizational dynamics to analyze the coping strategies of unstable administrative-political systems. For example, organization theorists suggest that organizations deal with 'organized' rather than 'unorganized' environmental settings. In an 'organized' environment, characterized by organizations with clearly defined goals and programs, factors or variables affecting the organization are identifiable and the pattern of interaction is easily discernible. In 'unorganized'

settings, which may be marked by frequent government changes or revolutionary situations, such variables are not easily definable or identifiable. The application of the concept of organizational turbulence to administration and politics must take into account both controllable and uncontrollable environmental factors (La Porte, 1975).

Furthermore, the distinction between 'organized' and 'unorganized' actors in business organizations must be modified to be applicable to public organizations because the environment of government administration embraces complex factors that cannot be easily categorized into controllable elements. In addition, governments face a greater degree of uncertainty than businesses because they do not have the capacity to create the political equivalent of monopolistic and oligopolistic environments. The political world is too complex and dynamic to lend itself to effective control of all the forces that operate on the system. In other words, political turbulence is not a result of one single defined factor. As will be reiterated in this study, it is rather caused by micro (internal) and macro (external) actors which may have competing demands on the state (Rosenau, 1990; Merry, 1995).

In sum, the notion of turbulence as developed in organization theory needs modifications to provide a basis for conceptualizing turbulence in government and public administration. The organizational perspective to turbulence with its focus on a limited range of factors must now account for a complex environment that affects the operation and response strategies of public administrative institutions and structures.

It was suggested earlier that competing viewpoints on the African state crisis would be reviewed to assess the

possible utility of premises and inferences from the debate for discussing political turbulence in Ethiopia. Despite its historical record as the oldest independent country in the continent, the Ethiopian people have suffered from severe underdevelopment and political fragmentation that afflict many contemporary post-colonial African societies. In many ways, Ethiopia is a microcosm of the African continent for it is beset with a fractured socio-political environment: sharp ethnic and linguistic differences, crisis in legitimacy and governance and general civil disorder. In other words, turbulence has engulfed one of the few contemporary African states that was never colonized by a European power except for a brief period of Fascist occupation between 1936-1941. Considering Ethiopia's experience within the context of the turbulence and development crisis that plagued much of the African continent for over two decades will facilitate understanding of the problems and common characteristics that Ethiopia shares with other African states.

The African State Crisis: The Internalist vs. Externalist Debate

This dissertation argues that the economic and political crises of many African states were caused by the widespread turbulence that engulfed much of the continent throughout the 1970s and 1980s. This turbulence reveals inter-related manifestations: recurrent droughts and civil wars, collapse of national governments and ill-advised policies, and external factors, for example, the effects of structural adjustment programs on African economies, such as drastic cuts in social and economic spending. Hence, African problems cannot be dichotomized as solely internal or external because the lingering crisis result from a complex inter-play of both internal and external factors. The ensuing chapter will elaborate how each of these factors

feed on each other to aggravate the socio-political problems
of many African nations.

The debate about the African crisis has given rise to
two conflicting schools of thought: the 'internalist' and
'externalist' perspectives. Internalists criticize African
government policies for the continent's poor performance in
economic development and growth. The World Bank and other
multi-lateral organizations blame African policies for the
development disasters that befell much of the continent
starting in the 1970s. On the other hand, externalists
allege that global economic patterns and the economic
policies of industrial countries have caused Africa's sharp
economic deterioration. Depending upon their perspectives,
the two schools have offered solutions that have failed in
reversing the precipitous decline and stagnation in much of
the continent. The major factor for the general economic
and social deterioration in much of Africa throughout the
1970s and 1980s was the socio-political turbulence and
instability afflicting African societies (Lofchie, 1989).

The compartmentalization of African problems into
exclusively internal and external arenas has led to
prescriptive solutions that fail to recognize the inter-
relationship of the afore-mentioned factors. Such
dichotomization has also encouraged the use of several
paradigms that do not describe the dynamics of the state-
society crisis in Africa. For example, the 'soft' and
'strong' state paradigms focus on the internal
characteristics and regime type of African nations and tend
to ignore broader environmental contexts within which the
African state operates, including the adverse impacts of
international economic relations. A major shortcoming of
the 'soft' and 'strong' state approaches is that they do not
focus on the inter-relationship of domestic and external

variables, including civil strife, regional irredentism and secessions, extreme poverty and catastrophic droughts, affecting the performance of African governments and states (Sangmpam, 1993).

In sum, the inter-relationship of the internal and external aspects of turbulence will be emphasized throughout this study in analyzing the Ethiopian situation. More specifically, it will be shown that internal factors, including ethnic turmoil and recurrent droughts and famines, and external influences, including the effects of 'cold war' politics on the Ethiopian state, generated political turbulence and instability in Ethiopia between 1974-1991.

Turbulence in Ethiopia: Strategy of Inquiry and Organizational Model of Analysis

This study discusses internal and external contributory factors to turbulence that characterized seventeen years of military rule in Ethiopia (1974-1991). Internally, Ethiopia faced civil strife and ethnic turmoil because its various nationalities sought independence from the state. I examine Ethiopia's domestic turbulence within the context of regional and geo-political struggles for dominance in the Horn of Africa since it was the combination of internal and external factors that exacerbated the economic and structural crisis of the Ethiopian state.

My objective in this research is to discuss how Ethiopia's public administrative system operated in a turbulent socio-political environment characterized by recurrent civil wars, famines and political repression. I plan to show that the political and administrative responses of the regime, for example, the bureaucratization of the state, shrank the scope for societal economic and political

participation and resulted in further instability and exacerbation of the economic and political malaise in Ethiopia. I will examine important policies and programs of the regime between 1974-1991 and characterize the dominant political responses during this period to illustrate how its policies and external geo-political factors contributed to the turbulence that engulfed the Ethiopian state for nearly two decades.

In order to examine the relationship between turbulence in various forms and regime responses, turbulence in Ethiopia will be analyzed in three phases: the pre-turbulent phase (1974-1977), the turbulent phase (1978-1987) and the post-turbulent phase (1988-1991). The pre-turbulent phase focuses on precipitating factors and events that contribute to turbulence in Ethiopia. The turbulent phase discusses manifestations and consequences of turbulence therein. The post-turbulent phase examines the administrative and political responses of the Derg regime to deal with a diminished level of turmoil and instability in Ethiopia. As the following simple organizational model illustrates, the main themes in this study -- the convergence of internal and external factors fuelling turmoil, turbulence as a characteristic of the Ethiopian military state and policy responses of the Derg regime -- are highly interrelated.

Overlapping events and factors exacerbate the three levels of turbulence. The policy priorities of the regime were aimed at overcoming economic and political problems it was facing during these approximate periods. The pre-turbulent phase (1974-1977) was characterized by fratricidal leadership and power struggles. During this period, the Derg concentrated on measures to consolidate and legitimize its authority.

The turbulent phase (1978-1987) saw the intensification of ethnic wars, purges and assassinations within the military junta, the onset of yet another severe famine and deepening economic crisis. Social and economic reforms were instituted to strengthen the state sector of the economy, revitalize agriculture and resettle large numbers of people affected by drought.

The post-turbulent phase (1989-1991) marked the beginning of the end of the Ethiopian Derg state. The regime suffered major setbacks in the war against rebel movements in the northern provinces of Eritrea and Tigre, survived an unsuccessful military coup d'etat and the Soviet Union cut its military assistance to the war effort insisting on a negotiated solution to the ethnic problem. The policy measures the Derg took to deal with turbulence, including revising some of its socialist economic programs and the decision to negotiate with rebel groups, came too late to avert the collapse of the regime in the middle of 1991. This final phase marked the decline and eventual demise of the military state.

Model 1.1
An Organizational Model of Internal and External Dimensions to Turbulence in Ethiopia (1974-1991)

Internal Factors
-Economic stagnation
-Droughts and famines
-Domestic ethnic and religious tensions
-Ill-advised state policies and plans
-Highly centralized government authority

External Factors
-Cold war effects
-External supply of arms
-Somali irredentist claims
-Regional tensions and conflicts

Converging

Produce

Turbulence
-Civil wars
-Ethnic insurgency
-Erosion of state authority
-Political turmoil
-Crises in state legitimacy and governance
-Economic woes
-Assassinations, power struggles and purges

Respond

Magnifies and exacerbates

Magnifies and exacerbates

Policy Responses
-Militarization
-Monolithic party
-Bureaucratization of the state-
State coercion and repression
-Centralized economic management
-Collectivization of agriculture
-Price controls and rationing
-Government marketing and distribution agencies
-Land reform and nationalization

Pre-turbulent Phase
(Chapters 2 & 3)

Turbulent Phase
(Chapter 1 and Chapters 4 & 5)

Post-turbulent Phase
(Chapter 6)

According to the model on page 12, converging internal and external factors relate to the pre-turbulent phase. The unfolding turbulence produced by the factors relate to the turbulent phase and the policy responses or outputs relate to the post-turbulent phase. The feedback mechanisms in the post-turbulent phase of the model illustrate how the policy responses of the regime exacerbated the internal and external factors that contributed to further turbulence and instability.

Based on the above model, chapter II provides a conceptual frame work for discussing turbulence in comparative public administration. Chapters III and IV analyze the pre-turbulent phase. The analytical focus in those chapters will be on the inter-relationship of internal and external dimensions to turbulence in Ethiopia and the convergence of those factors in fuelling turmoil. Chapter V deals with the turbulent phase. The main emphases in this chapter are manifestations and effects of turbulence in Ethiopia under the Derg regime. Chapter VI deals with the post-turbulent phase with a focus on the feedback mechanism of the model. It examines the policy responses and programs of the Derg regime to deal with challenges to its rule.

While particular aspects of the above model are specific to turbulence in Ethiopia, the overall concept can be applied to the discussion of turbulence elsewhere in Africa. All one needs to do is identify the specific variables affecting the experiences of individual African countries. For example, if this model is applied to other African nations which have passed through colonialism, it is necessary to consider the impact of colonialism on the evolution and stability of the post-colonial African state. In contrast, since Ethiopia is one of the few black nations that was never colonized, it can be argued that most of the

turbulence is caused by factors of local or regional origin rather than of international provenance.

Although the model is simple, this should not belie the complex inter-relationship of domestic and external factors upon which the model is based. Local, regional and international variables combine to produce the turbulent environment that has engulfed much of the African continent since the late 1970s. In subsequent chapters of this study, these variables are identified and analyzed.

Organization of the Study

This research on Ethiopian public administration under turbulence has seven chapters.

Chapter I gives a brief introduction to the organization and methodology of this study. Chapter II discusses the concept of turbulence and reviews the debate about the African state to provide an analytical and comparative perspective to discussion of political turbulence in Ethiopia. The African comparison will help establish relationships between the different combinations of internal and external factors involving turbulence and regime responses elsewhere in Africa. Also, this chapter argues why comparative public administration must borrow the concept of turbulence as developed in international relations theory and organizational dynamics in order to fill a gap in the development of the field.

Chapter III surveys the socio-historical characteristics of Ethiopian society that have exerted a great deal of influence on the country's strife-torn domestic politics and crisis in governance. Chapter IV examines the internal and external factors that contributed

to turbulence and eventual collapse of the imperial state. Such a discussion is intended to show that the fundamental problems of the Ethiopian state that generated widespread turbulence, for example, regionalism or secession, were not created by the military regime but dated back to the monarchy.

In chapter V, the internal and external dimensions to political turbulence under the military are discussed. This chapter examines the manifestations and consequences of turbulence that characterized the post-imperial Ethiopian state. The characteristics of turbulence in Ethiopia, including ethnic wars, civil strife and economic crisis, have parallels in other African countries as varied as Algeria, Liberia, Mozambique, Chad, Somalia and Angola.

Chapter VI deals with the administrative and political responses of the Derg military regime to cope with turbulence and instability in Ethiopia. It analyzes how the domestic and foreign policies of the regime exacerbated the turbulence in Ethiopia between 1974-1991. The coping strategies of the Ethiopian military regime, for example, the promotion of a monolithic party to guide state and society, bear close similarities with the experiences of other one-party African states.

Chapter VII presents a summary of the major findings of this research. This chapter draws a cause and effect relationship between the economic and political programs of the Ethiopian military state and the widespread turbulence that engulfed the nation between 1974-1991. It concludes that the regime's policies, for example, the bureaucratic monolithic party and the Soviet-style command economy, progressively narrowed the economic and political space where people could engage in collective activities outside

of government control and exacerbated the turbulence.

Methodology and Data Collection

The data for this study were collected in 1993-1994 when I spent a year in Ethiopia. When I arrived in Ethiopia to conduct the field research, the military government had been toppled and replaced by a coalition of guerrilla forces led by the Tigre People's Liberation Front (TPLF). There was widespread public mistrust of the new government because it had divided the country along ethnic and linguistic lines. Many Ethiopians were also dismayed at the new government's endorsement of Eritrea's independence.

While in Ethiopia, I interviewed officials of the former regime about its system of public administration and government during Ethiopia's most turbulent period (1974-1991). Many of the former officials were either jailed or dismissed from their official positions. I interviewed some of the officials in prison after securing permission from the authorities. My objective was to know how politicians and administrators of the defunct Derg government coped with the turbulence and instability that characterized the Ethiopian state under the military. The officials had no fear discussing how the administrative machinery of the former regime operated because the new government had not yet consolidated its authority to cause them any concern that the information would be used against them. In addition, my assurances to the interviewees that their names would be kept confidential helped me get data on how the public administrative system operated during Ethiopia's period of turmoil.

In addition to the interviews, I also gathered archival data from various government departments and the Institute

of Development Research (IDR) of Addis Ababa University. When I arrived in Ethiopia in April, 1993, the academic community was indignant at the new government's expulsion of 41 professors and other academicians on ethnic and political grounds. Despite the fear and uncertainty pervading the university, I managed to review planning and policy documents, the constitution, laws and various government reports of the former military regime. From my temporary office at the university, I also scanned the two daily newspapers, Addis Zemen and the Ethiopian Herald, for the period 1974-1991. They provided valuable information on the record of events leading to the Ethiopian crisis and on the dominant political responses of the regime to the challenges it faced. For the discussion on the African crisis, I collected relevant data and examined country case studies from the library and documentation center of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in Addis Ababa.

Data collected from secondary sources, including official government reports and statistics, are used to discuss the internal and external contributory factors to turbulence in Ethiopia between 1974-1991. The series of overlapping events and crisis that exacerbated Ethiopia's turbulence have been categorized into four periods: intense power and leadership struggles (1974-1977), intensification of internal and external conflicts (1978-1980), acute agricultural and economic crisis and recurrent famines (1981-1987) and the decline and collapse of the military state (1988-1991). The dominant policy responses of the regime to deal with the manifestations of turbulence in each period are characterized and discussed.

Finally, two broad implications come out of this study. First, comparative public administration must borrow the notion of turbulence from international relations and

organization theory.   Since the post-cold war world may be more turbulent than the bi-polar era, it is imperative to analyze administrative and political systems in unstable and conflict-ridden environments.   Hence, the introduction of the concept of turbulence into the lexicon of comparative administrative studies.

Second, Big Power involvement in the affairs of small nations was not a stabilizing factor during the bi-polar era.   As the Ethiopian experience illustrates, external interference cannot contain internal turbulence because it is no guarantee for the stability and continuity of a state with narrow domestic constituencies and fragmented power bases. As an example, U.S.-supported monarchist Ethiopia was as turbulent and unstable as ex-Soviet backed People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE) under the Derg regime. The same can be said about the former Republic of Somalia which was supported first by the former Soviet Union and later by the United States.

Chapter 1

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Chapter II. The Concept of Turbulence: A Theoretical Gap in Comparative Administration

From a theoretical perspective, the comparative literature on bureaucracy under turbulence is scanty because the study of comparative administration has been indifferent to the role of the environmental factor in development and governance. It has also been a reflection of the orientation of the field of comparative administration towards the study of stable political systems rather than states beset with fractured power bases and intense political conflicts. Since turbulence has become an important aspect of world politics in the post-bi-polar era, it is necessary to study how administrative and political institutions of contemporary nation-states cope with a turbulent socio-political environment.

In part one of this chapter, I plan to fill that gap by discussing the concept of turbulence as developed in the fields of international relations and organization theory. In part two, I will review competing viewpoints about the African state crisis in order to provide a comparative perspective for discussing political turbulence in Ethiopia. The purpose of interjecting the debate about the African state is to argue that widespread turbulence aggravated the economic and political malaise that has been afflicting many African nations during the past three decades. The chapter concludes by presenting an organizational model of analysis depicting the inter-relationship of internal and external causes of turbulence and regime responses in strife-torn African states, including Ethiopia. As a prelude, some general references to governance and administration in unstable political systems will be surveyed to illustrate the dearth of material describing turbulence in the comparative field.

Yezkhel Dror(1986) argues that bureaucracies in many developing countries function in an environment which he referred to as 'politics under adversity'. In 'politics under adversity', the political power base is fragmented because policy-making takes place in an adverse socio-economic setting. The manifestations of such an adverse environment include constant leadership and power struggles, resurgence of ethnic/tribal politics challenging central authority, rejection of the authority of the central state and lack of stable coalitions in the political system. These problems are most conspicuous in unstable nation-states and the public administrative machinery deals with instability and crisis management in such a setting (Dror, 1986).

Within the context of 'politics under adversity', different ethnic and regional groupings challenge the central political leadership and undermine the exercise of legitimate state authority. The national government does not control much of the country as its authority to implement policies or carry out development is greatly diminished. Political turbulence caused by civil strife, persistent regional challenges or acute power struggles make it difficult for the political establishment to assert state authority and conduct governance within its formal jurisdiction. While Dror admits that the ensuing instability affects that capacity for governance, he does not spell out the complex causes of the crisis. In other words, his prognosis fails to consider the internal and external aspects of turbulence that contribute to political and economic instability.

Peter Drucker's (1980) work on management in turbulent times deals with how business corporations adapt to changes in technology and global competition. His study focuses on

how big businesses can cope with global competition by investing in market research, new products development, education and training. Needless to say, the social and political forces that operate on states, such as the pressures emanating from competitive domestic politics or the international system of division of labor and economy, are far more complex than the factors that affect the behavior of business organizations. In addition, governments face a greater degree of uncertainty than businesses because they do not have the capacity to create the political equivalent of monopolistic and oligopolistic environments. Thus, his organizational-level analysis falls short of providing practical and theoretical clues as to how organized polities or state structures respond to turbulence (Drucker, 1980).

Another work which may be cited more for its captivating title than for providing sufficient explanation as to how public administrative institutions respond to crisis is Dwight Waldo's <u>Public Administration in a Time of Turbulence</u> (1971). According to Waldo, divisive issues like the civil rights movement, Great Society programs, racial and ethnic polarization and the Vietnam war, were manifestations of the then turbulent American political landscape in the 1960s and 1970s. He suggested flexibility in government, a more 'representative' bureaucracy, i.e. recruitment of minority and disaffected groups into the system, and a strong commitment to administrative efficiency to address the emerging challenges. His solutions deal with the U.S. experience in turbulence management and have limited practical or theoretical applicability in explaining the administrative and political crisis of emerging societies, notably in Africa (Waldo, 1971).

For various reasons, then, the issue of political

turbulence and administration has not been sufficiently addressed. In the first place, many comparative administrative studies overlook the significance of both domestic and international environmental constraints on the operation of public administrative systems. It needs to be stressed that the operation and efficiency of state bureaucracies can be fully comprehended if the internal and external socio-economic and political environment within which they operate is taken into account. For example, the impact of the domestic socio-economic environment, including ethnic wars, drought and famine, authoritarian and corrupt regime types, and the consequences of international economic relations, must be considered in assessing the performance of African public administrations.

Secondly, the issue of political turbulence and administration is discussed only in scattered references in the comparative public administration literature because bureaucracies are analyzed as strong agents of change that should not be affected by political and economic currents engulfing emerging societies. For example, Samuel Huntington (1968) saw bureaucracies as essential instruments of order and stability under authoritarian regimes that should not be undermined by social and political upheavals characterizing the system. He argued that bureaucratic-authoritarian structures could be instituted in emerging nations to contain turbulent movements for independence, general strikes, coups and revolutions that were taking place all over the world. Based on a study of the Iranian political system, he prescribed a 'conflict-free' political order to preside over rapid social and economic change. As such, Huntington's approach is of little use in studying contemporary administrative systems and regime types plagued by civil wars, ethnic turmoil and regional challenges that undermine central political authority (Huntington, 1968).

The principal shortcoming of traditional administrative theory is that it tends to treat the external environment as given, when, in fact, it is external actors, including politicians, the legislature, the clientele and competing organizations, that can determine the coping strategies and responses of the administration to the challenges. For example, Victor A. Thompson (1961) defines an organization as a 'highly rationalized and impersonal integration of a large number of specialists cooperating to achieve some announced specific objective'. Chester I. Barnard (1938) states that an organization 'is a system of consciously coordinated personal activities or forces of two or more persons'. Such definitions consider organizations self-contained and purposeful collectives characterized by sustained cooperative activity. They overlook the disruptive impact of the external political environment on the performance of public organizations. Academic study and research into bureaucracy can be significantly improved if both micro, i.e. internal structures and macro variables, i.e. external factors, are recognized as having decisive influence on public organizations. As Nicholas Henry (1980) notes, public organizations draw their resources (taxes and legitimacy) from the polity and are mediated by the state (Barnard, 1938; Thompson, 1961; Henry, 1980).

Comparative analysis of bureaucracies that focuses on their internal structure and organizational dynamics rather than external political forces is one explanation for the inadequate attention to the nexus between administration and the environment. An important premise of such a narrow perspective has been that bureaucracies operate with patterned regularity, predictability and consistency in a stable, conflict-free political and social order. This limited attention to the environmental factor has hindered understanding of administrative and policy-making

structures' operations and responses to crisis and turbulent changes (Carino, 1991; Klase & Mengistu, 1995).

As noted in chapter I, the concept of turbulence is well developed and widely used in the areas of international relations and organization theory. Hence, it is necessary to examine theoretical propositions from these two disciplines for the purpose of examining the relationship between administration and a turbulent political setting. In the pages that follow, the methodological and conceptual tools of analysis used to explain turbulence in the areas of international politics and organization theory will be reviewed to assess their applicability to administrative and policy-making structures in turbulent environments.

Political Turbulence: A Generic Concept

In the broad field of international relations theory, the concept of turbulence is used as a metaphor for discontinuity, disorder, crisis and instability in the political-administrative system. The term does not have a precise definition partly because the ensuing phenomenon takes place as a result of a complex set of factors that do not logically coalesce. As an analytic concept, turbulence denotes a highly unstable situation involving the contributions of several actors (influences) that relate to each other outside of the context of conventional and formally established procedures or patterns of interaction.

In Turbulence in World Politics (1990), James Rosenau discusses turbulence as an aspect of global politics during the 'cold-war' period. He provides a conception of turbulence that denotes the tensions and changes that ensue when the structures and processes that normally sustain world politics are unsettled and appear to be undergoing

rearrangement in a bi-polar world dominated by Soviet-American rivalry. He draws a distinction between political turbulence at the national (state) level and the international arena but argues that the two are interrelated. In other words, the actions of individual states, for example, military conflicts between two countries, can contribute to global turbulence and instability. Turbulence at the international level is a product of actions by many states and can be caused by inter-state conflicts, technological disasters, natural or any other emergency with implications beyond the borders of a single sovereign nation (Rosenau, 1990).

Political turbulence at the state level is created when a system is beset with anomalies and irregularities that it fails to overcome, such as when a central regime fails to accommodate opposition demands, and is thus thrown into a 'period of protracted disequilibrium'. State-level turbulence may be preceded by leadership power struggles, persistent wars between the central government and centrifugal groups or public discontent with unpopular government programs. As it applies to a state in crisis, the manifestations of such turbulence can be authority breakdowns, civil wars and strife, generational conflicts, mass uprisings or other forces that disrupt the functioning of the system. According to this argument, uncertainty is a prime characteristic of turbulent politics whose outcome can be the exacerbation of tensions and conflicts, collapse of the central state and the subsequent paralysis of its policy-making and implementation structures.

Furthermore, political turbulence has internal (micro) and external (macro) dimensions. The internal (micro) actors include individuals, political or ethnic groups, national government policies and other societal sub-groups

that compete and often conflict with each other for control
of the state and its economic and political resources. In
other words, it consists of domestic social and political
forces that influence the actions of states and governments.
On the other hand, external elements may include the actions
of sovereign states, regional groupings of nations and other
trans- or multi-national organizations (Rosenau, 1990).

Turbulence sets in when relationships among the
internal and external actors are marked by conflict rather
than cooperation. Conceptually, it is the contribution and
the inter-dependence of all the factors that ignite
instability. Any attempt at drawing divisions among the
dimensions is artificial because several factors inter-
relate in a number of direct and indirect ways to produce a
turbulent geo-political environment. Rosenau's analysis
suggests that internal factors are as important as external
actors in creating turbulence. Thus, he would probably
ascribe the economic and political instability of African
nations to mismanagement by national governments and ill-
advised policies as well as to IMF- and World Bank-supported
structural adjustment programs that debilitated economic
services and the social and physical infrastructure.

Turbulence as Cause and Effect

Another school of thought in international relations
theory treats turbulence as a cause and effect phenomenon.
It is difficult to construct an acceptable theory of
turbulence without considering whether turbulence is a
causal agent, i.e. independent variable, or an effect, i.e.
a dependent variable, of the dramatic changes taking place
in the contemporary world. In examining the cause and
effect relationship between turbulence and the changes
shaping the world system, M. Campanella (1988) and B. Jancar

(1989) treat turbulence as an independent variable (cause) when referring to the dynamism, complexity and interconnectedness of the international system. They consider it as a dependent variable (effect) to refer to the consequences that arise out of this relationship, for example, shifts in the balance of economic, military or technological power. By treating turbulence as both cause and effect, both theorists underscore the inter-relationship of causing agents and consequences of global turbulence (Campanella, 1988; Jancar, 1989).

In short, the cause and effect relationship helps to account for the diverse challenges and changes that confront political systems and regimes. Such an approach helps to construct a viable theory of turbulence in comparative administration because it takes into consideration both the internal and external dimensions to turbulence. This theoretical model can be built if the inter-connection between the administrative sub-system and the larger socio-political environment is emphasized as is the case in many other disciplines. One of these is organization theory to which I proceed in an attempt to advance the discussion on the need for a theoretical framework for turbulence in comparative administration.

The Concept of Turbulence in Organization Theory

In the field of organization theory, turbulence creates a state of uncertainty and unpredictability that organizations must respond to in order to survive. Some examples of such environmental challenges can be budget pressures and resource constraints, lack of political and legislative support for agency goals and demands to close the organization. Often, these internal and external factors are inter-connected to create the uncertain environment

which public organizations face. For example, moves to close down an agency can be pursued on budgetary grounds while the political goal may be reducing the size of government through privatization or contracting out of public services. When confronted with such an environment, public managers and administrators respond by redefining policies, formulating strategies and working out a contingency plan of action to minimize the adverse consequences on the survival of the organizations (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1973; Karpik, 1978).

There is sufficient literature that deals with administrative theory and the environment. In _Public Administration and Public Affairs_ (1980), Nicholas Henry discusses the evolution of organization theory and shows that the different schools of thought consider the environment important for the survival of any organization. Further, Kast and Rosenzweig (1979) describe the nature of the organizational environment in terms of cultural, technological, educational, political, legal, natural resources, demographic, sociological and economic dimensions and emphasize the importance of all these factors for the success of organizations. The contention in this dissertation is that the theoretical knowledge gained in mainstream administrative theory has not been used in comparative administrative studies. As such, the field suffers from lack of methodological and conceptual models to guide the study of administrative systems in turbulent political environments (Henry, 1980; Kast & Rosenzweig, 1979).

Philip Selznick (1949) was one of the early theorists who provided important clues as to how public organizations can successfully deal with the external environment. Based on a study of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), he

suggested the principle of 'co-optation' as an adaptive mechanism to reduce the conflict between the organization and its environment. According to this principle, an organization must absorb new elements into its leadership and policy making structure as a means of averting threats to its stability and existence. In other words, organizational power and authority are shared with the constituency because such involvement reduces conflict and enhances organizational effectiveness in serving the community. Although Selznick is credited for his important contribution to the nexus between the environment and public organizations, much more can be done in comparative public administration (Selznick, 1949).

Certain assumptions about turbulence in organizational dynamics are not helpful to analyze the coping strategies of unstable administrative-political systems. Some organization theorists believe that organizations deal with a 'structured' environment in coping with uncertainty. In other words, they assume that organizations contend with 'organized' rather than 'unorganized' environmental settings. In an 'organized' environment, characterized by organizations with explicit goals and policies, the factors or variables affecting the organization are identifiable and the pattern of interaction easily discernible. In 'unorganized' settings, which may be marked by insurrection or revolutionary situations, such variables are not easily definable or identifiable. The application of the concept of organizational turbulence to administration must consider all aspects of the environment to which organizations must be responsive, including controllable and uncontrollable environmental factors (La Porte, 1975).

Also, the distinction between 'organized' and 'unorganized' actors may be valid for business organizations

but is not applicable to administrative politics because the political environment embraces a large number of complex factors that cannot be categorized into easily controllable elements. In other words, political turbulence is not a result of one single defined factor. It is rather caused by micro (internal) and macro (external) actors which may have competing and often conflicting demands on the state. The notion of turbulence as developed in organization theory can provide a basis for conceptualizing turbulence in government and public administration if it considers all the factors that operate on the system. The organizational perspective to turbulence with its focus on a limited range of factors must be modified to account for a complex environment that affects the operation and response strategies of public administrative institutions and structures (Merry, 1995).

In sum, turbulence has both internal and external dimensions in international relations and organization theory. In the preceding discussion, it has been shown that cause and effect conceptual categories are used to analyze the notion of turbulence in world politics. In the pages that follow, I will employ these categories to review the debate about the crisis of the African state and society and illustrate the relationship between widespread turbulence and the continent's poor socio-economic performance. As a theoretical tool, the cause and effect relationship is useful for discussing the problems of the African state and economy because it accounts for the internal and external contributory factors to turbulence and political instability of many African nations. As was suggested earlier, the African debate is also intended to provide a comparative and analytical perspective for describing political turbulence in Ethiopia.

