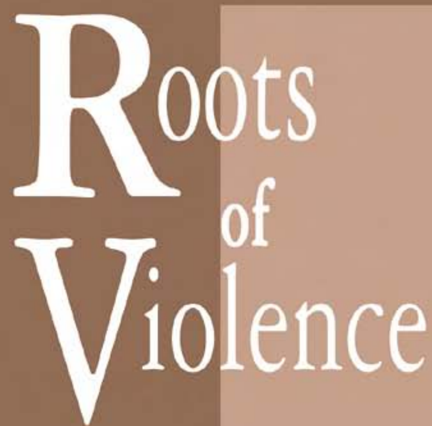

Roots of Violence

A History of War in Chad

Mario J. Azevedo

War and Society

Volume 4

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ROOTS OF VIOLENCE

A History of War in Chad

Mario J.Azevedo

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

LONDON AND NEW YORK

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INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

The *War and Society* book series fosters studies of organized violence and its consequences in all forms of society, from deep in the past until the present. It encourages different intellectual traditions from different disciplines. Its goal is to expand theoretical understanding of the causes and effects of war, thereby to provide intellectual tools for constructing a more peaceful world.

PREFACE

This book focuses on conflict and violence in Central Africa, the region Africanists have labeled Central Sudan, with specific reference to Chad from ancient times to the present. As such, it adds to the growing literature on the roots of conflict and resolution in the region and helps fill the prevailing research gap on this former French colony in Equatorial Africa. To the extent possible, it combines written primary and archival sources with secondary works, primarily in French and English, as well as oral data collected by the author in the country in 1974, 1981, 1984 and 1995.

The volume is organized into eight chapters. The first chapter addresses Chad's diverse life-styles and cultures—greatly conditioned by the unique environment of the region and the intermingling of people of diverse economic and cultural backgrounds following the great migratory movement of the sixteenth century in Central Africa. The extent to which such a movement of people may explain the nature and degree of violence that prevailed in the area in subsequent centuries is examined. However, the focus is on the non-centralized, stateless societies that for centuries have occupied the southwestern and southern tier of the country.

Chapter two analyzes the uniqueness of the northern and Sahelian state societies, characterized by warfare, raiding and looting of the outlying areas. In this context, slavery and the slave trade constitute important themes in the discussion of the region's violence and conflict. Chapter three looks specifically at the nature and role of the army in state activity to the extent that the available sources illuminate the pre-colonial period in Central Sudan.

The fourth chapter traces the violent history of the French conquest of Chad; the colonial policies that exacerbated the differences among the various peoples brought together as a nation; and Chad's unpreparedness and inability on the eve of independence to forge an integrated and regionally representative unitary state. As such, this chapter provides needed background to the roots of vio lence and the civil war that followed the achievement of independence in 1960 and the virtual destruction of the Chadian state during the 1979–1982 period.

Chapter five examines the nature of the post-colonial state and the causes that brought about the country's civil war. Chapter six looks systematically at the post-colonial instruments of violence and their impact on the state and Chadian society. The extent of foreign military involvement, which seems to have prolonged rather than shortened the conflict, is covered in the seventh chapter. This is followed by a general conclusion, chapter eight, that reflects upon Chad's history in an attempt to put the theme of violence in perspective; comments on the country's future as a nation-state; and looks at the prospects of the use of further violent means in the settlement of future domestic conflict.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express profound gratitude to my publisher for enabling me to tell the story of Chad, one of the most neglected and troubled countries on the continent of Africa. Above all, however, I acknowledge the role played by S.P.Reyna, who sparked my interest in this project and the theme of conflict and violence in Central Sudan in general and Chad in particular. I thank him for his unselfish hospitality and invaluable assistance and advice while we were both doing our fieldwork in Chad in 1974. I will never forget how helpful those trips in his beat-up green van were to me—with him at the wheel and a crowd of Chadian children surrounding us everywhere we stopped—while N'Djamena's temperatures soared to over 100°F. His familiarity with the country and his invaluable advice provided me access to the right people and scholars in Chad and contributed immensely to my own research.

I recall with gratitude my friend Christian Bouquet, professor of history and geography at the University of Chad, the first scholar I met when I landed on Chadian soil in 1974, who was instrumental in arranging my meeting with personnel of Chad's National Research Institute for Human Sciences, including director Nga Ngakoutou, secretary-general M.Mathieu, and the staff of the Musée National du Chad. Dr. Bouquet also assisted me with my research in Paris once I had completed my work in Chad. I am equally grateful to the late Colonel Jean Chapelle, who spent hours telling me his experiences as an officer and administrator in the north and about nomadic desert life and the contributions of the Sara in the colonial army. My warmest, heartfelt thanks, however, go to the people of Chad, the Sara in particular, among whom I was so well received as I traveled from village to village and interviewed their elders on the social and demographic impact of French colonial policies prior to 1940.

Words of gratitude must likewise extend to my PhD dissertation advisor, the late Dr. Gerald Hartwig, who, while I was his student at Duke University, introduced me to Chad, and to my friend and scholar, Dr. Mustafah Dhada, Department of Political Science, University of Colorado, and to Elizabeth Friar Williams, of California, for reading the manuscript and providing the most constructive criticism.

I acknowledge the patience and assistance I received from my family: Ernestine, Margarida and Linda. I would not have been able to complete the manuscript in time without the help of my secretary, Roberta Duff.

Finally, my sincere thanks to Dean Schley Lyons, College of Arts and Sciences, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, for supporting and encouraging my research activities. My colleagues in the Department of African-American and African Studies—Vicki Crawford, Gregory Davis, Veronica Nmoma, Tanure Ojaide and Dorothy Ruiz—were unswervingly understanding and supportive. They remained an inspiration to me throughout the writing of this book.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mario J.Azevedo is Frank Porter Graham Professor and Chair in the Department of African-American and African Studies at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Trained in African history with a focus on former French Equatorial Africa and Lusophone Southern Africa, Dr. Azevedo holds a BA in history from The Catholic University of America, an MA in history from American University, and a PhD in African history from Duke University. Professor Azevedo did his dissertation fieldwork in Chad in 1974 and has returned to the country on several occasions.

His publications include: *The Returning Hunter* (Interculture Associates, 1978); *Disease in African History* (Duke University Press, 1978), contributor; *Independence Without Freedom* (ABC-Clio Press, 1980), contributor; *Africa and Its People* (Kendall-Hunt, 1982), editor; *Religion, State and Society in Contemporary Africa* (Peter Lang, 1992), contributor; *Historical Dictionary of Mozambique* (Scarecrow Press, 1991); *Apartheid South Africa and American Foreign Policy* (Kendall-Hunt, 1987), contributor; *Cameroon and Chad in Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Edwin Mellen University Press, 1989), editor; *Africana Studies: A Survey of Africa and the African Diaspora* (Carolina Academic Press, 1993), editor and contributor; *Kenya: The Land, the People, and the Nation* (Carolina Academic Press, 1993), editor and contributor; *Chad: A Nation in Search of Its Future* (Westview Press, 1997), co-author; and articles in *African Studies Review, Journal of African History, African Affairs, A Current Bibliography on African Affairs, International Review of African Studies, Journal of Southern African Affairs, The Researcher, Current History, Western Journal of Black Studies, Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, Africa Today, Africa in the World, Journal of Social Science and Medicine, Conflict Quarterly, and Journal of Negro History.*

Dr. Azevedo served on the board of directors of the African Studies Association from 1986–1989. He has been a recipient of major grants on Africa from the U.S. Department of Education (four Fulbright-Hays to Africa), the Lilly Endowment, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and USAID. He was a Fulbright Scholar in Mozambique, 1996–1997.

Chapter *ONE*
Environment and Society

There were major socio-political and economic differences and resulting uses of violence as a means of survival, domination, and maintenance of law and order between the state (or cephalous) and stateless (or acephalous) communities in pre-colonial Chad. However, the core of the following chapter, although providing an overview of the country, focuses on the predominantly acephalous societies of Southern Chad, leaving a detailed discussion of Northern Chad to chapter two. Fundamentally, this chapter argues that present research seems to indicate that, stemming from a less developed state of socio-political institutions and a lack of relatively advanced technological and military preparedness, the conflict that Southern Chad's ethnic groups may have experienced in pre-colonial times was less violent and less lethal in its impact. This condition, the chapter notes further, was in sharp contrast to the situation prevailing both in the pre-colonial North and the South following the introduction of Islam and the slave trade.

UNDERSTANDING CHAD

Chad is a former French Equatorial African colony that, like many other colonies in Sub-Saharan Africa, achieved its independence in 1960. Unlike many newly-created countries and states, however, its precarious status as an infant and evolving nation-state has underscored the resilience of the region's ancient problems and conflicts and the seeming failure of the "integrative" colonial policies attempted by the French some hundred years ago. The fifth largest country in Africa, with a surface of 495,755 square miles (1,284,000 square kilometers)—two and a half times the size of France—and a population of approximately 5,500,000 (mid-1990s), it has long suffered from severe political, economic, and geographic ills, making it one of the most unstable countries on the continent. It has experienced one of the longest civil conflicts in Africa (1966–1990s); its per capita income is one of the lowest (Chad is classified as one of the poorest nations on the globe); and it has the world's highest infant mortality rate and the lowest literacy rate for female children (*Europa World Year Book* 1993:717).

These problems notwithstanding, Chad has managed to survive as a "nation." It has continued to be a member of major international organizations, and has attracted the military intervention of several major and minor actors such as France, the United States, Libya, Nigeria, and Sudan, as well as the attention of the Organization of African Unity. As a potentially militarized state, Chad has also caused anxieties among its closest neighbors, particularly Cameroon. Under these circumstances, therefore, one would expect that more scholars would take an interest in the affairs of this intriguing valve of "Africa's heart." This has not, however, been the case. Little is written on Chad, except for occasional books (usually written by French scholars) and short articles that appear

from time to time, mainly in French magazines and newspapers. Chad is therefore an unknown quantity for the overwhelming majority of the public in America and elsewhere. A U.S. Department of State official once said: “Why should the United States care? Chad is a fly-blown piece of real estate. Only 8 percent of the United States knows what’s going on in Central America so I should think only 1 percent of them would know where Chad is and only 1 percent of them would care” (Blundy and Lycett 1987:186).

The socio-ethnic, political, religious, and economic complexity of the country is undoubtedly a major deterrent to scholars, while the country’s landlocked position fails to attract the attention of the military and economic strategists. In fact, an American diplomat in N’Djamena once joked that one had to have a Ph.D. in international affairs to understand Chad’s complexity (Blundy and Lycett 1987:190). While Chad can be studied from different angles and perspectives, the present work focuses on the role of organized and nonorganized violence, warfare, and the army in the history of the country, not in isolation but in its intercourse with the surrounding societies and states in the region African scholars have called West and Central Sudan. In a sense, therefore, this is a history of violence in Central Africa. In as much as the purpose is to understand present-day Chad and its surroundings, the past becomes a steppingstone and a foundation for the present and the future; the effort of today’s Chad continues to be an attempt to reconcile ancient differences and peoples who were artificially forged into a “nation” by France.

Two tendencies prevail among scholars who show a modicum of interest in the Chadian situation. One has been to ignore the precolonial past and deal with the more manageable post-1960 period and to blame the Sara and the late president, François Tombalbaye, for Chad’s present problems. The second has placed emphasis on the dichotomy between the desert or semi-desert north and the productive south, the conflict between Muslim and Christian, the cleavages between Sara and Arab or Tubu, and the failed French colonial policies that developed the south but ignored the north, leaving the northern region almost intact in its centralized administrative and political structure. Unfortunately, neither of these tendencies alone explains the tragedy and the roots of the civil war in Chad.

As a result of these past approaches, the theme of violence, organized warfare, both modern and ancient, and the role of the army, have been considered within the general context, which most often confuses rather than clarifies the issues at hand. This volume, I hope, will prove, from both the historic and contemporary perspectives, that violence has become almost an intrinsic part of the fabric of the Central Sudanic societies, and will show how foreign intervention and interference, from centuries ago to the present, have exacerbated rather than weakened the sources of violence in the north as well as in the south.

The subject of the roots of violence in Chad is difficult to study and comprehend, as no country can be frozen in time. Ethnicity, demographic shifts, economic typologies, linguistic commonalities between and among diverse ethnic groups, and the emergent role of proselytizing and trade-centered religions, all played an important role in shifting and shaping the Chadian social fabric. As a result, Chad’s society was left in a volatile flux of transition, bifurcated between the non-Muslim south and the Muslim north, two geopolitical segments that were subsequently engaged in unending conflict. Compounding this conflict were external factors contiguous to Chad, as well as pressures

from beyond the continent. While the rise and fall of Islamic regional potentates was one such contiguous factor, France's intervention was the other.

Sandwiched between Arab Africa to the north and east and African Islam and African Traditionalism to the southwest, Chad suffered at the hands of both the North African imperial and trade designs as well as from the Nigerian Fulani religious, economic, and political crusades. As if this were not enough, the Europeans also had a hand in churning the Chadian historical soil, fertilizing it with Christianity dressed as deliverance from heaven. The upshot of all this was and still remains the lethal and volatile social "cocktail" of political tumult and turmoil played out on the Chadian sands, with factions pulled and tugged in different directions by forces within and by currents in the region and from the outside. In light of all this, can there be a heuristic framework for analyzing the roots of Chadian violence? This book will seek to address this question in an historical context. However, before embarking on an analysis of the social, economic, and political factors that may have led to the prevalence of violence in the country during the past decades, a word on the geographic features of the country and their impact on the people of Chad is called for.

GEOGRAPHY AND HUMAN HABITAT

As noted above, Chad is a huge landlocked basin surrounded by mountain ranges (the Wadai mountains in the east, the volcanic Tibesti massif in the northeast, 11,200 feet high, the Oubangui plateau in the south, and the Adamawa and Mandara ranges in the west), and stands surrounded by Nigeria, Niger, and Cameroon in the west, Central African Republic in the south, Libya in the north, and Sudan in the east. Chad experiences two major seasons, the rainy, from June to October, making the south almost impassable by vehicle for most of the period, and the dry season, from November to May, which makes the north and the center of the country a barren, arid zone. Geographers have divided the country into three major climatic zones—the Saharan (the northern third of the country), characterized by an annual rainfall of fewer than 200mm of rain; the Sahelian zone, with rainfall ranging between 250 to 500mm annually; and the humid tropical zone, located in the third tier of the country, which experiences an annual rainfall of between 500 and 1,200mm.

The country's great geographic differences account for the sharp economic disparities and the meager natural resources of most of its regions. In the true desert area, practically nothing is grown, except a few dates and some grain in the few oases, and the population is sparse, consisting mostly of nomads who herd sheep, goats, and camel. As one moves into the Sahel, one witnesses increased herding of cattle, goats, camels, horses, sheep, and donkeys (particularly in Wadai, Kanem, Batha, and Chari-Bagirmi), and a semi-sedentary transhumance (a lifestyle that varies according to season), coupled with limited market garden production, particularly between parallels 11 and 13. Contrary to most accounts, however, the north, invariably portrayed as totally arid, has a relatively diversified economy, while the claim that this region is inhabited by nomads must be qualified since there are people here who are also either sedentary or semi-sedentary (Buijtenhuijs 1978:10–39). This is why making a distinction between the northern desert and the Sahel is important. The Sahel is also uniquely blessed by the fact that it can

sustain cattle, due in part to the absence of the tsetse fly, whose presence has prevented cattle herding in the most productive southern tier of the country. In Biltine and Wadai, furthermore, gum arabic has provided some financial resources to local governments.

The south, in contrast, is endowed with more and better resources. This accounts for the fact that 90 percent of Chad's population lives in this tenth portion of the country, roughly the area below N'Djamena, the capital, with major demographic centers in the Mayo-Kebbi and Chari-Bagirmi Prefectures (850,000 and 830,000 people respectively). Two major export commodities are grown here, namely, cotton (the mainstay of Chad's economy and industry, employing more than 600,000 people) and rice, while millet, sorghum, corn, and cassava fulfill local consumption needs. The southern tropical grassland, at times becoming forest, has a diversified wild animal life. In fact, although little known to experts and lay people, the Zakouma National Park is one of the richest animal reserves in the world (Decalo 1987:3). With the discovery of oil in the north (in Kanem) and parts of the south (in Moundou), and despite Chad's acknowledged poverty, some experts believe that the country has the potential to do better than many other African countries, as long as the tsetse-free central plains continue to provide pasture for an increased number of cattle and the south undertakes major agricultural enterprises (AID 1985:58).

Fishing has been a major source of livelihood for many Chadians, as Chad has two relatively long rivers—the Chari (about 750km) and the Logone (close to 602km long). They are fed by several tributaries and meet at N'Djamena before emptying their waters into Lake Chad (3,861 to 9,651 square miles in size depending on the season), the country's lowest area. Fresh water provides fish and enhances trading activities within this landlocked country and between Chad and the neighboring states, some of which—Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria—participate in the management of the Lake. Furthermore, the two rivers are partially navigable, as is the case of the portion between N'Djamena and Lake Chad, and can be developed into a major transportation network.

CLASSIFYING CHADIAN SOCIETIES

The complexity of Chadian societies has presented a major challenge to scholars wishing to provide a logical basis for classifying the various ethnic groups in the country. Some end up by simply listing the ethnic groups and highlighting some of their characteristics. Others have classified them according to language, while others have used religion or lifestyles to provide a coherent picture of the country's social diversity. Dennis Cordell (1985:11–13), for example, singles out religion and conquest as major classifying tools in his study of Dar Kuti. He uses the concept of a "frontier zone," whereby the predominantly Muslim inhabitants of the northern desert and the semi-arid region, the "intruding society," saw the southern non-Muslim populations, "the indigenous societies," as a frontier zone into which they could expand their kingdoms and power and acquire needed human and physical resources. Cordell (1985:13) denies, however, the common corollary of the frontier theory, which holds that, ultimately, the intruding society ends up controlling the indigenous society. Although Cordell's concept is useful, it presents a problem when applied to Chad, as it might give the impression that Islam was the primary motivating force leading to the hegemony of certain Muslim Kingdoms

in Southern Chad. William Zartman (1986a:14) figuratively uses instead the expression "shutter zone" or movable screen for the Central Sudan.

Unlike Cordell, S.P.Reyna (1990:18) divides Chadian societies essentially according to their physical environment or ecology, livelihood, and lifestyle, and explains the migrations and the intermingling of people in the area as a result of the major environmental changes, particularly the continuing desiccation of the Chadian basin after A.D.1200. Thus he distinguishes the pastoralists, the micro-environmental specialists, the cereal producers, and those who combine pastoralism with limited agriculture and fishing, who could perhaps be called "diversified survivalists."

Archaeologists still have much work to do to provide us with a better picture of Chad's ancient past. The Sao civilization, likely a creation of the forefathers of the modern Kotoko, noted for its fortified walled cities, seems to date as far back as 3000 B.C. Unfortunately, the turbulent history of the country since its independence has made it difficult for archaeologists to undertake sustained and significant work, particularly in the north, around Lake Chad, and all along the banks of the Logone and Chari rivers, areas that seem to be rich in buried art objects, tool making techniques, and remnants of past lifestyles (Griaule 1943 and Lebeuf 1959). Yet, in spite of Chad's obscure remote past, it is clear that, for centuries, the region has been a crossroads of religions, trade, and lifestyles between east and west and between north and south, particularly after the migratory movements that intensified in the post-fifteenth century period.

The desiccation of the Sahara and the insularity of Lake Chad and its shrinking waters, as well as those of the Rivers Chari and Logone, in particular, have contributed significantly to the low or the high demographic density of certain regions, some people looking for farming land, others for fishing opportunities, others for trade routes, and many others for cattle pasture. The introduction of iron techniques, which did not reach most of Chad until the founding of Kanem during the ninth century (Lange 1988:216), certainly had a major impact on the securing of durable and more effective ways of improving agriculture and on developing the stronger weapons that revolutionized the political structures in some regions, especially the Sahel. The introduction of Islam from north to south, in particular, brought the rudiments of an alien Arab civilization, which added to the ever growing local social and cultural complexity. With time, Chad also became an important route to Mecca via Abéché and Khartoum, bringing transients and pilgrims from West Africa on the *hadj,* some of whom stayed in Chad and even built *zaribas* or quarters and engaged in business activities including the slave trade (Works 1976:170–171). The introduction of the camel among the Tubu and the Zaghawa, probably from North Africa or the Nile Valley by the first Christian millennium, assisted Chad in developing an extensive commercial link with North Africa, particularly between Fezzan and Lake Chad, enhanced by the existence of many oases and wells along the route (Lange 1988:216), and between Eastern Chad, Darfur, and Kordofan.

How does one resolve the problem of Chad's social complexity? Reyna (1990:18) classifies the camel pastoralists, whose typical example are the Tubu (Daza and Teda), who have lived for centuries in the desert and the arid north, as one distinct social group in what, after the French conquest, became Chad. Pastoralists are essentially herders of camels, sheep, and goats, and not cattle-raisers, because the latter require much more water and pasture than can be found in the desert and semi-desert areas.

Just below the camel pastoralists, in the Sahel zone, lived the “diversified survivalists” who established such states as KanemBornu (near Lake Chad), Bagirmi (along the Chari River, southeast of Bornu), and Wadai (in the eastern border highlands). Included among the state societies were the Kotoko “principalities” on the lower Chari and Logone rivers and a number of small sultanates such as Massalit, Dar Tama, Dar Runga, and Dar Sila, most of which were vassal states of Bagirmi and Wadai, or vassals of each other, as was the case of Dar Runga, which made Dar Kuti its own Muslim client state or colony in the south (Cordell 1985:11). Here, livestock was a major source of revenue, and drought-resistant crops (sorghum and millet) were possible. Fishing as well as foraging, tax collecting, and raiding were important survival and business enterprises, as the discussion below will illustrate.

The next social cluster is that of the cereal producers, below the Sahel states, in what Reyna (1990:18) calls “moist Sudan and the Sudano-Guinean” zone, where agriculture is practiced, with such export crops as cotton and rice. Included in this category would be the usually acephalous Sara, Massa (Banana), and Moundang, who were very specialized in food production. The last social group, in Reyna’s classification, encompasses the “micro-environmental specialists,” who for centuries have found ways to survive in such rugged terrain as around Lake Chad, whose surrounding environment is dry and whose water levels increase or decrease according to seasons. The *montagnards* are also found here, making a living on the mountain ranges of Chad. Among these are the Hadjerai of the Guéra hills, who have mastered the art of terracing. For those around Lake Chad fishing has been an important source of livelihood, while for the Dangaleat, the Sokoro, the Soba, and the Kenga, kin to the Hadjerai, as well as for the Fulani or Fulbe of the Adamawa mountains, farming and limited herding have made survival possible in an otherwise rugged environment.

CHAD’S MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

In order to provide a better picture of the nature of the relations that prevailed among pre-colonial societies in Chad, a discussion of the linguistic and cultural manifestations of the most prominent ethnic groups in Chad follows. At present, linguists have identified some 200 ethnic groups and some 110 languages in Chad, although twenty-five of these are still in the initial stages of identification (Grimes 1992:215–219). Complicating the matter further are ethnic diversity and linguistic commonality. There are some societies in Chad that are classified as separate ethnic groups but that do not have a language of their own and communicate in the language of the dominant or conquering society in which they find themselves living.

Without going into much detail, it is useful to note that some linguists characterize Chadian languages as Afro-Asiatic, which, with the exception of Hausa, have Sudano-Mediterranean roots, and are spoken between Niger and the Wadai plateau; and Nilo-Saharan, prevalent along the Niger River, from Jenne to Gaya, with the major subgroups comprising Zaghawa, Teda, Daza, and Kanembu-Kanuri (Lange 1992:218–219). Other linguists, however, classify Chad’s languages as Sudanic, including Sara, Tupuri, Banana, Moundang, Bagirmi, Youlba, and Runga; Nilotic, comprising Wadai, Kodoi, Malange, Madaba, Debba, Abissa, Dekker, Djema, Massalit, Lisi, Bulala, Kuka, Midogo,

Abusemeu, Mubi, Karbo, Mesmedje, Kenga, Babalia, Diongor, Saba, Yalna, Tunjur, and Torom; Arabic, which includes Hassauna and Djoehina Arabic; and Saharan, made up of Kanembu and Turubu (Hugot 1965:25–27). This list still does not do justice to various other languages spoken in Chad, but there is not much one can do at this stage of our knowledge of the region's idioms.

The following discussion of Chad's ethnic groups is based not on their geographical location but their potential impact in the country derived from their numerical size. The classification therefore goes from the largest to the smallest groups known by anthropologists. The Sara, the largest group in Chad are a patrilineal, polygynous society located in the southwest, especially in the Moyen-Chari, Logone Oriental, Logone Occidental, and parts of the Tandjile Prefectures, and account for about one-third of the country's population. They seem to be a Nilotic people who settled in Chad during the sixteenth century. They speak a Nilo-Sudanic language and comprise some twelve sub-groupings, which some linguists and anthropologists have classified as clans (Decalo 1987:284). Included among the Sara are the Gambaye (the largest), the Mbaye, the Goulaye, the Madjingaye (sometimes known as the pure Sara), the Kaba, the Niellim, the Nar, the Dai, and the N'gana. The Sara designation appears to have been given to them by the Arabs, meaning *Nassara* (Nazareth) or Christians, and the French may have lumped with them several populations that spoke similar languages (Kalck 1971:17).[1]

The claim that Sara might mean Christian is plausible, as there are traces of Christian missionary activity in Tibesti that go as far back as the seventeenth century. This is confirmed by documents in possession of the Congregation of the *Propaganda Fide* at the Vatican. In fact, it is believed that the Sara lived in the north before they sought refuge in the south against northern slave raids (Cordell 1985:25). Yet contrary to a popular belief spread by the Western world, most Sara are "Traditionalist"[2] in religion (Buijtenhuijs 1978:38). The total Christian population in the country is estimated at less than 20 percent, while some authors even claim that only 7 percent of the entire population of Chad is truly Christian.

The Sara are agriculturalists, the backbone of the Chadian economy, producing cotton and rice (two export commodities), peanuts, corn, millet, sorghum, and cassava. They live in the most productive part of the country. During the colonial period, they became a target for the recruitment of forced laborers, the military, government projects, and concessionaire companies. Because they were usually tall, strong, and physically adapted to manual labor (since agriculture was their tradition), the French had a romantic view of their imposing presence and called them *la belle race* (the beautiful people). Paul Brunache (1894:208) thus described them when comparing them, for example, to the Bondjio: "The Sara are stouter, and more handsome in aesthetic terms. They are very wellshaped and have a very majestic posture, which is a necessary complement to their tall stature."

Politically, the Sara were a stateless or acephalous society organized into villages under chiefs known as *mbangs* (the same term used in the kingdom of Bagirmi for the king), *ngeidonamg,* or *ngebe* (Azevedo 1974). Others (such as the Nar) had developed a system of chieftaincies necessitated by northern slave incursions, taking inspiration from the Bagirmi state. Unfortunately, the Sara were constantly threatened by the slave raids carried out by the Bagirmi, the Wadaians, and the Fulani, particularly during the nineteenth century. Indeed, the seasonal slave raids were so devastating that the Sara may

have lost at least two thousand people every year, representing perhaps between 3 and 7 percent of the entire population of Moyen-Chari. During the 1880–1890 period, Rabah Fadlallah took control of many clans and enlisted the sons of the Mandjingaye chiefs into his army, many of whom were taken as hostages as a way of exacting cooperation from the *mbangs*. At times, to save their villages, Sara chiefs would "sign" an *amana* (agreement) with the raiders, promising to provide a certain number of slaves every year if their villages were spared from the violent raids (Azevedo 1974).

The Arabs, about 22 percent of the population of Chad (some say they are actually only 14 percent), are the second largest group in the country. Scholars usually divide them into four major groups: the Eastern Arabs or the Djoheina (the largest of them), the Western Arabs or the Hassauna, the Awlad Sulayman, of Libyan descent found mainly in Kanem, and perhaps the Tunjur, of Sudanese origin. The Arabs began arriving in Chad during the migratory wave of the fifteenth century, and have remained essentially semi-sedentary pastoralists who raise horses, camels, goats, and sometimes cattle, and can be found even in the southern parts of the country (Bouquet 1982:45–50). They own the largest number of herds of domestic animals in Chad (Buijtenhuijs 1978:45). They have maintained their religion, their language (the second semi-official language in the country now) and their lifestyle. Islam and their language have given them some prestige. Monseigneur Dalmais (1963:3), Archbishop of N'Djamena during the 1970s, claims that their language is so widespread in Chad that certain non-Arab groups have forgotten their own languages and speak Arabic. Despite the fact that they control retail business in Chad, and are the majority in the city of N'Djamena, the Arabs in Chad do not wield much political power at present. In the past they were unable to maintain any major state of their own for long periods of time. They were, however, involved in the establishment of such kingdoms as Kanem and Wadai and in regional interstate and palace rivalries.

The Maba constitute the third largest ethnic group in Chad and are remembered for having founded the Wadai sultanate. Most Maba cultivate millet and sorghum. Those who, in the past, were officials in Wadai's government shunned manual labor, which they would relegate to slaves or to the Arabs (Decalo 1987:81). As slave raiders, they terrorized the south, which, even today, they consider to be a "foreign" country. The next largest group are the Tubu, the "mountain people," who are nomadic and semi-nomadic sedentary. Although the origins of the Tubu are unknown, Decalo (1987:314) notes that, "according to one reconstruction of the past, the Toubou descended from white nomads from the Nile Valley that established themselves in Borkou, then Tibesti, in the seventh to ninth centuries." The Tubu, called Goran by Arabic speakers, are divided mainly into the Daza of Borbou-Ennedi, former President Hissein Habre's clan, and the less numerous Teda, to which Gukuni Wedei, former Chadian president, belongs. The Tubu, whom Heinrich Barth identifies interchangeably as "Tebu, or Tubu, or rather Teda," were very influential in Bornu. According to him:

> Of all these named, the Tubu constituted by far the most important and most numerous tribe. To them belonged the mother of Dunana ben Hume, the most powerful of the old kings of Bornu. How powerful a tribe the Teda [sic] were is insufficiently shown by the length of the war which they carried on with that very king Dunana Selmani, and which is said to have lasted more than seven years… Even in the latter half of the

> sixteenth century, the Teda appear to have constituted a large proportion of the military force of the Bulala in Kanem (Barth 1965:31).

The Tubu also engage in trade among themselves and with the north and the south, and some are semi-sedentary and construct permanent villages (Lebeuf 1959:13). Some even do limited irrigated agriculture in the Tibesti and Borkou regions. They have been mobile for centuries now, using the camel as their transportation. They are patrilineal, but the wife occupies a special place in society, as she assists in the making of major decisions, keeps an eye on the servants, if the household has any, collects dates, and even irrigates the crops when the husband is away, often half of the year. Among the Tubu, hierarchy has little meaning, as members virtually decide which clan to belong to, although a spiritual leader with some political clout among all clans—the *derdei*—has traditionally been chosen from among the Teda (and not the Daza).

