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Problemi costituzionali della Somalia nella preparazione all'indipendenza (1957-1960) by  
Giuseppe A. Costanzo

Review by: Salvatore Foderaro

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*Migrants and Malaria* is a considerable contribution to African scholarship, and a splendid beginning for a new series of Longman's paperbacks, edited by Professor R. W. Steel of the Liverpool University Department of Geography.

W. B. MORGAN

*Problemi costituzionali della Somalia nella preparazione all'indipendenza (1957-1960)*. By GIUSEPPE A. COSTANZO (Istituto Universitario della Somalia, Facoltà di Diritto ed Economia). Milan: Giuffrè. 1962. Pp. 146. 1,500 lire.

It is generally recognized that the problems Italy had to face to promote the social, educational, economic, and political progress of Somalia during the time she held the trusteeship of that country were aggravated by the shortness of the period fixed by the United Nations—ten years, from 1950 to 1960. Within this time Italy was called upon to transform into a state-structured political unit a group of peoples under tribal rule which had never before attained unity except under the Italian colonial administration, starting in 1905 for the southern territories and in 1926 for the northern territories.

Italy adopted what may be regarded as a new approach to the problem, taking education—in the broadest sense—as the hub around which her policies and efforts for the advancement of Somaliland revolved. The experiment proved entirely successful, and may therefore be profitably examined and studied for the useful hints it may offer for the advancement of countries in process of development.

Professor Costanzo, who was in Somalia during the Italian trusteeship as Director of a politico-administrative school and Dean of the University Institute, has already made a thorough study of Italian policy.<sup>1</sup> The present book opens with an outline of this policy and discusses the problems involved in the gradual creation of Somaliland's constitutional organs, with a survey of little-known events related to the subject. In 1957, for instance, the scheme had been drafted for completing the constitutional organization of Somaliland as early as 1958—an action that would have involved a number of political and juridical problems. In fact, it was resolved to speed up the creation of the constitution because—as Professor Costanzo shows—it was thought expedient to promote the participation of Somalia's populations in the new system so as to ensure its efficiency in 1960.

Professor Costanzo emphasizes that the 'miracle' of the country's progress (as a foreign delegate defined it before the Trusteeship Council on the occasion of the debate on Italy's final report on the preparation of Somalia for her independence) was made possible because Italian policy was based upon the traditional customs and tribal organization of the Somali peoples.

The last chapters are devoted to a thorough analysis of the procedure adopted in drafting and approving the constitution of the state by a technical committee (presided over by Professor Costanzo himself), consisting of Italian and Somali experts, and with the participation of U.N. experts charged with the task of carrying out preliminary studies. After a year and a half's intensive work, the committee put before the Somali National Assembly (May 1959) a draft of the constitution and a detailed commentary, on the basis of which, supplemented by a revision of the project drawn up by the Somali Government, the work of the political committee and of the Somali Constituent Assembly could be carried out. The final text of the constitution was thus unanimously approved by the Constituent Assembly on 21 June 1960. All the basic principles and rules approved are dealt with by Professor Costanzo, who explains the origins of the various proposals, the vicissitudes inherent in the

<sup>1</sup> *L'educazione nello sviluppo della Somalia*, being a digest of *La Somalia al termine dell'amministrazione fiduciaria*, published in Rome (1960) by the Italian Institute for Africa (pp. 14-45).

elaboration of the project, and the points that emerged during the debates. Reference is also made to local conditions and circumstances. The book is clearly written and accurately documented, using some previously unpublished materials and will be an essential source for future research on the constitution of Somaliland. SALVATORE FODERARO

*The Glorious Victories of 'Āmda Šeyon, King of Ethiopia.* Translated and edited by G. W. B. HUNTINGFORD (Oxford Library of African Literature). Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1965, Pp. xii, 142, 6 plates, 3 maps, 38s.

ETHIOPIAN studies have often been considered by Africanists as pertaining *only* to the field of Semitics. The admission of the book under review to a collection of African literature is an appropriate recognition of the fact that Ethiopia, although Semitic (but not only!) in its language, is African in most respects.

The core of the book is the translation of a part of a royal chronicle written in Ethiopic (Ge'ez) in the fourteenth century. It describes a campaign undertaken by 'Āmda Šeyon against Moslem rebels, in 1329. The translation itself occupies pages 53-110. It is preceded by a bibliography, a valuable introduction (1-43) about the historical and linguistic background, followed by an English translation of a summary written in Portuguese by Pero Paez, S.J. about 1620, and by a translation from Amharic of soldiers' songs in honour of the same king. Five indexes close this scholarly and informative book. ROBERT HETZRON

*Report to the Government of Bechuanaland on the Bushman Survey.* By GEORGE B. SILBERBAUER. Gaberones: Bechuanaland Government, 1965. Pp. 138, ill., maps. £1. 6s. R. 2.60.

SILBERBAUER's competent and informative *Bushman Survey Report* gives the results of his investigations among the Bushmen of Bechuanaland. He was appointed Bushman Survey Officer in 1958. An anthropologist as well as a government officer, he has functioned in both capacities to present a valuable study of great interest to all who are concerned with Bushmen.

The report tells us that some 24,000 Bushmen live in Bechuanaland. Seventeen Bushman languages are found (dʒu/'ōāsi and !Kung being one—i.e. the !Kung speakers of that region call themselves dʒu/'ōāsi). An estimated 6,000 Bushmen live as hunters and gatherers. 4,000 live among the white farmers in the Ghanzi area, some employed, others in dire want from unemployment. An estimated 14,000 live among Bantu peoples. This is the way of life of the majority of Bushmen as we found them in Angola and South West Africa as well as in Bechuanaland. The most common form which the relationship takes in Bechuanaland is what Silberbauer calls a paternalistic patron-client relationship. How much the Bushmen bring to it, what they receive in benefits, how well, indifferently, or harshly they are treated varies in different communities and, Silberbauer observes, in different parts of the country.

The G/wi Bushmen who live in the Central Kalahari Reserve by hunting-gathering subsistence are Silberbauer's special object of study. More than half the report is devoted to them. Four chapters, too solid with thoughtfully observed detail to be summarized in a review, describe their band organization, concepts of headship and territories, the workings of their social controls, kin terminology, marriage regulations, ceremonies, religion, hygiene, and health. Two other chapters are concerned with the ecology of the Reserve and the means of subsistence of the G/wi within it.

In estimating the results of the hunt of one band for a year and calculating the amount of plant food needed by an individual to provide enough moisture for comfort, the report gives an impression that conditions for subsistence in this part of the Kalahari are more