The African State Crisis: The Internalist vs. Externalist
Debate

The debate about the political economy of African
development must consider the cause and effect relationship
between the continent's economic deterioration and chronic
political turbulence. Much of the discussion about the
African development crisis, which began to manifest itself
in the early 1980s, has concentrated either on internal or
external contributory factors and the solutions suggested do
not consider the inter-relationship of the several adverse
factors. For example, is the economic hardship and decline
(effect) throughout much of Africa exacerbated by political
turbulence (cause) or are the unrest and instability
(effect) fuelled by ethnic wars, fragile central
governments, recurrent droughts and famines and social and
economic degeneration (cause)? Does the fact that Ethiopia
is a multi-ethnic polity explain its political turbulence or
is it regime policy that contributed to its multi-faceted
turmoil? One needs to consider the interrelationship of
several factors in the experiences of individual states. In
general, however, it is a multiplicity of factors, including
ethnic rivalry and severe underdevelopment, that generates
turbulence and instability.

Furthermore, external actors are as important as
internal destabilizing factors in exacerbating turbulence in
Africa. For example, internal conflicts and ethnic wars in
the many regions of the continent are fuelled by inter-
tribal mistrust that could be traced to colonial policies
favoring particular groups and external flow of arms to
central governments and rebel movements. The economic
problems of African states are not only of their own making
but are compounded by adverse global economic relations and
imposed models of agricultural and economic development and
policies. One can cite the impact of budget cuts on women's

and children's health in Tanzania and Mozambique, food riots in Egypt and Nigeria and the fiscal and monetary crisis of countries as varied as Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Zambia and Zimbabwe, following their adoption of IMF adjustment and stabilization policies (Bush, 1995; Lugalla, 1995; Parfit, 1995).

The term 'African crisis' will be used to refer to the economic and political problems of many African states that became manifest starting in the late 1970s. The problems were caused by the widespread turbulence that afflicted much of the continent throughout the 1970s and 1980s. This turbulence reveals inter-related manifestations: recurrent droughts and famines, civil wars, collapse of national governments and ill-advised policies, and external factors, for example, the adverse effects of structural adjustment programs on African economies, such as drastic cuts in social and economic spending. Hence, African problems cannot be dichotomized as solely internal or external because the lingering crisis result from a complex interplay of internal and external factors. Many of these factors feed on each other to aggravate the socio-political crisis of African nations (Rose, 1985; Tarp, 1993).

According to M.F. Lofchie (1989), discussion about the African crisis has given rise to two conflicting schools of thought: the 'internalist' and 'externalist' schools. Internalists criticize African government policies for the continent's poor performance in economic development and growth. On the other hand, externalists allege that global economic relations and policies of industrial countries have caused Africa's sharp economic deterioration. Depending upon their perspectives, the two schools have offered solutions that have failed in reversing precipitous decline and stagnation since the late 1970s, because their diagnoses

overlook critical issues militating against sustainable development and recovery in many African states, i.e. an adverse socio-political environment that generates political turbulence and instability (Lofchie, 1989).

Internalists led by the World Bank, IMF and political economists, including Robert Bates, identify urban-based development strategies, the neglect of agriculture and rural development, unwieldy and highly subsidized publicly owned enterprises and inflated state bureaucracies as causal factors of economic decline in Africa. Some of their policy prescriptions include streamlining public sectors through privatization and deregulation. More specific policies cover price incentives to farmers producing food crops, export promotion and curtailing the role of the state in economic management and decision making (Bates, 1981; World Bank, 1981).

The criticism against the internalist approach is that it ascribes faltering African development to domestic factors. It needs to be pointed out, however, that external variables also have a negative impact on the economic growth of African nations. For example, the limited leverage African governments have in influencing economic policy making in developed countries and the vulnerabilities of African economies to world trade changes affect their economic and social progress. In addition, some 'solutions' of the internalist school, such as dismissing the African state as an obstacle to growth, are untenable because in much of the continent the state is one of the few politically and technically competent institutions to carry out social and economic development.

Externalists are led by underdevelopment-dependency theorists and supported by many African governments and

politicians. They place responsibility for Africa's decline on the economic policies of industrialized countries and global economic relationships that seldom favor African countries. This school absolves African governments of serious policy miscalculations. The externalists' 'solutions' to African problems of underdevelopment -- for example, centralized state structures for economic management and resource allocation -- have proved unworkable in many socialist-oriented states, including Ethiopia, Somalia, Tanzania and Egypt. The prognosis and solutions set forth by the externalist school to deal with Africa's economic stagnation have been controversial. For example, the externalists' argument that aid and trade links between low-income African countries and developed capitalist economies have worked to the disadvantage of the former has proved untenable (Lagos Plan of action, 1980; Addo, Amin, et al., 1984).

The main argument in this thesis is that turbulence aggravated the state-society crisis and the economic deterioration that befell much of the African continent starting in the late 1970s. This turbulence is a product of inter-related factors: internal and external political turmoil, the adverse international environment and the widespread societal hardship and instability that they generated. As the model at the end of this chapter depicts, each of these factors feed on each other to exacerbate the crisis. The model is presented to illustrate how overlapping internal and external factors contribute to turbulence and economic crisis in Africa.

The compartmentalization of African problems into exclusively internal and external arenas has led to prescriptive solutions that fail to recognize the inter-relationship of the several factors contributing to the

African development crisis. Such dichotomization has also encouraged the use of paradigms that do not describe the state-society crisis in Africa. For example, the 'soft' and 'strong' state paradigms focus on the internal characteristics and regime type of African nations and tend to ignore broader environmental contexts, including the adverse impacts of international economic relations, within which the African state operates. In the following pages, I will discuss the major shortcoming of the 'soft' and 'strong' state approaches and emphasize the inter-relationship of domestic and external factors affecting the performance of African governments and states (Zulu & Nsouli, 1985; Sangmpan, 1993).

The 'Soft'-'Strong' State Perspective to the African Crisis

Terms like 'soft' or 'weak' and 'strong' have been used to categorize African states. Such notions are often based on western conceptions of the state and do not describe African states and governing processes. Typically, the African state has been extremely intrusive into the affairs of the community. Over the years, African governments have assumed a myriad of activities ranging from nation-building to production and pricing of food supplies. As African states broadened their responsibilities, they shrank the 'civic' space for political and economic participation, where people could engage in collective activities beyond government control. Most African states are authoritarian and coercive institutions. People strove more to keep the state at bay or escape from its domain than to follow it (Callaghy, 1984; Hyden, 1983; Migdal, 1988; Rotchild & Chazan, 1988,1994; Harbeson, 1994).

The 'soft' state perspective suggests that disappointing African development is an indication of state

decline. Manifestations of decline of the African state include the prevalence of autocratic and personal rule, the resurgence of ethnic politics and severe constraints on the internal and external sovereignty of African states, all of which negatively affected socio-economic performance. According to this perspective, African countries are plagued by these problems because they are 'soft' or not 'effectively institutionalized', i.e. they are deficient in institutional authority and capability to carry out routine functions of government and establish a modicum of legitimacy (Fatton, 1989; Doornbos, 1990).

The term 'soft state' was first employed by Gunnar Myrdal (1968) to describe governments he observed in South Asia. Myrdal argued that throughout that region, governments could not promote rapid economic development because they could not implement public policies that imposed substantial obligations on the general populace. His observation that South Asian states lacked administrative capacity to implement policies and exercise governance, and thus could be characterized as 'soft' is not convincing. Myrdal's assertion that the 'softness' of states, such as India, prevented rapid economic progress proved untenable given the subsequent impressive achievements of India and Pakistan (Myrdal, 1968).

In contrast to what Myrdal found in Asia, what makes the state 'soft' in Africa is not so much a lack of 'social discipline' as resource constraints that confront political leaders, and their bad or misguided policy choices. For example, under the old regime in Ethiopia, Haile Selassie I spent much time and energy instituting a centralized tax system and independent resource base to consolidate his rule. His modernization and fiscal centralization measures provoked powerful regional groups that were determined to

preserve their autonomy. The challenge facing the Derg was the same. It had to devise mechanisms to cultivate, manage and expand its reservoir of resources to consolidate its authority and legitimacy. The regime's attempt to extract surplus and overcome Ethiopia's underdevelopment by imposing a Soviet-style command economy proved an abysmal failure.

According to proponents of the 'soft' state perspective, the African state is considered 'soft' because it lacks the essentials of statehood. In other words, it does not have adequate resources with which it could assert formal attributes of a state such as territorial integrity, independence, national and legitimate authority. The sovereignty of the African state is guaranteed by the collaborative world community of nations which accords formal recognition to its national sovereignty. It is also characterized by regimes of highly personal rule that are deficient in institutional authority and capability. These descriptions depict the internal problems of African governments but do not tell us much about the exogenous forces that sustain authoritarian regimes throughout the continent (Jackson & Rosberg, 1986).

One of the limitations of the 'soft' state approach is that it fails to account for the inter-relationship of the internal and external factors that exacerbate problems of the African state. Needless to say, internal and external pressures worked against the effectiveness and efficiency of the juridical state power apparatus in Africa. For example, domestic state capabilities have been eroded by the emergence of armed groups, such as ethnic-based opposition, that compete with the formal state for acceptance by society. On the other hand, authoritarianism and personal rule, which are the root causes of the crisis of legitimacy in many African states, were sustained by external forces

with perceived national interests.   Thus, the Russians long
sustained the brutal Mengistu dictatorship in Ethiopia
between 1974-1991; the Americans, Belgians and the French
buttressed Mobutu of Zaire since the early 1960s; and
Somalia's Siad Barre was first embraced by the ex-Soviet
Union and later by the United States between 1969-1990. All
these regimes perpetuated their rule more by unfettered
outside help than domestic popularity and   legitimacy
(Bermeo, 1992; Luckham, 1994).

Furthermore, African governments were thrown into
turmoil because of internal and external pressures that
mutually reinforced each other to aggravate the crisis in
legitimacy and governance throughout the continent.   For
example, African governments have often been caught between
two powerful sources of pressure on agricultural development
and policy. On the one hand, strong urban constituencies
favored statist policies that kept prices of food crops
artificially low and opposed changes that might unleash
inflationary trends in the cities.   On the other hand,
governments have been confronted with mounting pressures
from external aid agencies, including the World Bank and
foreign governments, which insist on freeing the
agricultural market place in order to alleviate food
shortages (Lofchie, 1989; Tarp, 1993).

The bias in favor of urban over rural interests is most
dramatically revealed in policies which gave the national
governments of many African states extraordinary control
over agricultural production and marketing. As Robert Bates
(1981) has pointed out, the earnings of the African growers
were substantially reduced as a consequence of the monopoly
which government marketing boards attempted to assert over
the distribution of seeds and the purchase of crops.   He
pointed out the conscious setting of prices at far less than

world prices, the taxing of export crops and discriminatory import tax structures that penalize farmers in favor of city dwellers were problems in increasing food production. Producers of domestic food crops were undercompensated in order to placate the urban power bases of the political leadership, which often constituted a tiny but powerful segment of the total population (Bates, 1981).

According to 'soft' state theorists, the African state is a failure because it does not possess the institutional-administrative and resource capacity to carry out development. Such an observation confines the discussion to the internal organization of African governments, such as their highly bureaucratized administrative structures, and overlooks the intense domestic and international pressures the African state is subjected to. For example, policy interventions by foreign governments and multi-lateral aid agencies have often taxed the capacity of the African state to respond to the challenges it faces by compelling it to change its priorities or accept conditionalities that further increased the hardship on important sectors of society. The desperation of most African countries for economic assistance has enabled external actors to exercise substantial leverage in formulating strategies that reduced living standards for the majority of the people and further undermined the legitimacy and stability of governments. In this connection, one can mention the popular discontent and societal backlash against IMF structural adjustment programs in Egypt, Nigeria, Ghana, Zambia and Zimbabwe (Davies and Saunders, 1987; Seddon, 1990; Kraaij, 1994).

It could be argued that it is the vulnerability of African economies to global economic pressures rather than the 'softness' of the state that affected the capacity of the African state to promote economic growth. A lack of

government revenue made worse by limited export and import capacity has constrained African public sectors from responding to the economic plight of their societies. According to the World Bank, the deterioration in public and social services in Africa, including schools, hospitals, roads and rural development, was caused by severe budgetary and fiscal difficulties. It cites instances in many countries, including Uganda, Zambia, Mozambique, Swaziland and Malawi, where governments were unable to prevent the total collapse of essential public services and pay public sector employees their salaries. Emergency grants and donations from foreign sources helped these governments deal with serious budgetary and fiscal problems (Rose, 1985).

From a different angle, Africa's total dependence on the international economy has affected its development priorities and might have indirectly contributed to its economic deterioration. For example, the fact that domestic economies are heavily dependent on foreign imports and aid has meant that African governments had to accept policy prescriptions to reduce expenditures in areas such as health, education and other parts of the social and economic infrastructure. By insisting on expenditure-reducing policy reforms as preconditions for assistance, involving, for example, deregulation, privatization, reductions in government expenditure, the elimination of government controls over economic activity and involvement in the production and distribution of goods and services, the institutional capacity of the state to intervene in the management of the economy is further undermined. More importantly, the reduction of government expenditure in critical social and economic sectors, such as health and education, has resulted in sharply deteriorating living standards which in turn fuel political and social turbulence in a continent already torn apart by strife and turmoil

(Loxley, 1990; Loxley and Seddon, 1994).

The 'soft' state perspective does not explain either the turbulence that afflicts the African continent or the poor socio-economic performance of African states. Many politically unstable and strife-torn African states, such as Ethiopia, Somalia, Chad and Mozambique, are also the poorest nations in the continent. This relationship between poor socio-economic indicators and the troubled African state is not explained by the 'softness' of the state alone because African underdevelopment is a result of severe internal and external challenges. Sadly, the World Bank stated that 'overall Africans are almost as poor today as they were thirty years ago'. Furthermore, the alleged 'softness' of African states does not explain Africa's socio-economic features because Asian and Latin American countries, whose states are presumably not soft, have faced similar problems. Therefore, to the extent that the paradigm does not base its assumptions, descriptions and explanations on comparisons between the state in Africa and other low-income countries, its usefulness as a tool of analysis for African problems is limited (Sangmpam, 1993; World Bank, 1989).

In addition to being circumscribed by conceptual and methodological limitations, the 'soft' state thesis does not establish a link between economic growth and the nature of the state in Africa over the past three decades. For example, a comparison of early 1990s per capita economic indicators of contemporary African countries, which are characterized as 'soft', with the same economic indices thirty years ago prove that those which were the poorest then remain poor. Countries as varied as Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Tanzania, Zaire, Somalia, Chad and Mozambique, which made the bottom list in the 1960s with an average per capita of US$84 were still on the bottom list in the 1990s, with an

average per capita of less than US$172. Their situation, broadly considered in GNP terms, cannot be ascribed to the 'softness' of the state. The common thread among these states that explains their economic difficulties is the disruptive effects of civil wars and conflicts, famine and drought, and corrupt government administrations, and not the softness of the regimes. Hence, the 'soft' state paradigm does not address questions related to the generic crisis of the African state or its poor socio-economic achievement (World Bank, 1989,1991; Kurian, 1992).

Many African states attempted to develop institutional capacity as a means to manage and protect their interests. Their institutional expansion took the forms of direct state ownership of the means of production (nationalization) and rapid expansion of the public sector to manage the economy. Heavy state involvement had qualitative and quantitative dimensions. The qualitative aspect covered the broad range of regulations, policies and investment codes governments put in place to enhance the regulatory capacity of the state over the national economy. The quantitative dimension could be determined using a variety of measures including the growth of publicly owned enterprises, the proportion of GNP expended by government and the dramatic rise in government employment as compared with the private sector. For example, during the 1980s, the average number of parastatals per African country was 300, ranging from 400 in Tanzania (1981) to 7 in Lesotho (1978). During the same period, government employment averaged between 45-69 per cent of the total labor force and African central governments expended more on wages and salaries compared with their counterparts in the industrialized and other developing nations. The expansion of government and public administration did not help avert the looming stagnation and crisis in the continent, and thus is often treated as a

causal factor (Heller and Tait, 1982; Ozgediz, 1983; Nellis, 1986).

During the 1970s and 1980s, several African countries, such as Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, responded to economic crisis by regulating the allocation of foreign exchange earnings, controlling foreign borrowing, overseeing parastatal activities and introducing draconian rationing of most basic of economic necessities, such as sugar and salt. The centralized bureaucratic apparatuses that governments built to implement these policies became an end in themselves rather than effective institutions to carry out social and economic development. Scarce resources were siphoned off to support these bureaucratic structures and a large army of government employees. In addition, as politicians and bureaucrats expanded the domain of the state, they reduced the 'civic' space of African societies, where people might engage in diverse collective action outside of government control.

Furthermore, although African governments allocated substantial capital investments and public expenditure on centralized bureaucratic apparatuses, the centralized bureaucratized component of the state was no guarantee for stability. The formal concentration of power did not lead to effective control of citizens by the state because people formed autonomous groups and survival mechanisms, for example informal markets, contraband trade and labor migration, to avoid state structures of control and domination (Migdal, 1988; Rothchild & Chazan, 1988).

Another theoretical assumption of the 'soft' state perspective is that political stability can be achieved by enhancing the coercive capacity of the state. The experiences of many African states, which expanded their

public bureaucracies throughout the 1970s and 1980s, suggested that institutional proliferation did not guarantee stable governance. There can be an expansion of formal institutional capacity, for example, the proliferation of state bureaucratic institutions, but the absence of legitimate state authority reveals a weakening state and, perhaps, a state in perpetual crisis. Some of Africa's strife-torn countries, including Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Somalia, established over-arching public bureaucracies and monolithic state parties. Such superstructures provided neither stable governance nor legitimacy for those in power. Despite extensive intelligence and security apparatuses and large armies, these countries were among the most turbulent and unstable states in Africa during the 1980s. It was not widely perceived legitimacy that was the basis of rule but the blunt force of the states' coercive and repressive power that was used to impose the narrow interests of elites (Liebenow, 1986; Ergas, 1987).

To summarize, while the state matters in Africa, attention must be given to its severe contextual constraints, i.e. political turbulence and instability. The performance and failures of the African state must be considered against this background. Many African countries faced problems of political fragility, regional instability, limited administrative and infrastructural resources, deteriorating terms of trade, heavy debt burdens, and a difficult international economic and financial environment. These deteriorating economic and political conditions reflected a number of external and domestic factors whose cumulative effects plunged the continent into political turbulence.

This thesis argues that turbulence is a useful

conceptual tool to better understand the problems of the African state. The 'soft' state approach cannot explain the African economic and political malaise because it does not focus on the inter-relationship of domestic and external variables affecting the performance of African governments and states. Furthermore, attributing the worsening socio-economic conditions solely to the 'softness' of the African state conceals inter-country differences which need to be explained by historical particularities, ecological reasons and the political regime in each case. Also, the strength of each state varies by policy area within states. Proposed solutions need to take these factors into account.

Turbulence in Africa has internal and external dimensions. The preceding discussion suggests the futility of efforts to differentiate between internal and external causes of turbulence and socio-economic degeneration in Africa. The internal and external causes of turbulence inter-relate in a number of direct and indirect ways to exacerbate problems of governance and economic crisis in the African continent. The following model illustrates the inter-relationship of internal and external contributory factors to turbulence in Africa and the manifestations of political and economic instability. In subsequent chapters, I will employ this model to discuss the causes and consequences of turbulence and regime responses in Ethiopia between 1974-1991.

Model 2.1
An Organizational Model of Turbulence and the African State

Internal Factors
-Violent leadership changes
-National government policies
-Civil war and strife
-Corruption and mismanagement
-Ethno-linguistic diversity
-Oppressive regimes

External Factors
-Regional/inter-state conflicts
-Border wars and insurgency
-Cold war politics
-External flow of arms
-World Bank and IMF economic recovery programs, e.g. SAPS
-Internal economic shocks, e.g. commodity price changes

Manifestations of Turbulence
-Ethnic strife and conflicts
-Recurrent droughts and famines
-Agricultural decline and food deficits
-Crises in legitimacy and governance
-Socio-economic deterioration
-Erosion of the states' administrative and resource capacity

The African State in Turbulence

Magnify and exacerbate

Reinforce and overlap

Pressures

Pressures

Pressures

Pressures

Magnify and exacerbate

Chapter II

Notes and References

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Chapter III. Socio-historical Context for Turbulence in Ethiopia

Introduction

Africa's oldest independent state has experienced many centuries of political turbulence. Ethno-regional wars, recurrent droughts and famines, grinding mass poverty and civil strife are contributory factors to Ethiopia's turbulent domestic politics. This chapter reviews the country's socio-historical characteristics and external factors to provide a context for discussing public administration and governance under turbulence in Ethiopia.

Internally, Ethiopia is a country of diverse ethnic groups and religions. Its features as a multi-ethnic polity have generated civil strife because of the violent struggles conducted by different nationalities that sought independence from the state. Protracted fighting between the central government and centrifugal forces has created a turbulent political environment in which state authority is fragmented and governmental administration is crisis-ridden. In other words, public administration has to operate in an unstable and conflict-ridden environment because of the erosion of central government authority to implement national policies.

On the external front, Ethiopia's domestic turmoil must be examined within the context of regional and geo-political struggles for dominance. The involvement of Big Powers in the politics of the Horn of Africa during the 'cold war' era aggravated inter-state tensions in the region. For example, the Soviet-American rivalry and their shift of alliances in Ethiopia and Somalia indirectly affected Ethiopia's stability and territorial integrity. In addition, the

pan-Arab religious and political ideology of the Middle East with an accent on establishing an Arab nation stretching from the Mediterranean to the Gulf of Aden undermined Ethiopia's sovereignty. This expansionist ideology fuelled ethnic and religious irredentism within Ethiopia and affected its relations with neighboring countries.

An important perspective for introducing the subject matter of public administration under turbulence in Ethiopia is through examining the politics of ethnicity as it impinged upon the country's domestic instability as well as its relations with neighboring countries since the mid-1970s. Ethiopia's internal turbulence and instability as well as external conflicts and wars have often flown from ethnic insurgency and processes of mobilization for more than two decades. The hostile regional environment has been supportive of the rise of separatist/nationalistic groups that challenged the emergence of a strong and unified Ethiopian nation. For an understanding of the difficulties of institutionalizing 'sovereign state control in Ethiopia', i.e. an organized polity with monopoly of governmental authority, it is necessary to survey the social and historical setting of Ethiopian society. Historical, cultural and social factors are important in understanding the dynamics of state-society relations, including the erosion of state capacity and limitations of the Ethiopian state to establish hegemony in the face of ethnic-based opposition with centrifugal tendencies.

Whether a nation is homogeneous or heterogeneous is not important in explaining turbulence in Africa, including Ethiopia. Repression and domination by the state of its citizens breeds instability. It is repressive rule and the suppression of individual and collective rights by autocratic regimes rather than the diversity of nations that

generated political turbulence and the state crisis throughout Africa for nearly three decades. In much of Africa, for example, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mozambique and Somalia, the manifestations of turbulence, including resurgence of ethnic/tribal politics, collapse of states and the paralysis of central government administrations, are legacies of undemocratic governments with narrow power bases. In these strife-torn societies, the efficacy of the state in promoting economic development was adversely affected by the social and political turmoil characterized by endless civil wars, ethnic/tribal conflicts, regional irredentism and secessions, extreme poverty and droughts.

In brief, Ethiopia is beset with an adverse socio-political environment that exacerbates its political turbulence. It suffers from manifestations of the African state crisis including inter-ethnic mistrust and the ensuing conflicts, the uneven distribution of economic and political power among different groups, regional and international tensions, bloated state bureaucracies and authoritarian regimes. It is these factors and the country's socio-economic setting that will be surveyed to provide a proper context for an understanding of political turbulence in Ethiopia.

The Ethiopian Socio-Economic Setting

Ethiopia's ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity is an important contributory factor to its lack of stable governance and public administration. For centuries, the country has been inhabited by diverse ethno-linguistic groups. The principal language groups can be divided into four categories: the Semitic languages of the northern and central highlands mainly Tigrean and Amharic; the Cushitic languages of the lowlands and of the south-western, central

and south-eastern highlands, mainly Oromo, Afar and Somali; the Sidama languages of the central and southern highlands; and the Sahara-Nilotic languages of the periphery areas. In addition, Ethiopia is also an early home for the major religions, including Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Historical legacy and religious heterodoxy have made Ethiopia one of the most heterogeneous nations in the world (Bender, 1976).

Ethiopia is one of Africa's biggest countries with an estimated 1993 population of about 53.8 million, growing at 2.7 per cent a year. It is the third most populous nation in the continent after Nigeria and Egypt. It has a territorial size of about 1.2 million square km. According to the 1984 census, about 62 per cent of the people were estimated to belong to the Christian faith, 33 per cent Moslems and the rest followed traditional beliefs (CSO, 1984; World Bank, 1994).

Contemporary Ethiopia is a heterogeneous nation-state with no less than 70 ethnic and tribal groups. The Amharas, Oromos and Tigreans are the largest ethnic groups. The Amharas, a predominantly Orthodox Christian people, comprise about 30 per cent of the total population and traditionally inhabited the central regions although they are fairly widespread throughout the east and south-east since the days of Menelik II. The Oromos, estimated to be between 30-35 per cent, are approximately half Christians and half Moslems. The Tigreans constitute 7-10 per cent and are predominantly Orthodox Christians. There are also a multitude of other ethnic groups, including the Agau, Afar, Gurage, Wolaita, Somali and Sidama, who belong either to the Christian or Moslem faith (Ofcansky & Berry, 1993; Lipsky, 1962).

In the economic arena, Ethiopia is one of the poorest states in the low-income group of countries. According to World Bank data, Ethiopia's GNP per capita was $110 in 1992 (better than only Mozambique's which was $60) and life expectancy stood at 47 and 53 years for males and females respectively. Only one out of every four school-age children could attend schools and less than 20 per cent of the population had access to safe water. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy and accounts for 85 per cent of GNP and employment and has been severely affected by recurrent droughts. After more than two decades of destructive wars, Ethiopia is in dire need of recovery and development as the infrastructure was damaged by years of civil conflicts and agriculture has been stifled by peasant villagization and resettlement policies (World Bank, 1993; Rake, 1995).

Despite Ethiopia's diversity, the Christian Amhara-Tigrean feudal ruling class has culturally and politically dominated the state until 1974. The Amharas and the Tigreans formed the core of traditional Ethiopia otherwise known as Abyssinia until medieval Ethiopia expanded to the south and south-east and became 'Greater Ethiopia'. The Amharas and Tigreans claim common descent from an ancient Axumite civilization that originated around 300 A.D. somewhere in present-day Tigre and Eritrea making Ethiopia one of the oldest nations in the world. The Amhara-Tigrean cultural and political domination of the Ethiopian state has long been a source of deep resentment by other tribes, mainly the Oromos, Somalis and other under-represented ethnic groups (Rey, 1969).

Important cultural and historical characteristics set Ethiopia apart from the rest of sub-Saharan Africa. The Ethiopian people possess the oldest written language and a rich literary tradition rarely found elsewhere in the

continent. Amharic, which serves as the lingua franca for a
substantial segment of the population, is the only language
in black Africa (except Arabic) that has an indigenous
script.   In addition, Ethiopians use a unique calendar
system, both for secular and religious purposes, that
equally divides the year into 12 months of 30 days each and
a month of 5 days (Ullendorf, 1965).

Another important feature which differentiates Ethiopia
from the rest of Africa is its long existence as an
independent state.   The country's unique cultural and
political landscape has been shaped by indigenous methods of
nation building, including internal wars and conquests,
rather than by European colonial powers as was the case in
almost all post-colonial African states.   Unlike much of
Africa, the country has been able to preserve an independent
statehood without European colonization except for a brief
period of Fascist Italian occupation between 1936-1941.   In
the heyday of colonialism, Ethiopia thwarted attempts to
subjugate her and added to its territorial size by
challenging the European powers in the 'Scramble for
Africa'. As a long-time student of Ethiopian politics put
it:

> Ethiopia is unique in Africa in possessing a tradition
> of the state which predates the colonial era. While
> most African societies were governed through political
> systems based on a mythology of descent -- Ethiopia has
> been governed through a hierarchial political structure
> based ultimately on the control of territory---This
> state was no mere dynastic creation, but, was rather
> deeply rooted in the social and economic structure of
> the people who comprised it (Clapham, 1990).

European colonial powers recognized Ethiopian statehood

as early as the 19th century. For example, Ethiopia concluded treaties with France defining the Ethio-Djibouti boundary in 1897, with Britain defining the Ethio-Kenyan boundary in 1907 and the Ethio-British Somaliland boundary in 1908 and with Italy defining the Ethio-Eritrean and Ethio-Italian Somaliland boundaries in 1908. Needless to say, European recognition of Ethiopia's territorial boundaries and government made Ethiopia a sovereign state. Furthermore, the 1906 tripartite treaty signed by Britain, France and Italy recognizing Ethiopia's sovereignty over her territories except Eritrea (which was then an Italian colony) was a reaffirmation of the political independence of the Ethiopian state. As a matter of fact, when much of the world, including Africa, Latin America and Asia (except Japan), was under colonial rule, Ethiopia survived as one of the few free nations with formal sovereignty and political independence (Baer, 1967; RIIA, 1935).

Ethiopian leaders fought against colonial powers, for example, the battles of Magdalla in 1868 and Adwa in 1896, to safeguard the country's independence. Simultaneously, they conducted internal state consolidation and territorial expansion by subjugating renegade Christian and Moslem regional principalities that challenged the supremacy of the medieval Ethiopian state. Historically, Ethiopia was molded into an indigenous state by the internal processes of state formation, including co-optation, conquest, expansion and elimination of rival groups, rather than external European penetration. Hence, Ethiopia could be considered a non-European state that utilized classic European techniques of state building, including the violent suppression of rebellious regional powers that resisted incorporation and integration into the central state. In addition, in terms of its class structure, i.e. differentiated classes of peasantry, clergy, landed aristocracy and monarchy, and the

internal and external resistances it had to overcome in order to consolidate and extend its dominance, the Ethiopian state was similar to its medieval European counterpart (Work, 1935; Held, 1983; Rubensen, 1976).