In traditional times, the Tubu clans controlled the community resources such as oases, pastures, wells, and valleys, and enlisted men for slave raids for community needs and defense, but they had no standing armies and no centralized states (Reyna 1990:18–21). Their semi-transhumant lifestyle perhaps interfered with the formation of states, which requires time and concentration. They are described as taciturn, generally armed as they move, and, according to some scholars (which is debatable), they are Chad's most ethnically oriented and regionalist in behavior (Thompson and Adloff 1981). They enslaved others in the past, fiercely resisted French conquest until the 1920s, and embraced Islam mainly through the zeal of the Sanussiya Brotherhood.

Next in size, about 65,000 at present, are the Mbum, who live in the southern part of the country and in the Central African Republic. Having no language of their own, they have adopted the rituals and the language of the Sara Madjingaye. Over the years, they have converted to Christianity in large numbers. The Haddad (split into some forty clans) have a similar history. They too have no language of their own, and were viewed as slaves among the populations with whom they lived as dyers, ironsmiths, tanners, saltminers, and shoemakers (Decalo 1987:159).

The Moundang of the Mayo-Kebbi Prefecture are cereal producers and cattle herders, while the Hadjerai, or "the mountain people," are micro-environmental specialists who have mastered terraced agriculture on the slopes of the Mongo and Melfi hills in the Guéra Prefecture where, in the past, they sought refuge against slave raiders. For a long time, they refused to convert to either Islam or Christianity and are known for their belief in the *margai* (spirits who control the forces of nature) (Reyna 1990:26). The Bulala, near Filtri and Massakory, who are said to be of Arab stock, are credited with assisting in the founding of the Kanem kingdom and for expelling the royal family from there during the thirteenth century. The Bagirmi, the Wadaians, and the Tunjur forced them to leave Kanem proper and settle around Yao, where they created a small Islamic kingdom or sultanate. They long ago abandoned their nomadic style in favor of agriculture and are said to be good warriors.

The Toper or Tubbier (or Tuburi), who have lived around lakes Fianga and Tiker since the sixteenth century, are fishermen (or farmers when changing conditions dictate it), and are also thought to be excellent warriors. The pastoralist Massalit, in Wadai, live along the Batha river, while the Kanembu or Beriberi, closely related to the Tubu in language and culture, are fishermen and pastoralists who live between Lake Chad and parallel 14.

They are the original founders of the kingdom of Kanem. However, the Kanembu have so intermarried with the surrounding ethnic groups that the only remaining pure Kanembu are those belonging to the Mangumi clan. Next in size are the Nilotic cereal producers, the Massa or Banana of Mayo-Kebbi, who suffered enormously from slave raids originating from Bornu, Adamawa, and Bagirmi.

The Zaghawa of Northern and Eastern Chad, on the other hand, are pastoralists who practice transhumance. Among the Zaghawa the men are herders or semi-cereal producers, while the women are hunters (using spears and nets) and fruit-gatherers as well as blacksmiths (Tubiana 1977:31)! The Barma, credited with the founding of the kingdom of Bagirmi, are cereal producers and have remained predominantly Muslim. They are infamous in Southern Chad for their yearly bloody slaving activities. The Fulani or Fulbe pastoralists seem to have begun their infiltration of Chad as early as the fifteenth century and can be found particularly in the Mayo-Kebbi and Chari-Bagirmi Prefectures, especially when they have turned semi-sedentary. Described by scholars as aristocratic (Azarya 1978:15–47), the Fulani used the *jihad* to subjugate Northern Chad and Northern Cameroon during the nineteenth century, and, in the process, enslaved many non-Muslim neighbors, including the Sara of Chad. As aristocrats, they considered themselves superior to any other society, viewed the state apparatus as their exclusive domain, and refused to engage in manual labor.

Finally, among the ethnic groups worth mentioning on the basis of their numbers are: the Mubi cereal producers of the *souspréfecture* of Oum-Hadjar, and the micro-environmental specialists, Buduma (and their most known clan, the Yedina), who are fishermen, canoe builders, and stockbreeders (and are still religious traditionalists). They live around Lake Chad. Interestingly, Heinrich Barth (1965:64) had already characterized the Buduma, who specialized in the construction of flat boats about 12 feet long, as “the famous pirates of the Tsad [Chad].” The Kotoko, who also live around the Lake, claim to be the owners of the land on which they live because they consider themselves the descendants of the Sao. They are fishermen and cattle raisers (with the work done by others, such as the Arabs), exact tribute from anyone passing through their land or using their pasture, and, in the past, considered everyone in Chad enslavable.

VIOLENCE AMONG CHAD’S PRE-COLONIAL ACEPHALOUS SOCIETIES

In order to enable the reader to understand this section and the upcoming chapters, the following discussion of concepts deemed crucial to the theme of violence in Central Sudan is offered. Included in the repertoire are the concepts of acephalous society, violence, warfare, feud, and duel. An acephalous (literally, headless) society is one that does not have a government whose normal functions include maintenance (through coercive means if needed) of law and order, administration of justice, collection of taxes or tribute, and enforcement of conscription of the young. Acephalous is often used interchangeably with the term stateless, although in French literature, francophone Chadianists have preferred to use the word anarchic. However, the problem with the French use of the word anarchy *(anarchie)* is that uninformed readers may equate statelessness with chaos and lawlessness, which was not the case in Southern Chad.

Depending on size, in stateless societies, decisions are usually made by a selected group of elders or by the entire community. Acephalous societies were common in Southern Chad, while (for reasons to be discussed later) state societies were prevalent in the north.

There is more agreement among social scientists today about what constitutes a state than there is on the origins of the state itself. Ronald Cohen defines the state as a system designed to "coordinate human efforts to carry out public policy," involving "a ruling class or, in structural terms, a governing bureaucracy." In an established state "The office holders oversee succession to high office, collect revenues, raise militia, adjudicate disputes, allocate resources, and, as an official hierarchy, join the non-officeholders to the governing regime" (Cohen 1978a:4). In a state society, therefore, there is an individual or a group of individuals (a king, a sultan sometimes assisted by a council of elders, as in Central Sudan prior to colonization, or an oligarchy) that is clearly identifiable as responsible for making binding decisions, and that relies on a bureaucracy to carry out its mandates.

Over the centuries, scholars and legal experts have attempted to explain or define violence, a feature that has been part of human history. While some claim that it is simply part of human nature or class-based aggression, others describe it as a "by-product of overcrowding" or as a "spasmodic affair," such as Nazism, analogous to a human infection. Interestingly, as Pye notes (1971:103), Italian psychoanalist Franco Fornari sees violence as emanating from human unconscious nature, equating "swords and spears with genital-sadistic fantasies, firearms with anal sadism, and nuclear weapons with oral sadism." This volume understands violence to be aggressive behavior that results in physical and psychological suffering to living beings, especially mankind, and damage to their property and to nature in general. The means through which violence is inflicted vary from society to society and from individual to individual, and are therefore discussed within their context in the following chapters.

How does one define war? Just as is the case for the concept of the state, social scientists have for centuries debated the concept of war. During the Middle Ages, St. Thomas Aquinas wrote volumes on the subject, making a major distinction between offensive and defensive war and the moral justifications for both. He defined war *(bellum)* as *"pugna multitudinis cum multitudine extranea ob bonum commune publica auctoritate suspecta"* or "war is a fight waged by a large group of people against an external group with society's explicit authorization to safeguard the common good." Aquinas noted that war differs from "a quarrel (brawl), which occurs between one individual and another or among small numbers of peoples." Likewise, in his view, war differs from civil war, "waged .among citizens of the same republic or city" and from a "duel, which occurs between individuals without a public contract" (See Noldin 1957:322).

For our purposes, Brian Ferguson has recently provided a definition that excludes individual violence from the concept of war and emphasizes war's social rather than individual nature. Such a definition seems not to fall into the trap of making actual death and military activities the *sine qua non* of war. Therefore, we adopt in this volume Ferguson's definition (1984:5) of war as: "Organized, purposeful group action, directed against another group that may or may not be organized for similar action, involving the actual or potential application of lethal force." However, we prefer to apply this definition primarily to those groups that have gone beyond the raiding and feuding stages,

usually state societies, although chiefdoms may at times approximate the organizational structure of the archaic or modern state.[3]

The use of violence, including war, as a means of coercion among the non-centralized, acephalous societies in Southern Chad is difficult to assess, as very little is known about the nature of the relationships that prevailed among them prior to the French conquest. This suggests that people most likely lived and co-existed in relative peace, as violence is an easily noted phenomenon and would have been reported if it had been frequent. Gayo Kogongar, for example, who studied Sara pre-colonial society, and most explorers of Chad and Central Africa say nothing that provides evidence that violence was rampant in this part of the region, except in relation to the northern states that raided annually.

The probability of peaceful co-existence is also supported by recent writings of anthropologists who maintain that warfare is a phenomenon of more advanced state societies (Reyna and Downs 1994), just as it was the case of Kanem-Bornu, Bagirmi, and Wadai, whose violence constitutes the theme of the next chapter. The consensus seems to be that the violence engaged in by acephalous communities and ethnic groups is usually less organized, and that most often it takes the form of raids on neighbors (mainly for looting purposes) and feuds among members of the same community or family. It would appear, however, that in the south, the appearance of neighboring states that waged war and engaged in slave raids did increase the incidence and degree of violence among certain ethnic groups within Chad, as Ellen Brown's work (1983) on the Nar shows.

Unfortunately for our purpose, the collection of data on the issue of war among these acephalous societies is only a recent phenomenon. As R.Brian Ferguson and Neil Whitehead (1992:26–27) have demonstrated in their study, "the effects of expanding states [on surrounding societies], and particularly of European colonialism, typically precede extensive descriptions of indigenous warfare, so that by far the greater part of our ethnographic information about nonstate warfare is post-contact [with Europe and other societies]." The same can be said of Chad's southern acephalous societies prior to the raids of the Sahelian states and French colonialism. However, Ferguson's and Whitehead's study *(Ibid.)* also confirms that "very frequently the result of state impingement [upon neighboring societies] is to generate warfare and transform its conduct and purpose rather than to suppress" and that "indigenous warfare in proximity to an expanding state is probably related to that intrusion." From this premise one would therefore conclude that the impact of northern warfare and raids in the southern part of Chad, which the two quoted authors call "the tribal zone," increased the incidence of violence and added new causes for further conflict.

Yet this study does not claim that state formation in general goes hand-in-hand with an increase in acts of warfare. Available evidence on the issue is not conclusive. Turney-High (1971:231), for example, maintains that it cannot be proven that "the rise of the state brought about more wars into the world." He claims that, on the contrary, his study provides evidence that "people with but little social cohesion, little concept of those political attitudes which produce and maintain the state, have killed off just as large a percentage of their populations as have the warlike, well-knit groups."

In Chad, the coming of states seems to have contributed to an increase in the rate of violent incidents stemming from the simple fact that relatively more advanced means of violence and tactics of warfare were introduced. Indeed, here warfare was often preceded

or followed by raids and the capture of individuals, which provides more reasons for internal and external conflict.

CONCLUSION: A COMPLEX SOCIETY IN TRANSITION

Chad was complex in pre-colonial times, and still remains so. It was, and is still, inhabited by people with the most divergent cultures, religions, and lifestyles—lifestyles clashing, uncompromising to each other at times, ranging from traditionalists to Muslims, from pastoralists to agriculturalists, from cattle and camel herders to transhumant date and nut gatherers, and from politically complex to simply organized societies. Although historically violence seems to be a part of every society and state at one point or another, it is most likely that such acephalous societies as the Sara, the Moundang, and the Banana, as well as many other communities in southern Central Sudan, did not experience the degree and kind of violence associated with the emergence of the northern Islamic states and Rabah's short-lived empire that, through warfare and raid, reduced many of them to subservience.

Nevertheless, some southern societies, such as the Sara Madjingaye seemed to have been in the process of becoming states just prior to the French arrival. There were others, in fact, that had a hierarchical, chiefly political structure where the authority, easily identifiable, exacted some tribute from the populace, regulated certain social activities, such as the *yondo* among the Sara, performed rituals, and determined the beginning of the planting and the harvesting seasons. In such societies, militias did exist, as was the case among the Sara. The existence of this rudimentary force certainly heightened the potential for some form of organized violence. As S.P.Reyna notes, "chiefly militias might be thought of as the first organized means of violence that, when exercised, possess 'constitutive powers'" (Reyna 1994:34). Among the Sara, the *goumiers* were actually a militia under a designated, experienced leader called *padjal*. They performed a defensive task against northern incursions and perhaps conducted raids against their neighbors in the procurement of slaves to satisfy the demands of the north and spare their own kin or clan.

Among these acephalous societies, feuding was certainly a common occurrence, particularly in the settling of scores and grievances. The 1929 Bouna "War," so-called among the Sara Dai discussed in Chapter Four, had the overtones of feuding and resistance to colonial taxation. We are also told by anthropologists that raids and warfare seem to be phenomena that arose out of settled and agricultural communities and societies, as land became much more precious than before, not only for farming but also for settlement (Carneiro 1994:12). Be that as it may, prior to the European arrival, Chad's deep south seems to have had enough land to accommodate most of its inhabitants, a factor that seems to mitigate against any thesis postulating a state of constant conflict in the region. This changed, however, when the region turned into a "frontier zone" and a field of empires for the northern polities and became the target of French imperial and colonial designs. Ellen Brown's study (1983:29–31) of the Sara Nar, for example, provides evidence that the arrival of the Barma as slave raiders on the banks of the Mandoul River turned Nar society upside down, fostering a relationship of "permanent hostility among the villages," that resulted in deaths and enslavement, as each village

chief attempted to survive under the harsh conditions brought about by the Bagirmi state and its slave raids, especially between 1859 and 1884.

What complicated relationships further in Central Sudan in general and Chad in particular was the intrusion of trans-statal and trans-ethnic Islam from the east and the north. The new faith transformed demographically and economically unstratified societies into clearly delineated solidarities based on religion and slavery, reinforcing two violent pulls, Islamic and non-Islamic, free and enslaved or enslavable. Such polarization made war and raids, the underlying theme of the next chapter, common occurrences in the region. But Islam had another disadvantage, too. Although it provided some spiritual identity and cohesion, most often it did not prevent conflict and violent hegemonic state expansion even among correligionists. Of course, one must add that such an occurrence was not unique in human history. Christianity created similar conditions in medieval as well as modern Europe.

NOTES

1. There are, however, other hypotheses about the origin of the term Sara. Kalck's account is just one version.
2. Traditionalism in this context means the set of religious systems and rituals that are indigenous to Africa. Of course, as elsewhere on the globe, traditions in Africa undergo constant change, and Africans at the time were no more, no less, traditional than other societies.
3. For those interested in how social scientists have generally dealt with the issue of war as it relates to theories of human aggressiveness, to the psychological and social factors predisposing states to use warfare, and to materialistic perspectives, Ferguson's work will prove quite helpful.

Chapter *TWO*
Chad's Centralized Societies and the Use of Organized Violence

In Chad, several state societies and principalities emerged between the ninth and the seventeenth centuries. Some survived until the arrival of the French during the 1890s. Others lasted a short time, most often engulfed by a stronger neighbor. Among pre-colonial Chad's best known states were Kanem-Bornu, Bagirmi, and Wadai. All three eventually became Islamic states following the conversion of their rulers and subjects to Islam, engaged in violent slave raids, and constantly attempted to expand and control a nucleus of states or indigenous polities as vassal states or tributary communities.

From available sources, this chapter attempts to demonstrate that, in contrast to the acephalous southern societies in Chad, the precolonial Sudanic states created a regional economic and political system based upon slavery. This resulted in socio-political conditions that led to unprecedented violence and polarization whose impact is still being felt by contemporary Chadians. Because slaving activities were often carried out in the holy name of Allah, they not only contributed to extreme zeal among the raiders but they also targeted in theory and practice the non-Muslim societies that at the time were scattered in what is now Southern Chad. Before discussing the nature of the three major pre-colonial states in Chad, it is important to clarify the possible relationships between warfare and the state, between long-distance trade and state formation, and between Islam and centralized government.

KANEM-BORNU, WADAI, AND BAGIRMI

The development of states in Central Sudan cannot be attributed to a single factor. Prior to the ninth century A.D., this vast plain and hilly terrain was already a crossroads of migrations that accommodated peoples of diverse lifestyles. It was a meeting point for trade intercourse, and a place where Islam and African religions intermingled. As population pressures grew, people began to compete fiercely for the region's scarce resources. These were made even more scarce by the changing environment, illustrated dramatically by the receding waters of Lake Chad, particularly after the thirteenth century (Reyna 1990:47).

Islam provided an administrative structure, a code of new laws and behavior, a new sense of commonality of values and purpose on earth, and elevated the African ruler to a higher pedestal as a representative of Allah and the Prophet. Control of trans-Saharan trade enhanced state revenues, which made it possible for rulers to realize dynastic and personal ambitions, transforming acephalous societies into hierarchical and centralized polities. Simultaneously, the pre-Islamic introduction of the horse and of the camel

(H.J.Fisher 1972), reinforced by the arrival of firearms in Central Sudan during the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, allowed intrepid leaders and their communities to centralize power and subjugate less politically organized societies; these they turned into vassal states or acephalous tributaries who had to provide the resources needed by their overlords, i.e., slaves, horses, ivory, salt, wax, metal tools, and manpower for war and booty raids.

The present study supports the view that, although TurneyHigh's thesis denying a link between state formation and warfare might apply in many cases, in Central Sudan generally the contrary seems to have been the norm:here warfare stimulated state formation. Indeed, even Turney-High himself (1971:238) seems to accept this exception, as he argues that in Africa in general, and in Central Africa in particular, in contrast to North and South America, many states grew out of warfare: "on the continent [of Africa, he writes] war produced many though not all of the states." He goes on to say (1971:239) of Central Sudan, including Bornu, which he calls Southwestern Sudan,

> The threat of defeat united many communities in defense of their lives and property. Widespread war-chieftainships and confederacies arose which survived into peace times. When outside aggressions welded wide territories into defensive organizations, this added strength was used to the detriment of some still independent peoples… The open country of the grain-growing Sudan permitted the formation of the civil state after the people had been hammered and welded by war.

He attributes the apparent cause and effect relationship between warfare and state formation in this part of Africa to the fact that people here are better off as they combine grain producing with pastoralism, and that "military communications" were made easier by the lack of forests, rivers, and marshes. These conditions gave people the resources, the time, and the ability to wage successful wars, which led to state formation. Yet, what he calls "the greater mass migrations and invasions" remained forever a potential cause for state and societal instability. C.Tilly, however, posited categorically in 1975 that "War made the state, and the state made war" (Tilly 1975:42). Although it is still unclear whether in every case war made the state, it is a fact that every state in Central Africa made war and made it an intrinsic part of state function. In other words, to paraphrase Cohen, "…Warfare by itself cannot make states. Control and coordination of warfare, and defense and the capacity to settle disputes, are the more essential" (Cohen 1984:337).

The role of warfare in the formation of states in most of Central Sudan was certainly critical, for the evidence seems to indicate that here states rose, shrank, expanded, and disappeared as their instruments of coercion and war oscillated between adequacy and superiority *vis-à-vis* those of their neighbors. Certainly, as we shall see later, the fall of Bagirmi, the rise of Wadai, and the successes of Rabah in Central Sudan at the turn of the century were primarily determined by the degree of strength and the effectiveness of their armies and their ability to wage successful warfare.

On this score, Joseph Smaldone (1972) argues convincingly that in Central Sudan the army and warfare were paramount in the formation of a centralized, autocratic structure, with a permanent bureaucracy. Goody (1971:22) had also advanced this thesis earlier when he concluded that "In the Western Sudan, differentiation in the means of

agricultural production [ploughs, for example] was not of major significance. Much more important was the ownership of the means of destruction [weapons], since on this depended political overlordship [i.e., the control of others] and the production of booty [through warfare and raids]."

To acknowledge the crucial role of warfare and the army is not, however, to deny the impact of other factors. For example, control of the trans-Saharan trade and the prestige of Islam, which accompanied commercial intercourse, enhanced the ability of the Central Sudanic armies to wage successful wars and guarantee the survival and expansion of the state. Yet the precise relationship between the trans-Saharan trade and state formation is still in dispute and needs further research. Indeed, it is interesting that Cohen's study of Bornu, Pabir-Biu, and Fombina-Yola forces him to conclude that "There is no indication in any of these states that *long-distance trade* [author's emphasis] preceded statehood or wars related to its emergence" (Cohen 1978:156). This suggests that long-distance trade, which involved several items necessary to maintain a bureaucracy (slaves, horses, and firearms, for example), important as these might have been, did not cause state formation, thought it did enhance the state virtually everywhere in the region.

However, the "systemic process" that most analysts propound today to explain the origins of the state, which may involve one or more factors—namely, population pressure or circumscription of population, warfare and military organization, conquest, defense, internal strife, protection of privileges by a higher ranking group, or the benefits to be derived from centralization (Cohen 1978a:8)—must give much prominence to long distance-trade (in our case the trans-Saharan trade) and religion (Islam) in the rise of all Islamic Central Sudanic states, in particular Kanem-Bornu, Bagirmi, and Wadai.

Kanem emerged around A.D.800 to the northeast of Lake Chad as a result of the effort of a branch of the Zaghawa called the Beni Sefi, who most likely enlisted the collaboration of the Tubu (particularly the Teda clan), and perhaps the Bulala. During the second half of the eleventh century, a new dynasty, the Sefuwa, in the person of *Mai* (King) Hummay (1075–1180), took control of the state (Lange 1989:225). Whether the Sefuwa were Beni Sefi is debated. As Lange (1989) notes, "Although there is no convincing evidence to show that the Sefuwa were not of local origin, equally there is none to say convincingly that they were." From their capital at N'Jimi, created during the thirteenth century, the *mais* of Kanem occupied a strategic location *vis-à-vis* the trans-Saharan trade, especially using the Bilma trail, which led from Tripoli through different oases in Fezzan, south of Kawar, and on to Lake Chad. According to Anthony Arkell (1952:264), this route was the most important one during medieval times, not only due to its oases and its wells but also because its terrain was easier to cross. The major items of trade at the time comprised salt, horses, cotton, slaves, jewelry, cloth, copper, kola nuts, ostrich feathers, ivory, hides, wax, perfumes, gold, muskets, and glass. Slaves, however, constituted the most important and coveted commodity (Cuoq 1975:49). The *mais* made sure that the trading routes were so safe that, as it was said then, even a woman walking alone feared nothing but God (Collier 1990:9).

According to available evidence, Islam spread in Kanem under *Mai* Ulmme Jelne during the eleventh century, and, during the next centuries, most notably during the rule of *Mai* Dunama Dabbalemi (1221–1259), Kanem achieved its first hegemony over a vast empire that extended to Northwest Chad, Wadai in the east, and the Adamawa plateau in the west. As was typical among the various dynasties in the Islamic Central African

states, feuding within the ruling family was constant. Apparently these disputes, which often resulted in assassinations, poisoning, blinding of family members, or forced exile, allowed the Bulala (portrayed variously as farmers and as nomadic pastoralists, but always as good warriors) to overthrow the ruling dynasty. They succeeded in forcing *Mai* Umar Ibn Idris (1384–1388) to flee to Bornu, west of Lake Chad, probably a province of the kingdom at the time, and settle there to recoup and attempt to regain the empire. In 1484 Bornu's Birni Ngazargamu (located in present Niger) became the capital of the new state, whence the *mais* attempted to restore their rule in Kanem. However, persistent dynastic in-fighting delayed their re-conquest of Kanem.

Mai Idris Katakarnabi (1504–1526) made the first serious attempt at re-conquering Kanem. This was followed by Bornu's total victory over the former kingdom through the military prowess of *Mai* Idris Alooma (1580–1619), with the result that the kingdom became Kanem-Bornu. But the kings continued to reside in Bornu. Several reasons explain why the *mais* did not return to Kanem. As Fartua, an Arab writer notes, it appears that, first, "the pre-ponderance in Kanem at that time [around 1507] of purely Teda tribes, called Gura'an," opposed the *mais'* settlement in the area. Second, the eastward movement of the Tuareg from the Atlantic threatened the security of the dynasty in the former kingdom (Fartua 1970:4–5). Brenner (1973:10) adds a third reason, namely that, since Bornu was agriculturally more productive than Kanem and better suited to cattle raising, which was a major occupation of the Kanembu, the *mais* found the new domain more attractive.

It was during Alooma's rule that Kanem-Bornu achieved its second zenith in Central Sudan and exacted annual tribute from people as far away as Wadai and Darfur. During the nineteenth century, however, the empire came under constant attack from the Fulani and the Tuareg and was finally dealt a serious blow by Usuman Dan Fodio's military Islamic crusade, which sacked the capital in 1808. In 1814, the Sefuwa dynasty became just a figure head, as Shehu Mohamed el Amin el Kanemi, a Muslim scholar-warrior, who had helped the Sefuwa against the Fulani, forcibly took virtual control of the sultanate. Following a civil war that broke out in 1836, el Kanemi's son, Umar (1837–1853), replaced the old dynasty. Subsequently, the *mais* transferred the capital to Kukawa, in Bornu, but were driven away by Rabah Fadlallah in 1893. They were finally conquered by the French and the British during the post 1890period. Inter-dynastic problems notwithstanding, the *mais* of KanemBornu were powerful but not absolute; they shared power with twelve aristocrats "who together formed a sort of legally constituted [informal] council of state," while they consulted several advisors before making major decisions (Brenner 1973:18).

Wadai, to the east, emerged as a state during the sixteenth century and survived up to the coming of Rabah and the French at the turn of the century. Initially created by the Arabic speaking Tunjur and the Maba, Wadai was eventually Islamized by the actions of Muslim *Kolak* (Sultan) Ab-del-Kerim II, who dethroned the Tunjur by force, perhaps with assistance from the discontented Maba, sometime in 1611 or 1635 (Nachtigal 1971:146–147). Ab-del-Kerim's successors made Wadai totally independent from Darfur in 1790 and, after that, from Bagirmi. Just as they did in Kanem-Bornu, the trans-Saharan trade routes passing through Wadai allowed the state to prosper and become powerful. There were two major routes after 1810, one linking the Upper Nile with Darfur, and the other linking Abéché with Benghazi, through Oum-Chalouba, Ennedi, Koufra, and Dadjo

Oasis, opened by Sultan Sabun. For long periods of time Wadai was able to control Dar Sila, Salamat, Dar Runga, and Dar Kuti, as well as to exact tribute from the non-Muslim southern populations such as the Sara and the Moundang, most often in the form of slaves, ivory, and wax.

Organized assaults on neighboring populations were Wadai's common practice. For example, Sultan Joda Sabun (1745–1795), commonly referred to as Joda, launched eight expeditions against the non-Muslim southerners, whom the Wadaians called *jenakhira.* Joda even tracked the Tunjur down into Kanem, where they had settled in the southern part, and took their capital Mondo, making them tributary. His successor, Salih Derret (1795–1803), considered incompetent, ruled over a larger Wadai extending from the desert in the north "towards Kanem in the west, Darfur in the east, and the Bahr es Salamat in the south" (Reyna 1990:146–147), making Wadai the dominant power in the east-central Chad Basin, especially during the mid-nineteenth century. Subsequently, as Cordell (1985:20) puts it, "Wadaian history between 1800 and 1850 oscillated between expansion and isolation prompted by internal strife," while in the south, the power of the sultan "expanded and contracted in accordance with events in the northern heartlands."

Although the reconstruction of the events in Central Sudan and the chronology differ according to sources, Wadai invaded Bagirmi a number of times between 1805 and the 1870s. In 1805 or 1806, *Kolak* Abdelkerim or Sabun (1805–1815) attacked Abder Rahman Gaurang I's capital on the pretext of punishing the sultan for violating Islamic precepts (marrying his sister Tamar). Two important generals deserted the sultan, having been co-opted through Sabun's intrigues. (In fact, one of them was accused of having an affair with Tamar herself, the *mbang's* first wife.) Consequently, Sabun sacked and captured Massenya, even killed Gaurang (1795–1806) and his allegedly incestuous wife, and, as always, took much booty (Tunisi 1851), including some 20,000 slaves. He appointed a puppet ruler, *Mbang* Burkumanda (1807–1846). He also subdued Dar Tama, Dar Sila, and Dar Runga and made them tributary states, and campaigned in the Wadai "heartland," but died as he was preparing to mount a major assault on Bornu (Cordell 1985:20). Sabun is likewise remembered for having blinded his brother and destituted his father to ensure that there would be no rival to challenge his rule (Chapelle 1980:205).

Following his predecessors' footsteps in violence and conquest, Mohamad Sherif (1834–1858) waged a successful campaign against Bornu, near Kusseri, and burned and pillaged the capital, Kukawa. Even Bagirmi did not escape the conquering appetite of the powerful rulers of Wadai. In 1871, Sultan Ali (1858–1874) successfully invaded Bagirmi, taking with him some 20,000 to 30,000 Muslims and nonMuslims as captives. Many of them were forced to settle in rural Wadai, as they were not allowed to return home (Cordell 1985:21).

As a result of its discipline and size, the Wadaian army became the largest and most formidable force in Central Sudan at the turn of the century, a force the state used for subduing various polities and raiding the south for slaves. The powerful *kolaks* surrounded themselves with a number of functionaries and were protected by well-trained officers, all of whom lived from the resources stolen or exacted as tribute from neighboring weaker societies. Indeed, here:

> The ruler was surrounded by many dignitaries, each with his own large staff and specialized functions, such as looking after the royal wardrobe,

> provisioning the palace, or guarding the Islamic manuscripts… The governors [whose major function was to collect taxes and recruit soldiers] had their own courts modelled after that of the sultan but spent most of their time at Ouara [Wara, the previous capital before Abéché replaced it in 1850], where they also had a domestic function at the royal court (Nelson et al. 1972:29–30).

Dynastic in-fighting, however, doomed Wadais' chance of ever controlling the region for a long period of time. For example, the sultans normally assisted by councils, blinded princes to avoid a succession challenge. This happened to Prince Abdel el Aziz, who was blinded by a slave in 1898. In 1901, however, Ibrahim was, himself, blinded by rebel dignitaries and replaced by his sighted brother Dudumarrah (1901–1911), under whom Wadai was subdued by the French. He too, as he ascended to power, blinded his nephew, a son of Ibrahim (Chapelle 1980:207). By tradition, a blind person could not occupy the throne.

Under these conditions, it seems logical to assume that military campaigns were used at times to divert attention from the domestic problems. Besides, warring on the neighbors was a lucrative activity. Nachtigal (1971:98, 171, 182) reported that the annual tribute from Salamat Arabs to Wadai, for example, was as high as 100 horses, between 500 and 600 oxen, 1,000 pieces of cloth, and as much ivory, honey, rhino horn, and other items that the authorities could lay their hands on. In addition, 4,000 slaves were taken from the non-Muslim southern populations and delivered to Abéché every third year.

Bagirmi, located southeast of Lake Chad along the Chari River in the present Chari-Bagirmi Prefecture, also flourished as a state during the sixteenth century, and established its capital at Massenya. The religiously traditionalist Barma seem to have been the founders, but Islam soon took grip of the state, when *Mbang* (later Sultan) Abdulla, 1568–1598 (Collier 1990:10, or 1568–1608, Reyna 1990:52), converted to the new faith (See Nachtigal 1971). Some accounts, however, place the conversion of Bagirmi to Islam during the reign of *Mbang* Malo (1548–1567), who supposedly embraced the faith and introduced dignitaries and an administration modeled after that of the Bulala (Chapelle 1980:204). Bagirmi towns, Bidri and Abu Ghern in particular, became important Islamic centers during the nineteenth century (Cordell 1985:41–42).