The internal and external forces that gave rise to the Ethiopian state were different from Europe during a similar phase of development. Unlike its European counterparts, which had become stable nation-states, the Ethiopian state did not evolve into a unified state primarily for two reasons. In the first place, nation-building in Ethiopia was conducted in a more diverse and complex socio-cultural setting than in Europe. Ethiopian society was less integrated politically and culturally and the economy less developed than medieval Europe. Central institutions were weak and unable to penetrate the periphery. The weak central authority structure gave rise to multiple forms of parochial loyalties, such as ethnicity and religion, that competed and conflicted with national consciousness and identification. The institutions of coercion and state consolidation could not be constructed in a fractured socio-political environment characterized by periodic social upheavals and instability. As a result, the central Ethiopian state had limited capacity to subjugate and incorporate the various peoples into a national core.

Secondly, state formation in Ethiopia occurred in a socio-cultural setting of far greater heterogeneity than in Europe. Ethiopia has been home to disparate ethno-linguistic constituencies with stronger and more potent affiliations to religion, tribe or region than to the central state. This meant that centralization had to be carried out with coercion in order to overcome domestic and external opposition to state consolidation. Internally, three forces could be identified as having challenged the

legitimation and centralization of an Ethiopian state: (a) the rural peasantry which resented the imposition of new taxes and obligations on its produce and labor and often rebelled when pressed to shift its loyalty from regional to central forces, (b) territorial princely states forced to accept the supremacy of the center; and (c) the competing dynasties and the Orthodox Church who resisted relinquishing power to a central crown. Externally, the major challengers were aggressive Moslem empires and European colonialists in northeast Africa competing against emerging Ethiopia for territory and resources. Hence, the Ethiopian state historically evolved after a protracted and conflict-ridden socio-political process -- a feature that it shared with the medieval European state but one that differentiated it from post-colonial Africa (Gebru, 1991).

In a comparative perspective, the Ethiopian experience in the evolution of the state was qualitatively different from many other African countries. In purely structural terms, Ethiopia shares many commonalities with contemporary African states: an over-inflated public bureaucracy, inter-communal strife, insufficient administrative and economic resources to establish hegemony and an intrusive governmental apparatus that left little space for 'civil' society. Notwithstanding such structural similarities, Ethiopia possesses unique historical and cultural legacies, for example, regionalism and ethnic rivalry, that partly explain its present-day problems of ethnic secession, extreme poverty and severe underdevelopment, whose cumulative effects generate political instability.

An Ethiopian state, i.e. an organized instrument of domination and control, evolved as a result of internal and external wars of expansion. Twentieth century Ethiopia has been a successor to an ancient Axumite state that expanded

to the south and south-east by challenging European
colonialism in north-east Africa during the 19th century.
Ethiopian emperors acquired weapons and technology from
Europe which they used to centralize and unify an indigenous
state. Such a process of internal state building and
consolidation has not taken place in much of Africa.

Ethiopian society has long been governed by a
hierarchial political order with a civil and military
organization that functioned under the monarchy and the
Orthodox Church. The central government maintained an
administrative apparatus that was sustained by surplus
extraction from the mass of peasant producers. The basic
components of the social system were the monarchy, the
landed aristocracy, the clergy and the mass of rural
farmers. Like any other feudal society, the dominant
classes taxed and extracted surplus from the toiling
peasantry. Land was an important determinant of wealth and
status in feudal Ethiopia. The peasant population resented
the state's authority to extract surplus and labor.
According to Ethiopian tradition, the state must be avoided
because as the popular saying goes, "Tell a government
official how much corn was grown and he will tax more
heavily. The correct number of children, cattle, goods,
whatever, may have the same effect. Unless the answers are
ambiguous, or inaccurate, the giver of the information will
suffer at the hands of the government official" (Gilkes,
1975).

Ethiopians of different ethnic backgrounds share
historical and cultural bonds that transcend particularistic
forms of allegiance such as kinship, blood or tribal ties.
The country's long experience as an independent state
created a stronger cohesion and sense of national identity
than to be found elsewhere in post-colonial Africa. During

the Haile Selassie I era, the use of Amharic as the national language, the Orthodox Church and modern education were aggressively pursued to promote national integration. This process of state building with an accent on a national culture and language generated discontent among those who lost their linguistic and cultural identities. Much of the ethnic-based fighting that both the monarchy and the military regime faced was motivated by cultural and linguistic grievances. The goal of the various ethnic liberation movements was to restructure the traditional Ethiopian state which they viewed as an instrument of cultural and political oppression by the Amhara-Tigrean ethnic group (Sorensen, 1993; Chazan, 1992).

In sum, Ethiopia is a multi-ethnic and -religious state. Many of its past rulers had different ethnic backgrounds, for example, Tewodros II (Amhara), Yohannes IV (Tigrean), Menelik II (Oromo-Amhara) and Haile Selassie I (Amhara, Oromo and Gurage). Historically, the forging of a national identity rather than ethnicity was the basis of the Ethiopian state. Indeed, ethnic consciousness in Ethiopian politics increased after the Italians divided the country into ethnic provinces during the period of Fascist occupation (1936-1941). Ethiopia is an indigenous African state that evolved as a result of internal processes of state formation, including inter-ethnic assimilation and internal expansion, a phenomenon which is rare in post-colonial Africa (Gebru, 1991).

This distinction of being an indigenous state explains the resilience of state-society and inter-communal relations in contemporary Ethiopia in comparison with other African states. For example, the violent overthrow of the military regime in 1991 did not lead to anarchy and the disintegration of the country's political and economic

institutions as happened in other African countries that underwent through similar civil strife. Ethiopia's tradition as an organized polity and political continuity were important factors in averting chaos and helping the relatively peaceful transfer of state power from a brutal military government to a bewildering array of ethnic front organizations led by the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Forces (EPRDF). In the recent past, Somalia, Rwanda and Liberia were thrown into anarchy and mass killings following the collapse of central governments as people shifted their allegiance from the state to their clan or tribal leadership. In Ethiopia, however, despite its bigger size and heterogeneity, governmental authority was quickly restored before much vindictive tribal killings and complete breakdown of law and order. The long experience of the people with central government and their deference to authority outlived the temporary paralysis of the state (Mathew, 1947; Schwab, 1985).

Despite its historical similarity to the medieval European state, Ethiopia has not evolved into an 'integrated' polity because the instruments that Ethiopian leaders employed to create a unified country were more coercive than unifying. Successive Ethiopian rulers imposed Amharic as the national language and the Orthodox Church as the dominant state religion upon a myriad of social and ethnic groups. Ethnic and nationality groups resisted cultural assimilation and political centralization resorted to armed struggles against a state which they considered illegitimate and unrepresentative. These groups used ethnicity to secure inclusion in the system and wanted to reconstruct state-society relations through violent means. The proliferation of ethnic liberation movements that included the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF), the Tigre Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF), the Oromo Liberation

Front (OLF), the Afar Liberation Front (ALF) and the Western Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF), is evidence of ethnic resentment towards the central Ethiopian state. Many of these groups engaged in fighting against the central government starting in the early 1970s. Incessant fighting between these groups and the central government made Ethiopia one of the most unstable and strife-torn nations in the African continent. More importantly, ethnic consciousness worked against the mobilization of the people around broad democratic concerns to promote national integration and overcome economic underdevelopment. In other words, ethnic separatism has undermined efforts to build a unified and integrated Ethiopian nation and became an enduring element in the state-society turbulence in Ethiopia (Keller, 1995; Markakis, 1987; Fukui & Markakis, 1994).

To summarize, Ethiopia is not a unified nation because of recurrent ethnic rebellions arising from the uneven distribution of political power among different ethnic groups. For an understanding of the problems of building a unified and stable Ethiopian nation, it is necessary to examine the country's turbulent historical past and the challenges it faced in consolidating central power.

The Early Signs of Turbulence in Ethiopian History

The earliest predecessor to present-day Ethiopia was the Axum city kingdom that originated around the first century A.D. along the Red Sea coast in northern Ethiopia. Ancient Axum developed the only recorded civilization in East Africa; maintained relations with the Arabs, Byzantine empire and Egypt; and in the mid-fourth century accepted Christianity. The Axumites devised an original architectural style and built churches and obelisks which to this day stand as legacies of an ancient civilization. In

addition, Axum also developed a written language, Geez, minted coins over an approximately 300-year period and was an important hub of culture and trade along the Red Sea coast (Sergew, 1972; Jones & Monroe, 1955; Houston, 1985).

Axum was cut off from the outside world after Arabs gained control of the Red Sea trade. As a result, the Christian Axumite state lost its maritime trade, underwent a period of prolonged decline from the seventh to the twelfth century and collapsed as one of the oldest African civilizations. A dynasty known as the Zagwe came in line in the mid-twelfth century after the fall of Axum and established itself in the Amhara and Agau regions of highland Ethiopia to avoid further Islamic encroachments from the coast. The Zagwe kingdom preserved the Semitic language, artistic traditions and Orthodox faith of the preceding Axumite civilization as a symbol of the continuity of the ancient Ethiopian state (Munro-Hay, 1991; Huggins, 1969).

As the Christian Zagwe was flourishing in northern Ethiopia early in the tenth century, Islam began spreading in the east and south of Ethiopia. Rival Moslem principalities, including the Afar and Ifat kingdoms, that would later challenge the supremacy of the Christian north emerged around this period. These Islamic states staged a series of expeditions to conquer Christian Zagwe territory and convert local populations to the Moslem religion. In the end, a weakened Zagwe kingdom was replaced by a legendary 'Solomonic' line at the beginning of the thirteenth century. The 'Solomonic' line Christian state set up a permanent capital at Gondar from which it controlled mainly the highland provinces of central Ethiopia but was unable to subjugate the surrounding Moslem peoples of the eastern highlands and the periphery. For about 200

years, Gondar was the cultural and political capital of medieval Ethiopia helping in the development of traditional Ethiopian literature and architecture. Having one fixed capital at Gondar helped to revive the art, commerce and language of the two dominant 'highland Christian people' of Ethiopia, mainly the Amharas and the Tigreans (Abir, 1980).

The rise of Islam in the Arabian peninsula changed the demographic and cultural profile of ancient Ethiopia. Starting in the middle of the ninth century, Islam had spread to the southern coast of the Gulf of Aden and East Africa bringing the people in the surrounding Ethiopian highlands under its domain. As a result, many Muslim sultanates like Adal, Ifat, Harar and Afar, were established thereby forcing the surrounding 'Cushitic' peoples to embrace Islam. Thereafter, the Islamized populations of the south challenged the Christian Amhara-Tigrean people of the north and weakened the Orthodox Church as the established religion of the empire state (Taddesse, 1972; Tirmingham, 1965; Cerulli, 1988).

The most serious threat to the Christian dominated Ethiopian state came during the second half of the sixteenth century. An Ethiopian Moslem war general, Ahmed Gragn, aided by the expanding Ottoman empire, mobilized Moslem people from the south and the east and overran Christian dominated northern and central regions of Ethiopia, including Shoa, Wello, Gojjam and Gondar. His campaigns brought significant populations in much of what had been the bastion of Christian Ethiopia under Moslem rule. The northern Christian empire was saved from annihilation with superior firearms supplied by Portuguese Roman Catholic missionaries. Later, the Portuguese ignited rifts within the country when they attempted to convert the local people to Catholicism. Eventually, the Portuguese interference led

to civil war that further exhausted the Christian kingdom and rendered it vulnerable to a series of incursions from the south (Sanceau, 1943; Whiteway, 1967).

Furthermore, after it was weakened by repeated Moslem invasions and religious wars, the Gondar-based state faced a wave of migrations from the south. In a series of massive migrations starting around the mid-sixteenth century, the Oromos penetrated much of northern and eastern Ethiopia. They infiltrated central Ethiopia with large numbers settling in Shoa, Wello, Gojjam and other adjacent provinces. In the east, the Oromo movement undermined powerful sultanates and contributed to the decline of the rebellious Moslem principalities. The Oromo people played an important role in the cultural and political dynamics of medieval Ethiopia by mixing their community and cultural traditions with other groups of tribes. Their egalitarian social and cultural organization affected the authoritarian social and family structure of the northerners, mainly the Amhara-Tigreans. Though the Oromos constituted a very large ethnic group, they did not impose their cultural and religious practices on other tribes. A significant segment of the ethnic Oromo became Orthodox Christians and assimilated with the Amharas, mainly in Gojjam, Shoa and Wello (Mohammed, 1990; Abir, 1980).

In summary, three political developments fuelled turbulence in medieval Ethiopia as it struggled to emerge as a state. First, there was continuous power struggle between the central Christian state and the surrounding Moslem principalities for domination of the Ethiopian empire. The inter-regional rivalry limited the ability of the central state to establish its hegemony over all the people in the Ethiopian region. Second, the Portuguese Catholic missionaries' interference in the affairs of the Orthodox

Church and palace politics unleashed civil war that further
exhausted the Ethiopian state. Third, there were massive
population movements dating back to the sixteenth century
that added to the instability of the Ethiopian empire. In
particular, the internal Oromo migrations brought about
cultural and ethnic interpenetration among Amharas, Oromos,
Agaus and other peoples of northern and central Ethiopia,
making Ethiopia a poly-ethnic constituency. These three
historical causes of turbulence weakened the central
Ethiopian state and led to the emergence of autonomous
regional states that fought among themselves for dominance.

The Emergence of a Poly-centric Ethiopia

The absence of a strong central state was a major
contributory factor to political turmoil in medieval
Ethiopia. Central authority could not be established
throughout the empire because of formidable regional and
ethno-religious opposition. The center-periphery struggle
weakened the central state and led to the proliferation of
regional mini-states that competed for supremacy.

Early period regional and religious rivalries gave rise
to the emergence of many different kinds of state formations
in medieval Ethiopia. These state structures could be
categorized into an empire (Axum and later Gondar), a
city-state (Harar), a clan (the Somalis), a kingdom (Janjero
and Sidama) and a sultanate (the Afar). None of these could
be considered sovereign entities as they did not have the
attributes of a sovereign state, including formal claim to
equality, non-interference in each other's affairs,
territorial inviolability and recognition by other states.
Rather, each of these regional powers engaged in incessant
battles for supremacy, exacting tributes from the defeated
side and wantonly pillaging each other's properties. The

perennial conflicts that went on for nearly two centuries among these semi-independent regional states threw Ethiopia into a chaotic period known as the 'Zemane Mesafint' or the 'Era of the Princes'--a period marked by the total collapse and disintegration of what was left of the central Ethiopian state (Andargatchew, 1993).

The 'Era of the Princes' (1769-1855) was a period of political anarchy and uninterrupted civil wars in Ethiopian history. A central state yielded to powerful regionalist states that had become de facto independent polities, rendering the central crown a puppet. Local principalities and regional warlords emerged in Tigre, Wag-Lasta, Simien, Begemdir and Gojjam. These separate states struggled among themselves to increase their power and authority as there was no strong center to quell the predatory behavior of competing dynasties. During this time, Ethiopia practically ceased to exist as a unified state as the titular emperorship shifted from one region to another (Abir, 1968; Mathew, 1947).

The history of the medieval Ethiopian state is a history of the struggles of regional power fiefdoms. The political structure could be called feudal 'poly-centric' federalism--a political system consisting of a loosely structured set of regional powers. The various regional kingdoms controlled culturally, linguistically and religiously mixed communities. The drive for expansion was motivated by territorial and resource gains to sustain mini-empires. In other words, empire building was not motivated by ethnicity or campaigns to rule ethnically homogeneous regions. None of these regional powers were either ethnically or socially homogeneous. Indeed, many of the historically powerful kingdoms, such as Gondar, Tigre, Shoa, Sidama, controlled multi-ethnic territories whose boundaries

were geographical and political rather than ethnic or
tribal. Historical and political factors were more
important than ethnicity in shaping a multi-ethnic Ethiopia.
This is underscored by the fact that the same ethnic group
was divided into various semi-independent regional states,
for example, the Amharas and the Oromos, the Tigreans and
the Amharas and the Amharas and the Agaus. In fact, the
ruling elites of the various regions established and broke
alliances on the basis of political and economic
considerations rather than purely ethnic dimensions (Levine,
1965; 1974).

Ethiopia has never existed as a 'centralized' nation as
in France, Germany or Russia. Rather, it was a 'poly-
centric' polity with pluralistic traits, i.e. statehood
rooted in regionalism, cultural autonomy and multi-ethnic
identity. Both the regional states and the central monarchy
presided over multi-cultural populations. In other words,
Ethiopia was a multi-ethnic state with several regional
power centers existing side by side with a central monarchy
having limited authority over its domain. The political
structure could be described as fragmented whereby the
regions recognized a titular central monarch and paid
tributes in return for a considerable measure of autonomy
(Marcus, 1994).

Like many other states, Ethiopia historically evolved
out of the struggles between the center and the periphery.
The ability of the central state to establish control and
monopoly of authority was constrained by formidable regional
opposition that was determined to preserve its local power
base and prevent resource extraction for centralization and
national state consolidation. The political resistance of
regionalist forces went on for nearly 200 years until a
'sovereign' Ethiopian state, i.e. a central government,

defined territorial jurisdiction and formal recognition by other states, emerged at the beginning of the 19th century.

The Emergence of a Sovereign Ethiopian Nation-State

Ethiopia achieved the status of a formally sovereign state in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The process of building a modern Ethiopian nation-state was successively undertaken by its great emperors: Tewodros II (1855-1869), Yohannes IV (1869-1889), Menelik II (1889-1913) and Haile Selassie I (1923-1974). This state never became a monolithic, centrally controlled polity because all leaders could not overcome domestic and external forces that perpetuated the dispersal of power (Bahru, 1990).

Tewodros II was the first Ethiopian emperor who attempted to establish a cohesive Ethiopian state by subduing provincial dynasties and putting an end to the regional rule of the 'Era of the Princes'. His goal was to revive a strong central monarchy and reform the church and government administration. As a reformer, he sought to establish the principle that governors and judges must be salaried appointees. He organized a standing army rather than depending on local lords for soldiers to unite the country. He also attempted to reform the church but met strong opposition when he tried to impose a tax on church lands to help finance government activities (Crummey, 1969; Rubensen, 1966).

The Ethiopian empire under Tewodros II was relatively peaceful in the beginning. Later, regional rebellions in Shoa, Tigre and Wello defied Tewodros' centralist authority. As a result, his ability to repress the opposition was greatly diminished. He also encountered problems with the British over their handling of his request for firearms.

While seeking aid from them, he became unhappy with the behavior of those Englishmen he had hoped would serve as intermediaries, and took them prisoners. Tewodros II committed suicide at Magdala in 1868 while fighting a British expeditionary force sent to secure the release of their compatriots (Bates, 1979).

After Tewodros, Yohannes IV was crowned as king of Ethiopia in 1872 at the ancient capital of Axum. From the beginning, Yohannes confronted opposing regional dynasties in Shoa, Gojjam and Gondar. The most serious challenge to Yohannes IV's rule came from Menelik II of Shoa who was skillfully consolidating his rule over Oromo and other territories to the south while Yohannes IV was preoccupied with containing an Egyptian invasion from across the Red Sea.

Yohannes IV faced an external threat to his empire from Italian colonialism. The Italians took over the port of Assab in 1882 to be used for the eventual colonization of the rest of Ethiopia. They also controlled the coastal towns of Keren and Massawa in 1885 and began to penetrate the hinterland through Eritrea. In 1887, the Italians invaded Ethiopia and suffered their first defeat by Ras Alula at Dogali. Later, they sent a stronger force to Ethiopia which Yohannes IV was unable to stop because of rebellions in other areas, and occupied northern Ethiopia, including Eritrea. The Sudanese Mahdist Moslem expansion was the final blow to Yohannes' reign. In 1889, he confronted the Mahdists at Metema but was fatally wounded. This ended Yohannes' rule over feudal Ethiopia and the crown passed to Menelik II of Shoa (Zewde, 1975).

Menelik II of Shoa (1889-1913) was Ethiopia's most successful leader in establishing control over much of

present-day Ethiopia and gaining recognition from the
European powers for its demarcated boundaries. He completed
the task of building a national state. Europe's recognition
of Ethiopia as the only black independent state and Menelik
II's aggressive steps to modernize the empire facilitated
his nation-building efforts. He created a larger and more
unified state out of a highly fragmented empire dominated by
feudal princes and chiefs (Marcus, 1994).

Contemporary Ethiopia is a creation of Menelik II, who
established its political boundaries and central control
over a wider territory than any of his predecessors. By
absorbing the traditional nobilities both in the north and
south, he managed to construct a broader social and economic
base for the imperial state. At the turn of the century,
when Europe was busy establishing colonies in the region,
Ethiopia alone remained an independent and sovereign nation
under his leadership. His diplomatic skills and European
recognition of the Ethiopian state helped him to strengthen
the country's sovereignty. After their defeat at the Battle
of Adwa in 1896, the Italians concluded a treaty with him
recognizing all of Ethiopia's borders with the exception of
Eritrea where they established a colony that lasted until
World War II. Through a series of mutual treaties signed in
1902, 1907 and 1908, Britain and France recognized him as
the king of Ethiopia and agreed to respect Ethiopia's
territorial boundaries. This was a significant victory in
diplomacy because it symbolized the recognition of Ethiopia
as an indigenous African state outside of the European state
system and might have deterred European ambitions to
colonize Ethiopia (Berkeley, 1969; Rubensen, 1976; Marcus,
1994).

On the domestic front, Menelik II introduced
administrative and political reforms. In the late 1880s, he

established Addis Ababa as the first permanent capital of Ethiopia. He also contracted with a French company to link Addis Ababa to the port of Djibouti by railway. It was Menelik who more than doubled the land size of present-day Ethiopia through incorporation of new territories and peoples into the empire historically confined to the northern highlands. He imposed Shoan rule on Kembata, Wollaita, Kefa, Oromo and other Omotic-speaking peoples. In addition, Menelik II took many other steps to strengthen central authority. He designed a system of provincial and judicial administration and regularly appointed administrators and judges. Roads and modern schools were built; telephone, postal and telegraphic services were also set up. To replace the private armies of regional nobles, a central army was organized and a state currency introduced. He also established the first ministerial form of government administration, thus pioneering a formal administrative machinery (Darkwah, 1975; Berkeley, 1969).

After Menelik II, Haile Selassie I rose to power and re-established the monarchy and the Orthodox church as the dominant central institutions. Once in power, Haile Selassie I (1923-1974) constructed a modern state with a professional army, a salaried bureaucracy, a national budgetary system, modern educational and health systems. In addition to the domestic reforms, he established diplomatic contacts with other nations in an attempt to end Ethiopia's isolation. For example, in 1923 he made Ethiopia a founding member of the League of Nations and secured international recognition for the Ethiopian nation-state.

In summary, Ethiopia evolved as the foremost non-European multi-national state starting from the mid-19th century. Yet, it could not establish hegemony over society because it faced a great deal of opposition that was either

national or regional in origin. Four major historical and political developments were crucial in influencing the turbulent politics of contemporary Ethiopia.

First, a central monarchy emerged as a unifying institution after protracted struggles with the regional nobility. The central feudal monarchy never established supremacy over its regional rivals, thus diminishing its capacity to penetrate the hinterland and mobilize resources for state consolidation. The monarchy and the Orthodox Church became historical symbols of the Ethiopian state after surviving centuries of civil strife caused by Roman Catholicism and Moslem invasions.

Second, Ethiopia established itself as a territorial state early in the nineteenth century. It secured defined boundaries and expanded beyond its northern traditional core by bringing more territory under its domain. Particularly during the time of Menelik II, the country nearly doubled its territorial possession and gained access to rich and fertile lands in southern Ethiopia. 'Non-northern' peoples, including the Oromo, Somalis, Sidama and the Afar, were integrated into the empire and a process of intercultural integration took place. Thus, Ethiopia became a multi-ethnic state.

Third, Ethiopia entered an era of unprecedented modernization as domestic reforms accelerated with the expansion of secular education, transport and communication and a central civil service machinery. Contacts were restored with the outside world after years of isolation. Externally, Ethiopia formalized relations with major European powers, obtained international recognition for its territorial integrity and welcomed ideas and technology to build a modern empire. Internally, the process of

consolidating the empire continued with administrative reforms and centralization of power.

Fourth, Shoan rule over the Ethiopian empire was solidified. Shoanization marked the transfer of power from its traditional base in the north and its centralization in a central region inhabited by many nationalities. Shoanization did not mean the monopolization of state power by the Amhara as the sole ruling group. Rather, it marked the emergence of an ethnically heterogeneous ruling elite drawn from the Oromos, Amharas, Gurages, Tigreans and other tribes from central and southern Ethiopia. The emergence of a multi-ethnic ruling class was facilitated through inter-ethnic marriages, linguistic and cultural assimilation, use of the Amharic language, the Orthodox religion and modern education (Clapham, 1988).

The pillars of Shoan rule were Menelik II and Haile Selassie I. Emperor Haile Selassie I transformed Ethiopia into an absolute monarchist state for over a half century although he faced challenges to his authority from competing dynasties in their respective territories. He reincorporated Eritrea and thereby regained Ethiopia's access to the sea. He solidified central authority over the Oromo and Somali peoples and border areas inhabited by other tribes. During his long reign, Haile Selassie I also pursued a program of modernization and social and economic changes.

Ultimately, however, centralization and modernization generated turbulence in imperial Ethiopia. Centralization upset regional and traditional class interests. It also generated seeds of ethnic and regional discontent among the Somalis, Oromos and Eritreans. In particular, the path of nation building that assimilated diverse peoples into a

dominant Amhara-Tigrean culture alienated significant ethnic and tribal constituents of the empire. Over the years, these and other groups resented the imposition of the Amharic language and culture and took up arms against the center demanding self-determination and/or separation.

The imperial regime was thrown into turmoil due to political changes in the international arena. In particular, the political turmoil in the Middle East and the radicalization of African and Arab politics contributed to the turbulence and instability of the Ethiopian empire under the monarchy. Unable to cope with mounting domestic and international problems, the ancient regime went into crisis as early as the 1960s. The following chapter will pay special attention to the reform policies of the Haile Selassie era to illustrate how a monarchist government set up to deal with small court factions collapsed when beset with domestic and regional turbulence.

Chapter III

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Chapter IV. Public Administration Under Turbulence During the Imperial Era

Public administration and government in imperial Ethiopia was affected by internal and external turbulence. The Eritrean nationalist struggle, ethnic and peasant insurrections against central authority, external pressure from hostile regional states and the U.S. decision to reduce economic and military assistance to Haile Selassie I's Ethiopia in the early 1970s were long-term contributory factors to turbulence that beset the imperial regime. The immediate causes might be the urban uprising of January to June, 1974, the highly publicized 1973/74 famine in Wello and other provinces, and domestic economic problems of inflation and unemployment. This chapter discusses important imperial policies, including centralization and modernization, that generated the turbulent environment within which the public administrative system operated in monarchist Ethiopia (Andargatchew, 1993; Halliday & Mollyneux, 1981; Thompson, 1975).

Centralization and Modernization: Turbulence and Nation Building

After ascending to power first as regent (1923-1929) and then as emperor (1930-1974), Haile Selassie I was more successful than any previous ruler in transforming Ethiopia into an absolute monarchy. Modern public administration was set up through the organization of a central government, a parliament, a national army, a salaried bureaucracy and a restructured provincial administration. As a modernizing autocrat, Haile Selassie I expanded transport and communication, modern education, public health and introduced a national budget. He enhanced Ethiopia's international status by establishing bilateral contacts with

countries in Europe, Asia, the former USSR, USA, China, and emerged as a prominent statesman in the Non-aligned movement and African affairs (Hess, 1970; Lockot, 1989).

Emperor Haile Selassie's first act of modernization was the introduction of the country's first written constitution in 1931. The constitution formalized the emperor's pre-eminent authority over the nobility and the Orthodox church which had traditionally been influential in Ethiopian politics. A bi-cameral deliberative chamber consisting of a senate and a house of deputies was created. Members of the senate were appointed by the king and those of the house were elected by the nobility and the landed gentry. In addition, the constitution provided for a crown council and a council of ministers, both of which had little authority beyond advising the emperor. The emperor enjoyed unrestricted constitutional powers over the parliament. He could declare war, appoint judges, dissolve parliament and negotiate and sign all treaties. The constitution further stipulated that supreme authority rested with the emperor and that no law could be put into force without his confirmation or initiative (Howard, 1956).

Haile Selassie I curbed the influence of powerful traditional groups to further his policy of centralization. The traditional groups consisted of descendants of regional dynasties, members of the imperial family and the feudal elite. He organized central ministries and departments with expanding functions thus reducing his dependence on a recalcitrant conservative class to carry out a program of modernization. In a classical feudal fashion, provincial notables, who otherwise would lose their semi-independent status and privileges as a result of the centralization of authority, were brought to Addis Ababa and appointed as parliamentarians or given senior posts in the government and

the military. This practice of forced residence in the capital eroded the local power base of the traditional forces by detaching them from their regional constituencies while enabling the emperor to assign central government representatives or 'endarassies' accountable to the crown (Asmelash & Markakis, 1974; Bereket, 1974).

The Italian invasion of 1935 interrupted Haile Selassie's early reforms. After liberation, the emperor restarted his centralization policies and embarked upon rebuilding the country. He set up a national army under central command to curtail the power of his rivals and their potential to raise independent armies. He reorganized the administrative divisions of the country, created a ministry of interior and appointed supporters of his reform policies as governors to the provinces. Within the first few years of returning to power, he also introduced a centrally controlled revenue collection and taxation system, strengthened the functional ministries for agriculture, education, health, rural development and created autonomous public utility organizations, including the Imperial Highway Authority (IHA), the Imperial Board of Telecommunications (IBT), the Ethiopian Electric Light and Power Authority (EELPA), and the Ethiopian Airlines (EAL). Over the years, these and other semi-autonomous public agencies helped in expanding the country's network of public services and infrastructure (Perham, 1948; Howard, 1956).

Figure 4.1

Structure of the Imperial Government of Ethiopia
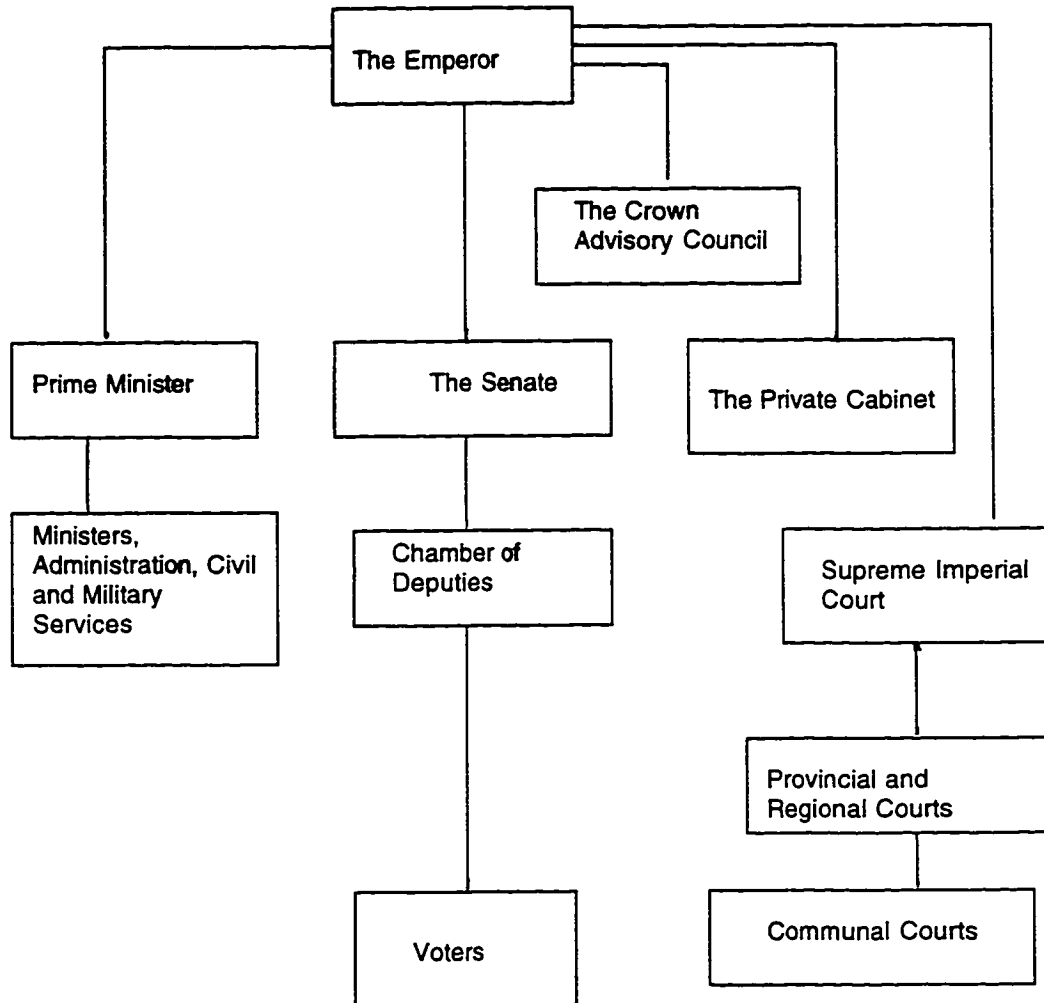
The other post-war reform undertaken by Haile Selassie was the revision of the constitution in 1955. The revised constitution contained formal provisions on individual rights and liberties, including freedom of speech, assembly and religion. It created a formal structure of government, viz. an executive, a legislature and a judiciary. The executive consisted of a crown council and a council of ministers headed by a prime minister appointed by the emperor. The senate and chamber of deputies constituted the parliament. The traditional court system was abolished and a hierarchy of modern court systems that included a supreme imperial court, a high court, provincial courts, regional and communal courts was set up (Clapham, 1969).

Despite the semblance of a modern constitution, power was concentrated in the emperor and he exercised authority as an absolute monarch. In this regard, article 26 was unequivocal when it stated: "the sovereignty of the empire is vested in the emperor and the supreme authority over all the affairs of the empire is exercised by him as the head of state". The constitution further declared "the emperor determines the organization, powers and duties of all ministries, executive departments and the administration of the government and appoints, promotes and transfers, suspends and dismisses the officials of the same." In effect, the emperor kept legislative, judicial and executive authority and separation of functions was practically non-existent as the king was the chief judge, law maker, head of government and state (Negarit Gazetta, 1955).

The revised constitution did not diminish the monarch's unlimited authority vis-a-vis the parliament or the council of ministers. Rather, it was intended to rationalize the emperor's centralization program and improve his stature as a modernizer. Haile Selassie instituted governmental

reforms to secure support for the eventual re-incorporation of the Eritrean province, which had a relatively free press and independent labor unions before the federation. In addition, by proclaiming a 'liberal' constitution, he hoped to co-opt the post-World War II educated intellectuals who wanted more progressive changes than the conservative and traditional classes were willing to accept. This educated group, which assumed important leadership and policy-making responsibilities in the imperial administration, resented the fact that Ethiopia lagged behind many post-colonial African societies in economic growth and modern education (Bereket, 1974).

Emperor Haile Selassie I set up a government that combined traditional and modern features. Traditional structures like the crown council and the senate were used to appease conservative forces and minimize opposition to his modernization programs. Semi-modern institutions like the cabinet and civil service were established to carry out a program of centralization and economic development. This dual structure generated conflicts over the pace of change between the old nobility and the new generation of educated Ethiopians. The power struggle culminated in gradual domination of the state apparatus by technocrats of largely non-aristocratic origin.

In the day-to-day running of the government, power was concentrated in the emperor. All officials were subordinated to his personal authority and all decisions required his approval. Ministers and heads of agencies were made personally accountable to him. The concentration of authority led public officials to avoid responsibilities and to pass on most decisions to the monarch. This persoanlist leadership worked effectively when Haile Selassie I was young and energetic. Such qualities overcame the resistance

of the Shoan nobility to his ascendancy and held a volatile empire together for nearly half a century. With advancing age and increasing governmental complexity, Haile Selassie became a weak sovereign without effective control of the state he crafted (Gilkes, 1975; Schwab, 1972).

A new generation of educated Ethiopians had taken over control of the state and military bureaucracy in the early 1960s. This group of imperial functionaries displaced the aristocracy and the church that traditionally served as the pillar of power for the monarchy. The newly emerging leadership faced opposition from two sources. On the one hand, it had to deal with the conservative feudal class that was fast losing influence in the government. On the other hand, it came under increasing pressure from university teachers and students, the urban working class, labor leaders and mid-level army officers. This radical stratum viewed the monarchy as an anachronistic institution incapable of delivering land reform or pulling the country out of economic underdevelopment. Intellectual and Marxist student organizations began to agitate for slogans like 'land to the tiller', 'self-determination including and up to secession for oppressed nationalities' and the abolition of the monarchy. Such public discontent eroded the monarchy's legitimacy.

In addition to domestic problems, the monarchist state faced external challenges that exacerbated the turbulence and instability of the empire. The pressure came from hostile Middle Eastern and Horn of Africa regional states, for example Egypt, Iraq, Syria and ex-Somalia republic. These external forces added to the turbulence of the imperial state by supporting nationalistic and religious movements against Ethiopia.

The Political Economy of Internal Dissent and
External Instability

The political stability and strength of any state are
determined by a combination of endogenous and exogenous
factors. Within the context of the Ethiopian situation,
geopolitical turmoil and the effects of 'cold war' politics
in the Middle East contributed to its turbulence and
instability. Internally, a rising tide of ethnic
insurgency coupled with economic stagnation and crippling
recurrent famines fuelled instability and domestic
opposition against the monarchy. Internal and external
factors that generated turbulence and led to the eventual
collapse of Haile Selassie's imperial government are briefly
noted in the ensuing section.

Regional Rebellions

Anti-government rebellions in Ethiopia during the Haile
Selassie era were largely caused by centralization measures
that disrupted regional alliances and reduced local
autonomy. Peasants in the three northern provinces of
Tigre, Gondar and Gojjam revolted against new taxes and
changes in traditional land-holding practices in the early
days of imperial rule. Faced with rural unrest, the
emperor repealed the taxes, but frequent uprisings served as
grim reminders to the government not to undertake socio-
economic changes that would upset established interests.

In 1943, a revolt known as the Weyane Movement erupted
in Tigre province but was quickly put down with assistance
from the British. The Tigrean peasantry rose up against
corruption by local officials, tax increases and the
appointment of non-Tigreans as provincial administrators and
judges. The Tigreans also opposed the centralization of

authority in Shoa and the domination of the Ethiopian state by the Amhara ethnic group. The Weyane rebellion was a manifestation of nascent Tigrean regional nationalism that resented its lost status as a ruling dynasty following the transfer of power from the Tigrean King Yohannes IV to Menelik II of Shoa in the 19th century (Zewde, 1975).

Sporadic uprisings also occurred in the north-west province of Gojjam throughout the 1950s and 1960s. The revolts in this rich agricultural region were directed against proposed changes in traditional (communal) land-holding practices and agricultural taxes. In particular, the agricultural land tax proclamations of 1942 and 1967 ignited serious peasant protests. The laws were intended to classify and measure agricultural land for purposes of taxation. The insurrection ended in 1968 after Haile Selassie rescinded the tax laws, replaced Shoan governors with local administrators and granted amnesty to those who took up arms against his government (Nega, 1971).

Anti-central government uprisings in the south had ethnic and economic dimensions. Since the beginning of the century, people from the northern and central provinces had migrated to the south and settled as farmers and traders. The Oromos and the majority of the southern peasantry became tenants and/or sharecroppers on land controlled by a class of merchants and land owners. In the 1960s, imperial land grants to retired civil servants and former soldiers exacerbated tenancy and/or landlessness by entrenching an Amhara-Tigrean landed gentry. Amharic became the language of government, schools and courts, which helped the northerners to establish themselves as the dominant cultural and administrative elite in non-Amhara areas. But, the migration also increased inter-ethnic hostility in Oromo areas as more land was expropriated from the local

population for settlement and farming (Baxter, 1978; Cohen & Weintraub, 1975).

The first signs of organized Oromo discontent against land confiscation and cultural domination by the Amhara-Tigrean elite emerged in the 1960s with the founding of the Mecha Tulema Self-Help Association. The Mecha Tulema movement originated in the central province of Shoa and declared its goal to be promoting rural development in Oromo areas. The imperial government banned the organization when it became a forum for articulating ethnic grievances. This Oromo opposition was supported by the urban elite, businessmen and government workers but drew little support among the large Oromo peasantry.

Another Oromo rebellion developed in the province of Bale. This uprising against Haile Selassie I's centralist authority was instigated by a disgruntled Moslem population against a Christian-dominated Ethiopian administration. In a manifestation of anti-central government (anti-Shoan) control, Bale peasants rose up against high taxes and administrative corruption. Their movement was finally crushed by the government in the mid-1960s. These two early movements set the stage for the rise of Oromo ethnic consciousness that culminated in the founding of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) in the early 1970s. Since the late 1970s, the OLF conducted a low-level armed struggle and an active campaign for a separate Oromia Republic (Lewis, 1983; Markakis, 1987).

The Eritrean Insurgency

The most important challenge to Haile Selassie I's centralist authority was the long-running Eritrean insurgency (1962-1991). As Ethiopia's northern-most

province bordering on the Red Sea, Eritrea provided vital access to the sea. It was originally colonized by the Italians in 1889 but the British took control of the province in 1941. At the end of World War II, Ethiopia pressed claims to regain the province on historical, cultural and economic grounds. Strategically, Eritrea was important to Ethiopia because it contained its two ports on the Red Sea. Economically, Ethiopia depended on the ports of Assab and Massawa for trade with the outside world while Eritrea received food and raw materials from the mainland. In 1948, a UN Commission was sent to Eritrea to assess the wishes of the people and found Ethiopia's claim to reunite with Eritrea justifiable. Based on the Commission's recommendations, the General Assembly passed a resolution approving that "Eritrea shall constitute an autonomous unit federated with Ethiopia under the sovereignty of the Ethiopian Crown". The Ethio-Eritrean federation lasted until 1962, when the Eritrean parliament voted to end the federal arrangement in favor of full union with Ethiopia—a move which many Eritreans believed was stage managed by the emperor's supporters in the province (Ruth, 1995; Okbazghi, 1991).

The Haile Selassie government faced a separatist movement called the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) immediately after the federation was terminated in 1962. The ELF was a Muslim-dominated organization that opposed Eritrea's integration into the Christian-dominated Ethiopian empire. Another organization, the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF), split from the ELF and started a secessionist struggle in the early 1970s. The ELF was supported by conservative Arab states including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the Gulf states, and operated in Moslem-inhabited low-land Eritrea. The rival EPLF was Marxist and secular and operated in both Christian and Moslem areas of

Eritrea. It received support from radical Arab regimes like Iraq, Syria and Libya and the former communist countries of Eastern Europe. After a long-drawn out guerrilla campaign, the EPLF declared Eritrea a separate state in 1993 following a controversial referendum (Sherman, 1980; Tesfatsion, 1994).

The Ogaden-Bale Insurrection

The Ogaden-Bale regional rebellions were kept alive by the territorial disputes between Ethiopia and Somalia. The vast Ogaden region--inhabited by ethnic Somalis--was part of the old Italian East Africa before it was placed under Ethiopian jurisdiction. In 1955, the British returned the region to Ethiopia. The region's inhabitants kept their linguistic, cultural and Moslem affinities with people in the Somali Republic. When Somalia became independent in 1960, it rejected Ethiopian sovereignty over the Ogaden and began moves to get it back as part of its 'Greater Somalia' design.

The genesis of the 'Greater Somalia' plan was the incorporation of the Ogaden-Haud region of Ethiopia, North Frontier District (NFD) of Kenya, Djibouti (former French Somaliland) and former Italian and British Somalilands into a single Somali nation. This irredentist claim provoked conflicts with all the neighboring countries, including Ethiopia. Somalia started to organize and arm dissident organizations to fight in the Ogaden and Haud. The contention over the territory was fuelled by potential oil and gas deposits in the area. Several border wars broke out in the 1960s and 1970s as Somalia continued to stir up nationalist feelings among Ethiopian Somalis and the Oromos of Bale. For example, Somalia established the Western Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF) in 1960 to liberate the

Ogaden-Haud region from Ethiopian control. Also, the Ethiopian Liberation Movement (ELM) was established just about the same period to liberate the Oromos of Bale. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the two movements conducted guerrilla campaigns against Ethiopia with cross-border supply of arms and training by Somalia (Drysdale, 1964; Lewis, 1988).

The Ogaden Somalis and the Oromos of Bale were a predominantly Moslem community. The imperial government had no economic and political program to integrate people into the Ethiopian nation. Central government neglect rendered the region susceptible to Somalia-inspired rebellion whose goal was detaching territory from Ethiopia by force. In addition, the fact that the Ogadenians had an ethnic affinity with the Republic of Somalia and that the Oromos of Bale, although ethnically different, shared the Moslem religion made them look for support from across the border. For Somalia, this provided an opportunity, along with the Eritrean insurgency, for creating instability in the periphery regions in order to hasten the disintegration of the Ethiopian feudal empire.

To summarize, the center-periphery struggle was one of the principal causes of turbulence in imperial Ethiopia. The major opposition to Haile Selassie's centralization of power came from peasant and ethnic-nationalist resistance movements. As previously discussed, pre-Haile Selassie Ethiopia was a weak state that was not able to establish hegemony over the periphery. Post-World War II centralization measures intended to create a unified empire provoked resistance among a peasantry that resented taxation and resource extraction by a centralizing state. Also, the feudal nobility resisted central rule because it was unwilling to forfeit its local autonomy and prerogatives.

The monarchy's domestic support eroded amidst slow progress in overcoming underdevelopment and poverty. The regime faced serious economic difficulties because of the failure of its agricultural and industrial policies. In the pages that follow, the economic structure and performance of imperial Ethiopia will be discussed with the objective of placing the government's economic problems within the wider context of the turbulence and instability that led to the collapse of the Haile Selassie regime.

Socio-Economic Contradictions

The imperial government faced serious internal opposition from urban residents, the civilian intelligentsia and the army because of deteriorating economic conditions. Unemployment, poverty and inflation were rising and causing widespread hardship amongst the populace. For example, out of an estimated urban population of 3.7 million in 1975, nearly 1.2 million people (or 34 per cent) were unemployed. The incidence of urban poverty in Ethiopian towns and cities was a staggering 59.5 per cent in the mid-1970s. In addition to an already acute problem of regionalism and centrifugal forces, the opposition at the center eroded the legitimacy of the ancient regime and weakened its grip on society (Griffin, 1992).

The 1960 army coup was the first sign of internal trouble for the Haile Selassie government. The abortive coup failed to overthrow the king but it helped politicize the army. As a reaction to the coup, the emperor initiated limited political and administrative reforms to appease the opposition and modernize his government. He recruited more university graduates into the imperial bureaucracy and delegated authority to the prime minister and the cabinet.

He also promised land reform and expanded health, education and community development programs in rural Ethiopia. Many of the measures were too little to satisfy the western-educated elite and other anti-monarchist sections of the population who wanted a radical economic restructuring (Clapham, 1968).

Ethiopia under Haile Selassie had an agrarian economy where land was the most important factor of production. Agriculture accounted for more than 90 per cent of employment and GNP. Most of the land was controlled by the imperial family, the Orthodox Church and the small landed gentry. A sizable segment of the country's rural population was either tenants or sharecroppers working on land owned by absentee landlords. The national economy had many features of an undeveloped economy: a low-industrial base, negligible foreign trade sector, weak domestic demand, limited wage labor and an insignificant monetized sector (Assefa & Eshetu, 1969).

The imperial government attempted to transform the economy by instituting a series of five-year development plans. Between 1954-1974, three consecutive five-year economic plans were launched. All the plans focused on infrastructure development (communication and transport), agriculture, mining, employment creation and foreign investment. It was envisaged that $254.7 million was to be invested during the first five-year period, $687.4 million during the second five-year plan and $1366 million during the period of the third five-year plan. By the end of the plan period, the country attained modest economic progress largely due to favorable international prices for its exports and sustained in-flow of foreign aid (Asmerom & Jain, 1993; Pickett, 1991).

Between 1960/61 and 1973/74, Ethiopia registered significant economic growth as measured by the country's GDP. During this period, GDP was estimated to have grown at an average of 4.4 per cent per annum. The comparative figure for sub-Saharan Africa was 3.3 per cent per annum. Even more important, Ethiopia's growth was higher than the neighboring countries of Sudan and Somalia which registered growth rates of 1.3 and 1 per cent respectively. Among the countries in the region, only Kenya's GDP growth rate of 6 per cent and Uganda's growth rate of 5.6 per cent per annum surpassed that of Ethiopia. During the same period, Ethiopia's manufacturing sector more than doubled, rising from 1.9 per cent to 4.1 per cent of GDP. The share of the service sector, which included wholesale, retail trade, tourism and construction, rose from 9.3 to 15.6 per cent of GDP. In addition, the share of agriculture in the Ethiopian economy declined from 64.5 per cent of GDP in 1960/61 to 49.3 per cent of GDP in 1973/74 (World Bank, 1980, 1989; Pickett, 1991).

Although there were significant improvements in the industrial and manufacturing sectors, the imperial government did not have a clear strategy to develop agriculture and increase food production. Starting in the 1960s, the government promoted large-scale commercial farms by private investors in pastoralist and low-land areas. The effort resulted in a significant expansion of private mechanized farms in the Awash Valley, Chillalo, southern Shoa, northern Sidamo, Setit Humera and the Rift Valley region. According to one study, the number of mechanized commercial farms went up from 32 to 2626 and the amount of cultivated land increased from 6244 ha. to 481,659 ha. between 1958/59 and 1969/70. Most private commercial farms produced export crops, mainly cotton, sesame and oil seeds, and did not add to the country's food supply. In addition,

increased mechanization led to the eviction of tenants and pastoralists in Afar, Arssi and other areas. For example, major land concessions in the Awash Valley granted to the British-owned Tendaho Cotton Plantations and the Dutch-owned Wonji Sugar Plantations deprived the pastoralist Afar and other tribes of grazing and watering land. The displacement of nomads and peasants by commercial farming might have been a source of discontent among dispossessed ethnic groups, including the Afar (Harbeson, 1975; Desalegn, 1986).

Ethiopia's small peasant agricultural sector had too many constraints to provide a viable option for agricultural growth and national food self-sufficiency. Ethiopia had one of the most archaic and complex systems of traditional land tenure in the world. For example, in one province alone, Wello, there were said to be more than 111 types of land tenure. Most farmers owned fragmented plots and lacked sufficient resources for purchasing fertilizers, farm tools or seeds. In the south of the country, where tenancy was widespread, constant fear of evictions and onerous land rents (sometimes reaching as much as 50 per cent of the produce) dampened peasant incentives to raise farm output. The government's attempts to implement land reform were blocked by parliament, most of whose members were major landowners in the tenancy areas of the south and southeast (Desalegn, 1984; Cohen & Weintraub, 1975).

In 1967, the Imperial government launched the Minimum Package Program (MPP) to accelerate rural and regional development. The program was intended to promote integrated rural development, including credit, farmer extension services, cooperatives, marketing, and provision of such basic services as health and literacy. It was initially launched in three Woredas--Wollaita, Ada and Humera--as an experimental project but was later expanded to selected

demonstration areas in all the provinces. The MPP proved
successful in generating farmer interest and stimulating
higher productivity among small peasant producers but later
ran into difficulties because of competition over farm land
at the local level (Harbeson, 1988).

More importantly, the MPP agricultural scheme failed
primarily because of institutional barriers to full
participation by the poor strata of rural producers. For
example, the program required farmers to put down 25 per
cent for fertilizers and 50 per cent for seeds to secure
credit. Also, would-be borrowers were told to obtain
written leases from their landlords to qualify for credit.
A landless farmer in feudal Ethiopia could not meet these
requirements because those who controlled the land were
reluctant to give out written contracts for fear of
forfeiting their rights to it. As a result, big landlords
and the local elite benefitted more from the gains in the
MPPs, such as improved infrastructure, drinking water,
health and educational facilities, than the small farmers
and tenants who were the targeted beneficiaries of broadened
agricultural participation (Tesfaye, 1975; Cohen, 1975).

The imperial government had no clear strategy for
developing agriculture throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Its
failure to change the feudal system of inequitable land
ownership was a major obstacle to agricultural growth.
Agricultural policy focused on the promotion of capital-
intensive commercial farms that produced mainly cash crops
for export. Mechanized agricultural development led to the
eviction of tenants and nomads due to increased demand for
land. In addition, imperial agricultural schemes failed
because of institutional and policy constraints, including
land insecurity and the absence of a government law to
regulate land lease and use rights. Hence, two decades of

experimentation to reform agriculture and increase food production failed. The long-term consequences of agricultural stagnation were recurrent devastating famines that ravaged rural Ethiopia.

As in agriculture, growth in the industrial and commercial sectors were constrained by insufficient investment capital and the country's limited experience in industrial development. Industrialization in Ethiopia had a short history, starting only after World War II. Its contribution to the total economy and employment was small. For example, in 1973/74, manufacturing accounted for only 4.4 per cent of GDP and its total output was estimated to be around $327 million. There was a rise in the number of small-scale industries growing by about 10 per cent per annum between 1964/65 and 1973/74. Most of these were primary agri-based industries, including textiles, food processing, paper and pulp, and were concentrated in and around major cities like Addis Ababa, Asmara and Dire Dawa. Industrial employment grew from 28,340 in 1961 to 51,312 in 1971, increasing at 6 per cent per annum. In a country of nearly 35 million people, this industrial labor force figure represented an extremely small foundation for solutions to the problem of rising unemployment (Love, 1979).

In 1964, the Imperial Government adopted a liberal investment law to attract foreign investment and encourage industrialization. The law contained generous provisions for income-tax relief, expatriation of capital, tax exemption of dividends and import-export duty relief. As a result of the policy, private foreign and domestic investment increased from $49 million during the Second Five-Year Development Plan (1963-1967) to $77 million during the Third Five-Year Development Plan (1968-1973). The overall impact of the policy in creating employment and a

diversified economy was limited. Many investors repatriated a substantial share of earned profits rather than risking long-term reinvestment in Ethiopia. For example, between 1966 and 1970, about $12 million was repatriated out of the country while only $1.2 million was reinvested in the economy. Hence, the amount of capital was inadequate to achieve sustained economic growth or rapid industrialization (Duri, 1980).

Ethiopia's economic situation began to sharply deteriorate starting in the early 1960s because of falling prices for its exports, mainly coffee, hides and skins and oil seeds. Coffee alone accounted for 80 per cent of export earnings. As shown in Table 4.1, the foreign trade sector was in consistent deficit between 1964-1972. 1973 proved to be an exception due to a drop in imports and a rise in exports. The government resorted to external loans and grants to deal with the unfavorable trade balance. As a result, Ethiopia's international debt increased from $130 million in 1968 to $237 million in 1973. During the same period, loan repayments and interest charges went up from 6 per cent to 11 per cent of total export earnings, a small percentage by present-day standards but still large enough to exacerbate economic crises (Gilkes, 1975).

Table 4.1
Ethiopian Import and Export Totals (1964-73)
(in Ethiopian Dollars)

Year	Imports	Exports	Trade Balance
1964	307.7	262.5	- 45.1
1965	375.7	289.8	- 85.9
1966	404.2	277.5	-126.8
1967	357.4	252.7	-104.6
1968	432.5	266.1	-166.5
1969	388.3	298.1	- 90.2
1970	429.1	305.8	-123.3
1971	469.5	314.2	-155.5
1972	435.6	384.2	- 51.3
1973	300.5	449.5	+ 50.0

Source:Gilkes, Patrick, The Dying Lion: Feudalism and
Modernization in Ethiopia, New York: St. Martin's
Press, 1975.

One of the consequences of Ethiopia's chronic trade imbalance was inflation. Until the early 1970s, the increase in the cost of living was fairly insignificant. In 1970, there was a sharp increase in the cost of living because of temporary food shortages. Starting in 1973, prices increased by nearly 9 per cent due to a jump in food and gasoline prices. In 1974, they went up by another 10 per cent. The increase in wages was not sufficient to offset the rise in the cost of living. For example, real wages declined from $410 in 1971/72 to $385 in 1973/74. Also, declining foreign assistance contributed to the economic problems the country was experiencing during this period. For example, between 1961-1970, average per capita aid for all of Africa was $44.90 while the figure was $13.80 (three and half times less) for Ethiopia. On a regional basis, Ethiopia's share was by far less than Kenya's ($56.90), Somalia's ($90) and Sudan's ($26.62). Foreign aid

was insufficient to offset the effects of a declining domestic economy (Love, 1979; Mulatu & Yohannis, 1988; Henze, 1991).

The imperial government's economic woes were compounded by rising unemployment. The expansion of modern education had dramatically increased the number of university and secondary school graduates looking for employment. For instance, in 1952, school enrollment throughout the country was only 60,000 students. By 1974, enrollment in elementary and secondary schools skyrocketed to over one million nationwide while there were 6000 university students inside the country with an additional 2000 studying abroad. As can be seen from Table 4.2, the development of modern education was a major achievement of the imperial era. The government's aim was to make education an instrument of centralization by providing a national language (Amharic) and culture to replace the strong regional and ethnic feelings in the empire. National school enrollment grew by an average of 25 per cent between 1963/64 and 1973/74. The quantitative growth in education proved a formidable challenge for an economy that was growing at 4.5-5 per cent per annum during the same period (Gilkes, 1975).

Table 4.2
Imperial Ethiopian Government School Enrollment
Statistics (1963/64 - 1973/74)

(in thousands of students)

Year	Number of Students
1963/64	351,785
1964/65	395,441
1965/66	434,335
1966/67	476,696
1967/68	531,991
1968/69	612,401
1969/70	705,115
1970/71	791,173
1971/72	875,102
1972/73	965,183
1973/74	1,112,026

Source: Adapted from Gilkes, P., ibid.,

Table 4.2 shows major achievements in education during the imperial era. Important advances in health, transport and communication were also made. When Haile Selassie ascended to power in the early 1930s, modern roads extended from Addis Ababa to only a few provincial towns; by 1974, Ethiopia had over 4400 miles of all-weather roads. An efficient Ethiopian Airlines which began in 1946 had developed an internal network of scheduled flights to over forty-five cities and towns. In addition, the empire was connected by a working infrastructure of postal, telegraphic and telephone systems---services that were skeletal in pre-Haile Selassie Ethiopia forty years previously (Nelson, 1981).

International oil price hikes and the closure of the Suez Canal to shipping traffic after the 1973 Arab-Israeli war hurt Ethiopia's economy. The closure raised domestic

prices, slowed economic growth and increased citizens' hardships. The economic situation worsened due to runaway inflation, sharp cost of living increases and the famine of 1973-74. Internally, both agriculture and industry suffered and unemployment hovered around 20 per cent. As a result, the overall national economy stagnated and could not produce enough resources to support a modern state or employ a large influx of job seekers (Markakis & Nega, 1978; Griffin, 1992).

The Haile Selassie regime faced a deepening economic crisis in the early 1970s because it could not generate enough surplus to finance state activities and development. The sluggish economy also made it difficult for the government to finance its modernization programs and rapidly growing state apparatus. Ethiopia's government bureaucracy experienced a fairly rapid expansion throughout the 1960s and 1970s. The cost of running a wide array of public institutions, including colleges, military and civilian training institutes, schools and hospitals, led to a steady increase in government spending which grew at an annual rate of 8 per cent. The number of government employees went up from 35,000 in 1961 to more than 100,000 a decade later. The bureaucratic class received salaries which were much higher than the average income of the ordinary citizen. For example, the starting pay of a university graduate was $250 per month ($3000 a year) while the national per capita income stood at $110 per year. The weak national economy could not generate enough surplus to pay for the costs of a modern state with its expanding military and civilian bureaucracies (Abraham & Seifu, 1974; Markakis, 1974).