Bagirmi reached its zenith between 1717 and 1786, when it expanded as far as Wadai, only to decline soon thereafter. In 1817, for example, Bornu's Sheikh El Kameni invaded the sultanate and, "after a number of very difficult campaigns, sacked Massenya for a second time in less than twenty years" (Reyna 1990:54). As noted earlier, Bagirmi was also invaded by Wadai several times, resulting in a loss of prestige, citizens, slaves, and other precious resources. Particularly devastating was a successful invasion by Wadai in the early 1870s. It resulted in the loss of perhaps as many as 30,000 Bagirmi to the enemy, who also took "weavers, dyers, tailors, saddlers, princes and princesses," including the young Gaurang II (Cornet 1963:22–23). Weakened by these invasions, the sultanate was easily conquered by Rabah after he burned and razed the capital to the ground in 1893. Thus, the sultan was himself forced to enlist assistance from the French through a formal treaty with Emile Gentil in 1897 (Cornet 1963:29–31).

Bagirmi's incursions into the south in search of booty and vassal states made it infamous, particularly among the Sara. Possessed of a relatively powerful army, Bagirmi

looked at every other society as a potential source of revenue for its state and for its aristocratic functionaries, who did no manual labor while maintaining lavish courts. Thus, the role and use of the army throughout the sultanate's existence were paramount. At virtually no time was the Bagirmi army not involved in a campaign against the so-called *kirdis* or pagans or other states in the area. S.P.Reyna, who has dissected the history and the social structure of the sultanate, divides its entire history into four major phases, briefly summarized below, on the basis of the violent actions taken by the *mbangs*.

During the 1522–1536 period, the first phase, Bagirmi became a small "mature empire" through the military actions of Dala Birni. He subdued the Arabs in the north and northeast, forcing them to pay tribute; he fought in the south against the N'Dam whom he made vassals; he defeated the Bulala; and he exacted a large amount of loot from the Madsche in the form of slaves, and from the Fulani and the Arabs in cattle and horses (Reyna and Downs 1994:140–148). During the second phase (1568–1608), under four *mbangs,* but principally during the rule of Abd-allah, Bagirmi added a number of secondary states along the Chari river, including those of the Bulala, Medogo, Modon, Mousgoum, Mafalling, Bousso, Bonai, Balanyre, Onoko, Mandjafa, Bagoumen, Sokoro, Sauna, Fulani, Debaba, Kozzam, Assale, Semliji, and Mabberate, which brought considerable revenue in horses and slaves. For example, the last six states and peoples he subdued paid no less than one hundred horses each (Nachtigal 1971:700).

The third phase of military expansion, accompanied by much violence, occurred between 1635 and 1680, when Burkumanda I expanded the kingdom through West-Central Chad after waging three major campaigns. The first, which lasted three years, was against the Sokoro and Kenga in the east, the Medogo in the northeast, and the Buduma in the west. He assaulted the Bilma in the desert and the Binder and Lere in the southwest, seizing an enormous booty in slaves, horses, cattle, and silver. He waged a second successful campaign against Sarua and the N'Dam, while in his third campaign he subdued powerful Wadai. Dala Birni II (1674–1680), who was killed during a successful battle, first waged war against the Mubi in southern Wadai and finally against Wadai troops around Lake Filtri. He made it possible for Bagirmi to enjoy an eighty-year military hegemony in Central Sudan.

Finally, the fourth and last phase, from 1741 to 1785, *mbangs* Loel and Hadji (the latter also known as Muhammed el-Amin) made Bagirmi a "dominant empire," expanding it as far as eastern and southern Wadai (Reyna 1990:148). It is known that Loel (1739–1749) quelled two internal insurrections and died during the second before he had attacked Sokoro and the Arabs in southern Wadai, a task that was completed by Hadji (1749–1784), who sent his troops towards the four cardinal points in a series of nine campaigns: the first against the Bulala, the Medogo, and southern Wadai; the second, to subdue Bornu and Borkou; the third, against his recalcitrant southern vassals, the Miltu; the fourth, to punish reluctant tributary states in the south; the fifth, directed against the Kotoko on the Logone and the Arabs in southern Bornu; the sixth, aimed at crushing the revolt of the Sarua, Miltu, and Sokoro, former tributaries; the seventh, against Bua; the eighth, to crush the Musgo in the south; and the ninth and the final, designed to subdue the Somrai, also in the south. In his campaigns he defeated the Kotoko, the Kuka, the Bulala, the Medogo, the Kawai, the Borgu, and Wadai, making Bagirmi the indisputable power in all of Central Sudan, amassing, meanwhile, much treasure in the form of horses, silver, and slaves (Devallée 1925:43).

The Bagirmi sultan enjoyed immense political and religious authority, compelling Barth to classify him as an absolute ruler because, he says, unlike in Bornu (where the sultan was assisted by an aristocracy that asserted its right to participate in government), and in the Hausa states (where there was an assembly), there were no institutional checks to the *mbang's* power. To enhance his mystique and power, the sultan often made himself invisible to the people by conducting his audiences behind a curtain. Barth adds that people who saw the king had to be not only "bare-headed but also [had] to draw their shirt from the left shoulder, and to sprinkle dust on their heads." He concludes, however, by noting that the Barma "…are not in general oppressed, and a far greater liberty of speech is allowed [in Bagirmi] than in many European states" (Barth 1965:562–564). Such tolerance might compel one to describe him as an enlightened despot. Reyna disputes the characterization of the *mbang* as absolute. He suggests that there was an established council of advisors in Bagirmi, and that, through his marriages (Barth speaks of 300 to 400 wives for the *mbang*) contracted with powerful persons, which kept him informed of the situation in the different regions of the sultanate, as well as through constant audiences, the *mbang* knew exactly what the feeling of his people was and responded accordingly.

Interestingly, Barth was also impressed with the way the Barma looked physically as compared particularly with the Bornuans. He wrote:

> In general the Bagirmi people are much better made than the Bornu, the men exceeding them in size as well as in muscular strength, as they do also in courage and energy of mind, while the women are far superior. The Bagirmi females in general are very well made, taller and less square, while their features have a great deal of regularity and a pleasing expression. Some of them might even be called handsome with their large, dark, beautiful eyes… It is, therefore, not without reason that the Bagirmi females are celebrated over a great part of Negroland (Barth 1965:486).

RABAH FADLALLAH AND THE SMALLER STATES OF CENTRAL SUDAN

The exploits of Rabah in Central Sudan have been relatively well documented, as they occurred immediately prior to the appearance of the European colonial powers on the African landscape during the 1880s and 1890s. While some have called him one of the greatest pan-Africanists (Amegboh 1976), others have branded him, and rightly so, as one of Africa's most notorious slave traders (Adeleye 1970), surpassing by far Tippu Tib of East-Central Africa. He was born a slave around 1840–1845 in Halfay, near Khartoum and is said to have belonged to the Fundj ethnic group. Later he became the right hand military man to Pasha Zubeir Rahma Mansur al-Abbasi (1831–1913), a Sudanese slave and ivory trader. Rabah parted ways with the Pasha's son, Suleyman, during the late 1870s, when Zubeir was imprisoned in Egypt. He initially gathered a force of 600 men and marched them towards Wadai from Darfur. He then moved towards Oubangui, subdued Dar Kuti in 1884, as well as Dar Runga in 1889. In 1890 he appointed one of his allies, Muhamad al Sanussi, as Dar Kuti's ruler, replacing Sultan Kobur. Afterwards, for

seven years, he circled the plateau south of Ndele, gathering an army of Kreich and Banda. He captured and dealt in slaves, while amassing a huge number of weapons.

Rabah's advances in Wadai were eventually checked near AmTimam by Aguid Salamat Cheferdin (Wadai's governor in the Salamat) in 1887, forcing him to camp in Kabaland. His stay here afforded him time to attack and recruit the Deme, the Ndjoko and others, whom he used as soldiers and slaves (Chapelle 1980:213–215). Once well prepared, he moved north and followed the left bank of the Chari river, fighting and terrorizing the area at the same time. He executed the *alifa* of Gundi and forced that of Korbol to flee. In 1889, he conquered Dar Runga, a Wadai tributary state (because the sultan had forbidden free passage to weapons destined to him through Wadai territory). In 1892, he defeated first the Bagirmi army, then a Bornuan force at Logone Birni, and annihilated Kuka (Kukawa), the capital of Bornu in 1893. Eventually he installed himself at Dikwa, where he began to organize his own state. He was in the process of taking Wadai when the French stopped him at the battle of Kusseri in 1900. Regrettably his involvement in Central Chad did not contribute to peace but to further political chaos, violence, bloodshed, and slave raiding, as well as regional depopulation caused by death and migration.

Apart from the three major states discussed above, there were various smaller states in what is Chad today and its vicinity, including a number of Kotoko "principalities," some of which gravitated as vassals around Kanem and Bornu, along the Chari and Logone rivers. There were several other Muslim states in the region north and east of Bagirmi, including Zaghawa, Babelya, Medogo in the region between Wadai and Salamat, including Dar Sila, Dar Tama, Dar Runga, Dar Kuti (in the south), and Darfur (part of Sudan). Darfur, a prominent Muslim polity, arose in the early 1800s but declined as it lost its client states (Dar Runga and Dar Sila) to Wadai. Reyna lists at least eleven states, some of which survived a long time between A.D. 900 and 1800. These states not only attempted to expand territorially, but they also raided the surrounding areas searching for slaves and other commodities of the time to fulfill their state needs or to meet the quotas imposed on them by the more powerful states such as Bagirmi and Wadai.[1]

SLAVE RAIDS AND VIOLENCE IN CENTRAL SUDAN

It is no secret among scholars today that, when the Western world was in the process of abolishing the "peculiar institution" of slavery, the Arabs and African Islamic leaders, especially in Central Sudan, were increasing their own traffic in human beings on the pretext that the *Sharia,* or the law of Islam, allowed the enslavement of nonMuslims (See Fisher and Fisher 1972:21–26). On Bornu, Louis Brenner (1973:115) writes that "Such raids were legitimate in the eyes of the Bornu leaders, since, according to Islamic law, the Muslim state is in a perpetual state of war with the countries of the unbelievers, who are legally enslavable." Muslim trader Tunisi notes, however, that Islamic tradition, although justifying war and enslavement, prescribed that "infidels" be allowed to choose between war and tribute and between peaceful or forced conversion. Tunisi was so distressed by what he saw in Central Sudan that he wrote, "The Muslims of Muslim Sudan, in their excursions against the idolatrous, do not observe what is prescribed by the word of God, and never call upon them before the attack to embrace Islam" (Tunisi 1851:288). He

elaborated this observation by noting (1851:298–299) that "Our holy law permits the sale and exportation of slaves." But he also added the following (1851:298–299):

> According to the Divine word itself, war is the legitimate and holy means to bring men under the yoke of religion; for as soon as the infidels feel the arms of Islam, and see their power humiliated, and their families led away into slavery, they will desire to enter into the right way, in order to preserve their persons and goods. However, before resorting to the extreme means, we must invite them to submit to the laws of Islam, and warn them many times of the misfortunes they will bring upon themselves by their incredulity…. If they take up arms against you, whoever is made captive shall be sold.

In fact, even by 1888, when the last modern state, Brazil, declared slavery illegal, Central Sudan experienced a great increase in the number of slaves taken out of their areas by Arab merchants and Islamicized African rulers to be sold in Central African markets, in Egypt, elsewhere in the Middle East, and in the Ottoman Empire.

In Chad, the societies most involved in the trade were the centralized Muslim states, particularly Bagirmi, Wadai, and Kanem-Bornu. These states would go to any length, bear any hardships, and inflict any imaginable suffering for the sole purpose of acquiring slaves from weak states, defenseless acephalous societies, such as the Sara of Chad, and any other people who refused to embrace the religion of the Prophet. Although slave raids are known to have existed in Central Sudan as early as the ninth century, their zenith occurred during the nineteenth century as a result of the rivalries between several empires, states, and their vassals, and the Anglo-Egyptian takeover of Sudan (1886–1899), which restricted slavery and the slave trade within Sudan proper. It has been noted that the AngloEgyptian condominium in Sudan forced many "Muslim merchants in pursuit of slaves and ivory…to establish fortified commercial centers among the southern peoples…" (Cordell 1985:11). This escalated conflict in the region, particularly in Chad. On the other hand, the impending and threatening arrival of the French, the British, and even that of the Germans heightened the regional frenzy for territorial conquest and the acquisition of slaves.

Bagirmi evokes the worst memories among the southern cereal producers in Chad. From 1871 to 1875, Bagirmi raided as far south as Koumra and Moissala, especially on the left bank of the Barh Sarh river, and in Oubangui-Chari, where Dar Kuti also raided yearly until 1911. People believe that the *mbang* snatched at least some 2,000 slaves-from Lai each year, among whom the Sara were always prominent, and some 100 captives from smaller nonMuslim ethnic groups in the south (Cornet 1963:52–53). In fact, after 1800, the state of Bagirmi often succeeded in monopolizing the trade over the Sara and other defenseless societies in Chad and Oubangui-Chari (present Central African Republic) (Kalck 1971:33). Bagirmi's slaving activities supplied the markets at Kuka, Ngazargamo, Wara, Massenya, Fasher, and En Nahud in Central Africa, North Africa, and the Middle East. Bagirmi raiders camped in the valleys along the Rivers Chari and Logone, where villages tended to be densely populated but inadequately defended.

Wadai as well incessantly raided the south, down to Lake Iro and Oubangui-Chari until 1908, when the French curbed its slaving activities. Here, the slave raids or the *ghazawa,* also known as *razzias,* became an organized state monopoly and business, with audacious military officers and defiant traders and businessmen often disregarding imperial orders. Slave raiders could be seen all over the Wadai plateau up to Bahr Azoum, decimating Salamat in the south, attacking the Mougo, the Runga and the Gula, whose villages were almost de-populated. The Wadaians even pursued the *montagnard* Hadjerai, who did their best to defend themselves, invoking their *margai* spirits, building barricades of shrubs to trap the horses of the invaders, and using every means at their disposal to repel them (Chapelle 1980:212). Wadaian raids increased after 1810 when the sultan opened a new trans-Saharan route between Abéché, the capital of the empire after 1850, and the Mediterranean Sea through Kufra in Fezzan. Thus the more complex and profitable the commerce with North Africa, the more frequent and more violent the raids turned out to be. As Cordell (1985:22) puts it, the more integrated Wadaian economic life and "desert network" became during the late nineteenth century, the more they "translated into slave-raiding and slave trading on an unprecedented scale, for non-Muslims."

Between 1880 and 1890, Rabah subdued several Muslim and nonMuslim societies, including the Sara, as far south as the Nzakara sultanate of Bangassou and as far north as Salamat, near Wadai, and was in the process of controlling the whole south, using the most brutal means, when the French appeared and eventually eliminated him in a battle at Kusseri in April 1900 (See Adeleye 1970:229). As Cordell (1985:58) notes, "Rabah's presence in Oubangui-Shari and the Chad basin between 1878 and 1891 had dramatic demographic effects," the result of his taking with him perhaps as many as 40,000 people from the south (See Buijtenhuijs 1978:40). Incidentally, Dar el Kuti (Dar Kuti) was raiding the same areas.

The Fulani, on the other hand, coming from as far as the Adamawa plateau (present Cameroon) (see Njeuma 1978 and Azarya 1978), raided the same areas in search of men for manual work and women as concubines and housemaids. Kanem, and later, Bornu, also conducted their slaving activities around Lake Chad and southwest of Chad, particularly following the recovery of Kanem by the *mais* residing in Bornu. Slaves became the most important export item among such others as ostrich feathers and ivory, over which the ruling aristocracy had a virtual monopoly. Other such smaller independent sultanates or vassals of the mature empires as Dar Kuti, Dar Runga, Dar Sila, and Darfur were engaged in the same slaving activities in the area in order to satisfy their own domestic needs or to pay their annual tribute to Bagirmi and Wadai. Dar Kuti as well as Bahr el-Ghazal became increasingly active and vicious slave trading states during the late 1890s, when parts of the south, as one scholar put it, "ran dry of anybody worth enslaving" (Collins 1971:225).

European explorers such as Auguste Chévalier, Heinrich Barth, Gustav Nachtigal, Paul Brunache, George Schweinfurth, and others, as well as Arab merchants spoke and wrote of the high incidence of slave trafficking and the concomitant violence in this part of Africa. Indeed, visiting Central Sudan today, particularly Southern Chad, one can still see the physical, social, and psychological scars of the trade carried out by the north. A visit to Dai Island, in the Canton of Beti, near Doba, provides vivid pictures of what the people went through to protect themselves from the slave traffickers. Every grown-up in

the villages remembers what used to happen on this three-mile long and a half-mile wide island decades ago. The Sara Dai, armed to the best of their ability, used to take refuge on the island as soon as news of raiders reached the vicinity. They would kill any raider attempting to cross the waters.

Informants whose forefathers were victims of the slave traders tell emotionally of the numbers of dead victims from the fatal skirmishes buried in the waters. Indeed, till today, many people refuse to eat fish from these "infected" waters (Azevedo 1974). Survivors in the village of Peni, near Koumra, repeat the same stories about the ravages of the *razzias*. In the village of Bessama, near Doba, for example, an elderly Sara male recounted how his mother and sister were abducted by the raiders, and how entire villages were abandoned when the raiding "season" arrived. In his opinion, if a village of one hundred people lost between five and ten people to the raiders yearly, it was especially fortunate, because others lost many more.

Sara informants confirm that in order to minimize the impact of the violent raids and preserve their society, the Sara would pierce the lips of their female children to make them look less attractive to the northerners, and they may also have sold sick children and weaker members of their society to satisfy the enslavers, a reason why, according to Auguste Chévalier (1907:357, 360), they remained such a robust ethnic group. At Koumra, the stories are even fresher than elsewhere. Apparently a raiding party led by Bagirmi *Mbang,* Abd el-Qader, killed many chiefs among the Ndam, the Goulaye, and the Sar during the 1850s. Abd el-Qader then summoned through drums the *Mbang* of Bedaya, who, some say, refused to appear. The Sara attempted to stop the raiders, and thereafter they resisted the Bagirmi through the use of force whenever possible. The aforementioned incident compelled the Sara *mbang* of Bedaya to create the *ngar,* charged with external affairs, who would advise him whether to use the militia or submit to the raiders (Chapelle 1980:213).

Some scholars argue that raiding was the first phase of slaving and that consistent annual tribute in slaves to the raiding party would become the normal pattern thereafter (Grey and Birmingham 1980:18). This may have been so in areas where the population was in a better position to challenge the invader. In the south, the major vehicle for the acquisition of slaves remained violent raiding by organized bands of northerners, often under the leadership of the sultans themselves or state officials, and at times by individual marauders or interlopers. As a consequence, certain chiefs organized local militias (or *goumiers* under a *padjal*) to defend the population, but these were no match for the raiding cavalry, which sometimes used firearms, particularly after 1850, when these were introduced in significant amounts in most Central African kingdoms (Chapelle 1980:208ff). Rarely were the dispersed villages able to put their militias together to face the threat. In fact, Cordell notes that firearms used during the latter half of the nineteenth century increased the number of successful and deadlier raids in the region.

Slave raids in the region were similar to each other in their *modi operandi*. The raiders, made up of contingents of 100–200 men, preferred the dry season, and built fortified camps or *zaribas* in strategic locations near occupied or abandoned villages. At times, they would engage in a "lightning" attack on a village, usually at night or at dawn, and disappear to fool the villagers, but then return, quickly re-attacking. Kidnapping and terror were often employed as well as murders, mutilations, village and crop burning, looting, hostage-taking to exact more victims, plundering farms and granaries to feed

their forces during camping season, and castration (to obtain eunuchs), for which Bagirmi was famous. Of that kingdom, Barth (1965:528) wrote: "The horrible custom of castration is, perhaps, in no country of central negroland practiced to such an extent as in Baguirmi." Following these activities, the raiders would return to the *zaribas* to re-group, re-furbish their troops with weapons, and decide whether they had a sufficient number of slaves and other booty such as ivory, wax, pots, swords, and the special throwing knives for which the Sara were renowned. The camps were not just rendez-vous sites but operated also as intelligence-gathering centers for the *mbang* and the raiding merchants where "the most recent news on slaving activities" was traded (Seignobos et al. 1986:35).

From the small state of Dar Kuti, Al-Sanussi's raids were highly successful in the non-Dar Kuti regions of Northern and Eastern Oubangui-Chari and in the southeastern Chad Basin from the 1880s to 1911. Between 1891 and 1902, the sultan exported between 1,500 and 2,000 slaves yearly (Cordell 1985:104, 111, 122). There were instances, however, when the raiders encountered stiff resistance and were forced to turn back. In Bedaya, for example, where resistance was common, Bagirmi *Mbang* Abou Sekkin surprised the Sara in 1884. Sara *Mbang* Mougode ordered Chief Ndolbai to play the drums and assemble the militia, which, surprisingly, succeeded in ambushing the sultan. Subsequently, he was forced to return all the slaves he had captured (See Fortier 1976:71). The trip back home, however, caused much suffering among the chained victims. Many suffered from diseases such as smallpox and meningitis; it is estimated that as many as 30–70 percent of the captives died before reaching their destination (Cordell 1985:122).

Eyewitnesses recounted that captives died by the thousands, and that it was considered a good omen not to lose more than three out of twenty captives *en route* to such destinations as Egypt. One eyewitness, Mohamad Al-Tunisi (Chapelle 1980:208), wrote: "While I have seen the *djelaba* [slave traders] and travellers from Wadai carrying many slaves but lose them from cold weather, others travelling with as many as three hundred slaves had to abandon them *en route* because of deadly heat and cold. On the other hand, I have also seen large slave caravans that did not lose a single slave. It all depends on the will of the All Mighty." Tunisi (1851:296) adds that barbarous killings were often used to scare the survivors: "If a slave, from fatigue or other reasons, determines not to proceed, he sits down and says, *'korongoro,'* that is to say, 'kill me.' He is instantly killed with clubs in the presence of his compani0ons, in order to frighten them, and deter them from imitating his example."

One should not think that slave raids were disorganized enterprises. In Wadai, for example, because of the sultan's power, if the ruler himself did not participate in the raids, he appointed a general to "perform a *ghazwa,* and nearly the whole product goes into the hands of the sultan" (Tunisi 1851:300). In other regions, such as Darfur and Dar Fartyt, as told by Tunisi, anyone willing to conduct a *ghazawa* among those "without belief in God, without knowledge of the Prophet or revelation, without religion or civil law," received a *salatiya,* a type of a royal license to deal in slaves, from the sultan, after providing him with a fine horse, bridled and saddled. Once in possession of the *salatiya,* the leading slave-raider would receive commissions, with collateral, from merchants and other interested individuals, some of whom would request five to six hundred slaves. He would then proceed to divide his men into groups or "squads" of ten or more, with a designated leader, map out the different itineraries, and determine where everyone's

rendezvous would take place. If conditions were accommodating, the raiders would play the drums as they visited the villages, warning the locals of the consequences if they attempted to resist

Thus, as Tunisi (1851:292) continues, "There have been sultans of *ghazawa* who have found themselves at the head of nine or ten thousand people or more." As the licensed leader of the raids proceeded to the rendez-vous site, his entourage resembled the king's court, and he took the title of sultan. Every squad leader would return with his own booty which, "by the grace of God, he has been able to take," while "The master of the *salatieh,* when the excursion has been fortunate, easily acquits all expenses, pays his debts, makes the necessary presents, and has a hundred slaves for himself. Besides this, the horses, the camels, the asses, and all the harness and baggage brought back, remain his property" (*Ibid.:* 294).

On the following pages the role of slaves in the centralized and hierarchical societies of Central Sudan will be discussed. Unlike in the New World in which the enslaved African's work was generally limited to the fields and the household, in Central Sudan, the slave was employed in every capacity imaginable. Eunuchs, for example, were highly prized in the sultans' palaces to guard the harem and perform delicate and confidential tasks. Interestingly, since the seventeenth century, eunuchs "perhaps in order to improve the market position and/or profit margins were so desired that they were even reportedly used to guard Muhammed's tomb in Mecca" (Cordell 1985:53–54). It appears that, in ancient times, slave owners believed a eunuch was not prone to revolt against his master. American psychologist Ernst Rodin once wrote: "The castrated ox will pull his plow" and "human eunuchs, although at times quite scheming enterpreneurs, are not given to physical violence. Our scientific age tends to disregard this wisdom of the past" (See William Tutman 1995:13). On Keira, a sultanate in Sudan, R.S.O'Fahey and J.L.Spaulding (1974:154) wrote:

> One group of slaves whose intimate position within the fashir [the sultan's residence] gave the access to great executive power were the eunuchs, imported from Dar Runga on the southern Dar Fur/Wadai border… From their ranks came the next powerful of the slave bureaucrats, the *abshaykh,* "the father shaykh", *ex officio* governor of the eastern province, dar daali, and controller of the sultan's household of which he took charge during the interregnum between one sultan and another.

In Wadai, a designated slave eunuch took care of the sultan's harem, while many others were employed as porters. The chief of the sultan's personal guard and that of the artillery (consisting of five cannons abandoned by Napoleon in Egypt) were also slaves (Chapelle 1980:207).

Slaves also made good soldiers, as they had no ethnic allegiance, and, in a sense, away from their homes, had nothing to lose and everything to gain if they distinguished themselves on the battlefield. According to Brenner (1973:100), Nachtigal estimated, for example, that Bornu had a standing army of 3,000 royal slaves alone, "armed with rifles, spears, and bows and arrows," and that they, therefore, constituted the foundation of power for the ruler. Indeed, Brenner (1973:101) adds, "They actually assisted in the successive depositions of *shehus* Umar and Abdurrahman." In Bagirmi, slaves were used

extensively in the army, and the most important officers were slaves, while some served in government officials' palaces or worked in the fields, although large plantations seemed not to have existed in the kingdom. Reyna (1990:121) estimates that at least 3,500 slave and free officials were employed by the sultan and his government. He concludes (*Ibid.:* 165):

> Officials used their incomes to feed themselves and their dependents, to secure and maintain weapons, and to purchase sumptuary and other goods required in the performance of official duties. The costs of cavalry weapons and sumptuary goods…were exceedingly high. There is not a single account, from either informants of the literature, of officials investing in any productive enterprise, with the exception of the slave villages.

Among the Fulbe or Fulani, slaves were employed as artisans and as manual field laborers, since their owners, as aristocrats, refused to do any work beside their traditional practice of tending cattle and horses. Heinrich Barth (1965:191) observed of them that "Slavery exists on an immense scale in this country [Adamawa], and there are many private individuals who have more than a thousand slaves… and others living in villages growing corn." Barth adds: …"I have been assured that some of the head slaves of these men have as many as a thousand slaves each under their command, with whom they undertake occasional expeditions for their masters." In her study of slavery in nineteenth century Damagaram (Zinder, Niger), Roberta Ann Dunbar (1977:170) writes: "The employment of slaves as soldiers is an ancient practice in the Central Sudan and elsewhere. In Fulani areas, slave soldiers were frequently the only ones armed with new weapons—muskets and, later, rifles." Interestingly, few revolts by these armed slaves in Central Sudan have been recorded.

To be sure, slaves were the primary commodity of exchange. The needs of the court and those of the various palaces of the nobility, the harem, and a large class of aristocrats who refused to work, made the slave trade and slavery essential to society. This is why the Wadai *akades* (dignitaries) would go south every year to raid in order to secure "the most precious commodity to exchange with Egypt' Tripolitania, Tunisia, and Turkey: the slave" (Chapelle 1980:207). Everywhere in Central Sudan, "for the purpose of the ruling classes, no combination of exportable products would ever adequately replace the slave in terms of ease of acquisition, margin of profit, and utility" (Brenner 1973:116). Some merchants used slave prostitutes along the major roads and towns as a means to get other goods. In the Sudanese Sinnar sultanate, for example, farming and slave ownership made the merchant class wealthy:

> Even the most modest trader owned field hands to cultivate the holdings and girls to carry water and grind grain, while the leading merchants had large slave establishments. The major slaveholders often sent their family slaves to work as prostitutes in towns along the trade routes; the girls were given living quarters, but paid a fixed monthly fee from their earnings to the master. This practice existed also among the nobility but it was

> unknown “in the more traditional and commercially isolated populations in the southern provinces” (O’Fahey and Spaulding 1974:82).

As elsewhere in the region, slaves came from the non-Muslim societies known as the Fur Fartit (Fartyt) through state-controlled *ghazawas*.

One major distinction made between traditional African servility and the slavery of the New World is that in the latter the enslaved person became a chattel-property, *with no rights whatsoever*. In the literature of African slaving, we learn that in Central Africa, the enslaved person was often not treated as property and that he/she was more valued than gold or ivory. Yet, the treatment of slaves in the Central Sudanic states seems not to have been much different from that in the New World. Indeed, just as in the New World, the descendants of a slave were also slaves until and if freed by the master. Likewise, the castration of young males to prevent procreation or stop affairs with indigenous females, particularly married wives of the sultans and the nobility, approaches the cruelty of New World slavery.

Overall, the economic impact of the slave trade and slavery was certainly great in this part of Africa: without it, the slaving states could not function. Indeed, as one scholar comments:

> Slave-raiding…allowed the mobilization of labor on a larger scale than previously possible, accompanied by appropriation of a great part of its product. The small-scale household labor force characteristic of indigenous non-Muslim societies was not eliminated, but it became a component of a multifaced system of forced labor that also included plantation production. The perpetuation of this system depended in part on continued access to firearms, powder, and other long-distance trade goods from the north which could be obtained only in exchange for slaves and ivory (Cordell 1985:79).

As many other scholars have pointed out, unlike in the New World, in Africa, as a general practice, even among Islamic societies, the more complex the society, the more varied the roles played by the servile population, ranging from field work to soldiering, from civil service to the responsibility of “retainers in the compound,” from babysitting to protecting the royal family, from becoming wives of masters to serving as “paddlers for trading canoes and war canoes,” and from envoys to new members of an extended family (Myers and Kopytoff 1977:14). Indeed, as was the case in Sara country, some traditional authorities converted to Islam for practical purposes, most likely to avoid being enslaved, as it seems to have been the case of the *boa* of Korbol (along the Chari river and the Toumak of Gundi, north of Koumra), crowned the *alifa* of Korbol and Gundi (Chapelle 1980:213).

The usefulness of the enslaved individual and the resulting treatment of him/her by the enslavers in order to prolong the tenure of service to the master and the kingdom may have prompted Richard Lander to claim that slaves were well treated in the Muslim society he visited, namely, Sokoto, during the 1830s. On this he wrote:

> The slave, however, in most interior districts, is treated with infinitely greater levity and kindness than among the less civilized natives of the sea coast; and the condition of the slaves of European planters is not to be compared with his, for happiness and comfort. If his character is good, and his honesty unquestioned, the slave of the African is admitted into the house of his master, placed on equality with himself and male children, thrusts his hand into the same bowl of *tuah* as they, shares their confidence, and participates in all his pleasures and amusements (Lander 1967:299).