In short, deteriorating economic conditions fuelled turbulence and instability in monarchist Ethiopia. There was no significant economic expansion to improve living

standards or solve unemployment among university graduates
and secondary school leavers. In addition to its domestic
economic problems, the monarchist state came under
increasing pressure from outside due to the coming to power
of radical regimes in the Middle East and the surrounding
region. These global and regional factors contributed to
the turbulence and collapse of the ancient regime.

The External Dimension: Geo-political Turmoil

The emergence of Arab nationalism and the division of
Middle Eastern states into Big Power camps were important
external factors that exacerbated imperial Ethiopia's
turbulence. The post-World War II Soviet-American rivalry
to lure the countries of the region to their respective
spheres of influence led to the creation of two groups of
states. These included radical/Marxist regimes, such as
Egypt, Syria and Iraq, supported by the Russians, and
conservative/moderate states, including Turkey, Israel, Iran
and Ethiopia, all of which were supported by the U.S.A. and
its allies. Ethiopia was targeted for destabilization by
radical Arab states and East European communist countries
because of its close association with the west and the state
of Israel. As a result, Nasserite Egypt and the Ba'ath
parties of Syria and Iraq and the Palestine Liberation
Organization (PLO) stepped up their assistance to ethnic
movements, including the Eritrean struggle and Somali
irredentist claims to undermine the legitimacy and stability
of monarchist Ethiopia (Spencer, 1984; Andargatchew, 1993).

Ethiopia established close ties with the U.S.A. to
safeguard its territorial integrity and sovereignty. Under
a 1951 bilateral agreement, it became one of the early
beneficiaries of American development and security
assistance under the Point Four Program. This was followed
by the 1952 treaty that enabled it to receive military

assistance under the Mutual Defence Act of 1949. In the
views of American policy makers, Haile Selassie's Ethiopia
was considered a moderate state that needed to be supported
by the west in a region brewing with radicalism and pro-
Soviet governments. The foremost American strategy in the
region was to form an anti-communist bulwark of pro-west
states, including Iran, Israel, Turkey and Ethiopia, to
serve as a line of defence against possible Soviet southward
expansion. For Ethiopia, the stakes were high: it needed
U.S. diplomatic support in regaining Eritrea and substantial
economic and military aid to counter the growing Arab threat
to its stability and sovereignty (Zewde, 1976; Ottaway,
1982).

Ethiopia benefitted greatly from its relationship with
the United States. With full US backing, Eritrea was
federated with Ethiopia in 1952 thus securing a corridor to
the sea and enhancing Ethiopia's strategic significance
during the 'cold war'. The US also maintained a large aid
program in Ethiopia to coordinate its economic and technical
assistance. Major USAID projects included the creation and
operation of colleges of agriculture, public health,
business administration, the organization and training of
Ethiopian Airlines and higher education for Ethiopians in
U.S. universities. U.S. aid also went to rural development,
agriculture, eradication of malaria programs and
infrastructure construction. In addition, there was a large
Peace Corps program whose numbers reached 462 volunteers in
1969 (probably the largest contingent in Africa then), most
of whom were teaching in secondary schools. By 1977, when
the U.S. cut its aid, Ethiopia had received over $600
million in loans and grants, placing it among the highest
recipients of U.S. aid in Africa (Mulatu & Yohannis, 1988).

Over a twenty-year period (1954-1974), Ethiopia built a

highly professional army, an elite Imperial Bodyguard, a well-equipped air force and navy with US military aid and training. Total military aid amounted to over $270 million. This massive program of military assistance was used in large part to counter Somali irredentist claims against Ethiopia. In addition, Ethiopia faced a growing military threat and Arab expansionism of the Middle Eastern states (Korn, 1986).

Ethiopia's turbulence and instability were aggravated by the ideological and political turmoil that swept the Middle East in the aftermath of World War II. This turmoil assumed many trends: pan-Arabism and pan-Islamism, radicalism and conservatism, capitalism and socialism, local nationalism and Arab nationalism, secularism and Islamic fundamentalism. All these ideological trends affected Ethiopia because of its proximity to a part of the world made turbulent by competing religious ideologies and 'cold war' rivalry. In particular, the spread of pan-Arab ideology among the countries of the Middle East, including Egypt, Syria and Iraq, increased the pressure on the monarchist regime.

According to Andargatchew, pan-Islamism was an ideology that posed threats to Ethiopia's territorial integrity. He states that pan-Islamism recognized two kinds of territories: that which is inhabited by the community of believers (Moslems) -- dar'al Islam -- and that which is inhabited by the community of infidels or non-Moslems -- dar'al harb. According to the dictates of Jihad, dar'al Islam recognized no boundaries and had an obligation to liberate all Moslems from non-Moslem control. Many countries in the Middle East believed ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia to be Islamic movements and interfered in its internal affairs by supporting the Eritrean and Ethio-

Somalian causes for secession. Hence, pan-Islamism provided a pretext for many Islamic and Arab states, including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Libya and Algeria, for aiding secessionist struggles within Ethiopia in order to make Ethiopian Moslems part of the Islamic world (Andargatchew, 1993).

As far as Ethiopia was concerned, pan-Arabism was also an expansionist ideology that threatened its territorial integrity because it served as a pretext for interference in the internal affairs of sovereign Ethiopia. For example, the ruling Ba'ath parties of Syria and Iraq declared that Ethiopia was an integral part of the Arab Fatherland. Thus, since their inception in 1947, the Syrian and Iraqi governments had been long-time proponents of carving out Ethiopian territories inhabited by Moslems and annexing them into the greater Arabian Fatherland. To this end, both governments were consistent supporters of anti-Haile Selassie groups that fought to break away from Ethiopia, including the Eritreans and the Ethio-Somalis (Andargatchew, 1993).

Ethiopia's pro-West and -Israeli connections angered Arab nations and led to intensified campaigns to undermine its sovereignty and territorial integrity. For example, in the early 1960s, Egypt under Nasser started anti-Ethiopian Radio Cairo broadcasts to incite internal insurrections. In addition, it facilitated the establishment of the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) in 1962 and trained Eritrean guerrillas near Alexandria for fighting in Ethiopia. All Arab countries blocked Ethiopia from joining any regional organizations or participating in conferences affecting peace and stability in the Red Sea and surrounding region. To overcome its isolation, Ethiopia cultivated security and strategic links with Israel and this generated more Arab hostility (Erlikh, 1994).

Different Arab countries had varied political and ideological motives for their hostility towards Ethiopia. Conservative states led by Saudi Arabia considered Ethiopia a Christian state dominating a Moslem community. Aiding centrifugal forces became part of their Islamic obligation. Many Arab and Afro-Arab states, like Egypt and the Sudan, had territorial and economic interests that clashed with those of Ethiopia. In this regard, Yemen's interest in the Red Sea and its claims to the islands along the Eritrean coast need to be mentioned. More importantly, Egypt's and Sudan's interest in the waters of the Nile River were/are vital concerns in regional politics. Further, the Eritreans' insistence that their struggle was part of the pan-Arab and anti-Zionist movement helped them secure the support of the Arab world. The preferred weapon of the surrounding Arab countries for resolving conflicts of interest with Ethiopia was stirring up internal instability through supporting movements bent upon secession/separation (Erlikh, 1994; Spencer, 1984).

Ethiopia's thorniest problem -- the Eritrean struggle for independence -- was long sustained by Arab and Islamic support. Historically, the opposition to Eritrean union with Ethiopia was led by the Arab and Islamic world. Egypt and Pakistan led that effort between 1945-1948 at the United Nations' debate on the future of Eritrea, claiming that Muslims in Eritrea would be dominated by 'Christian' Ethiopia. Despite strong Arab objections, the UN General Assembly voted to federate Eritrea with Ethiopia in 1952. Over the years, the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) secured support from countries with as varied political philosophies as Egypt, Syria, Algeria, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. The most important role was played by the Sudan, which made its territory available for the Eritreans

for training, shelter and weapons along the two countries' long border. In addition to directly providing arms, many Arab countries, including Syria, Iraq and the former South Yemen, served as conduits between the former Socialist countries and Eritrean insurgents. Soviet, Czech and Chinese weapons were transported across the Red Sea from the old South Yemen and Libya to Eritrea (Bell, 1973; Firebrace & Holland, 1984).

Aside from arms and money, Arab countries provided the Eritreans overt diplomatic support to promote their cause and undermine Ethiopia's sovereignty over the province. To this end, international and regional organizations, such as the UN, were used to pressurize Ethiopia into conceding to Eritrean independence. In particular, the League of Arab States (LAS) was instrumental in coordinating campaigns for a separate Eritrean state. The League had considered Eritrean membership since 1962 and had given the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) an observer status. Moreover, other Arab organizations, such as the Council of Arab Parliamentary Union and the Federation of Arab Lawyers, had repeatedly endorsed Eritrean independence despite Ethiopia's objections that the problem was an internal matter (Andargatchew, 1993).

Arab meddling in the Eritrean problem had been influenced by the misperception that Eritrea was an Arab-Moslem entity despite the fact that Eritreans are equally divided between Christians and Moslems. The internationalization of the Eritrean problem prolonged the conflict with tremendous losses in lives and property for Ethiopia and Eritrea. Also, it afforded each Arab nation an opportunity to exploit the problem for its own ends. For example, the Egyptians under Nasser supported the Eritrean cause as part of a campaign to undermine the 'reactionary'

government of Haile Selassie I which was allied with 'U.S. imperialism and World Zionism'. Conservative states, like Saudi Arabia, supported the Eritreans as part of a Jihad to liberate their Moslem brothers from a Christian-dominated Ethiopian empire. Others such as Syria, Iraq, Libya and Algeria, rationalized their support on the grounds that the Eritrean movement was part of the general struggle for the 'Arab Fatherland' (Mesfin, 1990).

In sum, the Eritrean problem had far reaching implications for Ethiopia because it challenged its legitimacy and unity. Because of the substantial help it received from external actors, the Eritrean secessionist struggle demonstrated the vulnerability of a multi-ethnic and -religious Ethiopia to interference by external powers who could use internal differences to promote their geopolitical and economic interests. Along with the Ethio-Somalian nationalist struggle, the Eritrean insurgency threw the Haile Selassie regime into ethnic and political turmoil that precipitated its demise (Lyons, 1990).

Another historical source of turbulence and instability was the Ogaden-Haud region bordering on Somalia. When Somalia became an independent republic in 1960, it laid claim to the territory on cultural and ethnic grounds because the incorporation of all the Somalis living in Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti was made the basis of legitimacy for a 'Greater Somalia'. Pan-Somalism led the new republic to reject existing boundaries with neighboring states, a move that escalated conflicts in the Horn of Africa. Somalia established liberation fronts to wrest control of the territories it claimed. As a result, the Western Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF) was set up in 1960 to take back the Ogaden-Haud. In the early 1970s, the Somali Abo Liberation Front (SALF) emerged in Mogadishu to

liberate the Oromos of Bale and highland Hararghe from
Ethiopian control. With Soviet support, the Somali army
sent guerrilla infiltrators forcing Ethiopia to mount
counter-insurgency operations and declare martial law in
Bale, the Ogaden and Sidamo provinces (Drysdale, 1964;
Mesfin, 1977).

The Republic of Somalia was a Soviet proxy state next
door to Ethiopia where there had been a strong western
influence. The Soviets established relations with Somalia
soon after it became independent in 1960, and they provided
military aid and training. They were entrenched in Somalia
after Siad Barre came to power in 1969. In return for their
use of the big naval facility at Berbera, the Soviets
launched an extensive program to arm the new Somali state.
Subsequent flow of arms supplies made Somalia the most
militarized state in the Horn of Africa region by the early
1970s (Patman, 1990).

Largely thanks to the Russians, by the mid-1970s,
Somalia possessed some 50 MIG 15s through 21s, IL-28s, 250
T-32 and T-35 tanks, 10 artillery battalions, SA-2 missiles,
2 Skonji class destroyers, 2 sub-chasers, 10 MTB, some 300
armored personnel carriers and approximately 2000 Soviet
technicians and advisers. In addition, during this period,
Somalia had the highest proportion of men under arms and
allocated the highest percentage of its GNP to military
expenditures among the countries in the Horn. The ratios of
armed forces to population were 6.9, 2.5, 1.7 and .6 per
1000 for Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia and Kenya respectively.
While Somalia spent 5 per cent of its GNP on military
outlays, the comparative figures for Ethiopia and Kenya were
2.3 and 1 per cent respectively. In addition, Somalia also
secured the largest proportional foreign military assistance
among the Horn countries: $20.31 per capita in comparison

with $9.7 for the Sudan, $4.47 for Ethiopia and $1.68 for Kenya. There was no justification for this massive and futile military investment other than plunging Somalia and the region as a whole into a cycle of political violence and socio-economic degeneration (Henze, 1991, 1982; Spencer, 1984).

The heavy Somalia military build up was a major concern for Haile Selassie's Ethiopia because of Somalia's claim to nearly a third of Ethiopian territory. Soviet support inflamed Somalian irredentist ambitions and Somalis used their newly acquired military strength to launch aggression against Ethiopia. The two countries fought destructive wars in 1959, 1964/65 and 1977/78. When Somalia's bid to unite ethnic Somalis was rejected by the OAU and African states, it turned to Arab and Islamic countries for support to fulfil the pan-Somalia agenda (Lyons, 1990; Gorman, 1981).

As part of a strategy to unite all Somalis, the Republic of Somalia joined the Arab League in 1973 and sought to mobilize the Arab world against Ethiopia. Although Somalis are ethnically and linguistically non-Arabs, membership in the Arab League brought arms and economic assistance from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Libya and the Gulf states. For Somalia, Article 6 of the League's charter, which read that 'if one of the members were a victim of aggression -- the League would determine the measures necessary to repulse the aggression', was an important attraction for membership. This provision, coupled with Soviet military supplies, guaranteed Somalia external support in its border confrontations with Ethiopia towards whom the Arab and Islamic world have traditionally harbored enmity (Hassouna, 1975).

In conclusion, the Haile Selassie I period was

characterized by turbulence and instability caused by internal and external factors. Three political developments produced turbulence that impacted public administration and government in monarchist Ethiopia.

First, Haile Selassie's program of centralization generated turbulence due to regionalism and secession. His policies alienated the Eritreans, Oromos of Bale and the Somalis, and pushed them to armed insurrection. The resolution of these ethnic conflicts was made difficult because the various movements struggling to secede were supported by regional and global actors. Thus, by the early 1970s, widespread ethnic/national resistance in Eritrea and the Ogaden-Bale region was supported by Somalia, hostile Arab states and East European communist countries.

Second, deteriorating economic conditions fuelled turbulence that contributed to the instability of the imperial regime. The sluggish national economy during the imperial era could not generate sufficient surplus to maintain the expanding civilian and military bureaucracies. The economic problems of the regime worsened due to high unemployment, deteriorating living conditions, inflation and the 1973/74 famine. Hence, the economic crisis fuelled the turbulence that toppled the monarchy in 1974.

Third, Middle Eastern and Horn of Africa regional politics exacerbated turbulence in imperial Ethiopia by fostering ethno- religious secession in the country. Ethiopia came under relentless pressure from radical Middle Eastern countries which harbored anti-Ethiopian hostility because of its alleged association with the US and Israel. The pressure intensified following the 1973 Arab-Israeli conflict and the increased oil power of Arab countries. These two international developments adversely affected

Ethiopia's internal stability.

Thus, a combination of internal and external geopolitical factors contributed to the turbulence of the imperial state and led to the collapse of the Haile Selassie I regime. When turbulence and a popular anti-monarchist upheaval broke out in 1974, the emperor's grip on power was so weakened that he could neither contain it nor prevent his own army from toppling him. Seventeen years of military rule (1974-1991) left Ethiopia mired in chronic political turbulence, economic destruction and crisis, which are examined in the next chapter.

Chapter IV

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Chapter V. Turbulence Under the Military: Policies and
Contributory Factors

The Provisional Military Administrative Council of
Ethiopia (PMACE) seized power in September, 1974, after the
Haile Selassie I monarchy collapsed following a spontaneous
uprising spearheaded by urban residents, students, teachers
and industrial workers. The PMAC was originally a 120-men
military council, popularly known as the Derg (military
Committee), whose members were chosen in secret by the
enlisted men and junior officers of each military unit,
including the army, navy, air force, the traditional
territorial army and the police. The Derg's collective
leadership was transformed into a one-man dictatorship under
colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam in 1977 after a series of
bloody purges and inter-military assassinations. It later
degenerated into a military-Stalinist state after the
declaration of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
(PDRE) in 1987.

Public Administration and governance in Ethiopia under
the military were characterized by turbulence. Its obvious
manifestations included civil strife, regional/ethnic
irredentism and secessions, extreme poverty and catastrophic
droughts, whose cumulative effects generate political
instability. All predate the military era. The Ethiopian
empire state under the monarchy was a feudal autocracy that
did not allow popular participation in the governing
process. Under the Derg, Ethiopia was ruled by a
dictatorship that subordinated society to the control of the
monolithic party. Both feudal Ethiopia and its successor,
the post-imperial state, narrowed the 'civic' space where
people could engage in collective political and economic
activities outside of government control. The preceding
chapter discussed imperial policies and programs that

fuelled turbulence in monarchist Ethiopia. This chapter examines policies and contributory factors that exacerbated the problem.

Civil-Military Conflicts and Struggles to dominate the State

One source of turbulence in the post-imperial state was civil-military struggles for power following the collapse of the monarchy. After the Derg (military committee) dethroned the monarchy in September, 1974, the main demand of the civilian opposition was the establishment of a 'provisional people's government' that would represent all sections of the society, including the army. The civilian opposition argued for a broad-based government that could make radical social, economic and political reforms that it had been demanding for a long time. The Derg rejected the idea of an alternative civilian leadership and created a state controlled by the military. Further, the military committee argued that it alone was capable of implementing revolutionary programs, such as the socialist path of development, and preventing the break up of the country along religious and ethnic lines. The policy of exclusion set the stage for civilian-military conflicts and the beginning of protracted struggles to dominate the Ethiopian state (Chege, 1979; Markakis, 1979).

The civilian opposition to military rule fell into two categories. The first category consisted of students and a substantial number of intellectuals who wanted a progressive (Marxist) regime to replace the monarchy. Most were veterans and leaders of the Ethiopian Student Movement (ESM) who since the early 1960s had agitated for the abolition of the feudal monarchy, 'self-determination' for oppressed nationalities and an agrarian program to redistribute land

and empower the peasants. This radical elite played an active role in organizing the public protests that preceded the removal of Haile Selassie I and considered itself the vanguard of the popular movement. It saw the army's usurpation of state power as a betrayal of the people's desire for an elected government and demanded an unconditional transfer of power to a civilian administration (Legesse, 1980; Melaku, 1988).

The second front of resistance to the military came from Ethiopia's technocratic and bureaucratic class consisting of civil servants, army officers, public managers, ambassadors, educators and business people. Emperor Haile Selassie coopted this modernizing elite into the Imperial administration to carry out his post-World War II socio-economic and political modernization programs that strengthened central rule. This group did not gain credibility as modernizing elites because of the resistance of the conservative class that was unwilling to give up its economic privileges rooted in the country's unjust land ownership practice. When the anti-monarchist upheaval erupted in 1974, the educated elite supported popular calls for change and reform that would achieve the goals of an elected government, ethnic autonomy, land reform and safeguards against official corruption. Unlike radical student and intellectual groups, this bureaucratic elite never endorsed the Marxist predilections of the military dictatorship or its abortive Stalinist state masquerading as the dictatorship of the proletariat (Clapham, 1969; Harbeson, 1994).

When the military government took power in September of 1974, it inherited an efficient imperial civil service that was willing to work for economic improvement, genuine land reform and resolution of Ethiopia's ethnic problems. In the

early days of the coup, the military destroyed all vestiges of imperial rule but retained the civil bureaucracy. For instance, the Derg imprisoned and executed members of the ruling class, expropriated their assets and unleashed a sustained campaign of persecution against landed elites but coopted the bulk of the professional and bureaucratic class. Serious differences over policy emerged between the military leadership and the civilians and generated conflicts in the bureaucracy. For example, the junta's tilt towards the left and some of its extreme measures, such as the mass execution of officials of the ancient regime widened the rift between the military and the moderate elite (Lefort, 1983; Bailey, 1980).

Civil-military relations deteriorated after the military- dominated government executed and purged civilian bureaucrats and replaced them with army administrators. For example, it executed 20 vice-ministers and senior administrators of public agencies and merchants on the grounds of economic sabotage, hoarding and price gouging between the months of February and June, 1975. This drastic action reflected deep divisions that underlined the fragile civil-military alliance. In addition, civilian politicians became the targets of constant reshuffles and dismissals by the military authorities. As Table 5.1 shows, there were 503 appointments, reshuffles and dismissals affecting a wide spectrum of senior positions in the Ethiopian government between 1974-1984. The high turnover rate among senior public servants was an indication of the power struggle between civilian politicians and army officers (Bailey, 1980; Lefort, 1983).

Table 5.1
Employee Turnover of Senior Officials
in the Ethiopian Government
1974-1984

Positions	Number of Dismissals, Reshuffles and Appointments
1. Ministers and Vice-Ministers	131
2. Chief Provincial and Deputy Administrators	81
3. Permanent Secretaries, Department Heads, Heads of Public Agencies, etc.	167
4. Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners	56
5. Ambassadors and Other Diplomats	54
6. Bank Governors	6
7. University Presidents	8
Total	503

Source: Compiled from two Addis Ababa dailies, viz. the Amharic daily, Addis Zemen, and the Ethiopian Herald.

In the early days of its rise to power, the Derg expanded the state bureaucratic apparatus to absorb

civilians into the government. For instance, the size of the public bureaucracy grew from 100,000 in 1974 to 300,000 in 1991. Nearly 65 per cent of the national budget went to support the bureaucracy in the form of salaries and operating expenditures. Senior bureaucrats enjoyed special privileges such as high salaries, granting of lucrative business licenses to family members and relatives, high priced imported goods and unlimited access to foreign currency in return for supporting the military government. The civil-military alliance was short-lived because of the failure of government economic plans and its military defeats (Keller, 1985, 1988; PDRE, 1989).

Deteriorating economic conditions and military losses of the regime aggravated the tension between military technocrats and their civilian counterparts. The military government blamed civilians for the widespread shortage of goods, corruption and the poor performance of state farms and public enterprises. The accusations generated a sense of insecurity among civilian politicians. As a result, the country experienced an unprecedented exodus of its small educated intelligentsia, including defection of politicians, ambassadors, educators, business people and labor leaders. An estimated 3000 highly trained professionals, including physicians, university professors and students, civil servants, engineers, economists, agriculturalists and economists, fled the country between 1974-1989 (Babi, 1992; Yohannes, 1993).

As far as the left-wing opposition, consisting mainly of radical students and intellectuals, was concerned, the Derg pursued a similar policy of repression and elimination of regime opponents. In the first few years after its ascendancy, the military government drew upon the ideas and political support of the civilian left but it later divided

and decimated the same group. For example, when the Derg set up a party, the Worker's Party of Ethiopia (WPE), in 1984, it rejected proposals to merge existing civilian political organizations and instead the party drew heavily upon the Military Political Administration of the Armed Forces. In effect, a party made up of military officers became the party of the state apparatus (Harbeson, 1994; Keller, 1988).

Early in 1979, the Derg established a commission to organize a vanguard party that would provide a modicum of legitimacy for the military dictatorship. Civilian involvement in the party formation process was highly controlled. For example, out of the 110 members of the party organizing commission, only 32 or less than a third were civilian appointees and the entire seven-member executive committee, which had the power to select party members, was made up of military officers. Furthermore, the Derg gave senior positions in the party and government bureaucracy to military-turned-civilian or 'men-in-uniform' administrators. This action alienated the country's intellectuals and intensified the civilian-military struggle to dominate the post-Imperial state. More importantly, the policy of excluding civilians from participating in government led to an upsurge of civilian political organizations that were determined to challenge the army by making the country ungovernable (Clapham, 1989; Keller, 1988).

The Upsurge of Political Organizations

A number of political organizations emerged to challenge the Derg in post-1974 Ethiopia. These included the Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU), the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP), the Ethiopian Oppressed

People's Revolutionary Struggle (EOPRS), the Ethiopian Marxist-Leninist Revolutionary Organization (EMLRO), the Ethiopian Worker's League (EWL) and the Revolutionary Flame (RF). Only the Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU) was advocating moderate reforms including a reinvigorated private sector to promote growth, a constitutional monarchy, a freely elected government and an independent judiciary. All the rest were leftist political organizations espousing either Maoist or Marxist-Leninist revolutionary ideologies (Halliday & Mollyneux, 1980; Markakis & Nega, 1980).

The multitude of leftist political organizations shared a common ideological and political program. They all wanted the dissolution of the monarchy and its replacement by a revolutionary socialist Ethiopian state. In addition, they favored a radical land reform policy and a state-dominated national economy. As such, the inter-party feuds and killings that took place among the various factions in the aftermath of the military's domination of the Ethiopian state were not driven by fundamental differences over programs (Balsvick, 1982; Legesse, 1980).

The greatest weakness of the Ethiopian leftist movement was that it got caught up in Marxist-Stalinist rhetoric of class war, dictatorship of the proletariat, 'self-determination including and up to secession' for ethnic groups. It failed to advance a realistic social and economic program to overcome the country's backwardness and poverty. A revolutionary Marxist agenda devoid of Ethiopian socio-cultural characteristics was not in tune with a tradition-bound Ethiopian society that largely supported continuity of an ancient state. The civilian left's Marxist vision of the future Ethiopian state might have indirectly helped the military junta in presenting itself as an acceptable alternative (Kiflu, 1994).

To summarize, the power struggle between the civilian opposition and the military junta plunged Ethiopian society and politics into turmoil. It is necessary to review the programs of selected political parties opposed to the Derg to assess their possible contribution to the turbulent politics of the military state.

The Ethiopian Democratic Union: A 'Middle-of-the Road' Opposition

One of the first political organizations to oppose the Derg was the Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU) established in London under the patronage of the crown prince Merid Azmach Asfaw Wossen. It was founded in 1975 and was led by former generals and officials of the Haile Selassie government. Its core leadership consisted of Lieutenant General Eyasu Mengesha (an Eritrean), Ras Mengesha Seyoum (a Tigrean of aristocratic origin) and General Nega Tegegn (an army officer from Gondar province). The organization claimed membership from the technocratic stratum of Ethiopian society, including former civil servants, senior military officers, businessmen, educators and ambassadors. This class was dealt a heavy blow after the Derg nationalized land (both rural and urban), private businesses and arrested the remnants of the Haile Selassie regime on corruption charges. Those who escaped went into the countryside or were exiled into neighboring countries from where they fought the military dictatorship (Getachew, 1977).

EDU's objective was to overthrow the military government which it characterized as 'Fascist' and establish a constitutional government with democratic rights for the people. The EDU program envisaged a transitional administration which would repeal all Derg laws, negotiate the Eritrean problem, grant amnesty to political prisoners

and Ethiopian exiles abroad and modernize the economy. It also promised a decentralized administration within a federal structure that would guarantee freedom, human rights and equality for all Ethiopians. Many EDU supporters claimed that it was a reform-oriented pan-Ethiopian party committed to the policies of freedom, democracy, economic and political pluralism, federal government and private land ownership. All these programs were in sharp contrast to the socialist agenda of the military government that included a party founded on Leninist-Stalinist principles and public (government) ownership of land (Mulatu & Yohannes, 1988).

As a party, EDU advocated political and military means to overthrow the junta. Politically, it launched domestic and international campaigns to undermine the Derg by exposing its repressive rule and the abysmal human rights situation in Ethiopia. From their base in London, EDU leaders condemned the Derg citing the mass arrests, killing of regime opponents, arbitrary executions of nearly 60 former officials of the Haile Selassie government and leftist policies of the regime. Their efforts to isolate the regime paid off when regional states, including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the Sudan and North Yemen, backed EDU as a moderate alternative to the pro-Soviet leftist military dictatorship in Ethiopia. Militarily, arms and equipment began to flow to the EDU through the Sudan, from where guerrilla forces launched attacks on Ethiopia's Tigre and Gondar provinces. The fighting went on throughout 1977 and 1978 and EDU controlled substantial territory in the north-western part of the country (Mulatu & Yohannis, 1988).

The Derg condemned EDU as a pro-monarchist and feudal political party that was struggling to reinstate the oppressive and unjust imperial administration. According to its policy statements, however, EDU was committed to

economic and political reform, including a constitutional
monarchy and competitive politics, which would have been
acceptable to many Ethiopians. EDU's leadership close
identification with the ancient regime was used by the
military government to discredit it as working towards
restoring the imperial regime and the oppressive system of
land relations. The anti-EDU propaganda and the fact that
the organization was based outside of the country diminished
its effectiveness in becoming a national front capable of
mobilizing the mass of the people against Derg rule. Hence,
the task of organizing opposition to the military was taken
up by a fractured coalition of Marxist-Leninist groups from
within.

The 'Leftist' Challenge to the Junta

The most potent opposition to the military dictatorship
came from a number of radical political organizations that
cropped up in post-imperial Ethiopia to challenge the Derg.
Only two of these, viz. the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary
Party (EPRP) and the All Ethiopia Socialist Movement (AESM),
will be considered because of their impact on subsequent
political developments in Ethiopia and indirect contribution
to the socialist (radicalization) programs of the military
regime. Both EPRP and AESM professed Marxism as a guiding
ideology and were established by the partisans of the
Ethiopian Student Movement (ESM) of the earlier years.
These two groups drew their strength from disgruntled
student and youth organizations resentful of the Derg's
usurpation of power. They had little support among the vast
majority of urban and rural Ethiopians for whom Marxism was
an alien formula ill-suited for solving the country's
problems (Balsvick, 1982).