It is interesting to note that in the New World, the system of slavery was capable of sustaining itself even following the interdiction of further importation of slaves during the early part of the nineteenth century because the slave population was able to reproduce itself. This was not the case in Central Sudan, where capture was a continuous necessity and where most of the captives were female. Unfortunately, reproduction in captivity was minimal in the Central Sudan for reasons still being debated by experts.

One psychotherapist who works exclusively with women, Elizabeth Friar Williams, suggests that enslaved women may have experienced amenorrhea (cessation of menses). This disorder is common in anorexic women, in those who over-exercise, and those who are under extreme emotional and physical stress. Certainly slave women would fit the categories of those who, over-exert physically, are stressed in the extreme, and also are unlikely to have enough nourishment. Further research on the lives and minds of African slave women would be interesting and valuable, especially as compared to those in the New World. While the lives of the latter were very hard and certainly devoid of rights regarding personal privacy and so on, "house" women, undoubtedly, were able to get enough to eat, taking what they needed, as they could. One would suspect that those who were "Mammies" were able to get some of their emotional needs met, too, through the regard of and physical contact with little children in their care.

Claude Meillassoux (1991:110) observes that, in Islamic communities, the woman's qualities "as a laborer and her qualifications for the performance of certain tasks were used deliberately as reproducers only to the advantage of the dominant class." He (*Ibid.:* 112) adds that:

> Since the slave class was reproduced through the plundering of alien societies and through purchase on the market, the procreative function was in the hands of men, whether warriors or merchants; it was 0 they who, by force of arms or payment, procreated the individuals who were to reconstitute the exploited class…he reproductive role of the woman was weakened relative to those functions which were linked to or derived from her slave state.

This reality implies that the Islamic states of Central Sudan would have continued indefinitely the violent capture of slaves since they had not devised, by choice or necessity, the social mechanisms capable of biologically increasing their slave populations.

CONCLUSION

Certainly, for centuries, the whole Central Sudan, including what later became Chad, was in a state of instability even before the founding of the earliest centralized polity, Kanem. Deteriorating environmental conditions, the encounter with and the subsequent clashes of cultures from east and west, north and south, and the differing lifestyles, contingent upon the available but scarce resources to survive, could only encourage conflict. Even as the trans-Saharan trade increased, living conditions did not change much among the people, who, whether in imperial polities, tributary states, or acephalous communities, paid all kinds of taxes to support a parasitic class of aristocrats and government officials who refused to work with their hands. Because the number of non-productive officials seems to have been quite high,[2] as exemplified by Bagirmi, no matter how much work the lower classes did, and no matter how much booty the states accumulated, the end result was a state of perpetual violence and labor depletion leading necessarily to underdevelopment.

Thus, centralized states turned into perennial predators, constantly warring and raiding to get the commodities they did not have or refused to produce. One can thus characterize Central Sudan as a frontier war zone, where the primary role of the state was to wage war and raid the surrounding communities using all means at its disposal: the army, the police, militias, organized raiding, and rarely diplomacy. No one has expressed this better than S.P.Reyna (1990:39), when he says in his study of Bagirmi:

> States…warred to trade and traded to war. War and trade drew the other societies in the east-central Sudan into the coils of the states, forming a regional structure… The states acquired the major commodity exchanged, the slaves, by warring or capturing other peoples… The warfare of the states was an offensive warfare that allowed them to be sellers of products in the trans-Saharan trade.

Had the situation continued a few more decades, the labor resources of the area might have been completely depleted, as the law of diminishing returns would have definitely applied here. The result of consistent pillaging, stealing, and killing was the glorification of warfare and the maintenance of organized violence, most often sanctioned by the state.

Thus, everywhere in the Central Sudanic Sahel, "Raids, police actions against recalcitrant taxpayers, and wars against tributaries or competing states all had to occur for the fields of empire to endure. States warred against returned the favor. Thus predatory accumulation reproduced the Sun King's realm in the field of empire by generating wars without end" (Reyna 1990:166). Although the comment refers to Bagirmi, it literally applies to all states that rose and fell in Central Sudan. It is an established fact that beside territorial conquest as one of the reasons for violence, the major incentive for warring in Central Sudan was the acquisition of slaves. There would have been fewer wars had slavery and the slave trade not been major features of Islamic societies in this part of Africa, which, in the name of Allah, authorized the faithful to enslave those of alien faiths or the idolatrous, as the Muslims called non-Muslims.

It is worth pointing out that Islam played a significant role in the day-to-day conduct of military operations. Soldiers prayed in combat five times a day and attempted to determine through amulets, charm, and prayer who the winner would be, always

believing that Allah would intervene on their behalf, and that death in battle would assure them heaven. The holy men or *marabouts,* of course, encouraged this attitude before and during battle. The campaigns waged during Ramadan were charged with high religious zeal (Fisher 1975:76–77).

The number of slaves taken from the non-Muslim societies is unknown, but it certainly was in the tens and tens of thousands throughout the region, de-populating several communities of the frontier zone. Entire families were at times wiped out or separated. As Tunisi (1851:295) recounts, the master of the *razzia* "seizes on all grown men, the youths, the women, and girls, leaving only the old people and those who do not seem to be in a state to undergo the fatigue of a journey." The suffering the raids left behind was certainly unimaginable. Sadly, societies that were being raided and enslaved were often forced to return the favor to others in order to have captives ready for the raiders and spare their own people and families. The French should not have been puzzled to notice that the Sara themselves, for example, long enslaved by the northerners, had their own slaves. It was simply a practical survival technique.

NOTES

1. The *mbang* was said to have housed as many 150 wives, 1,000 eunuchs, dozens of royal family members, some 100 horsemen, various army officials, several councilors, and an entourage of many other free and slave officials and servants, while generously dispensing gifts to his subjects and appointees. To a lesser degree, a similar situation applied to provincial governors in their attempt to survive politically (Reyna, 1990:106–118).
2. This discussion cannot end without mention of the mysterious Gaoga kingdom. Some scholars claim that Gaoga had become a Coptic Christian kingdom as early as the second century. It has been located at various sites by those who have studied references of it in the Arabic sources, including the writings of Leo Africanus. Barth identified it simply as a Bulala Dynasty at Fitri, Henri Cabou as Kanem, Captain Modat as a kingdom in Darfur, R.Palmer as a Nubian state east of Fitri, with its capital at Chibina, and Pierre Kalck (1972) as an earlier and larger Darfur. Whatever its origins, Gaoga does not seem to have been involved in the slaving activities of the Sahelian states.

Chapter *THREE*
The Army as an Instrument of Organized Violence in Central Sudan

Although much has been written on the motives for warfare, namely, territorial conquest and the exacting of tribute, especially in the form of slaves, among the Central Sudanic states, little detailed analysis is available on the army itself, the major instrument of organized violence, relative to its organization, weaponry, tactics, size, and time in battle. Robin Law's, S.P.Reyna's, H.Fisher's, Virginia Rowland's, J.Smaldone's and D.Cordell's works come closest to satisfying one's curiosity on the subject. It would appear that one reason for this obvious shortcoming is the fact that the nature of the armies in the region was very similar, with very few innovations in military strategy, since the terrain was similar and the weapons and the animals of transport practically the same. What counted in most instances was the number of trained soldiers one could command, the size of and mustering of the cavalry, which required considerable revenue gathering, and the unscrupulous use of terror tactics to scare the enemy.

The following analysis contends that the introduction of the horse and European firearms contributed to an unprecedented degree of centralization, making the Sudanic states formidable "war machines." This occurred only during the last decades of the nineteenth century, when imported non-traditional weapons began to be incorporated into the customary centuries-old war arsenal. The intrusion of stronger European armies in the region halted the process toward even stronger state armies fighting against the "infidels" as well as amongst themselves.

BATTLE FORMATION AND MILITARY ENGAGEMENTS

There were two types of military engagements: (1) actual war against another state of proven sovereignty, one that could defend itself, such as Kanem, Bornu, and Wadai, and, from time to time, smaller kingdoms that were able to put up stiff armed resistance, such as Dar Runga and Dar Kuti (the latter in present Central African Republic); and (2) military raids to punish recalcitrant and often defenseless tributary societies, such as the acephalous Sara, Banda, and others, or to procure slaves through *ghazawas* or raids .on an annual basis. The armies engaged in both activities varied in size, ranging from a few thousand soldiers in Bornu to 15,000 at Bagirmi's zenith, with perhaps 10,000 men in the infantry and 6,000 men in the cavalry of the latter. In its hegemonic period, Wadai is said to have had between 5,000 and 6,000 men in its cavalry alone, while Darfur seems to have had some 10,000 soldiers in its army (See Barth 1965:527, 530, 560).

Most of the soldiers came from the state itself (the core of the empire, to use Reyna's terminology), and fewer from tributary states. Officials who possessed troops were

requested to send them to join the imperial force. Because war was so frequent, troops were in perpetual preparedness for battle. In Bagirmi, the army was relatively large for the size of the country. Yet mobilization could be done very quickly. In most instances, especially when the battle or raid was against a major enemy, such as the *mbang* of Bedaya among the Sara, or a potentially rich tributary state or acephalous society, the sultan himself would lead the assault. Many of the fighting soldiers would also be former captives or slaves who had the trust of the officers as they claimed allegiance to no lineage or ethnic group in the society keeping them in bondage.

Training was, of course, a feature of all state armies, and good soldiering was rewarded with booty, women, slaves, and promotion. Under the circumstances, success in battle was an occasion for big celebrations. A returning victorious army was received with festivities and pomp. Barth witnessed the return to the capital of the Bagirmi sultan from a southern expedition. At the head of the army, entering in procession, was the lieutenant governor, the *kadamange,* who assumed responsibility in the sultan's absence, followed by the *barma,* and then by a man carrying a long spear as a spiritual symbol. Next came the *facha* or commander-in-chief, the second most important authority in the kingdom, followed by the sultan, in yellow burnous "mounted on a great charger," the horse dressed in war regalia and cloth of variegated colors. The sultan was almost invisible because of the cavalry surrounding him and the two umbrellas (one green, one red), covering his head, carried by slaves. Barth (1965:526–527) adds:

> Six slaves, their right arms clad in iron, were fanning him with ostrich feathers attached to long poles, and round about them rode five chieftains, while on his right were to be seen the *gheletma* and other principal men of the country. All about 30 men with burnouses. Behind, followed the war-camel, upon which was mounted the drummer, *kodganga,* near him riding three musicians with horn instruments.

Incidentally, to demonstrate the importance of women, there was also a parade of some forty-five female slaves or concubines of the sultan, mounted on horseback "dressed from top to toe in black native cloth, each having a slave on either side. The procession terminated in a train of eleven camels carrying the luggage" (*Ibid.:* 257). Almost everyone in town came to see the sultan, who also paraded the defeated chiefs. The sultan's wives and concubines could reach and touch any part of their bodies as a sign of great humiliation. It was tradition in Wadai and most likely throughout the region that, unless by accident, no sultan, prince, *ulema, kadi,* or musician should be deliberately killed in battle: normally, they were all set free. In Dar Fertyt, in Sudan, the sultan witnessing war in progress would sit on an ebony stool, born by "relays of four men," and "If defeated, they sit his majesty down and leave him," for, according to custom, "no prince is killed in a *mêlée*" (Tunisi 1851:289).

The best and largest armies would be assembled for the most formidable enemies. These were usually divided into squadrons, contingents, or detachments under senior or junior officers. Decisions on warring or raiding were usually discussed and approved by a war council made up of selected professional soldiers, army officers, political appointees, and the sultan (*mai, kolak,* or *mbang*) himself. Up to the mid-nineteenth century, there were few firearms used in the area, although some had been introduced as early as the

sixteenth century. Thus, normally, lethal weapons consisted of spears, poisoned arrows (as was the practice among the Fulani), daggers, knives, bows, lances, swords, and axes. Interestingly, according to Tunisi (1851:282), the "Muslim blacks" of Sudan refused to use bows and arrows, "but they have companies of archers composed of pagan slaves, who form a redoubtable element in their armies." The arrival of the explorers and the colonial governments following the Berlin Conference (1884–1885) increased the availability of gun-powder, repeating rifles, and even a few cannons, the latter used mainly to frighten the enemy. These new deadly weapons were obtained through treaties or stolen from European expeditionary troops. For example, al Sanussi of Dar Kuti acquired a considerable number of weapons after his massacre in 1891 of Paul Crampel's expedition, which had carried 175 flintlocks, 30,000 cartridges, some 60,000 percussion caps, hundreds of kilograms of powder, and a small *caché* of revolvers (Cordell 1985:611).

Rabah revolutionized warfare in Central Sudan through an increase in the number of superior rifles in the region, their acquisition being one of his top priorities. He used these weapons so effectively that he was known as the "Master of Fighting," the "Bearer of War," and people would say: "Rabih [sic] came, the bullets fell" (Cordell 1985:56). Furthermore, Rabah introduced the use of offensive warfare even to capture Muslim co-religionists, whom he treated like other captives, as slaves. His strategy was to put together detachments of about 125 men from different ethnic groups (mainly Banda, Kresh, Sara, Marba, Tombago, and Ndi), each headed by a banner commander. The Sara constituted the core of his fighting force. Cordell (1985:58) points out that when a census of his army of 3,148 men was made by the authorities in Fort-Lamy in 1911, 952 were Sara, 307 Banda, 21 Kresh, and 1868 unspecified others.

Given their high cost, helmets and metal armor were rare, whereas horses, the most prized possession after the slave, provided the greatest mobility to the army. This is why slave raiding and horse trading, whenever the sultans could enforce their will, remained a state business (Brunache 1894:218). As a result, one of the best gifts a noble could receive from the sultan was a horse. Camels, which arrived in Central Africa following the horse, were used only to transport war materiel and food provisions on long distance campaigns. They were essential for transportation across the desert because of their endurance, but not for combat. (Incidentally, one of the earliest mentions of the camel in Kanem legends reveals that a camel daily carried meals to the *mai,* who people did not think ate food like his fellow mortals. Anyone who saw the animal pass by would be instantly killed by the guards.)

In the *mêlée* of close combat with crude weapons, being wounded was more common than being killed, but butchering the enemy to punish him and make sure he would not dare disobey the emperor's or suzerain's orders was a common tactic, while burning entire villages and farms was another means, frequently employed by Bornu following the reign of Idris Alooma, who used musketeers and cavalry men trained by the Turks. Alooma is remembered for having introduced "fixed military camps (with walls); permanent sieges and 'scorched earth' tactics, where soldiers burned everything in their path; armored horses and riders; and the use of the Berber camelry, Kotoko boatmen, and iron-helmeted musketeers" (Collier 1990:8). Alooma seems to have broken away from traditional tactics of purely seasonal, itinerant raiding attacks by establishing, on a permanent basis, stockades, fixed posts, and sieging, rendering escape for the enemy

difficult, and making war coincide with the ripening of dates, "specifically to destroy the fruit before the harvest" and interrupt the enemy's agricultural activities (Fisher 1975:75–76).

According to contemporary reports, Bornu's war tactics were so devastating that, at times, the people were forced to burn their own houses to prevent the enemy from enjoying this sad activity. Ahmed Ibn Fartua (1970:1) tells of one of Alooma's twelve campaigns against his enemies, especially at Bikadwa town: "The Muslims assembled and went in search of the houses of the enemy so as to convert into houses for the Muslims as a protection against the eyes of men, and the wind, and the heat of the sun… The enemy began burning their houses with their own hands from that time to forestall the Muslims burning them." Depending on the availability of resources, these tactics and the use of some armor spread in Central Sudan. Surprise attacks and repeated charges were widespread in the region, though expeditions lasted sometimes not just days, but months, as was the case of the Bagirmi sultan's wars against the Sarua, the Miltu, the Bua, the Ndam, the Niellim, the Tumuk, the Gabri, and the Sara.

As noted in the preceding chapter, slave raiding parties would arrive in the south during the dry season between November and March and, when the enterprises were difficult, they might stay as long as five months foraging the countryside. In most states, wars and raids were done on an annual basis, and for some sultans, the number of wars waged and raids carried out were three times their numbers of years in office. In Darfur, for example, Sultan Muhammad al-Husayn is said to have launched eighteen military campaigns between 1840 and 1856 against the nomadic Arabs in the southeastern Fur highlands of Rizaygat (Cordell 1985:18). Joda Sabun of Wadai launched eight major expeditions just against the non-Muslim societies in the south, while Rabah virtually never ceased warfare from 1886 to 1900. Interestingly, Kanem is said to have waged a hundred-year war (1460–1564) against the Bulala (Reyna 1990:30). In this context, any sultan who did not wage war was perceived to be incompetent and unfit to rule. It was expected that a respected sultan would die in battle rather than at home.

THE ROLE OF HORSES, CAMELS, AND FIREARMS

Any discussion of warfare in pre-colonial Central Sudan leads to consideration of the impact of firearms, the role of the camel and the horse, and innovation in war tactics. To begin with, one must recognize the significance of the introduction of metals in the region, particularly iron, that revolutionized, to a certain degree, the weapons of destruction, namely, the bow and the arrow. We know that by the sixth century B.C., Meroe had become an important iron smelting center, spreading this skill, through horsemen and traders, to Ethiopia and then to Chad by the first century of the Christian era.

In Central Sudan, copper and bronze had not been used extensively, but the arrival of iron provided better and stronger weapons and tools for warfare and agricultural purposes. Unfortunately, unlike in Asia and the Middle East, the use of the wheel, which could have assisted in chariot transport, higher mobility, and irrigation schemes, never took hold south of the Sahara (Goody 1971:26). There are reports, however, that prior to the Arab Islamic invasions of the seventh and eighth centuries, as far back as the Roman

times, chariots (introduced in Egypt by the Hyksos between 1720 and 1500 B.C.) may have crossed the Sahara to Central Sudan. Although the evidence is still scanty, chariots are portrayed on rock paintings and engravings in the Sahara Desert. The Garamantes and the Pharusii may have used them in their trade with Carthage and Rome in ivory, slaves, and carbuncles (semi-precious red stones) from Fezzan and Fort Polignac in the north, via Tassil des Ajjers, Hoggar and Ti-m-Missao to Es-Souqin Adrar des Iforas (Law 1967:182–200).

It is appropriate at this juncture to discuss briefly the nature of weaponry. Experts classify weapons into four categories: firearms (projectiles), shock weapons, weapons of mobility, and weapons of protection. Perhaps a fifth category, frequently used in Central Sudan, could be called psychological weapons. Firearms, which use gun powder, are defined as "devices for getting at a distant enemy while at the same time actually or wishfully remaining safe from his striking power" (Turney-High 1971:10). Included among firearms are the bow and the spears, javelins, blowguns, slings, lances, grenades, bombs, and artillery, often used by infantry. In essence, firearms are projectiles.

Weapons of shock are, instead, "crushers and piercers which are held in the hand of the assailant," and they comprise war clubs, swords, pikes, bayonets, spears, and lances (which are also firearms). The most important mobility weapon until the invention of moving vehicles was the horse. The horse has enabled "the fighting man to get to the enemy, get around him, or get away from him faster than he could accomplish these ends with his own legs" (Turney-High 1971:12–15). Protection and defensive armor of many varieties has been used for centuries and it has included suits of quilting, linked mail, trees, diverse types of shields, fortresses, boulders, palisades, river streams, traps, and trenches. Types of psychological warfare weapons, widely used by Muslims in Central Sudan and designed to frighten the enemy, boost the fighters' morale, or make the enemy's weapons ineffective, included charms worn around the neck or legs, frightening war sounds, drums, prayers, beads, and a book of the Koran.

On psychological warfare, Christopher Spring (1993:39–40) relates that "The widespread use of both offensive and defensive charms is well documented in Sudanic Africa… Perhaps the commonest devices worn for protection were sayings from the Koran which were sewn up in small leather pouches and worn around the neck and headgear." There was "a whole range of talismatic objects…carried by soldiers against particular weapons or poison." The problem with psychological weapons, however, is that, for them to achieve maximum efficiency, both the defender and the enemy must believe in their hidden power.

The iron-wood bow and the arrow continued to be the common weapon for hunting and warfare among acephalous societies in Central Sudan and in most of the continent, and this was perpetuated by the lack of developed skills in iron-working, The effectiveness of the bow and arrow consists primarily in the distance the arrow is able to travel, its velocity, and its weight or the damage it can inflict (Pope 1974:3). As experts note, because bows and arrows are easy to make, anyone can have them. They are, in a sense, "democratic instruments" of force with profound political implications: "With the technologies of the bow and the stone-tipped arrow, any kind of centralization is almost impossible" (Goody 1971:28, 46). In Central Sudan, the introduction of metals seems to have contributed significantly to the emergence of states. Because metals were not as available as wood, for example, they had to be imported in long-distance trade

transactions, and were therefore unevenly distributed. As a result, it was more efficient to control them centrally. Furthermore, the technology as well as the resulting weapons from metals could be supervised, thus assisting in the formation of states.

What do we know about the horse in Central Sudan? The horse was the most precious commodity following the slave, and at times, the two were interchangeable:

> The exchange of horses and slaves therefore tended to become…a 'circular process': horses were purchased with slaves, and could then be used in military operations which yielded further slaves and further purchases of horses. Trade and war fed upon each other in a self-sustaining process which reinforced the domination of the warrior aristocracies—producing what Smaldone has christened the 'war complex of the Western Sudan' (Law 1980:63).

Although opinions differ, reports on the regular use of horses in Central Sudan go as far back as the ninth century, when it evolved around Lake Chad and spread in its vicinity, particularly KanemBornu. Law (1980:8–9, 14, 28–29) contends that there is no conclusive evidence about the precise time when imported horses from North Africa reached either Central Sudan or West Africa. On this, UNESCO's *General History of Africa* notes that "there were known to be horses in the Sahara during the second half of the second millennium and the first centuries of the last millennium before the Christian era. However, they followed populations movements, the Barbary horse also being found in the Mahgrib and the Dongola in the south-east" (Lange 1992:70). Apparently, *Mai* Dunama Ibn Umar (1422–1424) died from a horse accident, and Leo Africanus noted, perhaps with much exaggeration, that *Mai* Idris Katagarmade of Bornu had 3,000 horses in his possession. According to the *Diwan,* on the other hand, Sultan Dunama b. Ume is said to have had 100,000 horses (Law 1980:8).

Large horses imported from North Africa across the Sahara Desert and later perhaps locally bred may have spread from Kanem to Wadai, Bagirmi, and other states in Chad, so that by the eighteenth century horses were common everywhere in the region except the tsetse-infected forest areas of the south. Bagirmi did, at one point, breed a relatively large number of small horses, male ponies, prior to European arrival. Thereafter, the concentration of large numbers of livestock among the Arabs and Fulani alone contributed to a sharp decline in widespread horse breeding and usage in the sultanate (Seignobos et al. 1986:33). The Sara, on the other hand, may also have bred some types of ponies. We learn that during the first decades of the colonial period, as the Sara from Moyen Logone and Tandjile migrated to the mines of Jos, Nigeria, many of them "returned home bringing with them Yetseram ponies which they crossbred with Logone ponies" (Seignobos 1988:286).

Recent evidence seems to indicate also that smaller but extremely resilient horses or ponies were bred in Darfur, in Bornu, and even in Bagirmi and Wadai and that after the sixteenth century, the coveted larger horses used in warfare, were being raised locally (Fisher 1977:310–311 and Law 1980:28–29). Tunisi maintained that in Darfur and vicinity, the Dongola and the Egyptian breeds were among the most sought-after horses. The Dongola type had long legs, brilliant coats, and were black in color, whereas the Egyptian breed, bay in color and easier to train for war, was graceful and better

proportioned. It was of medium height, "with moderately long legs, slim and short barrels, broad buttocks, and well-developed chest" (Tunisi 1851:284).

Of all breeds, however, at least in Darfur, the Bedouin (Bedawin) or the Arabian horse was the most desirable transport animal, and sometimes a single Arabian horse was worth one hundred cows. Not only was this horse breed excellent in battle but it was also extremely perceptive: "The horse, accustomed to attacks, to fights, to forays, and incursions of every kind, hears the slightest nose, neighs and stamps on the ground to wake its master" (Tunisi 1851:184–185). The locally bred horses, or the Forian horses, hard to handle, according to Tunisi (1851:284), were "abominable hacks, with round bellied [sic] and savage character…" but "very hard and sturdy, and capable of supporting immense fatigue." In fact, Tunisi (1851:286) adds that in Darfur and Wadai "there are sometimes horses worthy of emulating the Arab for their swiftness and vigour." Wild horses are also reported to have existed in Central Sudan prior to the introduction of the larger imported horses.

Cavalry came to dominate Central Sudan warfare. This was particularly so following the introduction of the saddle (common during the tenth century A.D.), the toe—and the foot-stirrup (the former having originated in India, where it was common in the postIslamic era, and the latter being an invention of the Chinese ca. the fifth century A.D.), the bridle, and the bit by the sixteenth century. On this Law (1980:122) notes that "Before the introduction of saddles and stirrups, therefore, cavalry were of doubtful value in combat at close quarters with thrusting spears and swords, and were most effectively used in highly mobile harrying tactics, fighting at long range with missile weapons such as bows and arrows and javelins." These innovations in cavalry allowed the soldier to thrust and throw his deadly weapons—bows, arrows, javelins, and particularly the spear—without being thrown off the back of the horse by the force of the movement. The stirrup, for example, "enabled the horseman to gain greater control on horseback so that he could wield a sword or charge his enemy with the lance at rest, while mounted. This kind of horse warfare led in turn to further developments in the sphere of defense, especially the increased use of heavy armor" (Goody 1971:34–35).

Before the adoption of the saddle in West and Central Sudan, one could say, using our modern standards, that horses were cruelly handled. It is reported that horse riders, "in order to give themselves a firmer seat, as before the raid, they cut their horses' backs until the blood flowed, and thus cemented themselves on" (Fisher 1977:312). However, Fisher's interpretation is disputed by Robin Law, who writes that "a more plausible interpretation offered in other accounts of the practice is that it was designed to produce a callous weal, presumably to protect the horse's spine…" and that an incision on the backs of ponies and the opening out of the skin were done to cause "the flesh to swell and form a pad, which ultimately becomes callous and not for the rider to be glued on horseback" (Law 1980:94). As if in rebuttal, Christopher Spring (1993:34) emphatically notes that "Unlikely as it may seem, this practice [of cutting the horse's back and sitting astride the blood] is so well documented as to put its veracity beyond doubt, though it may well have a significance beyond the purely functional intention attributed to it by most commentators." The sword was used in close quarter cavalry combats, particularly if the mounted horseman lost or broke his spear.

With time, horse-mounted fighters were provided with special armor, such as quilted cloth and chain mail, and sometimes with metal armor. However, chain mail remained

cumbersome, since it could weigh as much as 30 pounds (Law 1980:130). The use of uniforms in battle may have been Rabah's innovation or his popularization. Tunisi (1851:280) says of the Darfur that "On the eve of a battle, each party chooses some sign by which the soldiers are to be distinguished; as, for example, a band of bark round the right wrist. In the absence of this precaution, as soon as the *mêlée* begins, it would be impossible to know friends from enemies, for there are no uniforms and no distinction of colour."

Experts disagree on the degree of the use and effectiveness of the horse in warfare. They agree, however, that the major advantage offered by the horse was its mobility and its rider's ability to inflict the first attack shock on the enemy, flank the opponent on all sides, and protect the infantry, as mounted men could throw their spears above the heads of the infantry ahead of them. As Law observes (*Ibid:* 136), "In some instances, the military value of cavalry seems to have been less in its use in battle, indirectly attacking the enemy army, than in its mobility on the march, which made it possible to launch lightning raids over long distances without the danger of meeting large forces of enemy troops." It should be noted that a horse was expensive; the soldier himself had to feed it; it could be easily trapped by the enemy in battle; it could only function in proper terrain; and, when scared, such as by the sight of a camel, a horse could throw the rider off. Furthermore, a horse was highly vulnerable to disease, especially trypanosomiasis, and to heat, and the task of training the animal was arduous. Worst of all, the average lifespan of a horse in Central Sudan during the nineteenth century was two years. As Fisher (1975:73) notes, however, "It was the exhaustion of horses, together with their need for water, which perhaps more than any other single factor determined the range of operations."

Experts agree that in Central Sudan, just as in Europe, the cavalry lost some of its usefulness in battle following the introduction of firearms, more specifically during the latter part of the nineteenth century (1860s on), and were both eliminated by the colonial conquest. They also agree that the cavalry was extremely useful in the slave raids in Southern Chad. Among the Fulani of the Bida Emirate who attacked the non-Muslim villages of Nupe, for example, "The horsemen moved ahead *en masse,* rushed the village with a wild yell, the inhabitants generally surrendering. The foremen… then enter, and tie up the number of slaves they require, and loot the place" (Mockler-Ferryman 1982:169–170). In contrast to Europe, in the Sudan, Goody (1971:48) remarks, "The cavalry did not employ the heavy lance and sword…; it had light armor, mail or quilted, and it used the stabbing spear and lighter swords; often the horse was just a means of transport to war rather than in war, though it was also used in raids to charge down the infantry of the acephalous people," such as the Sara of Chad.

Just as in Europe, the horse was monopolized by the aristocracy and the wealthy in Bornu, Bagirmi, and Wadai. To gain power, sultans began providing horses to slave soldiers and the officer corps under their direct control, thus undermining the power of the country's nobility, which owned its own cavalry. Indeed, "possession of the horse virtually entailed military obligation," and, until the nineteenth century, the horse contributed greatly as a means of conquest and acquisition of booty. Combined with firearms, this animal assisted state societies to become more centralized and more bureaucratic (Goody 1971:36 and Smaldone 1972:598).

A discussion of the cavalry in warfare leads one to examine the role and impact of firearms in Chad and vicinity. Despite the fact that firearms were known in Central Sudan as early as the sixteenth century and up to the latter part of the nineteenth century, Fisher has described their impact on warfare as minimal. Alooma of Bornu seems to have been the first and the greatest user of muskets, which he may have secured from Turkey through Tripoli. Firearm use seems to have spread from here to other areas of Central Sudan (Martin 1969:27). Kano, for example, was said to have had a considerable number of guns by 1425, Darfur by 1682, Wadai under Sultan Abdul Karim Sabun in the early nineteenth century, and Bagirmi by 1806 (Fisher and Rowland 1971:218–219). The pre-nineteenth century use of firearms in the Central Sudan, however, especially in Bornu, was not sustained, and actually seems to have declined by the eighteenth century (Fisher 1975:79–79).

Several reasons appear to account for the decrease in the use of firearms: the high cost of guns and ammunition; the long distance to bring them from North Africa or other parts of the continent to Central Sudan; the fact that Africans had been unable to manufacture a significant number of guns and gunpowder on their own; the inferiority of the locally produced firearms compared to those coming from abroad; the need for foreign technicians to train armed soldiers and repair damaged weapons; and the frequent accidents associated with their use, some of which even killed several sultans, as happened to Shaykh Hasan in 1664 (or 1665) when "his musket exploded" (Fisher 1975:71–72 and Law 1980:140–141). Of significance, also, was the inability of Sudanic Africans to equip the cavalry with firearms properly, because with armor and heavy guns, firearms could become more of an impediment in battle than an advantage over an enemy, even though he might still be using spears, arrows, and swords.

In fact, one French military officer, resident at Dar Kuti, commented that the Wadaians were more dangerous with their traditional weapons than with guns, because "Before they were able to re-load their firearms, their opponents had time to attack and kill them in great numbers" (Fisher and Rowland 1971:230). The same officer noted that the Wadaian army would rather deploy the cavalry for the initial attack and use firearms only for defense purposes, as the last resort, a tactic that changed in the last pre-colonial years. Wadaian soldiers, he added, preferred to march on foot and in order and "employ firearms and appear not to like hand-to-hand fighting. On the defensive, they adopt the same tactic as in attack, defending the terrain step by step, retiring from shelter to shelter" (Fisher and Rowland 1971:230).

As a result, more often than not, the use of firearms was reserved for slave soldiers and their officers, as such weapons were seen as "un-gentleman-like." Ironically, "…there is evidence that Muslims preferred to be shot than to be beheaded, because they expected that the Prophet would draw them safely from the narrow bridge to heaven by the hair or beard" (Fisher and Rowland 1971:231). Experts also note that defeated commoners and acephalous populations opposed the presence of the horse, which they saw as the nobility's and the sultans' instrument of their domination (Goody 1971:72). The same fate befell the artillery which reached most of Central Sudan before 1800. Cannons were rarely used except to scare the enemy and lift the mood during celebrations. Under the circumstances, firearms are said to have been more popular at celebrations and for slave-raiding and for souvenirs than for battle.

Chapters One and Two showed the relationship that might exist between war and state formation. Interestingly, however, there are related debates still raging regarding the overall impact of firearms on the army and the army on the state, once the latter emerges in Central Sudan. Nevertheless, UNESCO's influential *General History of Africa* (1992:70) emphatically attempts to establish that "As far as the Sudan is concerned, the role of the army was decisive in the formation of states like those in Kanem or Ghana." Whereas Fisher and Rowland, supported by Law, argue that the impact of the army and the firearms associated with it was actually insignificant, Smaldone holds the view that, from the 1860s to the arrival of the Europeans (in Chad's case, the French), firearms did have a dual impact: changing war tactics and strengthening the state's power over its subjects. Smaldone tries to prove, first, that the number of guns available in Central Africa increased dramatically during the late nineteenth century, from 4,000 in Wadai during the 1870s, for example, to 10,000 by 1910 (Smaldone 1972:593–594), and second, that their use changed tactics in the region.

The stepped-up use of firearms in Central Sudan, according to Smaldone, reversed the role of the cavalry in the battlefield and changed the traditional tripartite formation of battle. Traditionally, he says (and this is disputed by Law), the common battle formation was cavalry, infantry, and reserve-rear guard "mustered in that order from front to rear." Nineteenth century changes, however, allowed detachments of supporting units to move from the center of the formation to the vanguard "where they would be more effective in opening battle with volleys of fire at long range" (Smaldone 1972:595). Thus the formation order was reversed to infantry, cavalry and reserve, "in a tactical innovation designed to take maximum use of the infantry equipped with firearms." Smaldone (*Ibid.*: 595) also notes that, for tactical reasons, the new formation required a close coordination between the horsemen and the various specialized units:

> Musketeers on foot fought in close formation to ensure maximum effectiveness of their volleys and security for themselves, while depending also on a protective shield of mobile cavalry and the fire support archers. These infantrymen advanced toward the enemy in rows or lines, firing simultaneously. If there were a sufficient number of gunmen to permit the formation of several ranks, each would alternate firing and re-loading in turn, thereby providing a continuous volume of fire, and affording protection to units re-loading in the rear. In any case, during the one to three minutes re-loading time, the gunmen were more vulnerable to enemy fire or attack and required the support of the cavalry and other infantry units.

Smaldone contends that these new tactics (which Law considers traditional in the region) resolved the contradiction between the use of gunmen and the maintenance, integration, and deployment of an effective cavalry—the traditional "shock force."

Smaldone's position appears sound and it seems to be corroborated by French officers in Chad who noted that during battles the Wadaians were, for the first time, using a tactic that involved encircling the enemy with their cavalry, something rarely seen before. The result combined the effective use of cavalry and firearms. Establishing a standing army of slaves and an officer corps loyal to the center favored centralization: "By creating

independent military forces loyal to themselves, the rulers were able to reduce their reliance upon feudal contingents and to enlarge the scope of royal power and authority. The horse was the instrument of the feudal nobility, the gun [which was controllable], the instrument of the autocratic ruler" (Smaldone 1972:602–607). Smaldone stresses the point that this development was overlooked by historians as the colonial period quickly terminated and obscured the military changes the region seems to have been undergoing. If Smaldone's thesis is correct, Central Sudan had, by the turn of the century, turned into a region controlled by states that had become more centralized "war machines."

If indeed, the state had now a professional army with which it could easily conquer weaker states and acephalous communities, the rate of deaths must have achieved its zenith in Central Sudan just prior to the European arrival. Keith F.Otterbein discovered in his study of the evolution of Zulu warfare that the rate of casualties increased, progressively, from dueling battles to battles of subjugation and to battles of conquest. Overall, however, the number of battles tended to decrease when the state reached a stage when it simply engaged in long-range campaigns in order to keep the army busy. Kanem, Bagirmi, and Wadai, in particular, simultaneously engaged both in long-range campaigns and in subjugation wars. Otterbein (1994:31) writes: "The introduction of shock weapons and enveloping tactics [exactly the way the Central Sudanic states were evolving] combined with new reasons for war—namely conquest, rather than subjugation, of neighboring peoples—greatly accelerated casualty rates." In Central Sudan, Otterbein's proposition that simple plundering results in lower casualties could have been true only if slave raids had not always been an intrinsic violent element of the centralized states in their subjugation of the nonMuslim communities. The introduction of firearms and the seemingly new warfare tactics might have been expected to increase the level of violence among the indigenous peoples of the region, but colonial domination obviously precluded this.

As a way of underscoring its contribution to the increase in firearms and religious zeal in Central Sudan, a few comments must be made about the Sanussiya Order or *tariq,* an orthodox sufi (mystic) brotherhood founded by Algerian Muhamad el-Sanussiya in 1835. The Order was introduced via Kufra, Libya, mainly by Awlad Sulayman Arabs (Person 1985:255), to Tibesti and Borkou around 1899. It established its headquarters at Gouro among the Tubu and several populations in Kanem and Bornu, eventually exerting influence upon the decisions of the sultans of Bagirmi, Wadai (in particular), and in Bahr el-Ghazal in Sudan proper. The Sanussiya Brotherhood maintained a series of theocratic lodges. These were self-sufficient in theory, though in practice they exacted forced tribute. from the neighboring non-believers in trade goods such as slaves and ivory. Lodges were exempt from taxation in the areas where the Sanussiya settled (Ciammichella 1987:18). In addition, the Sanussiya lodges were extremely centralized (Brett 1973:xxii) and became influential in the areas in which they operated—particularly, as just noted, among the Tubu and the Kanembu. Many brothers became advisors to sultans and warriors and participated actively in war plans against enemies such as the Europeans. Jean Chapelle characterized the Sanussiya Order as a warrior society, and evidence shows that it was a major importer and provider of firearms to the Muslim Central Sudanic states (Kanem, Bornu, and Wadai), as it maintained its own arsenals of guns, ammunition, and cannons, repair shops for firearms, and warehouses for the manufacture of gunpowder (Fisher and Rowland 1971:223).

The Sanussiya opposed not only the "white devils" (i.e., the French) but Rabah and his secularizing policies as well. Thus they were a nightmare for both Rabah and French administrators and the military in Chad from the late 1890s until the 1920s (EvansPritchard 1949:1–2 and 6–7). Although French colonial literature abounds in negative images of the Sanussiya, the brotherhood is reputed to have brought educational and religious benefits to Chad, and made the route between Kufra and Cyrenaica one of the most important trans-Saharan routes commercially and culturally. This accounted for a close link between the rulers of Wadai and the Order. Similarly, it fostered agricultural and commercial endeavors wherever it established itself (Clark 1982:161). Overall, however, experts note that the Sanussiya did not contribute much to the spread of Islam in the Wadaian sultanate, as it avoided contact with non-Muslim societies.

CONCLUSION

What was then the impact of the army, as it attempted to incorporate firearms and integrate them with armored cavalry in this part of Africa? There are several points of congruence and agreement in the opposing arguments proposed by contending scholars concerning the political and military evolution in Central Sudan during the centuries preceding the colonial conquest. It is clear, for example, that the use of the cavalry remained extensive in the region, as it had since the sixteenth century. However, the horse lost some of its usefulness in the post-1860 period as firearms became more available and were more effectively deployed. The horse's natural advantage and usefulness, stemming mainly from its use as a shock force against enemy troops, had always been offset by the costs related to its health and maintenance. In addition, because it was associated with the nobility and theocratic warrior rulers and their slaving activities, the horse remained a symbol of oppression *par excellence* among virtually all non-Muslim populations in Central Sudan.

It also appears that, for the first time, during the late nineteenth century, all surviving Islamic Central Sudanic states developed more centralized standing armies under the direct control of the sultan, that relied less on military levies from the country gentry. One can also infer from the evidence available that the power of the state grew and a larger state bureaucracy—an enlarged and more efficient army being a proxy indicator—was instituted during the last decades of the pre-colonial era. It seems reasonable to attribute this development to the accumulation of firearms by the sultans and the accelerated and effective deployment of the new weapons by their (often) slave generals in the battlefield and elsewhere in the fields of empire. Indeed, analogically, the evolution of the European state establishes beyond a doubt the fact that military power begets political and state power.

In Central Sudan, however, changes in military affairs did not obviate the deadly and.frequent use of the army in the region. As a result, one has to agree with those scholars who posit that the state became a "war machine" whose aggressiveness and lethal impact were only curtailed at first and then eliminated completely by the colonial powers. The most immediate and greatest losers in the process were Rabah's incipient empire and the Wadai sultanate, both poised to expand their hegemony in the region on an unprecedented scale. The greatest winners, at least for a brief moment before the ugly

side of colonialism manifested itself, were the vassal states and the southern acephalous communities, which the new armies, employing new tactics and deploying more efficient troops, intended and almost succeeded to subjugate.

In this context, it seems fair to conclude that had the sultanates been able to manufacture large quantities of weapons and had they had more time to perfect their military strategies and war tactics, the carnage would have been greater and the domain of their power might have expanded perhaps as far down as Zaire. Such conditions would have presented greater obstacles to European conquest and pacification, particularly in Northern Chad. Fortunately for the French and unfortunately for the sultanates, as the following chapter attempts to demonstrate, the opposite was the case. For the acephalous southern populations, what at first appeared to augur the end of their likely domination and captivity under the encroachment of the northern Sahelian states, with time the arrival of the French replaced one form of subjugation with another, one that availed itself of the modern instruments of violence and social control.

Chapter *FOUR*
The Role of Violence During the Colonial Era

This chapter proposes that French colonialism in Chad, as elsewhere in Africa, was intrinsically violent, enlisting the army, the police, and all other available means of coercion to impose control and elicit conformity. As a result it created, particularly in the south, conditions of permanent violence such as once existed in pre-colonial Central Sudan. Although the south initially showed less resistance to colonial intrusion, ultimately it was the southerners who suffered most under French colonial rule. Southern traditions were essentially shattered, and a pattern of murders, assassinations, and rejection of authority developed, accompanied by unprecedented migration and lawlessness, as well as desire for heightened revenge among southerners against their northern fellow colonial subjects.

Given Chad's enormous environmental, logistic, and military problems, the mystery is why the French ever bothered to claim the territory as theirs. To understand French motives, one must look back to the period of the scramble for Africa. Fourteen years before the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885, the French were defeated by the Germans, their emperor captured, and the possibility of fighting back and winning a war against a unified Germany was remote. As problematic as France's international position, so was its domestic situation. As a result of the defeat, the French people became extremely nationalistic and *révanchiste* and wished to see their government do something to redress the great humiliation of 1870. As a frenzy for colonial territories overseas spread across most of Europe, Jules Ferry, the Premier of France (1880–1881 and 1883–1885), and other like-minded politicians began to assuage French humiliation through the acquisition of colonial territories. Additionally, many circles in Germany, Belgium, Britain, and France chorused for government to find settlement places overseas.

France took desert lands, giving little consideration to the resources they would offer: Chad, Central African Republic, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Burkina Faso. Britain, following the interests of its business community, preferred East Africa (although the British took much in West Africa as well), which seemed potentially richer and more able to safeguard the strategic links with India (Robinson and Gallagher 1961). Overall, it appears that three main factors explain France's renewed interest in a colonial empire in Africa: nationalistic sentiments, heightened by the defeat by the Prussians in 1870; demand of the business community for raw materials and markets to feed the industrial revolution; and strategy for the military domination of North-Central Sudan. Chad is, after all, located in the very heart of Africa, allowing a link between east and west and between the Muslim north (particularly Algeria, for long the pearl of France in Africa), and Central Africa.

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French military strategists believed that the conquest of Chad would also assure the French access to and perhaps control of Lake Chad and its surroundings, an area that French troops would have to cross in their military campaigns in the region (Gatta 1985:30). In addition, especially in the aftermath of the Fashoda incident of 1898, which prevented Jean Baptiste Marchand from securing for France part of the Nile, the French were racing against time to ensure that the British and the Germans would not push them out of Central Africa. Therefore, Chad, no matter how poor, was viewed by the French as integral to their plan to exert influence in North-Central Africa. This explains why Chad became part of French Equatorial Africa along with the Congo (Moyen), the Central African Republic (former Oubangui-Chari), and Gabon, to which East Cameroon was added after World War I. Once the conquest had been completed, however, the French virtually ignored the territory, making it the Cinderella of their empire. Until the 1930s, they left it to military administrators and to adventurous colonialists, many of whom were not qualified to serve in any colonial civil service. The governorgeneral of French Equatorial Africa, headquartered in Brazzaville, passed his orders to the lieutenant-governor (who was the actual governor of the colony), and he, in turn, supervised the various white administrators called the *commandants de cercle* posted throughout the colony. A *commandant de cercle* controlled the canton chiefs, and under him were the village chiefs.

In their attempt to subjugate the territory, the French faced a greater challenge from the north than from the south because of the stronger political and military organization of the northern sultanates. Following the 1892 Casemir Maistre Mission through Northern Oubangui-Chari and Southern Chad, which secured several treaties with the Africans, including the Chiefdoms of Lai and Kello, the French found it easy to subdue such acephalous societies as the Sara, most of whom saw the newcomers as a lesser threat than their northern neighbors who had been raiding and enslaving them for centuries. Indeed, the expedition's memoirs portray the Sara as more curious to know and assist the French than to fight them. Paul Crampel, to counteract Belgian expansionism in the region, initiated his travels in 1887, and arrived in Chad the following year. He was massacred by al Sanussi of Dar Kuti in 1891. Paul Brunache, who retraced, in 1890, the path followed earlier by the Crampel Mission in Southern Chad, speaks of a welcome in Southern Chad, particularly among the Sara. However, he described the Dai Sara as naturally very bellicose and of bad faith (Brunache 1894:218, 238).

On August 15, 1899, the French army founded Fort-Archambault, now Sarh, which became the strategic *entrepôt* and capital of the Moyen-Chari Prefecture. By 1911, they had also established permanent posts at Moissala and Bediondo, and, by 1917, Koumra had become an important administrative center. In 1890, the *mbangs* of Mandja-Tezze, along the Chari River, and Lai, as well as Tupuri authorities (who ended up ceding to the French the lands stretching from the Logone river to the Adamawa plateau), reluctantly "signed" treaties with Maistre, Brunache, and other explorers putting themselves under French protection. Yet easy access to the south did not mean that the people there offered no resistance to the French. At Bedaya, the French found a Sara *mbang* who refused to accept their authority. The chief sent gifts but refused to respond to their summons to appear at their future headquarters at Ngodere. Ultimately the French tracked him down

near a river in Mayngara. According to available sources, they killed him on March 3, 1901 (one source gives the year as 1905) along with his three bodyguards, Santa, Ngekodmoussidi, and Nguenangimbaye, an episode that many elders still remembered in 1974. To prevent a funeral that could cause a rebellion, the French cut the chief's head off, brought it to the village to exhibit it, and dumped the rest of the body into the river (just as they had done with Rabah's corpse in 1900). He was replaced by his most accommodating brother.

Subsequently, the French asserted their authority in the neighboring areas against several other recalcitrant Sara authorities. These, whom the village elders in 1974 were still able to name, were: Chiefs Ngakoundou Guirdi of Balimba, Djanta of Dobo, Dogourenoudji of Mouroungoulaye, and the *mbangs* of Ma and Mangara (Azevedo 1974). Interestingly, unlike the north, the south offered more resistance to colonial policies and rule than to the actual act of colonial occupation. The reason was simple: the French applied their harsh colonial policies unevenly in Chad, particularly following the conquest of the north during the 1920s, leaving most of the burden of the colonial yoke—taxation, forced labor, obligations to concessionaire companies, and military recruitment—on the shoulders of the southerners, especially the Sara.

The conquest of the north, which cost the French an unusual number of casualties, could not have been successful had they not first defeated Rabah Fadlallah. By 1890, Rabah had become the most powerful person in Central Africa, "Emir of the Faithful," as he called himself after settling at Dikwa (Bouquet 1982:51). He was so feared by the French that, to eliminate his presence in the region, they assembled three expeditionary forces. Commander François Lamy and Fourreau left Algiers accompanied by their Algerian troops, while Captains Voullet and Chanoine departed from Niger, the latter two committing many atrocities as they travelled along the route east of Niger. Leading the third force was Commander Emile Gentil, who departed from the Moyen Congo in 1897, and sailed up the Chari River on the steamboat Léon-Blot onto Lake Chad in pursuit of Rabah's forces.

The behavior of the two French officers, Voullet and Chanoine, and the entire Rabah "mission" itself underscore vividly the theme of violence in French colonial history (Chapelle 1980:219). Sometimes, however, the French government did attempt to control the conduct of its citizens abroad. Upon hearing rumors of the atrocities of the officers in the Niger column, for example, France sent Colonel Klobb from Timbuktu to find the two captains and ascertain the motives for their violent treatment of Africans. Unfortunately, once Klobb reached the expedition at Dankori, on July 14, 1899, the two captains ordered him murdered. Lieutenant Meynier, a member of the investigating team was wounded (Britsch 1989:20). A few days later, not to be outdone, the expedition's soldiers killed their two captains—Voullet and Chanoine—and lieutenants Joalland and Meynier took over the mission and reached Kanem with 150 men.

Once in Kanem, the French signed a treaty with *alifa* Djerab on November 25, 1899, following a battle at Dibinentchi. The victory allowed Meynier to continue with a small force to meet Lamy, some 700 km further south at Bessada, in Sara country, near FortArchambault, on January 10,1900, while Joalland met Lamy at Air (Chapelle 1980:219). In April 1900, the three expeditionary forces met at Kusseri (theoretically a German territory but, as far as Lamy was concerned, still part of pre-partition Bornu). The French were fearful of Rabah, partly because he had decimated a French force at

Niellim on July 17, 1899. He had been weakened, however, by Lamy's and Gentil's inconclusive victory of October 29, 1899, at Kouno, where both sides lost about half of their forces in battle, forcing Rabah to flee north. Gaurang of Bagirmi, who had signed a treaty of protection with France in 1897, wanted to see Rabah out of the region to save his sultanate. So he promised to join Lamy's forces against his Muslim brother at Kusseri.

The French were determined to fight at Kusseri because they wanted it for a base from which to drive Rabah out of the area. Rabah's army, despite its numerous victories in Central Sudan, was reluctant to engage the French at Kusseri because Rabah knew they were better armed. He, therefore, decided he would attack them only if they left the town in search of him. However, as feared, the French force was well prepared for the encounter. Lamy, the commander of the three combined forces, was assisted by ten officers, 700 well armed troops, and was accompanied, as well, by one artillery unit manned by an officer named Binoust. Rabah, camped about five kilometers from Kusseri, refused to initiate combat. The French fired the first shot against his army at 7:30 in the morning of April 22, 1900.

To the surprise of the French, the long-awaited battle lasted only a little over three hours, largely due to a brilliant performance by the Algerian troops (Britsch 1989:171–185). Ironically, Lamy, fatally wounded in combat, was taken to Rabah's tent to be treated by four French doctors who tried to revive him but to no avail. He was pronounced dead around 4:00 P.M. One version, attributed to Captain Cointet's troops, claims that Lamy was killed by Bagirmi soldiers—which is difficult to believe unless he was shot by friendly fire, since Gaurang was a French ally (Chapelle 1980:219). Rabah was killed by one of his own former soldiers, Samba Sall. Sall, a cannoneer, had defected and joined the French Central African Mission after Rabah had jailed him. When two *tirailleurs* (African skirmishers) announced, *"Rabah est mort! Rabah est mort!"* (Rabah is dead!), Gentil refused to believe them, because so often that same claim had been heard in Central Sudan. Shrugging his shoulders, he told them: "Well, if he is dead, bring him to me." Within ten minutes, the soldiers presented Gentil with Rabah's head at the end of a stick. The general still refused to believe what he saw until Samba Sall confirmed that the head was indeed that of his former leader. Gentil ordered that Rabah's body be thrown into the River Chari and that his head be exhibited prominently in the town of Kusseri (Amegboh 1976:75–76).

By the battle's end, the French counted nineteen dead and fifty-five wounded soldiers, while Rabah seems to have lost 1,000 men. Two French officers, including Meynier, were among the wounded (Malval 1974:45). Rabah's remaining soldiers were captured and placed under Rabah's daughter, Aoua. They were brought to Fort-Lamy and forced to help build the city. His son, also captured, was sent to Bangui. (Reportedly, on his way through Fort-Archambault, Rabah's younger son, most likely to the annoyance of the French, was hailed as a hero by the Kaba whom his father had recruited heavily into his army.) Finally, in 1901, the French succeeded in killing another of Rabah's sons, Rabah-ibn-Fadlallah, and, in 1911, his general, Mohammed el Sanusssi. Both had continued to offer resistance.

Rabah's death made the conquest of the rest of Northern Chad possible if not easy. Borkou and Faya-Largeau (now the capital of Biltine-Ennedi-Tibesti or BET), for example, fell to the French forces led by General Emmanuel Largeau on November 27,

1913. Here, the major enemy of the French had been a Libyan Sanussiya commander named Abdallah Touer. Touer was killed on May 23, 1913, at the battle of Oum el Adam, where he had assaulted the forces of Lieutenant Dufour en route to Ain Galaka for a military rendez-vous with Largeau. There was so much carnage at Ain Galaka that, reportedly, some ninety Sanussiya dead fighters were thrown into the same burial hole along with horses and cattle. Largeau eventually took Ain Galaka, but the operation cost him the lives of Captain Maignam and Lieutenant Berrier-Fontaine in a short but nasty battle (Ferrandi 1930:75). Largeau proceeded to take Faya, Ounianga, and Gouro, the Sanussiya Order's headquarters, weakening its grip on Chadian Muslims in the desert.

The Teda of the area, however, assisted by the Turks and the Sanussiya Brotherhood, continued to pose a major threat to French authority until 1920. Fortunately, for France, the Teda threat was diminished by 1914, following Italy's conquest of Libya. This made it difficult for Turkey to play a major role in Northern Chad, particularly in Tibesti, the stronghold of the Sanussiya Order in Chad (Whiteman 1988:4). The Teda were finally conquered, following the submission of their spiritual leader, the *derdei,* in 1920. Thus BET was pronounced pacified. Bardai had already been taken in 1915, while Zouar, the headquarters of the *derdei,* had been occupied by the French in 1917. Tibesti, Chad's mountainous region, detached from Niger, French West Africa, became part of Chad on November 11,1929. Consequently, the north no longer posed significant problems for the French army.

In the east, the Sultanate of Wadai also offered stiff resistance to France. The human toll on both sides attested to the level of violence accompanying the colonial occupation of the area. To worsen matters, the French became involved in the politics of the Wadaian royal family, supporting the claims of Acyl to the throne. Acyl, cousin of Sultan Dudmurrah (installed in 1902), had fled Abéché, the capital, because the sultan intended to blind him for his attempt to overthrow the regime. Subsequently, however, Acyl annoyed the French with his constant attacks on the Wadaian surroundings leading them to abandon him temporarily in 1908. That year, two major battles between Wadai forces and those of Captain Jérusalemy, accompanied by 200 armed men, took place, one at Dokotchi on May 29 and the other at Djoua on June 16. The June encounter resulted in the deaths of the two prominent Wadaian governors of the provinces of Mahamid and Debaba. The victory allowed Captain Fiegenschuh to enter Abéché with some 180 men and two cannons on June 12, 1909, declaring it a French territory the next day. The French then enthroned Acyl as the sultan (only to oust him in 1911 when he was suspected of conspiracy following a major revolt in Wadai).

Even then, the carnage was not over. After securing assistance from Darfur, Dudmurrah massacred Fiegenschuh and his force at Wadi Kadja in Dar Massalit on January 4, 1910. This incident forced Chad Territory's Commander Maillard, himself, to advance to Massalit with 300 men. On November 8, 1910, however, he was surrounded and defeated by 5,000 of Dudmurrah's cavalry and by the troops of the sultan of Massalit, Tadj ed-Din, at Dorothe. According to French accounts, there were many fatalities on both sides, including those of the French captain and Sultan Taj ed-Din, who reportedly lost all his 600 men (Chapelle 1980:222). Dudmurrah's power was thus restored. Alarmed, the French sent for Colonel Emmanuel Largeau, former Chad Military Commander (1902–1904), to come to the rescue of French honor. Meticulously crafting his strategy, Largeau succeeded in forcing Dudmurrah to surrender to commander Hilaire

in October 1911. He brought the defeated sultan to Fort-Lamy, and French forces occupied Wadai permanently in 1912. In 1917, rumors of a conspiracy against the French at Abéché resulted in the beheading of twenty-seven *faqis* and learned men by French troops, a harsh warning, indeed. From Wadai, in 1917, a French column, proceeding to pacify Goz-Beida, Dar Sila's capital, assaulted Sultan Bakhit's stronghold. When the Sultan's cavalry tried to ambush the contingent, the French responded by wiping out the entire princely family.

The French victory over Rabah in 1900 and the conquest of Wadai made it possible for France to implement the June 14, 1898 and the May 21, 1899 Franco-British conventions recognizing Bagirmi, Wadai, and parts of Kanem and Bornu as French territory. Elsewhere in the territory, the Hadjerai *montagnards* offered their own resistance to France. Heroic deeds by young men and women following a long siege by France are still described by elders in the vicinity of the long-abandoned Morgue village of Guéra (Chapelle 1980:223).

As a result of the string of French victories by 1920, Chad had, for all practical purposes, been conquered and pacified, but the death toll to the conquering forces was high. Both regular troops and high ranking military officers, fighting in small contingents, were killed. Dugald Campbell (1929:253) put it this way: "Here lies a Colonel, there a Captain or Lieutenant or an Adjutant, a Sergeant-Major, a Sergeant or a humble Corporal, buried under the sands of the Sahara to prove that the conquest of the Chad regions has been unusually costly." This was the consequence of their subjugation of a Muslim population that had shown so much contempt for them, calling every Frenchman a "dirty dog" *(kebb es su)* or "a Christian pig" (Campbell 1929).

The problem left to the French after conquest was how best to govern the new territory and bring the diverse groups to work together for the benefit of France. Imposing a colonial system, however, would require the continued use of violence by the authorities. The following section briefly addresses the violence associated with such colonial policies as military recruitment, forced labor for government and private concessionaires, taxation, and methods of enforcing the overall objectives of the colonial administration.

VIOLENCE IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF CHAD

Once they had conquered their Central African territory, the French became aware of the hardships they would face in administering it. First were the geographic disparities in the territory; second, scarce resources; third, poverty, particularly in the north. The lack of viable natural resources on the fringes of the Sahara Desert eventually forced the French to turn south toward the more promising savanna and rainforest region, which they labelled *le Tchad-utile* (useful Chad). Another major obstacle was the huge size of the landlocked territory, more than 1,000 miles away from either the Atlantic or the Indian Oceans, and its rough topography, rendering communication and travel extremely difficult, particularly during the rainy season. Then there was the discouraging problem of the northern Muslim populations' lively and visible contempt for everything French, even the colonial educational system, which they considered poison to their children.

The result of these adverse factors was the neglect of the colony and its relegation to the military and to the adventurous; from the "novice colonial administrators to derelict

officials" (Decalo 1987:8), who, left to themselves and attempting to survive, often wielded abusive power. Few of them had actually been trained at the *Ecole Coloniale* (later *Ecole Nationale de la France d'Outre-Mer*—ENFOM), an institution that prepared French civilians for overseas service. Chad's climate and poverty were such that being posted to the territory was considered a demotion by most civil servants (*Ibid.:* 8). In the final analysis, Chad turned out to be primarily a labor source for all types of activities in other colonies, especially those in French Equatorial Africa.

Before proceeding, a note on Chad's administrative structure: Chad was declared a French territory in 1900 and divided into *circonscriptions* and *subdivisions* in 1909. It received its first civilian government in 1920, following Tubu (Teda) submission to French rule that year. In 1934, the *circonscriptions* became *départements,* which turned into *regions* and *districts* in 1946. The colony was removed from the French Equatorial Federation in 1958, and its former regions were made *préfectures* and the *districts* became *souspréfectures.* At present, Chad is divided into fourteen prefectures.

Official French policy during the post-World War I era, except in Algeria and the four Senegalese communes of Dakar, St.Louis, Goré, and Rufisque that received outright citizenship, was one of selective and gradual assimilation of Africans, bringing them into the bosom of the French multiracial empire headquartered in Paris. Under the adopted policy, in theory (and sometimes in practice) assimilated Africans were to be treated as French citizens. Assimilated individuals could therefore vote, own property legally, and send their children to European schools. If discriminated against, they had recourse to French courts and could never be subjected to forced labor *(corvée)*. To qualify for assimilation they had to be able to read and speak French, adopt French culture (in dress code and eating etiquette, for example), abandon the drums and local dancing styles, be monogamous and, in most cases, Christian—and have the financial means to sustain themselves.

Non-assimilated or indigenous Africans were subjected to all kinds of forced work under what was called *le système d'indigénat*. Illiterate *indigènes* enjoyed no political rights, had to follow traditional laws in litigation, and could be discriminated against and segregated on account of race and culture. At any time they were subject to: military service; forced manual labor from six to nine months yearly; porterage; unpaid emergency work in the service of the government (building roads and bridges, for example); concessionaires' recruitment (mainly for cotton cultivation, rubber collection, and timber cutting); and service to private French and assimilated Africans (usually on farms and in the household), and to the Church. In sum, *les indigènes* were aliens in their own land. World War II, however, brought dramatic improvement to Chad and other French African colonies that had participated in the Allied cause. (Chad had been the first colony to join, under the initiative of its black Governor Félix Eboué, the French Resistance Movement in 1940). As a reward, forced labor was eliminated in 1946 and citizenship extended to all Africans. They were now allowed to send representatives to Paris to serve in the National Assembly, the Senate, and the Council of the Republic.