EPRP was an ultra-leftist group that sprang up in the

early 1970s to overthrow the monarchy through armed guerrilla struggle. Most followers of the organization were former students rallying behind a program of a Maoist revolution in a post-monarchist Ethiopia. It defined Marxism-Leninism as the correct ideology for the country and allied itself with revolutionary movements in China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam. These communist nations provided ideological and military training for some of the founders of the party. After the monarchy collapsed in 1974, the EPRP demanded the establishment of a 'provisional people's congress' to replace the officers' junta that succeeded Haile Selassie. EPRP rejected the military as unfit to lead the country's transition to a broad-based administration given the Derg's record of stifling the democratic rights of the people (Melaku, 1988).

Starting in 1977, EPRP launched an all-out urban guerrilla war to oust the Derg from power. As an underground party, it recruited youth and student militants at the provincial, zonal, basic and cell levels. Some of its recruits were later trained as freedom fighters by the Eritrean Peoples' Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). From rural bases in Tigre and Gondar provinces, party guerrilla cadres launched military campaigns against the central government during the mid-1970s. In cities, EPRP members clandestinely distributed anti-government pamphlets and propaganda calling for the overthrow of the Derg. In addition, they infiltrated mass organizations, such as labor unions and teachers' associations, and began urban killings of regime supporters and functionaries. The urban campaigns might have provoked the mass terror and repression by the military against the civilian left and the subsequent liquidation of all internal opposition to its rule (Clapham, 1988).

The other leftist challenger of consequence to the military dictatorship was the All Ethiopia Socialist Movement (AESM). Most followers of AESM were residing and studying abroad when the popular uprising erupted in 1974. AESM emerged in the early 1970s as an anti-monarchist movement of student activists and professed the Marxist-Leninist prescription for solving Ethiopia's intractable economic and nationality problems. Unlike its rival, the EPRP, AESM argued that the Derg was a revolutionary regime capable of implementing progressive policies, such as state control of the economy, and its members held key posts in the government upon their return from the United States and Europe. This party believed in providing 'critical support' to the military government, i.e. sharing power with the army while at the same time working to achieve an elected civilian administration (Balsvick, 1982).

The All Ethiopian Socialist Movement (AESM) collaborated with the military because it considered the Derg a leftist-oriented junta that instituted significant socio-economic reforms of benefit to the Ethiopian people. Unlike the rejectionist stance of the EPRP, which was banned as an illegal organization, the AESM opted to work with the military dominated government and helped in drafting the socialist development programs of the regime, especially the land reform legislation and the sweeping nationalization of all private economic activity. The civil-military cooperation did not last long because the junta felt threatened by the growing influence of prominent AESM members in the government and the bureaucracy. As a result, the military government cracked down on the organization in the same way it put an end to all previous civilian challenges to the emerging dictatorship (Ottaway, 1978; Yohannes, 1983).

EPRP and AESM were rivals for power. Despite a shared animosity towards the military dictatorship, the two leftist organizations had bitter differences over the future of the post-Haile Selassie Ethiopian state and the tactics to be employed in order to replace army rule with a civilian government. Most EPRP adherents were activists of the national student movement within Ethiopia while AESM members were predominantly Ethiopian students and intellectuals studying abroad. The two groups vied for the position of a genuinely Leninist party and had substantial differences pertaining to the program of the National Democratic Revolution, nationalization and distribution of land and the nature and composition of the provisional government to replace the Derg. The irreconcilable ideological and political differences triggered the civilian-on-civilian urban violence that killed thousands of Ethiopians during the late 1970s. The strife led to the urban assassination campaigns that both parties launched against each other in Addis Ababa and other provincial towns. The fratricidal killings between these leftist organizations revealed an old trait among Ethiopians for whom the art of working out political differences is not the art of compromise and dialogue but of complete victory over one's opponents -- a cultural bias which the traditional infighting common to Marxist groups did very little to mitigate (Ottaway, 1978).

Factional killings among leftist opposition groups plunged Ethiopian society into civil strife and anarchy. In response, the military government declared the infamous 'red terror-cum-white terror' offensives aimed at exterminating opponents of the regime. EPRP was singled out as the target of the brutal campaign as its members were rounded up, arrested, tortured and executed en masse in Addis Ababa and other cities. The victims of the mass arrests and those picked up from the streets and their homes were subjected to

some of the most inhuman forms of torture and cruelty unprecedented in the history of the country. In addition, the government gave out weapons to its supporters authorizing them to hunt down and carry out 'revolutionary' executions of EPRP members and all leftist opponents. By various estimates, between 10,000-50,000 suspected members of the underground opposition were rounded up and massacred by urban death squads (known as Urban Dwellers' Associations) and state security agents in Addis Ababa and other provincial towns between 1977-1978. Thus, the first generation of Ethiopians ever to put up organized resistance to a military dictatorship was wiped out (Babi, 1992; Melaku, 1988).

The terror of the late 1970s demonstrated that the military junta was determined to exclude civilians from the government and defend its existence by military means alone. The opposition to the regime intensified after it rejected power sharing with civilian groups. The reforms it carried out, including the radicalization of the land reform and all efforts to give central direction to the economy, strengthened military rule under the guise of Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy. What began as a 120-member military committee degenerated into a one-man dictatorship under Colonel Mengistu after it mercilessly persecuted and eliminated all opposition. Those who were able to escape being imprisoned or killed fled the country by the late 1970s and started ethnic-based struggles to oust the military dictatorship (Kiflu, 1994; Markakis, 1979).

The Resurgence of Ethnic-Based Opposition

Another major cause of chronic turbulence in Ethiopia under the military was the incessant fighting between the central government and the various ethnic liberation

movements. With the intensification of state repression at
the center, the remnants of Ethiopia's opposition fled to
the countryside and neighboring countries to wage a war of
attrition against the military government. From the
periphery, they organized numerous ethnic-based movements
that fought bitter wars against the central regime, making
Ethiopia one of Africa's strife-torn and unstable states.
The proliferation of ethnic liberation organizations and
numerous other opposition movements was a direct consequence
of the repression unleashed by the military regime against
its civilian opponents.

List of Organizations Opposed to the Ethiopian Military
Regime
1974-1989 (Alphabetical order)

Name of the Opposition	Political Program/Ideology
1. The Afar National Liberation Front	Ethnic Autonomy
2. The All Ethiopia Socialist Movement	Anti-Derg
3. The Eritrean Liberation Front	Secession
4. Eritrean People's Liberation Front	Secession
5. The Ethiopia Democratic Union	Anti-Derg
6. The Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement	Anti-Derg
7. The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party	Anti-Derg
8. The Ogaden National Liberation Front	Secession
9. The Oromo Liberation Front	Secession

10.	The Somali Abo Liberation Front	Secession
11.	The Tigre People's Liberation Front	Secession and/or Ethnic Autonomy
12.	The Western Somalia Liberation Front	Secession

Source: Compiled from various Ethiopian sources, including Markakis, J., National and Class Conflict, op. cit.

The more the Mengistu regime intensified its repression, the more opposition it faced and the more Ethiopia was thrown into turmoil. Because the regime conducted wars in the name of national unity, it set itself up as synonymous with the Ethiopian state. In so doing, it made the Ethiopian state the target of ethnic-based opposition. The numerous overlapping ethnic movements were united in their determination to overthrow the regime but had no common agenda as to the future of the Ethiopian state. In other words, all of them developed along the lines of destroying the regime but with no consensus on the shape of the post-military state. The lack of understanding on the future of an Ethiopian state among the various opposition movements was and remains a recipe for endless ethnic wars, continuing instability and turbulence of the Ethiopian state (Harbeson, 1994; Keller, 1995).

The list of ethnic organizations on the preceding page shows that the military regime (Derg) faced opposition from no less than twelve ethnic-based opposition movements between 1974-1989. Most of these opposition groups were either ethnic or tribal-based which attested to the fact that ethnic insurgency was a principal form of resistance against military rule in Ethiopia. The different ethnic groups which the fronts claimed to represent cross

provincial, ethnic and tribal lines thus the drawing of administrative and political boundaries along ethnic lines became a difficult exercise. Since some of Ethiopia's large ethnic groups, such as Afars, Oromos, Amharas and Guraghes, lived in more than one region of the country, it was not easy to contain the effects of ethnic conflagration and instability (Fukui & Markakis, 1994).

Most ethnic rebellions in Ethiopia, including the Eritrean and Tigrean insurgencies, were led by former students and intellectuals dissatisfied with the military government. Among the numerous ethnic organizations, the Eritrean separatist movement was the longest running nationalist struggle dating back to the termination of the federation between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 1962. The other movements, especially the Tigre People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), sprang up as in the mid-1970s to resist the repressive military government.

The Eritrean conflict was the most serious ethnic problem for the Derg. Attempts to solve it peacefully failed because the Eritreans insisted that the problem was a 'colonial question' which could be resolved only if the province became an independent state like former colonies elsewhere. For its part, the government proposed self-determination that would allow the creation of an autonomous ethno-linguistic Eritrean region within a united Ethiopia. The Derg rejected the Eritrean demand for an internationally monitored referendum to give people the choice between independence, regional autonomy or federation with Ethiopia. The political stalemate led to intensified fighting between government troops and Eritrean guerrillas throughout the 1970s and 1980s (Keller, 1990; PMAC, 1976).

In 1978, Eritrean separatist forces managed to control

all of the province except the city of Asmara and the ports of Massawa and Assab partly because of the chaos in Ethiopia. The government launched a campaign, dubbed 'Operation Red Star', in 1982 to solve the conflict. The 'Red Star' campaign involved the deployment of 100,000 troops to crush the insurgency and bring the province under effective central control. The central government secured the upper hand in defeating the guerrillas and establishing temporary control over much of Eritrea thanks to external military assistance from the Soviet Union and Cuba. However, the conflict was far from being resolved because fighting erupted again as Eritrean forces regrouped and launched bloody counteroffensives starting in the late 1980s (Bereket, 1980; Dawit, 1989; Mulatu & Yohannes, 1988).

As the military regime was battling the Eritreans in the north, it came under increasing pressure from the Tigreans in the north-west and the Oromos in the south and south-west. The Tigrean regional rebellion was led by the Tigre People's Liberation Front (TPLF). The TPLF started armed struggle against the military government in 1975 and most of its cadres were former students of Haile Selassie I University. Unlike Eritrea, Tigre province has never been a colony and, as such, the front did not demand an outright secession. It declared its objectives to be a 'democratic revolution' and the unity of the Tigrean people with the rest of Ethiopia based on 'democracy, equality and mutual benefit'. Although the Tigre movement did not demand an unconditional secession, the leadership had supported the Eritrean struggle and the two groups had conducted joint military operations against the central government and disrupted logistical and supply lines to the war effort in Eritrea. By the mid-1980s, the TPLF had become an effective guerrilla force claiming the whole of Tigre province and was fighting the government in northern Shoa, Wello and Gondar

regions (Asfaha, 1981; TPLF, 1986).

Another ethnic movement of significance in the anti-Derg resistance was the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF). This organization claims to represent the large Oromo ethnic group. The objectives of the front were 'national self-determination for the Oromo people, liberation from exploitation and oppression and the realization of the democratic revolution by establishing a 'People's Democratic Republic of Oromia'. The agenda for a separate Oromo state had little support among the population but there was discontent over the use of the Amharic language in schools and government administration in Oromo-inhabited areas. The fact that Oromos were well represented in the military government and that the peasantry was the major beneficiary of the land reforms in 1975 dampened enthusiasm for a separatist agenda. On the other hand, the Derg's policy of resettling drought-affected people from the north to the south and the forced military conscription of Oromo youth for the war effort in Eritrea and Tigre might have turned the people against the government. Since the mid-1980s, the OLF conducted low-level and sporadic military operations against the Derg in parts of Arssi, Bale, Hararghe and Wollega. Its activities never posed a serious threat to the regime in Addis Ababa (Baxter, 1983; Mulatu & Yohannes, 1988).

The remaining ethnic movements were not engaged in large-scale guerrilla operations against the military government but their proliferation pointed to the importance of ethnicity as a basis for political mobilization in post-Haile Selassie I Ethiopia. For example, the Afar National Liberation Movement (ANLM) conducted sporadic campaigns in the Rift Valley area mainly disrupting the railway link between Addis Ababa and Djibouti. The Afar, a nomadic

people roaming the Ethiopian lowlands, were estranged after the Derg forced their religious and political leader, Sultan Ali Mirah, into exile in Saudi Arabia. They settled for an autonomous Afar region to unite the pastoralist population who are spread over the lowlands of Eritrea, Tigre, Wello, Shoa and Hararghe. Furthermore, another ethnic organization, the Somali Abo Liberation Front (SALF), which claimed to represent Somalis and the Oromos of highland Hararghe and Bale, was no serious challenge to the Derg either. SALF was created by the neighboring Somalia Republic in the 1970s to foment dissension among the people inhabiting the border regions. In the early 1980s, it too became inactive as assistance from Siad Barre's Somalia, which was itself drifting into clan politics, dried up (Fukui & Markakis, 1994; Markakis, 1987).

Ethnic conflicts intensified throughout Ethiopia starting in the mid-1970s. During its tenure (1974-1991), the Derg's control over much of the country was eroded as rebel forces sprang up to challenge its centralist authority. By the mid-1980s, the country was embroiled in turmoil as civil wars and ethnic conflicts were raging in no less than eight of the fourteen provinces. Central government rule had all but collapsed in Eritrea and Tigre provinces and the remaining regions of the country were fast drifting into a state of anarchy with the spread of the ethnic fighting and resistance against the military dictatorship.

In short, the refusal of the military regime to share power with civilians and its determination to keep Ethiopia a highly centralized state led to the proliferation of ethnic-based opposition in post-Imperial Ethiopia. The government alienated many of the country's intellectuals. Many were executed and forced into exile. As a result,

civil/ethnic wars intensified and Ethiopian society was polarized along ethnic and tribal lines. Amidst the turbulence, population growth, ecological degradation and agricultural stagnation continued unabated and exposed the Ethiopian peasantry to devastating droughts and famines.

Drought, Famine and Civil War

In addition to the ethnic conflicts and civil wars that ravaged the country throughout the 1970s and 1980s, famine and drought were also manifestations of turbulence that engulfed the Ethiopian state. Drought and famine were not caused by lack of rainfall or irregular weather patterns alone. They were the consequences of many years of neglect of agricultural development and the failure of the military government to pay adequate attention to the hardships of the rural community. The government's ill-advised programs, including forcibly relocating peasants, coercive cooperativization schemes, forced conscription of the active rural labor force to fight ethnic wars and the expansion of military expenditure at the cost of social and economic development, contributed to Ethiopia's chronic food deficits and famine. These policies in conjunction with the wars disrupted rural production and produced instability and population displacements that aggravated food shortages and the cycle of agricultural crisis (Hailu, 1985; Sen, 1981; Stahl, 1989).

Ethiopia has experienced several famines throughout its recorded history. At least 25 major national and regional famines hit the country since the 12th century. Historians have recorded the Great Famine of 1888, the Tigre famine of 1958, the Wag Lasta famine of 1966 and the Wello famine of 1973 as the most dreadful ones. The two most recent famines that struck Ethiopia in 1973-1974 and 1984-1985 killed an

estimated 100,000-150,000 and 750,000 people respectively. Most historical famines in the past were preceded by natural calamities, such as pestilence and protracted droughts, that exposed the peasantry to depletion of food stocks, severe malnutrition, forced migration and ultimately mass starvation. The recent famines that ravaged the countryside since the mid-1950s have been consequences of endemic instability on the one hand and a sustained decline in food production and agricultural stagnation on the other. For example, between 1970-1980, agriculture grew at the rate of 0.7 per cent per annum while the population increased by 2.8 to 3 per cent per annum. Further, food availability per capita declined from a high of 102 in 1975 to 92 in 1985 during the same period (Jansson, 1987; Mesfin, 1986; Pankhurst, 1961; World Bank, 1992,1993).

Famine in Ethiopia was one measure of the political and economic deterioration which gained momentum in the early 1970s. As discussed previously, starting in the mid-1970s, the military dictatorship engaged in internal power struggles and unleashed mass terror against its civilian opponents. On the periphery, the regime waged bitter wars against ethnic insurgencies throughout the breadth and length of the country. At the same time, the economy sharply deteriorated and the agricultural sector was crippled by high defense spending to end the civil wars by military means. Instability and civil/ethnic turmoil resulted in recurrent famines and droughts. The following table presents the estimated number of people affected by drought and famine in Ethiopia between 1981-1985.

Table 5.2

Number of People Affected by Famine and Drought in Ethiopia
1981-1985

Province	Year				
	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
1. Wello	450,000	592,000	1,100,230	1,820,970	2,587,420
2. Shoa	239.000	533,000	195,000	204,310	851,830
3. Tigre	500,000	600,000	1,000,000	1,300,000	1,400,000
4. Eritrea**	--	--	--	--	2,341,270
5. Gondar	67,000	202,000	424,600	324,500	363,000
6. Harar	420,000	384,000	285,000	278,830	875,080
7. Sidamo	N/A	303,000	145,000	355,040	532,500
8. Gamo Gofa	232,000	N/A	N/A	79,880	106,330
9. Bale	275,000	109,000	35,000	52,950	192,870
10. Arssi	185,000	220,000	60,000	20,530	81,610
11. Wollega	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	23,420
12. Illubabor	N/A	20,000	N/A	N/A	20,400
13. Kefa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	58,000
14. Gojjam	N/A	83,600	20,000	35,250	76,120
Total	2,368,000	3,046,600	3,264,830	4,472,260	9,509,850

Source: Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, The
Challenges of Drought, Addis Ababa: 1986.

** Except for 1985, figures for Eritrea were withheld
by the military government but there was no doubt that it
was one of the worst affected regions because of the civil
war raging in the province for over two decades.

Civil wars and military conflicts played a big part in
the political economy of famine and starvation in Ethiopia.

A look at Table 4.2 shows that the regions most affected by the famine devastation -- Tigre, Wello, Gondar, Eritrea and Hararghe -- were also those more troubled by the perennial conflicts between the government and insurgent forces. The central province of Shoa and the Sidamo region should be treated as exceptions because their high numbers of drought victims were results of an increase in population and a subsequent decline in food production rather than war. Otherwise, the spread of famine and hunger in much of the country was inextricably linked to the intensification of hostilities between the central government and rebel groups.

In the mid-1980s, civil conflicts in Ethiopia reached their peak and famine and drought engulfed virtually the entire nation. As the fighting intensified, the famine spread to surplus-producing and previously unaffected regions, including Arssi, Bale and Gojjam, adding to the number of people needing emergency assistance. The expanding famine and food shortages, not to mention the mortality or social impact, was indicative of the worsening social and political environment in the country. Intensified fighting between the central government and rebel groups further complicated efforts of both governmental and non-governmental organizations to provide assistance to starvation victims in war-torn provinces. Escalating wars caused the displacement and deaths of thousands of Ethiopians because the lack of security made it impossible to reach and provide humanitarian aid to people in areas contested by both government forces and insurgent groups (Hailu, 1985; Sheperd, 1975).

The military government's response to the 1984/1985 famine showed utter disregard for the suffering of its own people. Ideally, any government has the responsibility to protect its citizens from 'man-made' and natural disasters

and provide all kinds of assistance in an emergency. The Ethiopian government miserably failed in this regard. It was the irony of the time that the government was trying to hide the famine and manifesting callousness to the hardship inflicted upon Ethiopian society by the combined effects of civil war and starvation while a large number of humanitarian aid agencies were feeding and caring for millions of starving Ethiopians. Instead of mobilizing domestic resources and international relief efforts to alleviate the drought, the regime was squandering millions of dollars for political party formation and celebrations to mark the tenth anniversary of its rise to power. It ordered national mobilization and placed the country on a war footing to fight insurgency instead of directing state resources into production to revitalize the agricultural sector (Dawit, 1989; Hailu, 1985).

The Derg framed the famine and hunger problems as natural phenomena and denied that conflicts and the ensuing instability were the primary causes for the national disaster. Misplaced government priorities had a negative impact on agricultural development and food production, because the high cost of running wars drained national wealth. Defence and security spending to subdue ethnic insurgencies left the agricultural and rural sectors severely under-financed, thus exacerbating food shortages and famine. The need for arms, which is inextricably linked to containing the endemic ethnic conflicts by military means, drew the junta to the former Soviet Union, which supported the Derg's socialist rhetoric. Since no discussion of Ethiopia's turbulence can disregard the Soviet factor, the following pages examine how the external flow of arms contributed to intensification of internal conflicts and the socio-political turmoil of the Ethiopian military state.

'Cold War' Politics: Soviet Arms Supplies and their Economic and Social Effects

Russian involvement was an important external factor that exacerbated the turbulence that characterized the Ethiopian military state. Their arms deliveries to the military dictatorship contributed to the intensification of the ethnic wars, militarization, crisis and degeneration of Ethiopian society and kept one of Africa's brutal regimes in power for nearly two decades. A brief examination of these issues will bring Moscow's contribution to the Ethiopian crisis into focus.

The Soviet policy towards Ethiopia took a strong hold in 1977 after Somalia abrogated its 1974 treaty with Moscow and expelled the Russians from the country. The Derg instituted radical socio-economic changes and sharply turned Ethiopia to the East following the downgrading of Ethiopia's longstanding ties with the U.S. There was a convergence of the interests of Moscow and the Ethiopian military junta. The Ethiopian regime's opening to Moscow was motivated primarily by a need to find a new source of military assistance sufficient to keep it in power and fight ethnic secession. On the other hand, the Soviets were attracted by Ethiopia's large population and its status as Africa's oldest independent state and changed their support from Somalia to Ethiopia. By embracing Ethiopia, the Soviets secured an important foothold in the Horn of Africa to reverse their relative weakness in the region vis-a-vis the United States and the conservative Arab states (Legum & Lee, 1977; Luckham & Dawit, 1984).

By the late 1970s, Ethiopia was a client state and close ally of Moscow in the Horn of Africa. The Ethio-Soviet alliance fuelled regional instability and tensions

with states in the surrounding region threatened by Soviet 'communist expansion' that followed the fall of the Shah of Iran, the Russian occupation of Afghanistan and the collapse of pro-West Haile Selassie's Ethiopia. In addition, the Castro Plan to form a 'Horn Confederation of Socialist States' comprising the former South Yemen (PDRY), Somalia, Djibouti and Ethiopia increased Western concerns about growing Russian influence in the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea. As a result, the Carter administration in concert with regional states, including Saudi Arabia and Egypt, provided arms and economic assistance to the tottering Siad Barre dictatorship. The East-West struggle set in motion the politics of the 'cold war' that kept arms flowing to the repressive regimes in Ethiopia and Somalia. The unrestricted flow of arms intensified conflicts between central governments and opposition forces and turned the Horn of Africa into one of the most turbulent and unstable regions in the world for nearly two decades. The attendant consequences of unfettered arms flows were recurrent civil wars which produced massive population displacements, militarization, economic degeneration, political instability and hunger, all of which were the precipitating factors for the failure and collapse of the state in the Horn of Africa (Ottaway, 1982; Spencer, 1977).

The Soviets made Ethiopia under the Derg the most militarized state in north-east Africa. Between 1977-1989, Ethiopia alone received more than 82 per cent of arms deliveries to the Horn of Africa. During the same period, Ethiopia's military outlays as a percentage of GNP was the highest among regional states and almost twice as much as the rest of Africa -- Ethiopia's was 7 per cent compared with 2.7 for Kenya, 3.9 for Somalia, 2.9 per cent for the Sudan and 3.9 for all of sub-Saharan Africa. As Table 5.3 shows, between 1981-1987, the former Soviet Union and its

East European allies poured nearly $6 billion worth of arms into Ethiopia. Two additional deliveries for Ethiopia in 1988 and 1989 brought the nine-year total to $7.6 billion (Henze, 1991).

Table 5.3

Arms Deliveries to Ethiopia, the Horn States and All of Africa

1981-1987 (in $US millions at 1987 prices)

Year	Ethiopia	Kenya	Somalia	Sudan	All Africa
1981	526	200	75	188	9455
1982	677	47	153	282	8537
1983	1105	57	79	113	7664
1984	1311	5	76	120	8383
1985	822	5	32	42	5610
1986	341	10	21	52	4699
1987	1000	10	20	50	4970
7-year total	5782	334	456	847	49318
7-year average	826	48	65	121	7046

Source: Henze, The Horn of Africa, op. cit.

Moscow's arming of the Ethiopian military state contributed to the intensification of conflicts and the deterioration of the political and military situation throughout Ethiopia. In the first place, the weapons and armaments that kept flowing to the central government also ended in rebel hands either because of defeats or defections in the battlefield. Secondly, military campaigns against centrifugal forces did not advance the regime's objectives of maintaining territorial integrity or achieving peace. Rather, militarization became a recipe for political turmoil and instability. It intensified the opposition and led to

further ethnic-based fighting.   The   more the   government
stepped up   the   war,   the   greater the   social and   economic
crisis,   including   the   destruction   of   infrastructure and
social and economic services.

In contrast   to the massive military   commitment to the
Ethiopian   military junta,   Soviet economic   and development
aid was   negligible.   Moscow's   first economic   program   to
Ethiopia   was   a $100   million   credit   given to   monarchist
Ethiopia in   1959.   Ethiopia   had used   less than   a third of
the $100 million credit by the time the military took power
in 1974.   New   credits were   added   to the   unused portion
bringing the   total to $149 in 1979.   Most of the credit was
used to build   a cement   factory, a tractor   factory, a   few
construction   projects and   the Melka   Wakena hydro-electric
project on the   Wabe Shebelle river.   Furthermore,   Russian
aid to drought and   famine relief was limited too   -- 10,000
tons of rice during the 'Great Famine' of 1984 and 1985   and
25,000   tons of   wheat valued   at $50   million in 1988.   By
comparison, the   USA, the EEC and   other nations contributed
nearly $1   billion   of   food   and   non-food   assistance   to
alleviating famine in Ethiopia in   1984 and 1985.   According
to available data, total   Soviet economic aid never exceeded
$300 million for two decades while their military assistance
topped $8 billion in 1989 (Hailu, 1985 ; Henze, 1991; Korn,
1984).

The   Soviet Union's large-scale   military investment in
Ethiopia produced other political and   economic consequences
as well.   Politically, it hardened   the position of   the
military   government   to   negotiate   with   ethnic opposition
groups and therefore prolonged the conflicts.   Economically,
it   distorted   the   country's   socio-economic   growth   by
diverting   resources from development   to military purposes.
Although   arms purchases were   externally (Soviet) financed,

the military regime allocated a substantial proportion of
the national budget for logistics and maintaining a large
army numbering about 300,000 throughout the 1980s. During
this period, nearly forty percent of the annual central
government budget was allocated for defense and security.
At the same time, as militarization accelerated, economic
growth rates declined and population growth rates increased.
As Table 5.4 demonstrates, between 1981-1987, Ethiopia's per
capita GNP declined by 8 per cent while population increased
by nearly 20 per cent over the seven-year period.   In
addition, infant mortality went up and food availability
declined, reflecting a deterioration in the quality of life
for most Ethiopians (World Bank, 1984, 1989).

Table 5.4
Selected Indicators of Ethiopia's Economic Performance
1981-1987

	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
Infant Mortality*	145	122	89	166	168	155	154
Per Capita GNP in 1987$	122	121	124	117	105	108	112
Food Availability**	1758	2162	2162	2009	1681	1749	1619
Population Growth (in mills.)	39	40	41	42	43	45	46
Arms Imports as a % of Exports	108	142	258	288	232	72	256

* Deaths per 1000 during first year of life

** Calories per capita

Source: World Bank, <u>World Development Report</u>,

1984,1988; & Henze, op. cit.

Imperial Ethiopia's economic and agricultural performance was superior to that of the military government. As discussed in Chapter 3, Ethiopia under the monarchy achieved modest agricultural and industrial growth. Between 1965-1973, GDP grew by an annual average rate of 4.1 per cent, industry by 6 per cent and agriculture by 2.1 per cent. After the military takeover, war, instability and state-led socialist policies contributed to the country's economic stagnation and precipitous decline. For example, between 1980-1992, GNP declined by an annual average rate of 1.9 per cent and agriculture by 3 per cent. Meanwhile, Ethiopia's dependence on external food aid and imports increased ten fold, from 110,000 tons in 1979/80 to a million tons in 1991/92, mainly because food production declined from 194.7 kilograms per capita in 1979 to 125.3 kilograms per capita in 1987. Such economic statistics made Ethiopia one of the poorest countries (coming after Mozambique and Tanzania) in the world. Ethiopia thereby joined the ranks of African states, whose financial and economic burdens of militarization led to degeneration and crisis (Griffin, 1992; Harbeson, 1988; World Bank, 1988,1994).

In conclusion, turbulence in Ethiopia under the military was fuelled by civil war, drought and famine, external flow of arms, economic mismanagement and repressive rule. Some of these problems, such as ethnic-based secession or the country's severe underdevelopment, predated the military government. The socialist development policies of the regime and its refusal to negotiate with ethnic opposition groups exacerbated the already strife-torn

political environment. The following chapter discusses the coping strategies of the regime to deal with turbulence and examines the constraints it faced in addressing the fundamental problems of state and society in Ethiopia.

Chapter V

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Chapter VI. Regime Responses to Turbulence in Ethiopia

The preceding chapter analyzed the inter-relationship
of internal and external factors that fuelled turbulence
under the Ethiopian military state. This chapter examines
the administrative and policy responses of the Derg regime
and argues that there is a cause and effect relationship
between turbulence and the domestic and foreign policies of
the military government. It is necessary to briefly review
some obvious manifestations of Ethiopia's turbulent socio-
political environment before discussing how the public
administrative and governmental apparatus coped with
widespread turbulence and instability.