Yet, voting for these institutions was done on the basis of a dual system or double college, which separated Europeans from Africans, the latter belonging to the second college, the *collège des autochtones*. As a result of the 1946 reforms, Africans were allowed for the first time to form parties and elect delegates to a Territorial Assembly and to the federation's Grand Council (headquartered at Brazzaville) for the four French

Equatorial African colonies, which included Chad. A major political change resulted in all French African colonies with the enactment of the *Loi Cadre* (Enabling Act) of 1956, which abolished the dual college. For the first time Chadians competed almost on an equal basis with the expatriates, although until 1957, Europeans and their parties continued to dominate territorial politics. French influence was especially strong in the *Union Démocratique Tchadienne* (UDT), a party founded in 1953, which drew support from African traditional leaders including many Muslims and Europeans. It was affiliated with the *Rassemblement du Peuple Français* (RPF). The *Loi Cadre* had the unintended result of advancing Africans' demands for self-government within the French Union. These demands began to emerge in 1957–1959 under the banner of the southern-based *Parti Progressiste Africain* (PPT), founded in 1946 by Antillian-born Gabriel Lisette.

As expected, in order to maintain law and order in the colonial empire, including the territory of Chad, the French needed the presence of a strong colonial army. For this purpose, throughout its entire colonial period, Chad constituted the major source of recruits for the colonial army, so much so that Chadian soldiers, mostly Sara, became synonymous with what was known as the *tirailleurs sénégalais* (Senegalese skirmishers) (Aerts 1954) who were deployed to fight distant wars in Africa, in Indochina, and even in Europe, as the two World Wars attested. By 1912, Chad, after all traditional forces in the colony, including, of course, the rudimentary militias in the south had been eliminated, could count on three battalions for its defense, each comprising four companies of some 200 men—about 3,000 troops altogether, stationed in the capitals of all the circumscriptions (Reyna 1995a:7).

How were soldiers recruited? Following a quota system, southern chiefs were required, under severe penalty, to satisfy the administration's demands. As a result, prior to the 1950s, at least 1,000 military recruits were taken yearly from Moyen-Chari alone, the most heavily taxed prefecture. Reportedly, some 181,000 African *tirailleurs*—mostly from Chad—were recruited for World War I. Of these, more than 25,000 died in combat during the war, while 50,000 others succumbed in Cameroon as victims of the porterage (Basquet and Vassal n.d.: 33). In 1920, some 12,000 Sara soldiers were sent to Burma but few of them returned home (Brown 1983:64). This story was repeated in World War II. At the initiative of Chad's Governor Félix Eboué (Governor-General of French Equatorial Africa in 1941–1944), Chadian soldiers, mostly Sara, became famous for maintaining their own regiment—the *Régiment des Tirailleurs Sénégalais du Tchad* (RST)—later divided into thirteen battalions—a model of the colonial troops supporting the Free French Movement in Africa and Europe. From 1939 to 1945, most of the 22,844 Africans from Equatorial Africa (including Cameroon) who served in the War were the Sara of Chad (*Ministère de l'Information* 1945:11). Indeed, of General Jacques Leclerc's 3,000 men who travelled from the Sahara to Berchstesgaden and made the victories of the Allied forces possible at such locales as El-Alameni in Tunisia, Ethiopia and Eritrea, the Near East, Provence, and Alsace, only 55 were French: the majority of them were the Sara of Chad (Whiteman 1988:5 and Chapelle 1980:235).

Unfortunately, heavy recruitment, often at gun-point in the villages, turned the Chadians against their own chiefs, often resulting in massacres and mass migration to the neighboring colonies, or in the murder of the chiefs themselves and those who enforced their will, the *policiers* or *goumiers*. Chadian archives provide numerous examples of violent incidents caused by compulsory military recruitment in the south. During the

1918 recruitment period among the Sara Goulaye, for example, villagers freed twenty-eight young men who had been rounded up to be taken to military headquarters, beat Chief Taniba of the Canton of Bousso, stripped him naked, and castrated him with their knives (Archives 1940:4). Obviously, aversion to military service was based on the usual factors, but the long and arduous trips on foot were particularly onerous on the recruits. (For some, however, travelling abroad, at times as far as Indochina and Vietnam, wearing glamorous uniforms, avoiding forced labor, and receiving a regular pension constituted a real attraction).

Forced labor on government and French private projects and farms (again implemented on a quota basis by the southern chiefs, since the north was exempt from it), elicited more violent resistance from the Africans than any other aspect of colonialism in Chad. Able-bodied recruits, taken by force, were to be paid virtually nothing for work usually done away from their villages for as long as six or nine months a year. The *corvée,* which, in theory, was enforced under a specific contract, was supplemented by emergency work without pay for government projects and with prisoners' labor. On the one hand, to force people to accept recruitment, administrators, chiefs, and the *policiers* at times held hostages in what was euphemistically known as *villages de liberté* (freedom villages) until they complied with the order, and used the *chicotte* (whip) and other devices designed specifically to punish recalcitrant individuals and populations. Concessionaire companies, on the other hand, often used armed workers to enforce labor laws to meet their recruitment needs (*Chambre des Députés* 1906:8). Under the system, the government and its concessionaire companies took a minimum of 4,000 recruits from the south each year.

Afraid of violent opposition from the northern Muslim populations, and aware that any development in Chad would have to be in the south, the French targeted the southern populations, especially the tall, muscular, Sara as the most appropriate manpower pool (Archives 1924:12 and 35). A tragic aspect of this was that the Sara were usually considered by the French to be peace-loving, and rather naive politically. Under the circumstances, deaths from forced labor (beatings, hardships, lack of adequate food, and infectious diseases contracted in the work settlements) were common among the workers. As was true regarding military recruitment, eyewitness accounts attest to the high level of violence associated with forced labor in southern villages (Moran 1934:100–103).

The most hated and most vividly recollected government project that required the highest number of Sara recruits at one time was the construction of the Congo-Brazzaville railroad (1924–1934). At least 120,000 Africans, 200 Europeans, and 600 Chinese worked on the project (Azevedo 1981). During the project, at least 50,000 people were reported dead, and 50 percent never returned home (Sautter 1966:237–238, 249, 269). Half of the Sara, who constituted the largest contingent for the project, died in the *chantiers* from hard work, accidents, mistreatment, and tropical disease, or simply disappeared, never to return to their families. At times, the weather was so hot that both Africans and Europeans walked naked. Eyewitness Albert Londres gave an account of the suffering inflicted on the Sara:

> The Sara worked here. Out of ten, six or seven were all right; one could see the skeletons of the others. Great disorder was rampant at the first chantier. Shouting was a daily affair. An Italian, sicker than the Africans,

> yelled: "Salauds!"; the *capitas* repeated the insult. Two Sara lay down the cement barrel; one *capita* cuffed them… From cuffing to cuffing, the cement reached kilometer 80… One felt that the [Sara] were trying to find the cemetery with their toes. Sara! Sara! Allez! Sara! Sara! The Sara turned their eyes on me as if I could bring them oil to sooth their burning backs (Londres 1929:243–246).[1]

The death toll was so high that it was said, at the time, that one African died for every crosstie and one European perished every kilometer. This prompted surviving former Sara railroad workers to call Brazzaville *(Barsaouli)* a cemetery (Azevedo 1974). Naturally, resistance to recruitment for the project in the south was strong. Consequently, Governor-General Marius Antonetti (1924–1926) travelled by automobile for the first time to Fort-Archambault in 1926 to urge administrators and Sara chiefs to continue to provide workers from every village in Moyen-Chari. He also entreated them to allow at least one-fourth of the workers to bring their wives, a provision that was designed to reduce the rate of attrition, part of which was caused by runaways (Archives 1926:5–6).

Former railroad workers remember vividly a violent but successful mutiny engineered by one of their own, Malloum, at the *chantiers,* demanding better treatment for the Sara. Even for the authorities, the Congo-Océan project, as it was known, became a nightmare. Responding to national and international criticism, Antonetti once bluntly said: "Either we accept the sacrifice of six to eight thousand men or we renounce the railroad." When the work was completed, "12 million cubic meters of dirt had been removed, 12 tunnels dug, one of which was 1,594 meters long beneath the Mayombe [in addition to], 162 large bridges and 92 viaducts" (Manot 1946:283–284; see also Londres 1929:240–246). A further tragic side of forced labor was that, even after its abolition in 1946, it continued in practice throughout the south, particularly involving the Sara. In fact, a 1949 circular assessing the political situation among the Sara advised the colonial government to stop using Sara territory as "an unlimited reserve of soldiers and labor" (Brown 1983:63).

Another colonial obligation that elicited violent resistance from the Africans was the compulsory cultivation of cotton introduced in the south in 1928, again imposed mainly on the Sara, to serve the needs of such monopolistic companies as the *Sociéte Cotonnière Franco-Tchadienne* (founded in 1925, later known as *Cotonfranc* and subsequently as *Coton Tchad*). Under the system, farmers received seeds from the government and were under an obligation to produce a certain number of kilos of cotton. Chiefs received their orders from the companies and the *commandants de cercles,* who saw cotton as the resource that could bring needed revenue for the impoverished colony. In fact, many colonialists considered cotton to be *"la plante de l'avenir"* (the plant of the future), just as cocoa was for Ghana and forestry for Gabon (Moran 1934:299). (During the 1970s, 100,000 tons of cotton a year were produced.)

Cotton cultivation, however, brought out some of the worst in the chiefs, many of whom began using what has been labelled *le système des cordes,* whereby they would reserve the best plots of land for themselves and their police and would recruit people to work in their fields for personal gain. (A *corde* was a 0.5 hectare plot of land to be used for cotton cultivation by the chief.) This abusive practice led to several murders of chiefs and their collaborators in Baibokoum, Bodo, Moundou, and Bebalem between 1946 and 1952 (Lemarchand 1980:456). Compulsory collection of rubber in the south, eventually

abandoned because of a scarcity of rubber trees, elicited the same violent response from the southerners in Bekamba, Koumra, and among northerners in Rig-Rig, Mao, and even in parts of Wadai, specifically against the *Compagnie Forestière Sangah-Oubangui.* At times, the chiefs would close an entire village to fugitives attempting to avoid rubber collection work, forcing many of them to return and, to avoid dying from hunger, give themselves in (Brown 1983:62). The violence and abuses associated with the *cordes* and perpetrated by the chiefs and their *cotton boys* were such that the system was finally abolished in 1955 (Brown 1983:64).

Porterage was another abhorred aspect of French colonialism that elicited violence by the Chadians as well as by those colonial administrators who retaliated against popular resistance. Porterage refers to the obligation of Africans in this context to carry loads, often a minimum of 40 pounds (20 kilos) on their heads and backs from town to town and from project to project. They were obliged to try to cover, for example, the 500-kilometer distance between Fort-Archambault and Fort-Lamy in fifteen days. Thousands upon thousands of dismally paid Chadians were employed in this capacity. Officials estimated that in 1902, a minimum of 120,000 men in French Equatorial Africa made some 112,000 trips (See Suret-Canal 1961:44–45).

Many porters suffered premature death, exhaustion, physical injury, impotence, hunger, disease, and maltreatment by Europeans and their guards. Former porters interviewed talked of a death rate of 37 percent on such trips, as was the case of the journey from Koumra to Fort-Lamy and to Am-Timam (Azevedo 1974). Brazza estimated the rate of death to have been at least 15 percent. Even young boys were targeted by unscrupulous administrators. Félicien Challeye notes, for example, that he saw in 1905 some 250 porters leaving Brazzaville, among whom he counted nine and twelveyear-olds, an equal number of old people, and others who, although extremely weak, were forced to carry loads. As a result, "many died *en route,* while very few were able to do any work" (Challeye 1909:231). Porterage, particularly when it was long-distance, forced carriers to leave their families for long periods of time. To survive on their long journey, hungry porters often looted the farms, especially those located along the road. Auguste Chevalier said of the Mandja: "Not only farms were neglected then, but the few crops growing in their fields were demanded by the Europeans or the Sengalese to feed guards or the porters themselves" (Chévalier 1907:110).

During his many trips through Chad, Lieutenant Governor Lavit (1920–1922) noticed several ghost villages, stripped of inhabitants when news of porterage recruitment circulated (Archives 1920:31 and 1925:13). Quite often, especially during the 1910s and 1920s, several *tirailleurs,* chiefs, and their guards were murdered. Even administrators' escorts were not spared (Archives 1910:2 and 1920:27–29), as violent reaction against porterage and other types of colonial obligation escalated. In Pala, in 1923, for example, young men ambushed and wounded an African sergeant and his companion and killed a guard accompanying the chief on his porterrecruitment rounds. Whenever incidents of this nature occurred, administrators typically responded with more force, imprisoned those who resisted porterage or committed violence, and destroyed or burned villages and "illegal" settlements erected by runaways and migrants (Archives 1937:2).

A major irritant in the relations between the colonial government and the Chadian people was, of course, taxation. It was introduced officially in 1903 and required that one-fourth of the taxes be paid in cash and three-fourths in kind. While the south could

pay part of the tax in cereals, the north was always asked to satisfy the obligation in cattle, sheep, goats, horses, or camels. Initially, the north paid a higher rate of taxes than the people living in the south, but the situation changed in later years. During the 1950s, for example, the south paid six times per person as much as the north, about 750 francs in Moundou and Fort-Archambault (Sara country), compared to 190 francs in Faya-Largeau (Muslim Tubu territory) and 130 francs at Abéché (Maba and Arab city, capital of Wadai) (Lemarchand 1980:409). Resistance to taxes, at times violent, was aroused not by taxation itself but by the methods the chiefs and administrators employed to collect revenues. Everyone in the rural area, poor or rich, had to pay the same amount and at the time requested. Non-compliance brought severe penalties. At times, the chief would collect taxes twice a year, and there were instances in Chad in which administrators demanded that households pay taxes for dead relatives or absentees.

Just as it was the case with recruitment, the response to unfair and misunderstood taxation was migration and violence against those responsible for its collection—the chiefs and *policiers*. On migration as a reaction to taxation, the Lieutenant-Governor wrote in 1931:

> Each time taxes go up, every time recruits for the railway are demanded, and as soon as manpower is requested, the figures presented above [500 to 1,000 individuals] increase because there are no comparable demands on the other side of the frontier. Sadly, any understanding with the neighboring subdivisions to repatriate the fugitives is meaningless since emigration occurs not in large numbers but is individualized and happens by infiltration (Archives 1939:9).

Invariably, the administration sided with the abusive chiefs and warned their subordinates to be firm on the issue of taxes because the survival of the colony and their jobs depended on them. One administrator ordered, for example, that recalcitrants be given hard lessons *("les plus dures leçons"):* "Since our conciliatory gestures are viewed as signs of weakness, we must wage a war against them until they have submitted," he wrote (Archives 1911:1). The various instances of violent resistance cannot be covered here, but Dénise Moran writes of administrators ordering the killing of those who refused or were unable to pay their taxes in Wadai in 1910 and 1921 (Moran 1934:126–127). Heavy-handedness on the part of the colonial state, however, halted neither resistance to taxation nor violence against the collectors. In 1924, for example, several *"tirailleurs"* and "political agents" were assassinated by the people at Baltobo and Balkogne (Archives 1924: n.p.).

Among the Sara, the most serious taxation incident was what southern Chadians have traditionally called the Bouna "War" of January 1929. Although French administrators at the time, and some French researchers later, tended to view the bloody incident as merely a feud between two families among the Dai Sara, information gathered among the survivors tells a different story. According to these recollections, the Bouna incident resulted in the massacre by the colonial administration of almost the entire population of the Canton of Bouna, numbering perhaps 20,000 (Azevedo 1974).[2]

A combination of various factors seems to have contributed to the violent reaction of the French administrators against the canton. In 1928, Chief Moungar had been unable to

collect taxes because the people refused to pay them, partly due to the abuses associated with taxation—not the least of which was the chiefs' pocketing the money for themselves. Consequently, authorities at Moissala sent guards to ascertain why this huge village was in rebellion. (Bouna was demographically so large that it was made a canton, a rare occurrence in those days. A canton comprised several villages brought together as a unit under a high chief and several subchiefs). The official envoys were either abused, beaten, or killed by the villagers. Interviewed informants revealed that the administration had, from time to time, appointed illegitimate chiefs for the canton who brought people with them who disrespected Bouna traditions. While these problems were being aired, the issue of an unfaithful girlfriend emerged,[3] resulting in deaths on both sides of the contending parties of the aforementioned family feud. The administrators decided then to act decisively as a lesson to other recalcitrant villages and brought troops from Fort-Lamy, FortArchambault, Fort-Crampel, Doba, Koumra, Ngodere, Ngalo, Bengoro, Paredounga, and Ndile.

Once gathered, the soldiers assaulted Bouna, burning it to the ground and killing as many people as could be found. The Sara Dai put up an unsuccessful resistance, after being encouraged by the *chefs de terre,* who told them that they were invulnerable to French bullets that would melt into water as they came in contact with their bodies! The colonial troops spared only children, who were taken to Moissala and dispersed elsewhere as "prisoners of war" and repatriated to Bouna only in 1946 (Azevedo 1974). In the carnage, the French murdered Chief Moungar along with the following chiefs and sub-chiefs: Jingarta, Baala, Ndoyon, Ndjangsi, Ndodi, Gueyako, Nangar, Najadrer, Kaje, and Gainajir. The massacre was so shocking that administrators attempted to keep the story secret. Even during the Tombalbaye Administration, people were advised under penalty not to discuss the "war" because it had been a divisive ethnic incident. The French made sure that Sara troops would be the major perpetrators of the crime against their own (Azevedo 1974). In essence, therefore, the war was fought over taxes and with colonial disregard for Sara traditions.

The more the people in Chad resisted the colonial yoke, the more violent the colonial state became there. Several other massacres have been recorded in archival documents and appear in the accounts of eyewitnesses. A few examples suffice to underscore the point. The massacre of at least fifty *marabouts* and learned Muslims, rudely awakened from their bed, in Abéché on November 15, 1917, reported by General Hilaire, prompted cries for an official inquiry, which Paris quashed, since it would have implicated high officials of the colonial state and the army (Hilaire 1930:327). Oral data also confirm a 1918 massacre of children in Doba that was designed to punish parents who brewed and sold local beer (Azevedo 1974). In the early 1900s, the villagers of Kon, near Fort-Archambault, and Beti recall how a group of colonial *tirailleurs* shot people dead because they had refused to accept French authority. In the process, the villagers killed one guard (Azevedo 1974).

As a result of the frequency of violent crime against the colonial state, jails in Chad, prior to the 1950s, were usually chock-full of "criminals"—from Fort-Archambault to Abéché, and to Fort-Lamy itself. Thus the Governor-General sarcastically remarked in 1923 that: "In ten years, the administration of the military territory (of Chad) inflicted twenty centuries [sic] and fifteen years of detention to a population that does not exceed 1,300,000" (Archives 1923:5). In 1932, in Massakory, a *circonscription* of some 30,000

people, the administration jailed two percent of the population. The *circonscription* of the Bas-Chari had 919 people behind bars (Archives 1932:34 and 1938:21). And a jail sentence was not enough; in addition, the "criminar had to pay a fine and, most often, perform manual labor!

POST-WORLD WAR II REFORMS

Throughout the colonial period, social conditions in Chad were marred by revolts and reprisals—even following the introduction of reforms designed to allow the Africans to participate more and more in the process of charting their future. While there were incidents of violence due to politics in the countryside, in Fort-Lamy the establishment of parties heightened the cultural and religious differences among the African elite and between them and the European population. Between 1946–1960, the 1946 reforms saw the creation of some thirty political organizations. Samuel Decalo's political typology reveals five groups of parties that rose and fell in the colony during the colonial and post-colonial periods (Decalo 1987:252–265).

The conservative parties such as the Muslim *Union Démocratique Tchadienne* (UDT) and the *Union Démocratique Socialiste de la Résistance* (UDSR), founded in 1946 by Northerners and Europeans respectively, typically brought together expatriates, traditional African authorities, the Muslim leadership, and the merchant class. The progressive parties, such as the *Parti Progressiste Tchadien* (PPT), advocated the elimination of the colonial system along with the traditional authorities—whether Muslim, Christian, or Traditionalist. Because of its popular stance, the PPT's ascent to power became inevitable after 1956. In that year, the southern-based party (also enjoying considerable support in the north) had commanded the majority of the electorate in Logone, Moyen-Chari, Fort-Lamy, and even in BET and Kanem (Diguimbaye and Langue 1969:33). Following the March 31, 1957 elections to the Territorial Assembly, for example, the PPT gained 32 seats, while members of its *Entente* (the UDT and the *Parti Socialiste Indépendant du Tchad,* the PSIT) took 16, the *Groupement des Indépendants et Ruraux Tchadiens* (GIRT), an offshoot of the *Action Sociale Tchadienne* (AST), 9, and the surviving AST 8, with one seat having gone to an Independant (*Ibid.:* 35 and Decalo 1987:265).

The socialist parties, exemplified by the *Parti Socialiste du Tchad* (PST), founded in 1950 by Ahmed Koulamallah of Chari-Bagirmi, typically upheld the goals of the socialist parties of Europe or the ideology of Egypt's Nasser. The rebel parties, such as the National Liberation Front (FROLINAT), most of which appeared after independence in 1960, including the *Union Nationale Tchadienne,* founded in 1958 by Muslim radicals led by Issa Dana, Abba Siddick, and Mahamat Outman, and banned in 1962, advocated drastic political reforms even if they were to be achieved through violence. Finally, the local issues parties, such as the *Union Logonaise* and the *Union de Guéra,* spoke strictly to local issues and interests. In general, party affiliation and ethnic differences did not result in outright violence in colonial Chad, although at times some violent disturbances resulted in fatal casualties. In April 1952, for example, a massacre occurred in the village of Bebalem, in the Logone Prefecture, when a government agent, trying to punish a citizen who had refused to pay taxes to the canton chief, fired into a crowd, killing many

unarmed demonstrators. In 1958, in the Chari-Bagirmi Prefecture, Arabs and Fulbe killed each other over old disputes. The PPT was blamed as the instigator of both the Bebalem "massacre" and the Chari-Bagirmi incidents, and calls for an inquiry were made in the Territorial Assembly, particularly for the Logone "massacre." André Kieffer, an independent European Territorial Assembly delegate, sometimes called the one-man party, made impassioned speeches against the PPT, the UDT, and the government.

Socio-cultural and economic differences between the north and the south were significant and contributed to the uneasy atmosphere that prevailed just prior to independence. Decalo (1987:9–10) characterizes the 1945–1957 period as "the story of the tug-of-war between, on the one hand, the largely southern progressive militants (Lisette, Tombalbaye, Toura Gaba, etc), and, on the other hand, the chiefly elitist political alliances supported overtly or covertly by French expatriate commercial interests and the local French administration." Southerners were relatively more educated and their region had a better infrastructure than the north. While northern politicians, fearing the southerners, wished to slow down the movement toward independence, the southern elite, particularly the Sara, hoped to gain political control of the state apparatus and free its people from their unique burdens of forced labor and cotton cultivation. Of course, the French colonial administration attempted to accentuate the differences between the two regions, with unfortunate results.

So much distrust existed between the two regions, among Muslims, Christians, and Traditionalists, that the fall of Gabriel Lisette from party leadership (and membership) and from the government resulted from the actions of both Muslims and Tombalbaye (Ki-Zerbo 1972:517). The Muslims opposed him because he was a powerful leader with a base in the south, while François Tombalbaye and others saw him as preventing the rise of true southern politicians born in the colony. Thus, although Chad joined the overwhelming majority of the colonies that, except for Guinea, unambiguously voted for inclusion into the French Union in 1958, tension among the different leaders was nevertheless there.

The atmosphere of distrust and recrimination was due mainly to adverse pre-colonial relationships and to regional, religious and ethnic divergences, all of which the colonial administration exploited to its advantage. Differences between the various ethnic groups in the colony, particularly between the Arabs with their Tubu allies, and the southern sedentary societies, especially the Sara, were heightened. As Chadianist scholar Lemarchand notes, the use of such terms as Christian and Muslim, nomad and farmer, civilized and uncivilized, *nordiste* (northerner) and *sudiste* (southerner), and fetishist or pagan, sharpened even further the existing social cleavages. It was clear that independence would not resolve the social and political problems that had divided Chad since the days of slavery and the introduction of "attempted integrative colonialism."

CONCLUSION

Paris' ultimate intention in Chad was to create a united colony, where the indigenous and the assimilated Africans would live in peace with the French expatriates and colonialists in a multiracial empire. Unfortunately, individuals responsible for the implementation of such a grandiose ideal thought otherwise or unwittingly took measures that would

undermine the whole metropolitan plan. First, as they attempted to eliminate the vestiges of slavery and the slave trade in the north (in which they did not succeed until 1917), the French made compromises that left the north, particularly after the introduction of cotton in the south, almost self-governing. French authorities in the north were satisfied as long as the sultans paid taxes on their herds, opened the trade routes to legitimate merchants, and provided unfettered access to the few colonial agents posted in the region. The approach here was not assimilation or direct rule but indirect rule *à la* Lord Lugard in Northern Nigeria. In fact, as far back as 1929, Dugald Campbell (1929:221) wrote of French rule in Wadai:

> Small groups of those ethnic groups live in corners throughout the town, and keep up their tribal customs, dress and diet, religion, etc., with all of which French government officials make no attempt to interfere, provided the law is not infringed. Thus, much tact and patience is observable in the French adjustments to gain and retain respect and obedience of the native populations they govern, whether nomad or fixed. Although the rule of France is that of the iron hand, one can distinctly feel the velvet glove.

Such a policy created a situation where colonial control had little impact on the northern populations. In a word, the political structures prevalent when the French conquered the region remained substantially unchanged as Chad entered the decade of independence. Concomitantly, the long-standing northern contempt for manual labor that was, in the past, relegated to slaves, was left intact by the French, who forced southerners to accept the *corvée,* even if working primarily with their hands was not traditional there. The contempt the north showed for French culture and civilization and the memory of the long-standing resistance offered by the Tubu, the Arabs, the Barma, and the Wadaians influenced a soft administrative approach toward the northern societies.

In the south, particularly among the Sara, the French assembled their meager financial resources to make the region—*le Tchad-utile*—productive and beneficial to the colonial apparatus. As a result, during both the colonial and post-colonial periods, this region, mainly through its cotton industry (Chad has consistently remained the greatest producer of cotton in all Francophone Africa), continued to be the major contributor to the national economy: 80 percent of the country's exports came from there, providing employment to about 75 percent of the industrial labor force during the 1980s (Azevedo and Prater 1986:103). To achieve this goal, minimal educational opportunities had to be provided, a suitable road infrastructure and transportation initiated, and a modicum of health services made available to the population.

Thus, the recruitment of all kinds of essential manpower took place primarily in the south. The population had to be forced to produce cash crops. The government civil service section in N'Djamena preferred, however, to employ the "civilized" Muslim Arabs, while in the southern region the few educated Christian Chadians occupied the positions the European population could not fill. Indeed, until 1928, according to Decalo, 42 percent of the civil service in Chad remained unfilled. French admiration for the centralized societies of the north continued even in the south, for chiefs who converted to Islam and wore Arab robes were at 'times appointed over others to head villages (Gatta 1985:46–47).

The effort to maintain authorities that would not contest French supremacy in the south was also manifest in the removal of chiefs who did not follow orders or whom the administration perceived as ineffective; ineffectiveness meaning hesitation to use force, collecting insufficient taxes when due, and providing fewer recruits than demanded for the army, government projects, and porterage, If chiefs were retained, their domain was either reduced by splitting it into smaller units with appointed illegitimate sub-chiefs or by consolidating villages into cantons and creating a superchief or a "paramount chief" structure, as was the case in British West Africa. The French tolerated the chiefs' and their *goumiers'* abuses until the new political parties, especially the *Parti Progressiste Tchadien,* began a campaign against them and their supporters in the colonial administration. It was PPT pressure that, during the 1950s, forced the colonial administration to initiate slowly a policy of non-blind support of the indigenous authorities, deposing some and imprisoning others (Brown 1983:64). Thus, as Brown adds, when Chad entered the era of the mid-1960s, only two of the "great" colonial chiefs remained, albeit stripped of their power: Tatala of Moissala and Alina of Koumra.

It is fair to say, then, that the region, historically, had been so chaotic and violent on the eve of the colonial conquest that the French colonial experiment had little chance of succeeding in Chad, even if the discriminatory practices that caused new social cleavages while exacerbating old ones had not been introduced. As one Sara politician and scholar put it, "The recourse to violence and coercion was permanent, even for the construction and the functioning of educational and health infrastructures…he colonial authorities resorted to no other means but violence, brutality, and coercion of one type or another" (Gatha 1985:34). The colonial system by nature was prone to abuse, as the *commandant de cercle* assumed unparalleled power, with very little supervision from Fort-Lamy:

> He was the local despot in a despotic system. He was at one and the same time the political chief, the administrative chief, the police chief, the chief prosecutor and the president of the indigenous court. He set the head tax, he controlled duties and levies, he demanded forced labor, he extracted export. crops, he mobilized people for compulsory work and he imposed military service (Diop et al. 1993:61).

Under these circumstances, the violent regimes that followed Chad's political emancipation in 1960, the subject of the next chapter, should be no surprise to the student of history.

NOTES

1. Author's translation of the original French version.
2. Most of the following account is based on interviews at Bouna and Dai villages, Moissala, Chad, June-July 1974.
3. Alfred Adler's account blames the incident on a family feud. See Adler.

Chapter FIVE
Independence and Civil War in Chad

An analysis of Chad's colonial situation on the eve of independence dramatically prefigures the tremendous political and social problems the new independent state would face. As noted in the previous chapter, these difficulties were brought about mainly by a long history of domination and slaving activities, by ethnic differences between north and south, and by Muslim/Christian dichotomies existing since the French missionary era—all exacerbated by the divide-and-rule policies of the colonial state. Certainly the situation was ripe for violence and perhaps civil war.

Chapter Four noted also how the southerners of Chad, in particular the Sara, reversed, in 1960, the trend of centuries past, when the northern centralized states dominated them by raiding them annually. As expected, the political outcome of 1960 was unwelcome in the north, but it could not be stopped, as it was not a matter of choice: it was a colonially-imposed solution. Inevitably, most of the Sara who inherited the colonial state saw the handover of power as a day of reckoning enabling them to settle past scores and grievances.

The country's new president, François Tombalbaye, embittered by the political and social struggles of the 1940s and 1950s, desired a redress for past grievances as much as did his Sara constituency. He'd been stripped of his teaching position by the administration and found it almost impossible to govern in 1959 due to northern opposition. So he acknowledged his people's demands and implemented "appropriate" policies. Tombalbaye was an ambitious man; his personality and the conditions in which the new nation found itself at independence were bound to create a severe political crisis. This chapter deals with post-independence Chad. It focuses on what most experts believe contributed significantly to the organized as well as the non-organized violence that Chad experienced, particularly in the post-1979 period: the policies and personal behavior of those in leadership roles.

CIVILIAN RULE (1960–1975)

As soon as he took office in 1960, Tombalbaye's political agenda was to allow his government, which was, in fact, nothing more than his instrument, to run the country as a single-party state, as was typical for most of Africa. Prior to becoming president of Chad, Tombalbaye rose fast through the ranks of the PPT and the colonial institutions created by France after 1946. A former teacher and active labor unionist, François Tombalbaye was elected the PPT Secretary-General. He spoke against all forms of colonialism and defended the emancipation of the Chadian people from French colonialism (Diguimbaye and Langue 1969:41). He had been elected in 1952 and re-elected in 1957 to represent Moyen-Chari in the Territorial Assembly. It was also in 1957 that he became

vicepresident of the Grand Council of French Equatorial Africa, moving, in March 1959, to form a provisionary government in Chad prior to that year's legislative elections. On June 16, 1959, Tombalbaye became prime minister of the new permanent government of Chad, leading the colony to independence on August 10, 1960. On August 11, 1960, he was elevated to the position of head of state and president of the Council of Ministers by a unanimous vote of the National Assembly.