Throughout this study, turbulence in Ethiopia has been
used to denote political instability, ethnic turmoil and
chaos. Ethnic/civil wars, political repression and crisis
in legitimacy, recurrent famines, grinding mass poverty and
agricultural and economic deterioration, whose cumulative
effects generate political instability and economic
hardship, are characteristics of turbulence in Ethiopia.
State and society in Ethiopia share such problems, which
became increasingly manifest since the late 1970s, with many
African countries, including Somalia, Chad, Mozambique,
Angola and Liberia (Rose, 1985; Sandbrook, 1985; Liebenow,
1986; Wunsch & Olowu, 1990).

As elsewhere in Africa, turbulence in Ethiopia has
internal and external causes. An important source of
internal turbulence in Ethiopia has been the endless
fighting between the central government and the various
ethnic movements that sought independence from the state.
Although ethnic differentiation in Ethiopia has historically
been more crosscut by territorial identities than elsewhere
in Africa, the military government's unsuccessful campaigns

to subdue ethnic insurgencies by force only heightened ethnic consciousness and separatist tendencies. The ensuing civil wars between the government and ethnic opposition groups made Ethiopia one of contemporary Africa's most war-torn nations (Young, 1976; Harbeson & Rothchild, 1995).

Ethiopia is located in the Horn of Africa which is well known as one of the world's poorest and politically most turbulent regions. Geographically, the Horn of Africa comprises Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia and some parts of the Sudan and Kenya. Among the factors bearing on the region's chronic instability has been the inter-relationship between regional and extra-regional/international politics, historically as well as at present. In other words, an important feature defining the Horn of Africa has been the extensive and persistent entanglement of the region's domestic politics of state evolution and ethnicity with the competition among European powers for influence in the region. For example, the historical bases of ethnic conflict in Ethiopia is the drawing of boundaries that were intended to serve European colonial interests without considering the ethnic and religious diversity of the people inhabiting the region. The situation of Somalis spread over Ethiopia, Kenya, Djibouti and Somalia and the longstanding Eritrean problem are cases in point (Fukui & Markakis, 1994; Markakis, 1987).

During the 'cold war', the Horn of Africa was caught in political and military competition between the ex-Warsaw and NATO alliances more than any other place in Africa except, perhaps, parts of southern Africa. Both the USA and the former Soviet Union courted repressive regimes in Ethiopia, Somalia and the Sudan with military and economic assistance. Although the strategic significance of the Horn of Africa diminished after the end of communism in eastern Europe and

the Soviet Union, the unfettered flow of arms to the region during the cold-war era has contributed to the intensification of ethnic and civil wars throughout the region. The argument here is that the historical and contemporary linkage between the region's problems, including ethnic unrest and lagging economic growth, and external machinations for influence, has been a critical factor in exacerbating turbulence among the Horn states, including Ethiopia. Ethnic wars in Eritrea, the Ogaden and Bale and massive supplies of Soviet arms to the Ethiopian military regime have been important contributory factors to the country's mutually reinforcing political turbulence and severe underdevelopment (Gurdon, 1994; Harbeson & Rothchild, 1995).

Famines and droughts contributed to turbulence in Ethiopia in a number of ways. In the first place, protracted droughts and the ensuing famines compelled victims to abandon their localities and migrate to rural towns and adjacent provinces in search of food and water. Although food riots were uncommon in Ethiopia even during periods of severe drought, people displaced by famine exhausted the already scarce food resources and the social and economic services of the receiving centers. For example, there are several studies that indicated sharp rises in grain market prices when major towns, such as Dessie and Komboltcha, were overwhelmed by famine victims from the surrounding awrajas following the 1973-1974 and 1984-1985 droughts (Hancock, 1985; Shepherd, 1975).

The displacement of whole communities by war and famine generated religious and ethnic tensions in some parts of Ethiopia. When the drought-stricken peasantry migrated to other provinces inhabited by a different ethnic/tribal group, they were not welcome because of shortage of arable

land. Forced migration and resettlement intensified competition for land and water resources between resettlers and local populations. In this instance, the Derg government's policy of resettling large numbers of people from drought-prone regions of the north in several southern provinces could be cited as a source of resentment that erupted into inter-ethnic conflicts following the collapse of the regime in 1991 (Meheret, 1994).

Another contributory factor to Ethiopia's protracted turmoil was the military government's socialist policy of economic management. Its Marxist-Leninist economic dogma stifled economic growth and activity by restricting the role and participation of the private sector in the economy. Furthermore, the sweeping nationalizations of land, banks and private industry ignited opposition among the dispossessed classes and former land owners that were bent upon overthrowing the regime by force. Therefore, to the extent that the radical economic measures generated resistance against the military regime, it can be argued that political turbulence in Ethiopia was fuelled by the crises in the Marxist economy of the military government (Henze, 1989).

In addition to the socialist policy factor, turbulence in Ethiopia is fuelled by the fact that the Ethiopian state is built upon an economic base of quite exceptional fragility. Ethiopia's GNP per capita in 1993 was $100 better than only Mozambique's, which stood at $90. Between 1989-1995, Ethiopia's percentage of malnourished children under five years old was a staggering 47, the comparable figure for two of Africa's poorest states -- Rwanda and Tanzania -- was 28 per cent. According to a 1996 World Bank report, only 18 per cent of Ethiopia's total population had access to safe drinking water while the figures for some of

the other poorest countries of sub-Saharan Africa, viz. Tanzania, Mozambique and Rwanda, were 52, 22 and 37 per cent respectively (World Bank, 1993, 1996).

Furthermore, social and economic turbulence in Ethiopia are brought about by decades of war and misplaced government priorities. At the height of wars in Ethiopia, military spending absorbed half or more of the national budget. The costs of maintaining a huge defence and state coercive apparatus have been enormous competing with development needs and emergency assistance to the rural population that was exposed to recurrent famines. Added to these have been the stagnation of an already weak economy, the destruction of physical infrastructure, and the disruption of production and economic activity, together with immense suffering and human costs in terms of casualties, displaced populations, famine, disease and a high rate of maternal and child mortality. These immense social and economic dislocations plunged the country in turmoil and exacerbated the Ethiopian state-society crisis (Love, 1989; Hailu, 1985).

The discussion on turbulence in Ethiopia is incomplete without considering the role of the ex-Soviet Union in the chaotic politics of the post-imperial Ethiopian state. After relations with the U.S. reached an all-time low after the collapse of the Haile Selassie I regime in the mid 1970s, the Derg under Mengistu Haile Mariam sharply turned Ethiopia to the Soviet Union in 1977. Starting in the late 1970s, Moscow and its East European partners poured nearly $8 billion worth of military supplies into Ethiopia. In contrast, Soviet economic assistance and famine aid amounted to no more than $300 million between 1959-1989. Moscow's massive arms deliveries were tantamount to throwing fuel at a house under fire because the Ethiopian military state was

embroiled in destructive ethnic wars and brutal repression
of regime opponents. In addition, Soviet militarization of
the Ethiopian state misled the Derg into believing that it
could solve Ethiopia's intractable nationalities problem by
military means. Thus, the Soviet action prolonged the civil
war that destroyed the country's economy and infrastructure
and further aggravated the ethno-regional strife of the
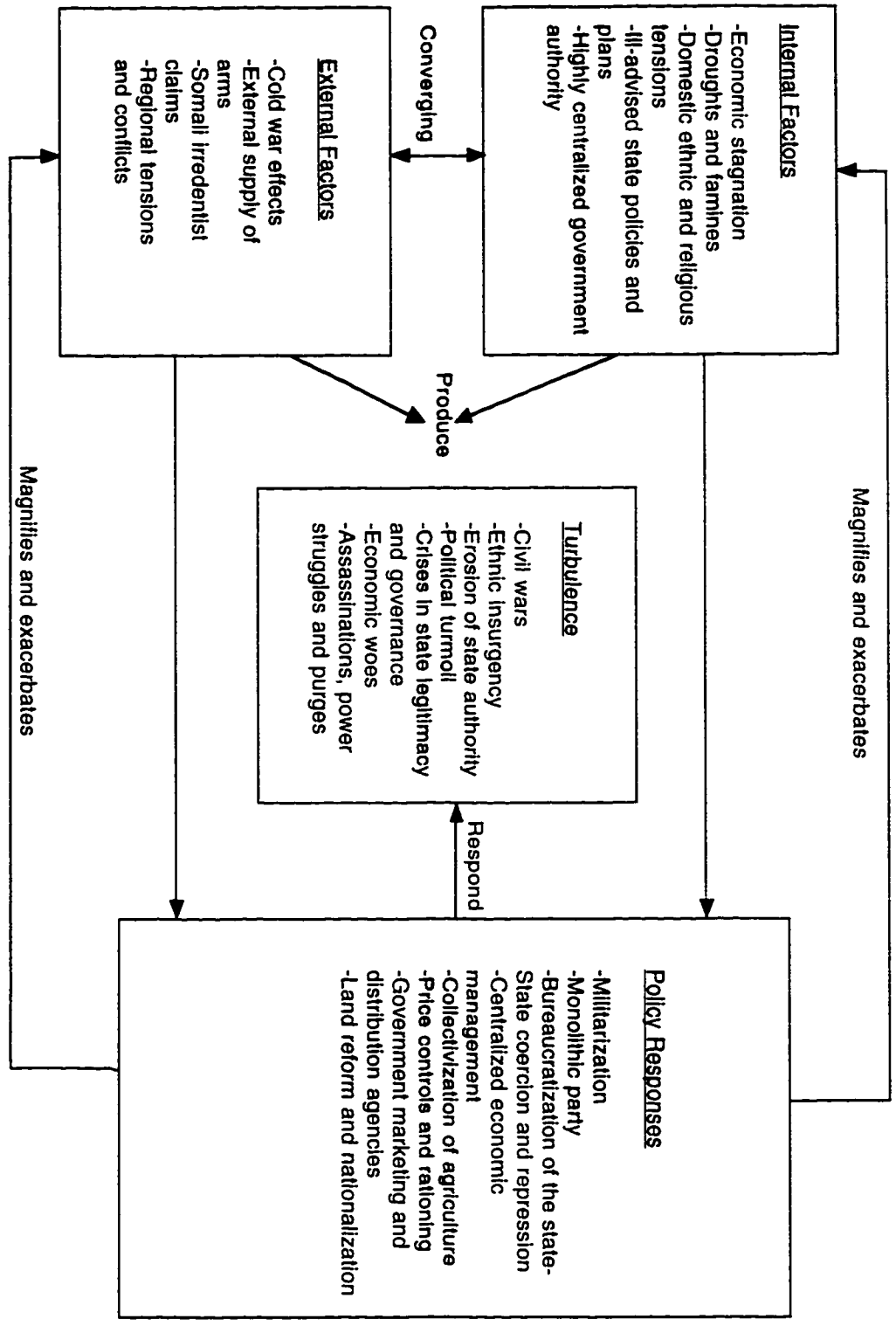Ethiopian nation (Henze, 1991; Korn, 1986).

Soviet-American rivalry in the Horn of Africa also
contributed to turbulence in Ethiopia. Until 1974, the USA
was a long-time benefactor of monarchist Ethiopia while the
Soviet Union had kept a foothold in neighboring Somalia
since its independence in 1962. After Haile Selassie I was
toppled, Ethiopia became a Russian client state and the
Americans moved into Somalia to counter the growing Soviet
influence in the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea. With
military and economic assistance provided by the Super
Powers, dictatorial regimes in Addis Ababa and Mogadishu
presided over the destruction of their countries in a futile
attempt to suppress ethnic rebellions and resistance to
their oppressive rule. The conflicts that ravaged the Horn
region throughout the 1970s and 1980s and the 1977-1978
Ogaden war between Ethiopia and Somalia took place against a
background of Soviet support to the military junta in
Ethiopia and Washington's embrace of the Siad Barre
dictatorship in Somalia. Inter-state problems in the Horn
of Africa, for example the Ethio-Somali border dispute, drew
in Soviet-proxy states, including Cuba, South Yemen and
Libya, on the side of Ethiopia and pro-west states,
including Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, on the
side of Somalia (Legum & Lee, 1979; Gorman, 1981; Dougherty,
1982).

To summarize, ethnic and regional turmoil, Soviet arms

supplies to the Derg, agricultural and economic deterioration and recurrent droughts and famines contributed to the turbulent socio-political environment in Ethiopia. This turbulence shows overlapping manifestations, including endless ethnic/civil wars, economic crises, severe food shortages, mass starvation and chronic instability. The inter-relationship of internal and external contributory factors to turbulence and the policy responses of the Derg regime are presented in Figure 6.1.

Model 6.1
An Organizational Model of Turbulence and Regime Responses in Ethiopia (1974-1991)

Internal Factors
-Economic stagnation
-Droughts and famines
-Domestic ethnic and religious tensions
-Ill-advised state policies and plans
-Highly centralized government authority

External Factors
-Cold war effects
-External supply of arms
-Somali irredentist claims
-Regional tensions and conflicts

Converging

Produce

Magnifies and exacerbates

Turbulence
-Civil wars
-Ethnic insurgency
-Erosion of state authority
-Political turmoil
-Crises in state legitimacy and governance
-Economic woes
-Assassinations, power struggles and purges

Respond

Magnifies and exacerbates

Policy Responses
-Militarization
-Monolithic party
-Bureaucratization of the state-
-Centralized economic management
-State coercion and repression
-Collectivization of agriculture
-Price controls and rationing
-Government marketing and distribution agencies
-Land reform and nationalization

The model on the preceding page depicts that many aspects of turbulence in Ethiopia have both an internal and external dimension. For example, civil wars in Ethiopia are aggravated by external flow of arms and domestic destabilizing factors, including ethnicity, economic deterioration and the military's imposition of centralized governance upon a heterogeneous Ethiopian nation. Further, the regime's Marxist party, the Worker's Party of Ethiopia (WPE), created a rigid state structure that concentrated power in the hands of the military junta. Its refusal to devolve authority to the various nationality groups exacerbated ethnic turmoil within Ethiopia and border disputes with neighboring countries, including the Sudan and Somalia. Because ethnic groups in the Horn of Africa are spread over many states, the effects of turbulence, such as war and population displacements, spill over to adjacent countries throughout the entire region.

According to the model, converging internal and external factors combine to promote turbulence and they cannot be categorized as exclusively internal or external. For example, militarization in Ethiopia was a result of the convergence of the interests of the ex-Soviet Union and the Derg regime, i.e. the desire of the former to gain a strategic foothold in the Horn of Africa by arming the Ethiopian Derg state and the domestic priorities of the latter to build a large army to suppress ethnic secession and civilian opposition to military rule. To provide another example, Ethiopia's chronic food deficit is intertwined with the disruptive effects of endless civil wars and the government's ill-advised forced procurement of agricultural produce at prices that dampened peasant motivation to raise output.

While particular aspects of the model are specific to

turbulence in Ethiopia, the overall concept can be applied to discussion of turbulence elsewhere in Africa. All one needs to do is identify the specific variables affecting the experiences of particular African countries. For example, if this model is applied to other African nations, most of which have passed through colonialism (external factor), it is necessary to consider the impact of colonialism on the evolution and stability of the post-colonial African state. In contrast, since Ethiopia is one of the few black nations that was never colonized by European powers, it can be argued that most of the turbulence is caused by factors of local or regional origin rather than of international provenance, although the latter might mitigate or exacerbate internal turbulence in post-monarchist Ethiopia (Lyons, 1992; Gurdon, 1994).

Having dealt with the causes and consequences of turbulence in Ethiopia, I now turn to the coping strategies of the regime. While discussing the Ethiopian experience in dealing with turbulence, I will note patterns in the policies of other African governments to deal with widespread turbulence and instability plaguing the continent for nearly three decades.

Managing Turbulence in Ethiopia

The policy choices and programs of any government are influenced by the internal and external challenges to its authority. The Ethiopian Marxist military dictatorship under Mengistu Haile Mariam was no exception. Its internal legitimacy was contested by ethnic opposition while it faced a hostile regional/international environment because of its revolutionary Marxist rhetoric and close association with Soviet and East European communism. Domestic and external destabilizing factors, including the politics of ethnicity

and the regime's avowed commitment to doctrinaire socialism, influenced the policies that it adopted to deal with problems of governance and turbulence.

The Derg government's strategy to deal with multi-dimensional turbulence in Ethiopia shows a pattern of heavy state involvement and reliance on a bureaucratic machinery to tackle underdevelopment and poverty. As in many places in Africa, this state-centered approach did not solve Ethiopia's problems because the capacity of the Ethiopian state for development and stable governance has been eroded by powerful centrifugal opposition groups. In the following pages, I will examine important policies and programs of the military regime to establish a link between its administrative and political responses and turbulence.

The Vanguard Party Solution to the Legitimacy Crisis

One of the manifestations of turbulence of the Ethiopian military state during the 1970s and 1980s has been the crisis in legitimacy and institutional power. This refers to the erosion of the public administrative and resource capacity of the state to undertake development and establish central government authority throughout its territorial jurisdiction. In a move intended to legitimize the military dictatorship, the Derg set up a commission for organizing the vanguard party in 1979, the Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE). Civilian political organizations, including the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Party (EPRP), All-Ethiopian Socialist Movement (AESM) and other Marxist groups, were suppressed by a wave of Red Terror campaigns launched by the regime in 1977/1978 and the party hierarchy drew heavily upon the Military Political Administration of the Armed Forces. The 'process of party building from above' laid the foundation for a totalitarian political

order with a politburo, a central committee, regional and provincial structures. All the seven-member politburo (executive committee) and seventy per cent of the central committee were representatives drawn from the army, police, navy and the air force. Hence, a party made up of military officers became the party of the state apparatus effectively closing the door to significant civilian participation (Keller, 1985; Clapham, 1989).

The military government consolidated its political power base in a single Leninist political vanguard along the Soviet model. External Soviet influence in the modernization of Ethiopian political institutions was important but was not unrelated to Ethiopia's lack of experience in democratic governance and political participation. Imperial Ethiopia's experience with near centralized control over the regions in the periphery was not affected by the abrupt transition to military rule. Monarchism, while not absolute, precluded the formation of political parties, independent labor unions and other representative institutions. Both in the urban and rural areas, Haile Selassie's repression of only the most vocal of internal opponents gave way to stifling even the most modest expressions of dissent by the military dictatorship. Domestic institutions for maintaining military prominence and stifling internal dissent have indigenous origins, but have been buttressed by Marxist-Leninist masquerading of organization of state and society in Ethiopia under a military dictatorship (Asmelash & Markakis, 1974; Clapham, 1989).

Figure 6.2

Structure and Organization of the Worker's Party of Ethiopia – 1987
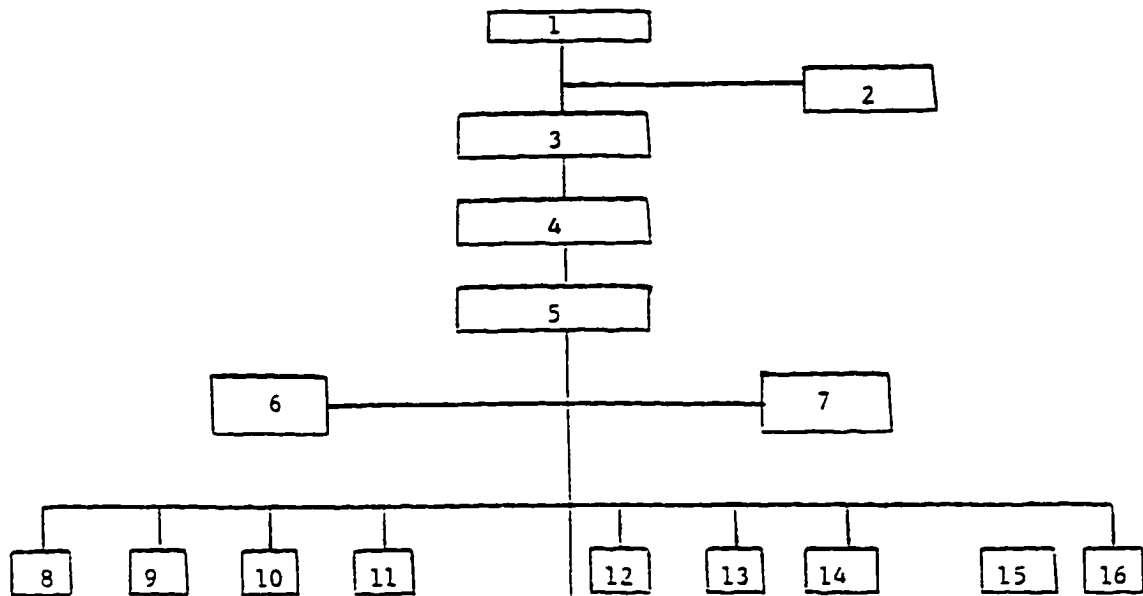
Key:

1. General Assembly
2. Audit Commission
3. General Secretary
4. Central Committee
5. Politbureau
6. Secretariat
7. Central Control Commission
8. Youth Department
9. Women's Department
10. Co-operatives Department
11. Nationalities Department
12. Organization Department
13. Ideology Department
14. Defense and Security Department
15. International Affairs Department
16. Finance and Administration Department

17. Regional Party Secretariats
18. Provincial Party Secretariats
19. District Party Secretariats
20. Primary Party Organization (PPO) Offices

The chart on the previous page shows that the Workers'
Party of Ethiopia (WPE) controlled various mass
organizations, including youth, women, labor and farmers'
groups. The leaders of these mass associations were card-
carrying members of the party, thus augmenting the coercive
and surveillance capacity of the repressive military state.
Popular mass organizations became extensions of the state.
Also, the party controlled important economic production and
distribution activities by appointing its cadres in the
party and state apparatuses. As in any other one-party
state, the system of economic control and decision making
favored party loyalists and functionaries. In addition,
centralized economic management gave way to widespread
corruption, bribery and waste in government. According to
one account, 26,000 cases of corruption involving economic
sabotage, tax evasion and misuse of public property were
reported between 1981-1986 (Clapham, 1988).

The Derg established a Stalinist political party that
fused party, state and government. Parallel bureaucratic
structures proliferated because party functionaries were
appointed as heads of government departments and agencies.
Organizational duplication and fragmentation of governmental
functions became consequences of an unplanned bureaucratic
expansion. For example, the chairman of the international
relations committee of the party served as the foreign
minister and the chairman of the party's defence and
security committee held the post of defense minister. Such
duality of roles was common throughout the system because
party membership was an essential requirement for holding
positions in the government.

Bureaucratic expansion under the Derg became a means to
coopt civilian technocrats into the party and government.
State control of many economic activities--nationalized

banks, industries, insurance companies and other businesses-
-required a large bureaucracy for management and control.
As a result, employment in the public sector rose sharply
from 110,000 in 1974 to about 300,000 by 1989, which
represented an annual increase of 12 per cent. The number
of ministries rose from 12 to 22 during the same period. A
growing public administration and government machinery used
nearly 65 per cent of the national budget for administrative
and operation expenses leaving only a third for social and
economic services (PDRE, 1989).

The growth of the public bureaucracy enhanced state
capacity to extract surplus resources to sustain the system.
For instance, domestic revenue collected increased from
618.9 million birr in 1972-1973 to 2100 million Birr in
1982-1983, which represented an average annual growth rate
of 14.5 per cent. Total current government expenditure
increased by 246.8 per cent in cash terms between 1973-1974
and 1982-84, from 529.5 million Birr to 1836.4 million Birr
(1 US$=2.07 birr). During the same period, general current
expenditure increased by 335 per cent in cash terms while
the comparable figures for social and economic programs were
143.5 per cent and 162.5 per cent respectively. Throughout
the 1970s and 1980s, more than two thirds of the central
government budget was used for recurrent items, especially
wages, salaries and general government administration.
Further, investment in education and health were adversely
affected by heavy military demands on revenue (PDRE Budget,
1976-1988; Clapham, 1988).

The costs of bureaucratization and war put a heavy
drain on national resources for development and aggravated
Ethiopia's economic problems. The government resorted to
internal borrowing and deficit financing for a wide array of
state activities. Between 1974-1986, the combined claims on

government by the National Bank of Ethiopia and by the commercial banks rose from 178 million Birr to 3510 million Birr, a cumulative increase of 28.2 per cent per annum. By the end of 1986, the level of total domestic credit was 5379 million Birr of which the government was responsible for 66 per cent (Love, 1989).

In brief, the Derg attempted to deal with turbulence and the crises in legitimacy by creating a Stalinist party and state. Ethiopia's poor and undeveloped economy was unable to support the bureaucratic and political power apparatus of the military dictatorship. Fashioning new symbols of authority in the name of Marxism was an essential step in the consolidation of power by the Derg government. The larger task was to tackle Ethiopia's enormous economic and social problems. Under the best of circumstances, this would have been no easy task given the country's widespread poverty and severe underdevelopment made worse by socio-political turbulence and chronic instability.

The Politics of Central Planning

The Derg opted for a Marxist economy to deal with inter-related problems of turbulence and economic crises. Like many other leftist juntas, it maintained a firm commitment to a statist development strategy that rejected the idea of an open capitalist economy and endorsed state leadership and direct involvement in economic activities. This state socialist development strategy required the elimination of the private ownership of the key means of production and the transference of this ownership to the people. Closely related to the state ownership of the means of production was the requirement that it control the productive, distributional and exchange processes of the national economy. This could be achieved through an all-

embracing planned socialist economy that would drastically reduce the role of the private sector in economic development.

The foundations for a centrally planned economy were laid in 1978 when the regime issued a 'Proclamation to Provide for the Establishment of the National Revolutionary Development Campaign and Central Planning'. The proclamation established a Central Planning Supreme Council (CPSC) under the direction of the Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC). The organization consisted of a committee, a secretariat, provincial development campaign and planning offices at regional and district levels. The permanent staff of the National Revolutionary Development Council was around one thousand and included a number of Soviet and East European economic advisers. The planning organization was top heavy with military personnel and bureaucrats far outnumbering workers and representatives from other mass organizations. In its first year of operation, the CPSC planned to expand the area of land under peasant cultivation and boost grain production by 170,000 tons. It projected that new state farms would cover 250,000 acres of land. In the industrial sector, a 40 per cent increase in production in the 132 most important state-owned enterprises was targeted. As for coffee, the most important export commodity, it projected that production would reach 100,000 tons (ONCCP, 1984; World Bank, 1983).

State control of the economy reached extreme proportions after the Derg proclaimed its ideology of 'Ethiopia Tikdem' (Ethiopia First) in the early 1970s. The motto of 'Ethiopia Tikdem' was similar to other brands of African socialism that covered the structure of government and the economic, social and foreign policies of the Derg. 'Ethiopia Tikdem' (later dubbed Ethiopian socialism)

enunciated the Derg's internal and external policies and was adopted as a compromise between the demands of the radical left for a Marxist-Leninist society and economy, on the one hand, and of the interest groups and voices of moderation, on the other. The motto was translated into 'Ethiopian socialism' in 1975 after a series of nationalization measures that reflected the programs of the radical left (Andargatchew, 1993; PMGE, 1974).

'Ethiopia Tikdem' provided an ideological basis for the sweeping nationalization of about 200 industrial and commercial enterprises, including all banks, insurance companies and most large-scale industries in 1977. By the end of 1982, the state owned eighty per cent of the entire industrial sector, which accounted for only ten per cent of the Gross Domestic Product annually. Nationalization did not affect the overall organization of the national economy because the state under Haile Selassie was heavily involved in the economy while allowing a wide scope for private sector development. What was different under the Derg was the regime's determination to make the state more instrumental in directing and manipulating the economy to benefit the military oligarchy (Keller, 1988).

The benefits of nationalization to Ethiopia's economic growth were minimal. As can be seen from Table 6.1, the important sub-sectors taken over by the state were manufacturing, small industries, banking and insurance, which together accounted for less than 9.4 per cent of GDP in 1971. The total value of private domestic and foreign paid-up capital affected by the nationalization of business organizations never exceeded US$ 36 million. Hence, considering the small amount of private investment, nationalization measures were misconceived (Eshetu, 1970; CSA, 1971).

Table 6.1

Gross Domestic Product of 1970/1971 at constant factor cost 1960/1961

Sectors	%age Share
1. Agriculture	52.7
2. Industries	15.3
3. Mining	0.2
4. Manufacturing*	4.0
5. Handicraft and Small Industry*	4.1
6. Building and Construction	5.9
7. Electricity	1.1
8. Wholesale and Retail Trade	8.8
9. Transport and Communication	5.9
10. Other Services	17.4
11. Banking, Insurance and Real estate*	1.3
12. Public Administration and Defence	5.3
13. Educational Services	1.9
14. Health Services	0.7
15. Others	8.2
Total	100.0

Source: Central Statistical Office, Statistical Abstract, 1971.

*Nationalized sectors

One of the effects of nationalization of private businesses was to bring them under direct management of the state. The form of management chosen was central planning of the sort common to the socialist countries of Eastern Europe. The rationale behind such a centrally directed economy was that the state administrative machinery involved in the formulation and implementation of plan tasks (the organs of the central government, the middle links and enterprises) was more efficient and productive than the

land distribution -- issues that are discussed next.

State Ownership and Distribution of Land

The Derg implemented the March 1975 land reform to broaden its power base and minimize turbulence and instability in rural Ethiopia. It was the most radical policy move by the military government in that it affected the lives of nearly 90 per cent of the population, over 60 per cent of the GDP and 90 per cent of exports. Land reform was intended to raise the regime's level of political support in the Ethiopian countryside as it struggled to counter the influence of ethnic liberation groups among the peasantry. As a policy, it was significant because agrarian reform had immediate and long-term implications for the country's ability to feed itself and overcome chronic food shortages. It was the Derg's single most important undertaking that substantially transformed the social, economic and political landscape of the country.

The immediate result of the 'Proclamation to Provide for the Public Ownership of Rural Lands' issued on March 4, 1975, was the abolition of most existing systems of land tenure and tenancy. The law made all land the property of the state, which became responsible for equitably distributing land to all farmers who would cultivate it. The size of a family's plot was set at no more than ten hectares but such amounts could not be allocated because of the shortage of land and variability in its quality. According to the legislation, all rural land was declared the collective property of the Ethiopian people. With the exception of large-scale private farms, which the government converted into either state farms or cooperatives, all privately owned rural land was distributed to people who were willing and able to cultivate their holdings

personally. The law gave the peasant farmer 'use rights'
(usufruct) as opposed to 'proprietary' rights over his/her
land. In other words, he/she did not own the land, which
was determined to be the collective property of the
Ethiopian people and could not, therefore, be sold, given as
collateral or transferred to another person in any way
whatsoever (PMGE, 1975).