At first, Tombalbaye attempted to amalgamate the parties by forcing them to coalesce with his own and by banning those he felt were harmful to national unity as he defined it. Indeed, the elimination of the opposition was achieved under the claim of preventing divisions along religious and ethnic lines in order to preserve the "soul" of the nation, just as other presidents of African nations argued at the time. Therefore, on January 28, 1962, Tombalbaye banned all political parties except his PPT, an act that was followed by the forcible adoption of the presidential system in the country. (He was elected president in April 1962 by the National Assembly and Chad's eight commune councils, and re-elected in June 1969 by a popular vote.) The institutionalization of a one-party state and the adoption of the presidential system in 1962 led to protests and arrests, forcing the government to establish a special criminal court in May 1963 (Thompson and Adloff 1981:28).

In March 1963, Tombalbaye arrested three cabinet ministers and the Speaker of the National Assembly, Mahamat Abdelkerim, and many other Christian and Muslim activists. Subsequently, on March 26, he dissolved the National Assembly in order to hold new elections that would allow him to govern unhindered. In September 1963, he arrested Djebrine Ali Kerallah, a northern minister, and Jean Baptiste, the popular mayor of Fort-Lamy, moves that caused rioting in the capital and in Am-Timam, resulting in the deaths of at least 100 or 500 people, depending on sources (Whiteman 1988:6). Ahmed Koulamallah, the wily politician who used to turn the Territorial Assembly upside down with his eloquent and inflammatory speeches (Thompson and Adloff 1981:437–438), was arrested after his 1963 deportation back to Chad from Cameroon. The atmosphere of suspicion and violence was heightened when the president, alleging that he'd uncovered several coup conspiracies engineered by the opposition, subsequently declared a state of emergency. This led to an amendment of the constitution on June 4, 1964, that made Chad *de jure* a single-party state.

Meanwhile, the Sara occupied civil service positions for which many (and not all) were neither technically nor culturally trained, leading to serious incidents. Significant violent reactions by the Mubi of Batha occurred on September 2, 1965 and in October 1965. The Mubi did not understand why the government was demanding a surtax on their cattle and personal incomes, which in some areas, tripled the current tax. The government euphemistically labelled the surtax a "loan" to the government to finance necessary projects in the area. As a sign of displeasure, the Mubi killed ten government officials. The authorities, on orders from N'Djamena, responded by killing 500 Mubi, including the local National Assembly delegate (Collier 1990:20). (The president confirmed the number killed as only 270 "bandits") (Chapelle 1980:193).

The Mangalme Rebellion, as the Mubi uprising was later called, spread to the north where there had been much discontent, not just with the fact that the Sara were now occupying many lower and middle level civil service posts, but also because they showed little respect for northern and Islamic traditions. In February 1967, a *préfet* and a

souspréfet were killed in Wadai and Salamat. Why? The *Mission de Réforme Administrative* (MRA), a 30-member French team commissioned by the president in April 1969 to examine the causes of northern civil revolt, gives part of the answer. The MRA reported incidents of "insensitivity" on the part of southern officials, including: torturing, disrobing, and parading women in public; levying fines (50,000 FCFA for each offense) for not cutting one's beard; forcing the Tubu to be sedentary cultivators of crops (as were the southerners during the colonial period) rather than herding cattle; disdain for the *dia,* or the blood wealth in Biltine-Ennedi-Tibesti (BET), shown by prefects such as Lieutenant (later General) Negue Djogo (appointed in 1966); and severe punishment (50–100 whip slashes per person) for those caught in a dispute.

Other restrictions and impositions included, for wearing a turban, an important old tradition in the north, a fine of 5,000 FCFA, or imprisonment, if payment was not forthcoming. Holding a meeting of as few as two people was punishable by one month in jail and a fine of 50,000 FCFA (See Galopin 1971). Unrest in the northern countryside encouraged northern politicians and nationalists to meet under the leadership of Ibrahim Abbatcha, at Nyala, Sudan, on June 22, 1966 and to establish the National Liberation Front (FROLINAT), whose objective was the forcible overthrow of the regime in N'Djamena.

Government abuses continued in the north despite subtle warnings. On the night of September 2–3, 1966, for example, a dance resulted in an altercation between civilians and the military and the death of one government soldier in BET. As as result, the *souspréfet* ordered the army to round up the population and take all men, women, and children to prison, strip them naked, and beat them with a whip and bayonets. Such provocation grew so unbearable to the Tubu that their spiritual leader, *derdei* Wedei Kichidemi, exiled himself along with 1,000 followers to Libya at the end of 1966, after Tombalbaye had stripped him of his traditional judicial powers and refused to appoint his son, Gukuni Wedei, secretary of the Bardai tribunal (Kelley 1986:9). The president had also supported a rival of the *derdei,* Chaimi Sougoumi, for a seat from Tibesti in Chad's National Assembly. Many analysts consider the humiliation and the flight of the *derdei,* father of the future prominent rebel leader and president of Chad, Gukuni Wedei, as signaling the earnest beginning of the northern rebellion against N'Djamena.

FROLINAT soon split into three army factions, but the banner of its revolt spread across the northern plains and hills from BET to Chari-Bagirmi and to Wadai. In March 1968, encouraged by FROLINAT, the Tubu Nomad Guard revolted in Aouzou and captured the garrison from government troops, holding it captive until August of that year, when French troops could come and free it. Unwisely, following a misunderstanding with the French, Tombalbaye forced the French troops (still protecting the north, even after independence) to leave the BET in January 1965. He replaced them with Chadian administrators whose major function was to keep law and order, and not just, as Zartman (1986a:21) puts it, perhaps sarcastically, to "collect new taxes and compulsory national loans." Compounding these difficulties, the Chadian regular Army (composed of four infantry battalions) was predominantly southern, and had only two Arab lieutenants. As the revolt continued to spread, the Chadian troops that replaced the French were viewed as an army of occupation and treated in such a hostile manner that it is reported that the children of southern politicians and civil servants had to use a military escort to attend school (Thompson and Adloff 1981:46).

Politically, Tombalbaye faced increased opposition within the government as well as the debilitating and demoralizing effects of the rebellion being waged in the countryside by FROLINAT. In 1968, as a result of the spreading revolt, the president had to swallow his pride: he asked President Charles de Gaulle to honor the military pact between Chad and France. Reluctantly, de Gaulle authorized the use of French forces in 1969. When the troops arrived on April 14, 1969 under General Michel Arnauld, Leclerc's former companion, Tombalbaye tried to dictate the mission of the Operation. At one point, for example, he summoned the general to one of the Defense Council meetings and reportedly told him to wipe out all Arabs at N'Goura, near N'Djamena, because they did not deserve to be called Chadians. The general took offense, replying: "I am a French general and I will not engage in genocide." Silence followed, it is reported, and Tombalbaye ordered the general to avail himself of the first flight to France. He was replaced by General Cortadellas in September 1969 (Chapelle 1980:261). Cortadellas, who seemed to get along well with the president, established several militias in Guéra and Wadai against the rebels. Because the nomadic Misirye, whose camps the FROLINAT was pillaging, responded positively to the anti-guerrilla campaign there, the president ordered that guns be distributed to them (Chapelle 1980:261).

Reflecting the country's tense atmosphere, on August 27, 1971, Tombalbaye announced that he'd uncovered another plot to overthrow him, and accused Colonel Kadhafi of Libya of having been involved in the conspiracy. Then students rioted in N'Djamena on September 29–30, 1971, in spite of the fact that Tombalbaye had announced two popular amnesty programs in April 1971. All these occurrences seemed to confirm that the president had become unpopular both in the north and the south.

During the early 1960s, Tombalbaye showed the same stern hand for his opponents whether they were from north or south, or were Christian or Muslim, but his southern constituency remained loyal. To endear himself to the traditional authorities and show his scorn for the elite in the early 1970s, the president started a series of reforms. These were related to his new cultural philosophy known in Chad as *authenticité* or *Tchaditude,* a more radical version of a cultural revolution initiated in Zaire by President Sésé Séko Mobutu. Essentially, *authenticité* emphasized the Africanization of the country's institutions, changing Western names for sites and streets, using the term *compatriote* among all citizens irrespective of rank and social status, and adopting an African traditional name if a person had a Western name. To provide an example, the president adopted the name Ngarta (Chief) Tombalbaye. Fort-Lamy became N'Djamena ("the place of rest") and Fort-Archambault was baptized Sarh.

Antoine Bangui-Rombaye (1990:151), a former minister of planning imprisoned by President Tombalbaye and released April 28, 1975 under General Malloum's amnesty, notes that changing one's Christian name, as required by the cultural revolution, was intended to achieve two purposes: the first was to camouflage the failures of the regime; the second to increase revenues, since every time citizens changed their name, they had to buy stamps! More serious, the president reinstituted as obligatory the Sara traditional initiation called *yondo,* which included circumcision and clitoridectomy According to the president's directives, the *yondo* would apply to anyone between the ages of 16 and 51 employed or seeking government employment. However, Bangui-Rombaye says that the decree on the *yondo,* called *beul* among his Sara Gor clansmen, actually applied to all southern Chadians, regardless of age, religion, or culture, thus making everyone

vulnerable. Complying with the order, some 3,000 civil servants, including two cabinet ministers and one colonel, went back to their villages between mid-1973 and April 1974 to undergo the ritual (Whiteman 1988:8 and Collier 1990:23). There's no evidence to believe, however, that the Baptist president, himself, turned his back on Christianity, and donned instead, African or Chadian traditional values!

A seminar of Chadian cadres, an amalgam of civil servants and intellectuals, mainly southern, held in N'Djamena on May 30, 1981, concluded:

> We should not fool ourselves, because all changes [made by Tombalbaye] were superficial. The repressive and policing apparatus was reinforced. In the name of combatting the armed rebellion of the north, the regime, under the cover of the so-called policy of authenticity, tried to destroy the growing opposition from certain personalities in the south. The initiation, a noble ancestral practice, lost its real objective and was used to humiliate opponents physically and systematically (See *Séminaire National des Cadres Tchadiens* 1981:138–139).

Tombalbaye's cultural philosophy was reinforced by the creation of a new party in August 1973, called the *Mouvement National Pour La Révolution Culturelle et Sociale* (MNRCS). The institutionalization of the cultural revolution by the MNRCS resulted in the mysterious disappearances of many people, including prominent Christians, pastors, and educated Sara who opposed the *yondo*. Once in the bush, according to some eyewitnesses, the "child" destined "to die to be born man" was subjected to torture, brain-washing, beating, and murder, under the initiating elders. Thus, as one eyewitness notes:

> The pastors and the Protestants who refused to submit to *yondo* were considered anti-Christian and opponents of the regime. In revenge their parents were dismembered, literally limb by limb, before being buried alive… [In certain areas] churches were closed down through ministerial orders, and…Christians were killed. The Evangelist Barthelemey enclosed in a tam-tam (trunk of a cut tree) died after being completely immobilized for fifteen days (Bangui-Rombaye 1990:154–155).

Reportedly, some people were even squashed dead between tree trunks (N'Gangbet 1984:21). The situation in the south was aggravated after August 17, 1974, when the president, to combat famine caused by the drought and promote self-reliance, announced Operation Agriculture (also known as Operation Cotton), designed to raise cotton output to 750,000 tons by 1975—a 600 percent increase over 1973–1974. It would have mobilized over 1.5 million people to work on more than 500,000 hectares of land "without significant fiscal outlays" (Decalo 1987:239). The project, which recruited both farmers and urbanites, was abandoned following the president's assassination in 1975.

Unable to slow the guerrilla advances in the north and east, Tombalbaye accused the Army of ineffectiveness, calling it a *désolant spectacle de mauvais esprit* (a shameful case of low morale) for the military reverses it had suffered. He also accused many government officials of attempting to overthrow him (See Decalo 1987:102–103 and

Thompson and Adloff 1981:26). Several reasons accounted for the inefficiency of the *Forces Armées Tchadiennes* (FAT) even as early as 1974:

1. It was a small force for such a huge and rugged country, comprising no more than 4,000 soldiers at any one time, not much greater than that of FROLINAT, which, reportedly, had close to 3,000 guerrillas scattered in the Sahel.
2. The rebels, although fighting each other at times and having difficulties on the ground in transporting war materiel and in recruiting guerrillas to their cause, presented a semblance of organization and efficiency as they divided Chad into seven military regions or *wilayas* under specially trained commandos.
3. By 1974, the rebels were using modern weapons (Reyna 1995a: 19–23).
4. The Chadian Army was desperately divided within itself, partly because of the president's interference.
5. The FAT weapons were in short supply and there was no air force or significant other means to transport war materiel and resources to the field once the hidden guerrillas were spotted.

In June 1973, the N'Djamena airport came under attack. Incidents of this nature and the political unrest in the country led to the arrest of several Army officers that year, including General Felix Malloum, accused of participating in a bizarre "Black Sheep Plot," which allegedly involved a Sara ritual of burying a sheep alive to control events—the particular event in question was the desired overthrow of the president! The leader of the party's women's wing, Mrs. Kalthouma Nguembang, was implicated in this plot. That same year, a prominent Sara dissident born in Fort-Archambault, Dr. Outel Bono, living in Paris, one of only two Chadian medical doctors in 1962 and former member of the *Union Nationale Tchadienne* (predecessor of FROLINAT), was assassinated. He had been in the process of forming a new political party advocating a dialogue with the rebels and was gunned down just prior to holding a press conference. Because Tombalbaye announced the formation of the MNRCS the very day following the assassination, the public, wrongly or rightly, implicated the president's agents and the French secret service in the murder. Many observers believe that the Bono case precipitated the establishment of the MNRCS.

Elimination of the old party hardly appeased southern elite dissatisfaction at the way the president was handling the country's domestic and international problems. For example, Libya's sympathy toward the rebels became a thorny issue for Tombalbaye and provoked the president in 1971 to accuse his northern neighbor of conspiring to overthrow him. The diplomatic stand-off with Kadhafi was only resolved through the mediation of President Diori of Niger. Moreover, by 1973, Tombalbaye had lost the Aouzou Strip to Kadhafi, even after an attempt to appease Libya by breaking Chad's diplomatic relations with Israel and recognizing Palestinian rights. Whether Tombalbaye actually acquiesced in the annexation of the Aouzou Strip by Libya is an issue still being debated today by Chad experts, most of whom reject the view held by some, that Tombalbaye secretly ceded the Strip to Libya (See Zartman 1986a:15). No convincing argument or evidence has ever been made public that proves this assertion. Under OAU pressure, the Libyans produced on November 28, 1987 a document of doubtful validity purportedly written by Tombalbaye to Kadhafi, in which the Chadian president declares that the "Aouzou strip has been and will continue to be, without doubt, an integral part of

Libyan territory" (*Jeune Afrique* 1988:26–29). Perhaps the most likely explanation is that Tombalbaye had reached a point where he knew he could never challenge Libya's annexation militarily. At the same time he needed assistance against the rebels, and Kadhafi promised to cease his support of them and provide Chad with much needed financial assistance—although, in the ensuing years, this barely materialized.

Perhaps sensing that the end was approaching, Tombalbaye issued increasingly bizarre accusations. In June 1973, before an audience of thousands of Chadians in N'Djamena, the embattled president accused Georges Pompidou's advisor on African Affairs, Jacques Foccart, of having plotted fourteen unsuccessful *coups* against him. Soon the tense situation in the countryside threatened Sara political control and increased the sense of crisis in the capital. On March 23, 1975, the president arrested a number of senior Army officers accused of plotting against him. This was the last straw. Virtually unknown members of the *gendarmerie,* instigated by junior military officers, mainly Sara, decided to end Tombalbaye's rule. They assassinated him in an assault on the presidential palace at dawn on April 13, 1975.

Reportedly the death of the president was hailed with joy by people from many walks of life. Bangui-Rombaye (1990:159) relates that as soon as the coup was announced on April 13, 1975, in his native village, women shouted "'you-yous' of joy; my mother forgot her tears, and my father had sighs of happiness in his heart all day long and all night." It was the song of victory, while in N'Djamena, "people drank until they were drunk," told each other stories about how they had escaped death during *yondo* or how they endured tyranny. Bangui-Rombaye adds, "The *coup d'état* caused general relief and the Army was hailed as the savior," while bands of kids sang in the Gambaye language: "Doua m'ban wa? Have you heard? Ah…haa! Doua m'ban wa? Have you heard? Gendamadje tol N'Garta! The Gendarmes killed N'Garta!" *(Ibid.)*.

One group, however, seems to have stayed with Tombalbaye practically throughout his presidency: the traditional pre-colonial authorities, including some Muslims whom he, as leader of the PPT during the colonial period, had apparently tried to destroy. For example, three paramount chiefs—Ali Silek of Wadai, Mahamat Youssouf of Bagirmi, and the *alifa* of Mao in Kanem—who survived the colonial ordeal—stood behind the president and refused to support the FROLINAT rebels. Thompson and Adloff (1981:43) conclude: "The outcome of his [Tombalbaye's] long struggle with the traditional authority might be termed a tie, or at best, a Pyrrhic victory. In the end it was the government succeeding him that abolished the office of paramount chief the month after Tombalbaye was killed."

What role did religion play in Tombalbaye's politics? It would appear that Tombalbaye's treatment of people was motivated less by religion than by his attempt to eliminate the opposition to his government. On this score, Bernard Lanne and others such as Gali Ngothe Gatta, have argued convincingly that the president always attempted to balance, whenever possible, Christian and Muslim representation in government. Lanne notes, for example, that the seven legislative assemblies, elected between 1946 and 1969, had a northern majority in the proportion of 61 to 57; and that, apart from the weak Assembly presidencies of Sahoulba in 1957–1960 and Dounia in 1959, the National Assembly always had a northern (Muslim) president: Allahou Taher in 1959–1960, Ahmed Kotoko in 1960–1961, Mahamat Abdelkerim in 1962–1963, Adoum Tchere in 1964–1968, and Abbo Nassour in 1970–1975. This meant that, while a southerner

presided over the executive branch, a northerner controlled the affairs of the legislative body (Gatta 1985:176).

Furthermore, Lanne and Gatta point out, the transition of the PPT to a single-party status was approved at a party congress on January 20, 1963 at Fort-Archambault. The National Political Bureau, which became the organ directing the party and the state through an act of the congress, was created entirely on a bipartisan basis, southerners with northerners equally represented. Many ranking northern politicians, such as Abbo Nassour, Adoun Tchere, Baba Hassane, Abderahim Djalal, and Aliso Kosso, consented to the one-party state stipulation (See Lanne 1981:56). Gatta adds that Tombalbaye was so sensitive to the accusation that he was antiMuslim that whenever he travelled within the country or abroad, he made sure he would almost always be accompanied by Muslim deputies to show that "Chadian unity was not just an empty word"(Gatta 1985:175).

It is also known that Tombalbaye's first cabinet (March 24, 1959) was 65 percent Muslim, and that during the 1970s, at least 30 percent of the administrative personnel was from the north and Muslim. There were even cases in the south where *préfets* and *souspréfets,* were Muslim. In the north many of the *préfets* were Muslim (Lanne 1981:55–56). Former rebel leader and president, Hissein Habre, for example, before going to Paris to study, had been a *souspréfet* during the early 1960s at Moussoro, Kanem. Michael Kelley, however, believes that "After 1963, a certain disequilibrium developed between the northern and central-eastern regions and that of the southwest regarding the higher governmental positions. The balance of power within the state increasingly fell toward certain southwestern elites to the disadvantage of northern and central-eastern Moslems" (Kelley 1986:7).

Without denying the tilt towards the south in government positions, Robert Buijtenhuijs (1978:25) notes that the so-called northern invasion of untrained southerners, particularly the Sara, was more apparent in the middle echelon of the civil service, i.e., clerks, teachers, nurses, and policemen, positions for which the northerners were not trained during the colonial period, mainly due to their own refusal to accept Western culture. There were times, for example, that when the French attempted to make the northern leadership send its children to school, parents would fool the authorities by sending the children of their slaves or of their former slaves rather than their own. As a result, about 70 percent of these positions were filled by the southerners, but in the higher echelons there was some parity (Buijtenhuijs 1978:182). Tombalbaye's attempts to include the north proves that he was sensitive—but only to a point—to the accusations that he was anti-Muslim and antinorth and that he attempted to do something to counter them. However, his concern about the negative response from his southern constituency may have prevented the president from enacting further "affirmative action" measures that would have neutralized northern complaints.

STATISM OVER FRAGMENTARY ETHNO-POLITICS (1975–1979)

The disappearance of Tombalbaye from the political scene provided the greatest opportunity for the new leadership to attempt to correct the shortcomings and injustices of the previous regime, well known both in the north and the south. Yet, as the following pages will attempt to demonstrate, the military interlude of the seventies turned out to be

no more than old wounds dressed in less colorful gauze, veering Chadian politics from one violent ethnically exclusive autocracy to another.

Following the president's assassination in April 1975, General Malloum was almost immediately sworn in as Head of State and Chairman of the *Conséil Supérieur Militaire* (CSM). Everything seemed to indicate that Malloum would be able to weather the storm; his ascent to power was hailed by some of the rebels as the beginning of a new era. In fact, he freed hundreds of political prisoners on April 28, 1975, and increased the number of northerners in the cabinet. However, Malloum lacked imagination and vision as head of state.

The new president had, of course, inherited a troubled political legacy. On April 21, 1974, in Bardai, Tibesti, Habre's and Gukuni's FAN had captured Mme. Françoise Claustre, a French archaeologist, along with other Europeans—Christophe Staewen, cousin of President Gustave Heinemann of West Germany, and Marc Combes—and demanded a huge ransom for their release. The German government immediately paid $823,000 and broadcast the rebel's message to the world. But for three years France was unsuccessful in its effort to negotiate with the rebels either through the Chadian government or directly. Eventually, Kadhafi's intervention and Gukuni's pressure on Habre prevailed and Mme. Claustre was released after a huge ransom had been paid. However, Habre had also captured Captain Pierre Galopin, a member of the 1969 *Mission Administrative de Réforme,* who was representing the N'Djamena government during the negotiations for the freedom of Claustre. Habre accused Galopin of spying for the regime and reports assert that he personally tortured and executed the envoy on April 4, 1975.

The outcome of the hostage case, as tragic as it was, provided the Command Council of the *Forces Armées du Nord*—CCFAN (FAN's decision-making body)—with much international publicity, and brought in funds and weapons from ransom. But it soured relations between France and Chad as well as between West Germany and the Malloum regime (Decalo 1977:19). Malloum was outraged by the fact that the French government had negotiated directly with the rebels. Yet, he erred when he expelled the French troops from Chad in September 1975. In the words of a Chadianist scholar, "By insisting on the withdrawal of French troops and guns in 1975 (only to bring them back on a reduced scale in 1978) Malloum sealed his fate. Once the protective shield of the French forces was removed from the Chadian cauldron, the FROLINAT armies took full advantage of Libyan support to consolidate their position on the ground and begin their march on N'Djamena" (Lemarchand 1985:246–247).

Indeed, when the new president ascended to power in 1975, his southern-based regime needed French military assistance perhaps more than ever before, notwithstanding the fact that the new head of state was able to get the support of the *derdei,* who returned from exile that year and unsuccessfully urged the Tubu to halt their rebellion. However, most Chadians, including the *derdei's* son, Gukuni Wedei, soon viewed the regime as a mere re-play, a *déjà vu,* of the preceding one under different trappings. As the 1981 National Seminar of Chadian Cadres noted in its conclusions: "The military *coup* was received with enthusiasm everywhere in the country…but soon we realized that this *coup d'état* was a palace revolt that did not modify in any way the past structures" (*Séminaire National des Cadres Tchadiens* 1981:139). Discontent and rebellion against the new regime burst out into the open on April 15, 1976, during the regime's first anniversary

celebrations in N'Djamena, when a grenade was thrown at Malloum and his entourage, killing some—but not the intended target, the president. Almost a year later, March 31, 1977, an attempted *coup* at the presidential residence ended the life of Lt. Col. Ali Dabio, who was defending the palace from the mutineers. This incident led to the execution of several military officers.

By 1977, FROLINAT had essentially split into several factions stemming from internal disagreements, one of which was the issue of how to react to Kadhafi's virtual annexation of the Aouzou Strip. The First Army, established in 1969, was a loose coalition of adventurous guerrilla groups operating in Eastern-Central Chad, including Wadai and Guéra. This force, about 2,000-men strong, suffered severe setbacks in 1969–1972 against General Cortadellas' forces (Buijtenhuijs 1987:34). Indeed, up to 1969, the First Army had waged more of a psychological than a guerrilla war, concentrating its activities on executing tax collectors and government officials as well as targeting defenseless institutions such as schools, dispensaries, and Christian missions (Reyna 1995a:17).

The Volcan Army was comprised mainly of Arab guerrillas who had shunned the leadership of Dr. Abba Siddick. Although perceived as anti-Arab, Siddick was chosen to succeed Ibrahim Abatcha as Secretary-General of FROLINAT. The new Army emerged in 1975 under the leadership of Mohamad Baghalani (subsequently killed in a traffic accident in 1977 in Tripoli). Eventually it coordinated its activities with Gukuni's Northern Army or the Second Liberation Army in Biltine and Salamat. During the 1980s, the Volcan Army was headed first by Ahmat Acyl, killed in an accident on July 19, 1982, and then by Acheikh Ibn Oumar. It engaged Chadian forces in the east along the Sudanese border. The Northern or Second Liberation Army operated until 1971 in the northwest, in Tibesti and Borkan, under the joint leadership of Hissein Habre and Gukuni Wedei. The Third Army, under a Nigerian *protégé,* Aboubakar Abderahmane, was based in the center-west, in Kanem Prefecture. It is worth noting here that a later political offshoot of the Volcan Army, the *Comité Démocratique de la Révolution* (CDR), whose most renowned leader turned out to be the ever-present Acheikh Ibn Oumar, emerged in mid-1980 and sought Libyan support.

Indeed, in spite of its alleged successes, until 1973, "Frolinat, as an organization managing activities against the Tombalbaye regime, was something of a myth" (Reyna 1995a:24). However, the weaker the government appeared in N'Djamena, the more impressive the fighting reputation of FROLINAT turned out to be. In fact, FROLINAT's internal struggle was such that, in October 1976, Habre and Gukuni split, forcing the former to leave with some 300 men and establish a military base of his own in Biltine, usurping for his troops the designation of the *Forces Armées du Nord* (FAN), while Wedei and Ahmat Acyl formed, in March 1978, the *Forces Armées Populaires* (FAP).

Just as in 1971–1972 (when the French left Chad believing that the government had turned the tide of war in its favor) (Zartman 1986a:15), it looked as if the Malloum government might have blocked FROLINAT's advance but for Libya's substantial weapons and logistical support. This allowed the rebels to lay siege twice to Faya-Largeau in 1976 and capture Bardai through the actions of the Command Council of the Northern Armed Forces (CCFAN) in June 1977 (Decalo 1977:26). These events forced the closing of Chad's border with Libya in October 1976. The possibility of defeat now loomed, requiring Malloum to recall the French troops in June 1978 to save his regime.

Subsequently, the rebels scored major victories, first in February 1978 and then in August of that year, with the capture of Fada, Ounianga-Kebir, and Faya-Largeau. The magnitude of the defeat suffered by government forces was such that it is estimated that in just six months Chad lost 2,000 of the 11,500-man force battling the rebels. As a consequence, Malloum, urged by some of his advisors, by Mobutu, and French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, did the heretofore unimaginable: he sought a rapprochement with one of the staunchest enemies of the Sara, Hissein Habre, whom he appointed prime minister, following the signing of a *Charte Fondamentale* in Khartoum in late August 1978. The *Charte Fondamentale* mandated the amalgamation of the two armies (FAT and FAN) into a unified National Army and close consultation between the president and the prime minister on important issues. However, Habre never intended to abandon his allegiance to FAN or to serve as a "number-two" man. Instead, he began acting as the president, vetoing Malloum's decisions and showing utter contempt for the head of state. As an editorial in *Le Monde* noted, "While Mr. Hissein Habre was ordering the arrest of General Malloum's friends and acting in an intimidating way toward southern elements in the government and administration, the head of state behaved the same way regarding the northerners" (*Le Monde* 1981:5).

Furthermore, Habre's speeches were often inflammatory, exacerbating further tensions between northerners and southerners. On one occasion, for example, addressing a mosque prayer in N'Djamena, he told his audience that "with him, no northerner, no Muslim would bow his head to a southerner;" he was their representative in N'Djamena and "the fight [against the south] would continue to the finish," to which the crowd applauded. This led the *muezzin* to call for a holy war the next day (Gatta 1985:177)! The presence of two hostile armies in the capital, the *Forces Armées du Nord* (FAN), whose allegiance was to Habre, and the *Forces Armées Tchadiennes* (FAT) under former chief of the *Gendarmerie,* Sara Colonel Abdelkerim Kamougue, who had sworn allegiance to the state but showed little loyalty to Malloum, set the stage for an armed conflict within the regime itself.

A minor incident sparked what became the first battle of N'Djamena in February 1979. An aborted strike organized by Muslim students at the *Lycée Félix Eboué* (most likely incited by Habre's FAN) led to a counter-reaction by non-Muslim students on February 12, 1979. To prevent a brawl among these students of opposing views, a *gendarme* fired a shot into the air to separate and disperse the two groups and attempted to install a 75 mm cannon on a tripod. The FAN (1,500-men strong at the time, according to some sources) intervened through the prime minister's guard and fired shots at the assembled Chadian *gendarmes*. None of the students was hurt as they scattered, but two civilian passers-by were killed (Ngabissio 1981:16).

Habre went to the national radio station to make a personal announcement, but the station staff, following consultations with the office of the presidency, refused to allow him to speak. Moments later, the radio station was afire. Around 12:00 noon, two of the six Chadian aircraft (AD4) operated by the Army fired at the prime minister's residence. Habre's FAN attempted to arrest members of the *gendarmerie* near the Central Hospital. Soon, some of Kamougue's 4,000 men, part of the FAT, joined the violence. A brief but bloody civil war ensued in which Gukuni's forces (FAP), coming from BET via Kanem, joined those of the FAN on February 19 against government forces. N'Djamena became a true battleground with mortar attacks and sounds of artillery day and night, causing the

deaths of some 2,000–5,000 people between February 12 and March 16, 1979, the start of the Kano conferences (Ngabissio 1981:25).

French forces under General Louis Forest, in Chad to defend the state, stood by passively, although they knew that the odds favored Habre. The reason for their hesitation was that, despite his murder in 1974 of Pierre Galopin, whom he had taken hostage in 1974, Habre was admired by the Chad-based French military as a courageous soldier and a shrewd military tactician. Eventually, pressured by the *Imam* of N'Djamena (who threatened to parade the corpses of those killed during the Chadian air strikes at the French Embassy) and by Habre's threat that he would take every French man and woman hostage, Forest demanded that the (supposedly French) mercenary pilots of the Chadian military Air Force stop their bombing. Otherwise, he said, he would block the runways to prevent the aircraft from landing (Gorini et Criton 1981:15). (Forest denied being involved in any way either in the hiring of pilots or in their activities in N'Djamena.)