Table 6.2

Ethiopia's Tenant Population as Percentage of Total Rural
Population by Province-1973/1974

Province	Rural Population	Wholly Rented	Part Owned/ Rented	Total Rentals	% age
Arsi	690,600	307,764	50,724	358,488	52
Gemu- Gofa	583,000	249,412	21,663	271,045	47
Gojjam	1,344,500	172,785	95,024	267,809	20
Gondar	1,087,200	97,848	62,232	160,080	15
Hararghe	1,435,570	703,429	71,778	775,207	54
Illubabor	515,375	376,224	10,307	386,351	75
Kefa	969,100	571,769	29,073	600,842	62
Shoa	3,585,000	1,828,350	573,600	2,401,950	67
Sidamo	1,987,590	735,408	39,751	775,159	39
Tigre	1,410,800	98,848	257,218	356,066	25
Wollega	1,064,100	574,738	49,715	624,453	59
Wello	2,061,800	360,552	474,214	834,766	32
Totals	16,734,935	6,076,927 (36%)	1,735,269 (12%)	7,812,396 (48%)	47

Source: Andargatchew Tiruneh, The Ethiopian Revoluton,
1974-1987, 1993, and Cohen & Weintraub, Land and
Peasants in Imperial Ethiopia, 1975.

The greatest advantage of the land reform measure was that it did away with tenancy, land rents and other feudal obligations on the farmer. In imperial Ethiopia, landlessness and tenancy were widespread, especially in the southern parts of the country, where farmers were compelled to pay as much as seventy-five per cent of their produce to landlords as rent. As can be observed from Table 6.2, the land reform policy emancipated about fifty percent of the Ethiopian peasantry by raising the status of the ex-tenant to that of an owner of all her/his produce. It nevertheless weakened the small owner-cultivators' control over the land. Whereas before the reform, owner-cultivators could sell or bequeath their plots to heirs, the reform forbade such practices. Upon death, for example, the plot did not go to persons designated or specified by law but to the peasant association for redistribution to other farmers. Further, whereas prior to the reform, a farmer could borrow money using a plot as collateral, the land had no such value after the reform. In effect, the law diminished the individual farmer's control over land and increased the power of the state over the peasantry (Desalegn, 1970, 1985; PMGE, 1975).

Another important feature of the land reform proclamation was the drive to organize all farmers into associations under the control and guidance of the state. The law stipulated the establishment of a peasant association within a maximum area of 800 hectares. All former tenants, landless peasants, hired agricultural workers and farmers with less than ten hectares were allowed to become members of the association. Landowners with more than ten hectares each had to wait until land had been distributed before they could become members. Also, persons engaged in occupations other than farming, including artisans and potters, were excluded from membership. Peasant associations were organized at four levels: kebele

(village), woreda (district), awraja (provincial) and national levels. The estimated farming population organized in peasant associations is presented in Table 6.3, which illustrates the extent of state control over rural Ethiopia.

Table 6.3
Peasant Associations, Service and Producer Cooperatives by Region, 1984

Region	Popu-lation (mils.)	Number of Peasant Associations	Peasant Association Membership	Number of Service Cooper-atives	Number of Producer Cooper-atives
Hararghe	3.04	1,352	383,991	259	96
Sidamo	2.73	1,488	719,242	235	84
Shoa	6.19	5,346	1,327,522	1,055	167
Bale	0.90	519	106,190	128	89
Tigre	2.10	157	55,988	56	3
Arussi	1.20	1,086	235,501	142	85
Illubabor	0.80	961	148,959	186	77
Eritrea	2.40	188	38,537	13	5
Kaffa	1.60	1,612	370,042	242	54
Wollega	1.96	2,123	216,698	347	90
Wello	2.55	1,132	535,001	258	75
Gemu-Gofa	0.97	795	179,267	81	18
Gondar	2.00	1,052	320,859	411	120
Gojjam	1.98	1,750	520,082	411	120
Total	30.05	19,579	5,164,178	3,651	1,006

Source: Tegegn Teka, 'Cooperatives and National Development: The Ethiopian Experience', Institute for Development Research, Working Paper, No. 18, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 1984.

The main function of peasant associations was to distribute land and adjudicate disputes that might arise among members. They were established to serve as popular institutions for community involvement and participation at the grass-roots level. The vertical organization of the peasantry within a regional and national organizational structure enabled the government to exercise control over farmers. In the late 1970s, the government set prices for agricultural goods, forcing peasants to sell their produce at the official rates. Although free market prices were higher than state prices, a number of control mechanisms were put in force to ensure that peasants could not sell except at prices fixed by the government. For example, peasants were required to deliver through their associations a fixed quota of agricultural produce to the state marketing agency, Agricultural Marketing Corporation (AMC), which paid at the official rates. If farmers failed to deliver their quota, the government could deny them credit, seeds and consumer goods, which were supplied by state distribution agencies (Alemneh, 1987; Ghose, 1985).

Another measure which the Derg used to tighten its grip on Ethiopian society was the nationalization of all urban land and extra houses. Whereas the rural lands policy had effectively disinherited the landed aristocracy and rural gentry, nationalization of urban lands and buildings was a determined effort to weaken Ethiopia's nascent urban-based entrepreneurial class. By 'Proclamation to Provide for Government Ownership of Urban Lands and Extra Houses, No. 47, 1975', nearly half a million urban dwelling units and buildings were placed under government ownership. The units were managed by newly created urban dwellers' associations (UDAs) that were made responsible for rent collection and maintaining all houses in towns and cities. The urban associations became instruments of state power once they

were given development, political and security functions (PMGE, 1975).

The nationalization of rural and urban land was in line with the Marxist-Leninist dogma of the Derg administration to bring all means of production under state ownership. Once the state claimed all land, the notion of private property disappeared, as an individual's right to land was confined to 'use right' as opposed to 'proprietary' or ownership right. The Derg state's expanding control on land and other economic resources set the stage for a series of government-imposed/socialist urban and rural programs of development. These included cooperativization of peasant agriculture, villagization and resettlement programs, all of which made rural organizations appendages of the state.

Villagization: A Tool to 'Capture' the Peasantry

An important policy move by the military regime to extend state control over the Ethiopian peasantry was the implementation of the villagization program. The purpose of villagization was to reorganize rural villages and make them 'catchment areas' for the provision of such services as education, health care, agricultural extension and safe drinking water. The government's rationale was that it would be less costly to provide social services and disseminate development by clustering small and dispersed rural communities to become economically viable settlements with large populations. Although the plan was introduced in the 1975 Land Reform Proclamation, large-scale program implementation did not start until the early 1980s (Cohen & Isaksson, 1987).

Villagization was a government-sponsored blueprint to re-establish state authority over the peasantry by moving

them away from provinces infiltrated by insurgent movements to areas controlled by the central government. The program was initially launched in Bale and Hararghe provinces where the invasion of Somali forces in 1977 led to the displacement and flight of thousands of peasants to neighboring Somalia. The government was fighting insurgency in these provinces inhabited by the Oromos of Bale and Ethiopian Somalis living on border regions. By 1983, there were 519 villagized communities in Bale comprising 106,318 families. The largest villages housed as many as seven thousand people and the smallest as few as 300. The fact that the program was started in unstable regions of the country lends credence to the argument that it was a political move by the government to gain control over a dissatisfied rural population over whom the central government exercised little authority.

The Ten-Year Perspective Plan incorporated villagization as an integral part of a long-term rural development strategy with a plan to move about thirty-three million people into new sites by 1994. As a result, the project was implemented in many parts of the country including Shoa, Arssi, Gojjam, Kaffa, Sidamo and Illubabor. There were an estimated 10,000 villagized communities throughout the country in 1987. The regime's success stories were the provinces of Arsi, the Hararghe highlands and Shoa, which together constituted about 33 per cent of Ethiopia's rural population. Conspicuously unaffected were the provinces of Eritrea and Tigre, where ethnic wars were raging and the government had little, if any, control (Keller, 1988).

Villagization was a top-down political and rural development program to change the life of the peasant. Cadres of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia were heavily

involved in site selection, village layout and providing assistance to newly established settlements. Party committees at regional, provincial, sub-provincial and peasant association levels were set up to monitor and coordinate the program through a number of sub-committees. In addition, an inter-ministerial committee and National Villagization Coordinating Committee supervised day-to-day progress and performance of the nation-wide villagization campaign. Peasants in many parts of the country were coerced into accepting the villagization scheme by order of the party and government. Farmers resisted the government-led villagization campaign because it disrupted agricultural activities and their established way of life. Many peasants balked because of the pressure to villagize (move to new sites) during critical planting seasons thus exposing their crop fields to rodents, pests and weeds. Others were reluctant to abandon their existing scattered settlements in favor of the government-proposed hamlets because the former were far apart and provided protection against fast-spreading communicable diseases in rural Ethiopia--an extremely important consideration in a country where modern preventive medicines and vaccinations are rare and unknown.

Traditionally, Ethiopian peasants selected sites for building dwelling units and planting crops based on proximity to grazing areas, streams and firewood. The governments's top-down villagization program disrupted the peasants' established way of life. Like other government-dictated rural development strategies in much of the third world, the Derg's villagization plan met strong resistance because there was little popular participation in the design and implementation of the program. More importantly, the Ethiopian peasant viewed the villagization scheme as a convenient government tool to increase state control over the rural population. Peasant discontent fuelled the state-

society struggle. Fleeing from the villagization program,
seeking refugee in neighboring countries and joining ethnic
groups   fighting the regime became means of avoiding the
state.

Like   many policies   of   the Derg, villagization in
Ethiopia had both domestic and external implications. Non-
governmental   humanitarian organizations,   bilateral and
multi-lateral   development   agencies   were   against
villagization because of coercive recruiting practices for
relocation.   In order to maintain a working relationship
with the government, some of them, for example Concern-
Ireland and the Swedish International Development Agency
(SIDA), supported the technical and economic benefits of the
program to rationalize their involvement in an otherwise
unpopular   scheme.   On   purely   technical   grounds,
villagization could improve rural conditions and enhance
productivity, enhance extension services,   promote more
rational land-use patterns and natural resource conservation
and strengthen community development.   The acquiescence of
foreign relief and development agencies enabled the regime
to use resources provided by these organizations to enhance
the central control of the state over the rural population.
In many parts of the country, especially in Bale, Hararghe
and Tigre provinces, villagized communities became
'strategic hamlets' designed to separate the population from
insurgent movements and bring them under central government
control (Cohen & Isaksson, 1987).

From the preceding discussion, it can be inferred that
villagization was a policy instrument used by the Derg to
enhance the role of the party and state in the management of
rural development.   From the political standpoint, the
policy was intended to contain turbulence by establishing
central government authority over regions affected by ethnic

insurgency and war. In practice, villagization indirectly contributed to turbulence and instability because it increased peasant resistance to the regime, disrupted agricultural production and led to the mass migration of the peasantry to neighboring countries, including the Sudan and Somalia, either to avoid the state or join ethnic liberation movements fighting the central regime. The villagization program did not achieve its stated social goals, including improving the well-being of peasant families and the overall quality of life in rural Ethiopia.

The Policy of Resettlement

Resettlement was one of the important policies of the Derg regime to deal with consequences of turbulence, i.e. war and famine. The resettlement policy sought to relocate about 1.5 million people from the areas most severely affected by drought and civil war in the north of the country to regions in the south that had adequate rainfall and farm land. The government insisted that resettlement was a sound policy to rehabilitate the drought-affected population, whose lives were perennially at risk because of drought and war, by moving them to relatively fertile and sparsely inhabited areas of the country. Its project of organized resettlement would not only alleviate the suffering of millions of drought victims but would also contribute to national food self-sufficiency and environmental rehabilitation of drought-prone areas by easing population pressure on land and other resources. External aid agencies and Western governments supported the principles of resettlement but condemned excesses of the program, such as family separations and government control and management of resettlement areas. As a result, Ethiopia was subject to a large-scale development assistance embargo with the exception of humanitarian/relief aid, in order to

compel the Derg to change its policies, including resettlement (Henze, 1989; Ottaway, 1986).

The major criticism against resettlement was that the government made very little preparation and planning before moving large numbers of people to new locations. Areas selected for resettlement were found to be infested with many kinds of tropical diseases and unsuitable for agriculture. The movement of millions of people involved a lot of suffering, death and family separations since it was done with haste and inadequate preparation. Many aid agencies and the international community considered resettlement a violation of the human rights of resettlers because they were coerced into accepting resettlement when they were helpless, destitute and suffering from the trauma of famine (Meheret, 1991; 1994, Pankhurst, 1992).

According to critics of the government, the main purpose of the resettlement program was to depopulate areas affected by on-going fighting between the regime and opposition groups, including the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and Tigre People's Liberation Front (TPLF). The regime ignored domestic and international criticism and relocated about 600,000 people (about 150,000 families) between 1984-1986. The largest number of peasants from Wello and Tigre provinces (150,000-180,000 each) were resettled in south-western and southern provinces of Gojjam, Wollega and Kaffa. Although the long-term goal was to resettle a total of 1.5-1.75 million people, domestic and international pressure compelled the Derg to slow the relocation of drought victims in the middle of 1987. Also, the government faced difficulties in recruiting more volunteers for resettlement because forced conscription increased peasant resistance to the program (Keller, 1988; Pankhurst, 1992).

The Derg's resettlement campaign disrupted the efforts of international aid agencies to provide emergency relief assistance because the government moved the people from established feeding centers to government organized resettlement projects. Many non-governmental organizations and humanitarian aid agencies were reluctant to provide assistance to the resettlement program because of alleged human rights abuses of resettlers. The controversies surrounding resettlement, including forcibly moving people with no regard to family ties, and the large number of deaths due to poor transport and logistical preparation, put many relief agencies in a dilemma as to whether they should be involved in resettlement. Although non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and foreign governments were acutely aware of their moral duties to help people in distress, they were concerned that participation in resettlement might be interpreted as condoning the way resettlement was conducted by the Ethiopian regime between 1985-1986 (Keller, 1988; Korn, 1986).

The foregoing discussion indicated that the resettlement policy had internal and external critics because it was used to enhance the control of the state over the peasantry. It sought to move people from areas of civil war and recurrent droughts and relocate them to more stable areas of the country. Politically, it was a means to establish national government authority over the countryside rendered unstable and turbulent by fighting between the central government and ethnic opposition groups. The heavy involvement of government and party cadres in running the resettlement program meant that important decisions affecting the lives of the peasantry were made by government/Ministry of Agriculture and party (Workers' Party of Ethiopia) bureaucrats. Farmer participation was minimal and peasant producer and service cooperatives were

dictate agricultural development and pricing. Farm produce was distributed to members on the basis of work points as determined by the peasant association leadership. As an incentive to promote collectivization, only registered collective farms could receive government assistance, research services and modern inputs (Kidane, 1990).

Collective farms were consistent with the Derg's objectives of land reform and socialist agriculture but were unpopular among farmers because of constant party and government interference in their management and autonomy. Because of their size and organization, collective/cooperative farms relied on state resources, including seeds, fertilizers, machinery, and managerial skills. Instead of serving as viable grass-roots institutions for improving rural conditions, state-organized collective farms under the Derg became extensions of the bureaucracy to implement policies and directives at the local level, including grain contributions and peasant militia conscription for the war effort. Lack of peasant support for collectivized farms was amply demonstrated when farmers dismantled service and producer cooperatives following the collapse of the military regime in mid-1991.

The expansion of state farms was another priority area of agricultural development in Ethiopia under the Derg. Among the three forms of agriculture, viz. state farms, collectives and private farms, the state farms sector was the most favored in resource allocation. Despite its insignificant contribution to total agricultural output, which accounted for less than 5 per cent, the state farms sector received more than 60 per cent of agricultural investment. For example, in 1981-1982, the state farms sector received 76.4 per cent of fertilizers and 94.8 per cent of improved seeds that were distributed in the country.

In 1982, the government allocated 80 per cent of total credit and about 40 per cent of all government expenditure on agriculture to state farms. In addition to absorbing the lion's share of the government budget, agricultural research services and modern inputs were likewise channelled almost exclusively to the state farm sector (Ghose, 1985; Pateman, 1987; Kidane, 1990).

The Derg expanded the state farm sector to overcome food shortages in urban areas and increase agricultural output by utilizing large-scale farming. It also hoped to enhance overall agricultural development by using state farms to bring new areas under cultivation. In practice, none of the plans were achieved because state farms were beset with administrative and organizational problems. They were overcentralized and lacked trained managerial and technical personnel. Between 1980-1985, they operated with huge subsidies from the government but incurred an average annual loss of about 80 million Birr ($38.6 U.S.). Their contribution to capital accumulation and food production was negligible. Furthermore, their reliance on imported technology, especially heavy machinery, became a drain on the country's meager foreign exchange earnings. Their organization rendered them unsuitable for dissemination of technology and research results. Machinery/implements in use in state farms were inappropriate for small-scale peasant farming and few of them developed communication networks with farmers. State farms largely existed as enclaves, like the private commercial farms prior to 1975 (Desalegn, 1987; Kidane, 1990).

Inadequate funding of agriculture and the disproportionate targeting of available resources in favor of state and collective farms meant the neglect of independent private farms, which consisted of over 91 per

cent of the country's farms and produced more than 85 per cent of total food grain. Despite the significance of the peasant farm sector in the national economy, it was deprived of extension services and agricultural resources, including better seeds and credit, because the regime believed that small peasant producers were inferior in output and productivity to the state-organized farms and collectives. As a result, the productivity of the independent farmer sector remained well below its potential contribution to national food self-sufficiency and agricultural growth (Kidane, 1990; Pateman, 1987).

In line with its socialist agricultural strategy, the Derg discriminated against independent farming by implementing policies that put private peasant farms at a disadvantage. For example, private peasant farmers paid higher taxes than either state farms or cooperatives (collectives). The discriminatory policy towards small private farming was intended to force peasants into joining socialist cooperatives that were serving as institutions of state control at the grass-roots level. In addition, while highly subsidized agricultural inputs and investments were channelled to state farms and collectives, the independent peasant was subjected to many forms of obligations, including grain and labor contributions to the war effort, as a means to strengthen state bureaucratic control over rural society (Kidane, 1990).

Independent peasant farms also faced strict producer price controls. The government's agency, the Agricultural Marketing Corporation, bought grain from peasants at fixed prices for distribution to the army and urban residents. Setting producer prices did not generate surplus to be transferred to other sectors of the economy because independent private farms benefitted less from subsidized

agricultural inputs and extension services than both state and collectivized farms. More importantly, the policy of fixed prices led to farmer dissatisfaction and depressed motivation to increase agricultural output (Kidane, 1990; Alemneh, 1987,1990).

In conclusion, the Derg implemented 'statist' economic and agricultural policies to deal with turbulence and instability. The regime's experiment to create a centrally directed state with a Soviet-style command economy proved an abysmal failure. Its authoritarian political and economic model generated turbulence because it progressively narrowed the 'civic' space where people could operate outside of government control. When the Derg was toppled in the middle of 1991, it left behind a more turbulent Ethiopian state and society than the one it inherited from the imperial regime.

Chapter VI

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Chapter VII. Conclusion: Summary and Findings

This dissertation has suggested a link between internal and external dimensions to turbulence in Ethiopia during seventeen years of military rule. It has examined how Ethiopia's public administrative system operated in a turbulent socio-political environment characterized by recurrent civil/ethnic wars, famines, severe underdevelopment and regional turmoil. The main finding of this study is that the political and administrative responses of the Derg regime, for example, the bureaucratization of the state and the creation of a single monolithic party, shrank the scope for societal economic and political participation and resulted in further instability and exacerbation of the country's economic and political malaise.

Internally, Ethiopia faced civil strife and ethnic turmoil because of incessant fighting between the central government and its various nationalities that sought independence from the state. On the external front, the legacies of European colonialism in Eritrea and other troubled regions and Big Power machinations for spheres of influence in the Indian Ocean and Red Sea areas during the 'cold war' era were important factors in generating civil strife and instability among all the states in the Horn of Africa, including Ethiopia. Domestic destabilizing factors, including the politics of ethnicity and lack of social and economic progress, and external influences interacted on each other to make the Horn of Africa one of the most turbulent and poverty-stricken parts of the world.

This study found a cause and effect relationship between Ethiopia's chronic turbulence and the 'statist'

economic and political programs of the Derg dictatorship. The regime exacerbated the instability and crises of Ethiopian state and society by its policy choices. For example, the creation of a single party in 1984, followed by the enactment of the constitution and declaration of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE) in 1987, established a Leninist-Stalinist military state masquerading as the dictatorship of the broad masses of Ethiopia. This authoritarian political and economic order plunged Ethiopia into turbulence because it progressively shrank the scope for societal economic and political space.

Social and political turbulence in Ethiopia resulted from decades of war and misplaced government priorities. At the height of wars in Ethiopia, military spending absorbed half or more of the national budget. The enormous costs of maintaining a huge defense and state coercive apparatus competed with development needs and emergency assistance to the rural population that faced devastating famines. The Ethiopian state's capacity to undertake development and governance was further eroded by protracted civil wars and wasteful defense spending in a futile attempt to contain ethnic secession.

The regime embraced the Leninist maximalist view of the role of the state to deal with Ethiopia's multi-faceted problems of ethnicity, regionalism and severe underdevelopment. The state was seen as the major agent of economic development and social transformation. It was to change the land tenures system, plan and execute economic development, accelerate industrialization, reorganize agricultural production and relocate the population from over-crowded and ecologically degraded areas to more fertile ones. Such policy objectives could not be accomplished by the Derg's weak and resource-deficient bureaucratic-

administrative apparatus that served one of the world's most turbulent and crisis-ridden regimes. The inability of the military government to deal with the consequences of turbulence was amply demonstrated when it collapsed in 1991, leaving behind a more turbulent Ethiopian state and society than the one relinquished by Haile Selassie I in 1974.

The Stalinist military dictatorship, popularly known as the Derg (military committee), ruled Ethiopia between 1974-1991. It was toppled by a coalition of ethnic movements led by the Tigre People's Liberation Front (TPLF) in May, 1991. The ruling group, Ethiopian People's Democratic Revolutionary Forces (EPRDF), comprised a broad front of ethnic parties that opposed the Derg. The various ethnic parties formed an alliance that established the Federal Republic of Ethiopia after a series of inter-party and inter-tribal struggles for control of the post-military state. A separate Eritrean state was created in 1993 following a controversial referendum in Ethiopia's former northern province. The new Ethiopian government divided the country into ethnic homelands to construct a new federal nation. In addition, it has enacted a constitution that allows any ethnic (tribal) group to secede and establish a separate state. Instituting ethnic federalism in a country where the people share common national characteristics that transcend tribal and religious loyalties and have lived inter-mixed with each other for generations is a recipe for further discord. It may generate inter-ethnic tensions and mistrust among the various nationalities. By 1997, post-Derg Ethiopia's experience served as an early indication of the ruling EPRDF's misconceived agenda for forced ethnicization of state and society in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia's multi-ethnic historical and cultural foundations, including its political tradition as an ancient

country, its legacy as Africa's oldest independent state and internal patterns of migration and settlement, must be considered in constructing a stable nation-state. The forced ethnicization of state and society in Ethiopia by the present regime contrasts sharply with Ethiopia's long experience as a multi-ethnic state. Historically, Ethiopia evolved as a heterogeneous state where the central monarch exercised limited authority over semi-independent regional powers that fought wars of conquest and expansion. The goal of the different regional leaders was to gain territory and resources rather than rule ethnically homogeneous populations. Powerful ruling classes co-opted rivals and established alliances to build multi-ethnic empires. There is a stronger sense of national identity in Ethiopia than elsewhere in Africa because of inter-cultural and inter-ethnic integration among different communities. The vast majority of Ethiopians identify themselves as belonging to a national state rather than to a particular ethnic or religious group. The current policy of creating ethnic enclaves has been used to obliterate the multi-ethnic characteristics and historical foundations of the Ethiopian state. The Tigrean elite in Ethiopia is substituting national symbols of allegiance for ethnocentric values to legitimize its rule. This can generate inter-communal mistrust.

There are few examples of successful states where ethnicity has been used as the sole criterion for constructing a state. The newly created ethnic states in Ethiopia have regional assemblies and use their language in schools, courts and provincial administration. The government insists that its ethnic agenda will promote the unity and equality of all nationalities in the country. Because of Ethiopia's widespread poverty and the uneven distribution of social and economic services, such as

schools and hospitals, ethnic federalism has created an opportunity for certain groups controlling the state to transfer resources to their respective regions. This has generated resentment and discontent among ethnic groups that have been left out in the distribution of national resources. For example, many critics of the Tigre-dominated government have pointed out that the flow of resources for reconstruction and development to the Tigre regional state at the cost of other ethnic states has contributed to the regime's lack of support among Ethiopia's major ethnic groups, including the Amharas and Oromos. It will be a long way before the current Ethiopian regime establishes national consensus and legitimacy given its political record on insuring that the members of the Tigrean elite dominate the army and security services, key sectors of the economy and the state bureaucracy. The policy of marginalizing non-Tigrean nationalities can lead to ethnic turmoil and instability. These were major problems which plagued both monarchist Ethiopia and its successor, the post-imperial military state, for nearly half a century.

Another finding of this study is that ethnic strife and Ethiopia's severe underdevelopment are inter-related in fuelling domestic turbulence. Ethnic secession and widespread poverty pre-date the military era. They are rooted in history and represent manifestations of longstanding ethnic and regional grievances. In the modern era, a centrally directed state and wasteful defense spending starved agricultural and economic development of resources and contributed to political and socio-economic degeneration. A broad-based national government and a protracted period of stability and peace are essential requirements for socio-economic progress in Ethiopia.

Turbulence has been both a causal agent and a

consequence of Ethiopia's economic underdevelopment. Chronic political instability and civil strife precluded social and economic development to improve the life and well being of the people. Many years of destructive wars damaged the country's socio-economic infrastructure and crippled its agriculture and economy. On the other hand, widespread poverty has long been a source of continuing instability and civil strife because of the endless fighting and competition among contending groups for control of the political and economic resources of the central state. Turbulence on the one hand and economic impoverishment and hardship, including mass starvation, disease, illiteracy and population displacements on the other, mutually reinforce each other to further deepen socio-economic crises.

The Ethiopian state under the Derg attempted to develop an administrative-institutional capacity to cope with the consequences of turbulence, including crises in legitimacy and regime instability, fragmentation of political authority and socio-economic degeneration, that began to manifest themselves in much of the African continent starting in the late 1970s. The Derg reorganized agriculture in state farms and government-controlled rural producer cooperatives, instituted central planning to ration economic goods and services and undertook a rapid expansion of the public sector to manage the national economy. The expansion of government and public administration was no guarantee for stability or dominating society because as bureaucrats and politicians broadened the domains of their power, people devised ways and means of avoiding the state. For example, the proliferation of ethnic organizations and fleeing of millions of Ethiopians as refugees in other countries are manifestations of widespread discontent against a repressive regime.

The Derg set up authoritarian and coercive party and government institutions, for example, the establishment of the vanguard Worker's Party of Ethiopia (WPE) in 1984, to cope with turbulence and establish a modicum of legitimacy. The centralized public administrative and government components of the state that the Derg built to implement its policies brought neither stability nor legitimacy for those in power. Bureaucratic state structures became an end in themselves rather than serving as effective institutions to carry out social and economic development programs. Scarce resources were siphoned off to support these apparatuses and a large army of government employees.

Finally, this study found that external actors were as important as internal destabilizing factors in aggravating turbulence in Ethiopia throughout the 1970s and 1980s. During the 'cold war' era, the Horn of Africa, including Ethiopia, was more affected by Super Power competition for spheres of influence between the ex-Warsaw and NATO alliances than any place in Africa, except, perhaps, parts of southern Africa. Both camps provided military and economic assistance to dictatorial regimes in Ethiopia, Somalia and the Sudan.

Until the mid-1970s, the ex-Soviet Union armed the former Republic of Somalia under the Siad Barre dictatorship. In neighboring Ethiopia, the United States supported the monarchist Haile Selassie I regime with economic and defense assistance. At the height of the 'cold war', the two super-powers shifted alliances. As a result, Ethiopia became a Soviet client state after the Derg sharply shifted its loyalty to Moscow and the United States embraced the Siad Barre dictatorship in former Republic of Somalia in the late 1970s. The changing involvement of the two super-powers was not a stabilizing factor during the bi-polar era.

As the Ethiopian experience illustrates, external interference cannot contain internal turbulence because it is no guarantee for the stability and continuity of a state with narrow domestic constituencies and fragmented power bases. U.S.-supported imperial Ethiopia was as turbulent and unstable as ex-Soviet backed People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE). The same can be said about the former Somalia state, which was first supported by the ex-Soviet Union and later by the United States.

The former Soviet Union was a major arms supplier to Ethiopia's Derg Regime. The ex-Soviet Union and its east European allies poured nearly $8 billion of worth of arms into Ethiopia between 1977-1989. In contrast, their economic assistance and famine aid amounted to no more than $300 million between 1959-1987. Moscow's arming of the Derg state accelerated its militarization and worsened the political and economic situation in Ethiopia. Massive Soviet arms deliveries were tantamount to throwing fuel at a house on fire because the Ethiopian military state was embroiled in destructive ethnic wars and brutal repression of regime opponents.

The effects of the 'cold war', for example, external flow of arms and support for authoritarian regimes to promote perceived strategic interests, continue to reverberate in many turbulent regions of the world, including Afghanistan, the former Yugoslavia, the Horn of Africa and southern Africa. In 1996, the United States government announced a decision to send spare defense equipment and arms to Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda. If history is a judge, such actions exacerbate the instability of recipient countries and the cycle of violence and turbulence that smother in other former front-line states, such as Afghanistan and Angola, which one would hope have

died with the end of communism.