A cease-fire was agreed to between government forces and Gukuni on February 22, 1979 under the auspices of General Forest. French passivity seems to have allowed Habre to occupy the *Quartier Sénégal* in northern N'Djamena and the quarter where the Mosque is located. Contrary to several reports, the evidence shows that Malloum did not flee the presidential palace, and Habre, with his 1,500 men (other sources cite the lower figure of 400–600 troops), did not take most of the city, which was still under government control. In March, 1979, as an extension of the civil war in the south, between 5,000 and 10,000 northerners and Muslims were murdered in Moundou and Sarh reportedly by Sara commandos. This massacre was said to have been perpetrated in revenge for those committed against southerners in Abéché, Biltine, and N'Djamena by the FAN (Whiteman 1988:11). Simultaneously, some 60,000 to 70,000 people, mostly southerners, left N'Djamena and sought refuge in Cameroon, particularly in the small town of Kusseri.

The year 1979 presaged an ominous future for Chad. Its hitherto indivisible territory and sovereignty had been shattered, for, in fact, the country was now divided into four nearly autonomous sections. The first of these was Faya-Largeau, the capital of BET, controlled by rebel forces with assistance from Colonel Kadhafi. The second was N'Djamena and its vicinity, under the central government, which had little control even over the capital, as factional forces were roaming around virtually unhindered. The third part of the country was the south, gravitating between secession and federation and dominated by commandos known as Sara *codos* or *commandos rouges,* who committed all kinds of lawless acts. The south was also ruled by followers of Colonel Abdelkerim Kamougue, centered at Moundou. Kamougue is said to have had virtual control of five of the fourteen prefectures: Tandjile, Logone Oriental, Logone Occidental, Mayo-Kebbi, and Moyen-Chari, and parts of the Chari-Bagirmi, whose capital is N'Djamena. Finally, there was the Aouzou Strip, which Kadhafi had annexed and fortified in 1972–1973 (Alima 1981:97–98).

Notwithstanding its short duration, the civil war had tragic and lasting consequences, intensifying the regional and religious hatred between north and south and causing an exodus of southerners from N'Djamena, vowing to take revenge on the northerners, which they did in March 1979 (See Lanne 1981:59). The first battle of N'Djamena tilted the balance of power in favor of the northern rebels, who were now poised to control N'Djamena for the first time since independence. In an attempt to resolve the conflict,

Nigeria, supported by Cameroon, Sudan, Libya, and Niger, convened two conferences between March and April 1979, called Kano I and Kano II (Kano III scheduled for May never materialized).

Kano I, attended by Malloum and Habre (who, by the way, out of mutual distrust, left N'Djamena at the same time but on different planes) created a Council of State under the chairmanship of Gukuni. This move displeased those factions who had not been invited to the conference, and the Council therefore did not function as hoped. The Accord mandated the following:

1. demilitarization of the city of N'Djamena, forcing all military factions to respect a 100-km demilitarized zone around the capital
2. release of all political prisoners
3. dissolution of all private or factional armies
4. establishment of an integrated national force
5. eventual retreat of the French troops
6. supervision of a cease-fire by Nigerian forces (See *Accord de Kano,* 1981:120–122).

Malloum resigned his position sometime after the conference, probably under pressure from Nigeria with France's tacit acquiescence, when he realized that, for all practical purposes, he could no longer defend the capital.

On April 3, 1979, after the failure of Kano I, Kano II, also under Nigerian auspices, called for a cease-fire between the factions, and reiterated the same principles that had been accepted in March 1979. A Transitional Government of National Union (GUNT) was created, led by an unknown civil servant, Lol Mohammed Chowa, a *protégé* of Nigeria, and leader of the obscure *Mouvement Populaire pour la Libération du Tchad* (MPLT). But the GUNT did not take effect until April 29, when Lol became President. Habre, the Defense Minister, Gukuni, the Interior Minister, and Abdelkerim Kamougue, Vice-President, split the cabinet's composition among eleven northerners (all Muslim) and ten southerners. The GUNT's lack of stature and credibility, the continued allegiance of Habre to his *Forces Armées du Nord* (FAN), and the in-fighting within the *Forces Armées Populaires* (FAP), many of whom resisted being amalgamated into a national army, contributed to chaos, violence, and banditry in both the countryside and the capital. All of this occurred in spite of the presence of Nigerian troops.

The May 1979 foray of the FAP-FAT (the GUNT then) to subdue the southern rebels, who had virtually seceded from N'Djamena, created further tensions, as the government force was seen by southerners as an occupation force rather than a national army intent on restoring the integrity of the nation. To salvage the Kano Accord, Nigeria, supported by Libya, convened another series of meetings in Lagos on May 27, 1979 (Lagos I) and August 19, 1979 (Lagos II). The Lagos Accords made possible the "integration of Ahmat Acyl, Abba Siddick, and others into the GUNT" (Decalo 1987:191) as well as the factions that had been excluded from Kano in early 1979. Lagos II included virtually all Chadian factions. Together they signed, in the former Nigerian capital, an agreement that made the GUNT even more representative. Gukuni was made President (and not the Nigerian favorite Mahamat Lol Chowa), with Habre as Defense Minister, and Colonel Kamougue as Vice-President The articles of the Accord, just as did those of the Kano Accords, called for an immediate cease-fire, the demilitarization of a 100-km zone around N'Djamena, and the complete integration of the Armed Forces.

In addition to these terms, the Accord mandated the demilitarization and disarmament of civilians and the creation of an urban police force in N'Djamena, and called for a general amnesty. The new government would be made up of a president and vice-president selected by consensus among the signatories, and two ministers from each of Chad's fourteen prefectures (*Accord de Lagos* 1981:124–133), but would last only eighteen months. It would be replaced by a government resulting from free democratic elections to be held eighteen months from the date of the Accord's signature (Kelley 1986:17). Unfortunately, because it relied heavily on Gukuni's faction, the new government pleased few. Consequently, the various armed groups decided to resume their attempt to dislodge any N'Djamena regime that was not drawn from their own ranks.

THE DEMISE OF THE STATE (1979–1982)

The major political consequence of the February-March 1979 battle of N'Djamena was, as Bernard Lanne notes, the destruction of the Chadian state (Lanne 1981:62). This would take a long time to reconstitute. As happened during Malloum's rule, the two Tubu leaders, Gukuni and Habre clashed in personality and leadership style. Their disagreements led to the longest and bloodiest civil conflict, the second battle of N'Djamena, beginning March 22,1980 and continuing until December 1980. It was joined by the other factions. The major military actors were the *Forces Armées Populaires,* apparently coordinated by Libyan General Mansur Abdel Aziz; the *Forces Armées Tchadiennes',* and the *Forces Armées du Nord* (supplied with money and weapons by Egypt and Sudan). Reportedly, some 5,000–10,000 people died in the inferno, and, again, the few remaining French troops *(Opération Tacaud),* who left on May 4, 1980, looked aside, claiming that the conflict was a Chadian internal affair.

A veteran of the Vietnam War, witnessing the clashes from the Cameroonian side, reported that the fight in the capital was "more intense than he had experienced at Hue during the Tet Offensive, while other observers noted that, in the last three days alone, many thousands of artillery shells had been fired, mainly by the Libyans and their *protégés* (*Ibid.:* 64). Habre's men, having no armor but "only a scattering of anti-tank grenade launchers captured from their opponents" (Foltz 1988:64), lost the initial contest primarily because of Libyan support of Gukuni's troops. Habre was removed from office by Gukuni on April 25, 1980. Eventually the deposed minister of defense had to flee N'Djamena—without giving up the struggle. Indeed, after signing a cease-fire on December 16, 1980, Habre defiantly announced in Dakar on December 31 that he would resume fighting as a guerrilla against Gukuni. He moved east and began reorganizing his fighting force.

In N'Djamena, Gukuni, President of the GUNT, attempted to cling to power through assistance from Kadhafi, who saw him as more malleable than Habre. Indeed, on January 15, 1980, Libya announced that it had signed a Treaty of Friendship with Chad, giving a free hand to the northern neighbor to enter Chad and influence events on an unprecedented scale. Article 1 of the agreement committed each country to mutual defense, stipulating that the threat against one constituted a threat against the other. Article 2 dictated the sharing of internal and external military and intelligence

information, and article 5 guaranteed freedom of movement of individuals between the two countries. A pledge of considerable financial assistance and educational opportunities for Chad by the Libyan Popular Socialist Arab Jamahiriya was part of the agreement (*Traité d'Amitié* 1981).

The pact actually meant that Chad acquiesced in the colonization of its northern part by Libya; the use of Libyan identity cards (already in place among the Tubu and the Arabs); the adoption of Libyan currency (already unofficially spread throughout the region); and the omnipresence of Libyan troops. Following the first accord, for example, in November 1980, Colonel Kadhafi and Gukuni toured Faya-Largeau together and inaugurated a health clinic at Aouzou (Grain 1981:82). On December 14, 1980, Libya's Islamic Legion entered N'Djamena with Soviet-made T-54 and T-55 tanks, several rocket launchers, and a number of 81 mm mortars (Lemarchand 1985:247). However, what angered every neighboring state and created apprehension all over Africa was the stunning announcement on January 6, 1981 that Libya and Chad had signed a treaty of merger, in essence, making Chad an Islamic republic under Libya! Negative reaction from the francophone countries and others was swift. Francophone leaders demanded that France intervene lest the same fate befall some of Kadhafi's neighbors. A few months later, the OAU voted to send an inter-African peace-keeping force to assist the government in power in its struggle against the rebel factions and urged Libya to withdraw from Chad. Unexpectedly, Libya withdrew quickly from N'Djamena in November 1981, and some 3,800 troops from an Inter-African Force (IAF) took their position near the capital. (Since the next chapter details the reasons why Kadhafi decided to pull his troops out of Chad, we will not list them here.)

Unfortunately, the Inter-African Force (IAF), entrusted to Nigerian General Geofrey Ajiga, floundered; it was badly trained, poorly financed, and charged with an unclear mission. It was unable to stop violence in the capital or in the rest of the country. Habre's FAN, now solidly regrouped and financed by France, the United States, Sudan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, slowly but surely moved from the east, threatening every government post along the way. Indeed, on November 19, 1981, Abéché fell to Habre's 4,000 Goranes (Arab designation of the Tubu). In May 1982, Habre successfully advanced his forces in BET and the strategic passes in the west, intent on ultimately choking off N'Djamena along the Oum Hadjer-Ati line. Within six months of the arrival of the OAU force, Habre defeated Gukuni's troops and, declaring Chad's Third Republic, re-entered N'Djamena on June 7, 1982, making himself the new head of state. Gukuni, forced to skip town, hurried to Algiers, whence he was still able to re-group his followers, both in Northern Chad and in Tripoli. In August, Habres' FAN, now renamed *Forces Armées Nationales Tchadiennes* (FANT), confidently marched south and overran Kamougue's headquarters in Moundou, forcing the southern colonel to flee to Cameroon, Gabon, and then Algiers.

Kadhafi and Gukuni did not take the defeat lightly. Aided by FAT troops, the *Comité Démocratique de Révolution* (CDR) of Acheikh Ibn Oumar, they formed a government in exile, headquartered at Bardai, and began systematically occupying the major towns. The rebels were trained by Libya and, paradoxically, at one time, put under the command of a French-trained Sara officer, General Negue Djogo (Tartter 1990:192). On June 13–24 and July 8–10, 1983, respectively, Faya-Largeau and Abéché fell to Gukuni's rebel

forces, an occurrence that precipitated, in July-August 1983, the return of the French in *Opération Manta*.

Although government forces were able to retake Abéché and Faya-Largeau in mid-July, 1983, they lost Faya-Largeau again on August 10, 1983. As if accepting the division of Chad, the French troops, instead of moving north and repelling the Islamic Legionnaires and Gukuni's rebels, simply drew a line (the so-called Red Line) on parallel 15 (later extended to parallel 16) beyond which the Libyan and rebel forces would not be allowed to advance. Significantly, French assistance, in the form of an air counter-attack, occurred only after Gukuni's troops, backed by heavy Libyan armor, attacked Ziguey in northern Kanem on January 24, 1984.

The Red Line, running from Koro Toro to Oum-Chalouba, created a stalemate that brought an agreement between President Mitterrand and Colonel Kadhafi in September 1984, under which their troops were to withdraw simultaneously and immediately from Chad. As a result, by mid-November 1984, the French had actually removed their troops from Chad, although the Colonel had not. Instead, he fortified his position in the north, particularly in Faya-Largeau, Bardai, and Aouzou, reinforced by a major jet landing airstrip at Ouadi-Doum, 90 kilometers from Faya-Largeau. This meant the potential for war still loomed and Habre's government, although recognized by France and the international community, was not at all secure.

What changed the equation was the crossing of parallel 15 by the Libyan Army and its Air Force on February 10, 1986 and its occupation of Oum-Chalouba, Ziguey, and Kouba Olanga. Their ultimate goal was N'Djamena itself. This reverse forced the French to return to Chad in what became *Opération Epervier* (Sparrowhawk). On February 16, 1986, French bombings paralyzed Ouadi-Doum for a few days, while Habre's troops, on the ground, pushed the invading forces back to their earlier positions in the north. Finally, in October 1987, the two countries re-established diplomatic relations, and, in November of that year, exchanged diplomatic ambassadors, a feat that few people believed the Tubu leader could ever have forced on the Colonel.

On the domestic side, once in power, Habre's new task as a statesman (and no longer as a guerrilla leader), was to reconcile the country. He attracted a former rival, Kamougue, who became minister of agriculture in June 1986, and persuaded Acheikh Ibn Oumar to pull his CDR away from the remnants of the GUNT (theoretically still under Gukuni). He was also able to convince Mahamat Idris, Gukuni's trusted lieutenant, to join him. Djibril Negue Djogo, southern leader of the *Front Démocratique Tchadien* (FDT) and former chief-of-staff of the GUNT, made peace with Habre on December 23, 1985, and became minister of justice. Other important individuals and factions within the GUNT and among the southern *codos* followed. To reduce the rancor of the south toward his FAN, Habre created the *Union Nationale Pour l'Indépendence et Révolution* (UNIR) in 1984, and established a committee that was to move Chad toward democratic reforms, clamored for by the French and most of Africa by 1988. In 1985, some 3,000 southern commandos had surrendered to Habre, while their leaders joined the government. A few of them were actually incorporated into the Armed Forces. Several factors, however, worked to undermine Habre's leadership in the country. These included his sharp disagreements with his most trusted lieutenant, Colonel Idris Deby (See *International Herald Tribune* 1995:5), who had been primarily responsible for the defeat of the Libyan forces in 1986 and 1987; the ruthless treatment of his opponents; the resurgence of past

factional differences among the people with whom he had surrounded himself; and a French conspiracy against him in favor of Deby. As is now clear, Deby was mysteriously invited by France to be trained at the Ecole de Guerre in 1985, after being replaced by Hassan Djamous as Commander-in-Chief of the Chadian forces. Three years later, in 1988, he and his successor, Djamous, were accused of plotting a *coup* against Habre, causing both to flee to Sudan. The inactivity of the French, therefore, and their lukewarm defense of Habre even during the brilliant campaigns against the Libyan Legion in the north in 1986–1987, make one suspicious of the argument often advanced that France became disenchanted with Habre because of his "failure to initiate a transition towards multiparty democracy" demanded by Paris (Lanne 1994:264).

Of course, Habre's regime tried to track down Deby and Djamous. Djamous was killed by government troops, but Deby escaped to Libya and was able to organize his *Action du 1 Avril* in Sudan, whose aim was to topple the N'Djamena regime. In March 1990, Deby formed a new organization called the *Forces Patriotiques pour le Salut,* later known as the *Mouvement Patriotique Pour Le Salut* (MPS), and began a series of incursions into Chad. At first, these were slowed by the presence of *Opération Epervier*. On November 10, 1990, Deby assaulted government forces at Tine, northeast of Abéché. Later, after French troops repelled him and then simply stood by, he was able to take Tine. Continued French inaction enabled him to enter Abéché unopposed on November 29, 1990 and to march towards N'Djamena, forcing Habre to flee on November 30, 1990. As Deby entered the gates of N'Djamena on December 2, 1990 amidst chaos and looting, Habre and his family fled to Maroua, Cameroon, and then sought permanent asylum in Senegal. Once again, the French simply looked on, claiming to uphold the principle of non-interference in Chad's internal affairs. As astute a politician as he appeared to be, Habre had been unable to foresee that the French would undermine his position.

Unfortunately, Deby's ouster of Habre did not bring peace to the country. In December 1991, some 3,000 troops said to be loyal to Habre attacked several towns around Lake Chad (Lanne 1994:265). Attempted *coups* were reported in 1991–1993. Two were serious: one in February 1992 and another in January 1993. Moreover, disaffected former Habre supporters have since launched attacks against the government in the north and the west (in Kanem, for example). In addition, the south continued to be a problem. In 1994, after denials and attempts at preventing an impartial inquiry, the government admitted that a massacre of southerners in April of that year had been carried out by government troops, now called *Armées Nationales Tchadiennes* (ANT).

CONCLUSION

With French support Deby has been able to survive and continues to maintain the semblance of peace initiated by Habre's regime. However, Chad is far from being a tranquil place, and reconciliation between north and south has not taken place. Habre had made it possible for the government to function once again, although in limping fashion, and created relatively favorable conditions for attracting financial assistance from foreign donors and international agencies. He had further restored Chad's territorial integrity, except for the Aouzou Strip. Deby, on the other hand, came under pressure from the French to introduce democratic reforms, something he was very reluctant to do until

1993. After much procrastination, he finally permitted the formation of parties to challenge his *Mouvement Patriotique pour le Salut* (MPS). On January 15–April 7, 1993, a National Conference, attended by some 800 representatives from the government, the country's professional associations, the thirty registered parties, and trade unions, was assembled in N'Djamena. The Conference elected a transition prime minister who could reconcile the various factions and prepare the country for presidential elections (*La Gazette du Golfe* 1993).

Fidele Moungar, a Sara medical doctor by training and former minister of national and higher education, assumed the responsibility (to be extended, if necessary, for just one more year) of moving the country to a new constitution and to democratic elections, with Deby remaining the head of state. Along with the transition government, the Conference approved an interim legislature called *Conséil Superiéur de Transition* (CST), made up of 57 members who elected as chairman Mahamat Lol Chowa, leader of the *Rassemblement Pour La Démocratie et le Progrès* (former President of the GUNT, back in 1979, following the Kano Accords). The CST was supposed to act as a Constituent Assembly. Thus, even in 1995, the situation in Chad was extremely fluid; violence and state repression carried out by Deby's security forces and other organs of the government had not subsided.

Postponed from January 1995 due to disagreement between the government and the opposition, presidential elections were scheduled to take place in April 1995, to be followed by legislative elections. Unfortunately, due to problems resulting from a flawed registration drive in February-March 1995 and political bickering between the President and the opposition parties, the process was once again postponed to April 1996. A new transition prime minister, Daniel Djimasta Koibla, who served under previous regimes, including Deby's, and is widely respected in the country, was appointed in mid-April 1995. His task was to ensure a smooth and irreversible transition to a democratic regime in early 1996. Many Chadians feared, however, that violence would erupt if the president lost the elections, as there were politicians such as Maurice Adoum el-Bongo who seemed to be very popular.[1]

NOTES

1. While during a run-off or a second round of the presidential elections in June 1996 Deby won the contest against Kamougue, his MPS won a majority of seats in the National Assembly following two rounds of legislative elections in early 1997. No noteworthy violence was reported in both instances, even though the opposition denounced the results. Deby reappointed Koibla as his Prime Minister.

Chapter *SIX*
The Nature and Use of Violence in Post-Colonial Chad

Regrettably, the more technologically advanced society becomes, the more violent and more inhumane seem to be its means of enforcing compliance. For Chad, the proliferation of advanced instruments of violence and coercion have contributed not to stability and peace but to more suffering and violence. This chapter examines the nature and the evolution of the institutions of violence in post-colonial Chad and assesses their socio-political impact. It is argued that through its unwise handling of the Armed Forces, the Tombalbaye regime sowed the seeds of its own destruction and that the proliferation of factional armies facing militarily weak governments in N'Djamena ensures a state of chronic anarchy throughout Chad.

CHAD'S ARMED FORCES

Prominent among the perpetrators of organized violence in Chad have been the national Armed Forces, the Army in particular. In general, the organization and size of the Armed Forces reflected its upgraded role as the most appropriate vehicle of mass social control and coercion in the country. Following independence, the Chadian Armed Forces have slowly grown, and their officers and troops have remarkably improved in training, tactic, and efficiency.

The Army was used as an organized instrument of social control for the first time by President Tombalbaye following the September 1963 riots at Fort-Lamy and in Central Chad. The order to use the Army against civilians resulted in an undetermined number of casualties (Thompson and Adloff 1981:24). Even then, however, the Chadian Army was insignificant in its performance and size. In 1964, it consisted of only 500 troops, trained by some 200 French officers, with soldiers recruited mostly from the south. The Sara Mbaye prevailed over every other ethnic group, including the Hadjerai, who ranked second in number. From colonial days to 1979, the Sara always constituted the overwhelming majority of Chad's Armed Forces. Many of them retired after fighting in several French wars, and some 10,000 were receiving pensions from France as war veterans as recently as 1961. For cultural and nationalist reasons, the northerners, despite their warrior tradition, refused to enter the Armed Forces, just as they refused to accept Western education. As a result, only some 250 Tubu served in the *Garde Nationale et Nomade,* while the entire Armed Forces had only a handful of non-southern officers, namely, two Arab lieutenants. By 1969, mainly in response to FROLINAT's activities, the size of the Chadian Armed Forces reached 4,000.

Of course, upgrading the Armed Forces required increased expenditures. During the 1980s and later, the Army commanded much of the national budget, perhaps as much as 50 percent. In the 1960s, by contrast, military expenditures represented a mere 3.4 billion CFA francs (about 5 percent) of the national budget (rising to 35 percent by 1985), and were used mainly for administration and salaries rather than to purchase sophisticated weapons of mass destruction. By law each citizen aged 21 and older in Chad was subject to conscription for a two-year period, raised to three years in 1972.

During the 1960s and up until the end of the Malloum regime, Chad's Armed Forces were organized into four branches: the Territorial Guard (later known as the *Garde Nationale et Nomade*), whose aim was to control the northern nomadic areas; the *Sureté Nationale,* designed to patrol the borders, prevent crime, and protect the president himself; the *Gendarmerie,* entrusted with regular police tasks; and the regular Army, made up of four infantry battalions whose task was to safeguard and protect Chad's territorial integrity. The Army was assisted by an insignificant Air Force and a tiny Navy stationed on Lake Chad (Thompson and Adloff 1981:46). Until 1975, the *Garde Nationale* and the *Sureté Nationale* were under the ministry of interior, while the *Gendarmerie* and the regular Army fell under the supervision of the ministry of defense and veterans affairs (1973–1979). Thereafter, the chaotic military situation in the country made proper jurisdiction a moot issue, as only the Army and the *Gendarmerie* functioned, and then only at the whim of the leader in power.

Perceiving his government's inability to subdue the rebellion in Central Chad, Tombalbaye created the *Compagnie Tchadienne de Sécurité* (CTS) in 1967, a special unit under his personal control, trained by the Israelis, to which he added, in 1969, the so-called village militias. In 1971, the size of the Army grew to 3,800 men, the *Gendarmerie* to about 1,600, and the National and Nomad Guard to 3,500 men (Tartter 1990:173–179). The regular Army was made up predominantly of four batallions of infantry, one paratrooper company, and one camel corps called the *Méharistes*. It was headquartered at Camp Koufra in downtown N'Djamena, with garrisons at Moussoro, Mongo, Faya-Largeau, and a few other strategic locations (Decalo 1987:46). The Air Force increased to 200 men in 1973. During the early 1970s, the Chadian Army was poorly equipped and consisted largely of a few armed scout cars and some 60 mm and 81 mm mortars. The Air Force was equipped only with three C-47 medium transport aircraft (increased to thirteen in the mid-1970s), three light transport planes, and one helicopter, all serviced at the local French air base in N'Djamena. Until 1975, the pilots were almost all French.

President Tombalbaye's attitude toward the regular Army was scornful. To demonstrate his displeasure at its performance, he would increase the size of the other branches such as the *Gendarmerie,* the CTS, and the National and Nomad Guard (which he had doubled by the time of his assassination). Some analysts believe that his attitude may have been determined partly by his belief, stemming from 1972–1973, that once the issue of assistance to the rebels had been settled with Libya and Sudan, there would be no serious frontier problem that required the Army. He perceived the domestic threat to be more real than any possible foreign one. Thus the president was more willing to remove or imprison members of the Army whom he suspected of conspiracy than members of the other defense forces. In his view, it was surely the other branches and not the Army that needed to be strengthened.

By the process of constantly purging senior Army officers, Tombalbaye slowly sealed his own fate. In November 1971, he fired General Jacques Doumro and put him under house arrest partly because he'd become popular among students who had hailed *"vive Général Doumro"* during a demonstration against the government. Doumro's popularity stemmed from his firm stand against the president on the issue of the modernization of the Army and the recruitment and establishment of a professional corps. Once the students' demonstration had subsided, Tombalbaye swiftly replaced him with General Félix Malloum and took over the defense ministry portfolio himself.

In fact, throughout his presidential tenure, the president never trusted his Army officers, fearing that they would overthrow him, a position that was well-founded, considering what was happening in other parts of Africa. A little-circulated White Paper, published after the president's death, alleges that Tombalbaye was so threatened by the prospect of a *coup* by the Army and the possible victory of the rebels that he intended to proclaim himself king (as Bokassa did in Central African Republic in later years) and recruit the most loyal and fanatical Army—one that would crush the northern rebellion once and for all and restore law and order in the country (Thompson and Adloff 1981:49). In 1973 and 1975, the president purged other senior officers, including Malloum (in 1973, as a result of the "Black Sheep Plot"), noted earlier, Jacques Doumro, and Negue Djogo, and some officers of lesser rank.

The constant purges and the sarcastic comments he often made about the Army's failure to win the war against the rebels caused many Chadians to sympathize with the officers at the time of the president's assassination and, as Thompson and Adloff note "…largely for that reason [the Army] enjoyed unwonted popularity as a vehicle expressing discontent among Chadians of all origins and creeds" (Thompson and Adloff 1981:26). Tombalbaye once characterized his troops as badly trained, undisciplined, and of low morale, and preferred to use Moroccans as his bodyguards and French and Israelis as trainers and instructors of Chad's Armed Forces. Only briefly did he seem to court the Army when he made the defense ministry privy to the deliberations of the party executive and allowed the conscripts to participate in civic activities. Unfortunately, the *Gendarmerie* and the Army, primarily responsible for the *coup* of 1975, had no program whatsoever to address the country's political and military ills. Indeed, the assassination of the president by the Armed Forces can be seen as nothing more than an attempt by officers to settle old scores.

Following the President's assassination, there was a quantum leap in the number of Chadian troops: 4,200 in 1975, rising to 11,000–12,000 men under Malloum (with 2,000 *gendarmes* included), reflecting the seriousness of the impact of the northern rebellion. The *Conseil Supérieur Militaire* of Malloum lost its popularity too soon, and so enacted no enduring and meaningful reforms. By March 1979, in the aftermath of civil war, the Chadian Army (the *Forces Armées Tchadiennes* or FAT), was again practically non-existent. The soldiers dispersed, and about 3,500 headed south, following the former Chief of the *Gendarmerie,* Abdelkerim Kamougue. For all practical purposes, therefore, FAT became a regional rather than a national Army. As a result of the chaos and civil war of February-March 1979, the *Gendarmerie* itself, by the end of April, contained only 600 men. As Habre took over in June 1982, his FAN integrated several recruits from the various factions and from FAT, although former FAN soldiers, who then called themselves the *Forces Armées Nationales Tchadiennes* (FANT), remained the core.

FANT numbered about 10,000 soldiers in January 1983, 15,000 in 1985, and 28,000 by 1987, still organized into four battalions. In 1993, the number of troops in the Armed Forces, now renamed the *Armées Nationales Tchadiennes* (ANT), rose to 40,000. At that time, the bulk of the FANT was concentrated in 127 infantry companies of about 100–150 men each,

To ensure efficiency and the rapid deployment of troops when necessary, Habre, in 1988, divided the country into twelve military zones, each with a senior commander. He, himself, assumed the portfolio of the ministry of defense, veterans and war victims. The BET Prefecture, however, constituted a separate military zone, mainly because of the potential problems it presented as the base of several warring factions. Throughout the years, the size of the various Chadian military and guerrilla factions grew to alarming proportions and have varied according to sources. The following provides rough estimates of their sizes.

Guerrilla, Factional, and National Armies in Chad (1969–1995)

Year	Military Units	Numbers	Leaders
1969–1978	French Troops	1,500–2,500	Cortadellas, Forest
1974	FAT	4,000	Tchadian Officer
1979–1980	GUNT	4,000–5,000	Gukuni
	FACP	4,000–5,000	Acyl
	FAT	4,000	Kamougue
	CDR	3,000	Acyl
	Isl.Legion	7,000–90002	Kadhafi
	FAO	1,000	Abderahmane
	FAN	4,000–6,000	Habre
1981	OAC'S IAF	3,800	Ajiga
1982	FANT	10,000	Habre
	Codos	3,000–5,000	Djogo et al
1983	French Op. Manta	3,500	French Generals
	Zairean Troops	1,800	Zairean Officer
1985	Ex-FAT Guerrillas	300	Dr. Balaam
1986	French Op. Epervier	1,500–2,500	French Generals
1987	FANT	28,000	Habre
1993	ANT	40,000	Deby
1995	ANT	25,000	Deby

Sources: Decalo 1987:49, 146–148; Whiteman 1988:10–14; Tartter 1990:175–200; and Thompson and Adloff 1981:146–148.

The various troops were equipped not with simple guns but at times with the most modern instruments of death. The Libyans, for example, at Ouadi-Doum, used hundreds of armored combat vehicles, BM-21 multiple rocket launchers, enemy tracking radar systems, SU-22 bombers, ZS4–23–4 self-propelled anti-aircraft guns, T-62 and T-55 tanks, BMP armored personnel carriers, L-23 light attack aircraft, and dozens of Marchetti SF-26 Italian light ground support planes. The French employed their Mirages, Jaguar- bombers, fast moving Panhard vehicles, and several batteries of Crotale and Hawk surface-to-air missiles. With assistance from the United States, Chadian forces used American and French surface-to-air missiles, hundreds of armed, fast-moving, sand—adapted vehicles such as Toyota trucks, whence the expression "Toyota War" (Miles 1995a: 43) and the most modern machine guns. The rebels utilized all types of modern and ancient weapons of destruction, many stolen, or taken from defeated government troops, or received from abroad, particularly from Libya and Algeria and from some Middle Eastern Arab states.

Given such a wide array of military hardware, the winner of the contest would be one that could most efficiently muster the weapons at his disposal and devise better strategy and tactics. This seems to explain the intriguing victories achieved by Hissein Habre and his troops against the better equipped Libyan troops and former fellow FAP soldiers in the post-1982 period, especially in the battles that routed the Islamic Legionnaires from Northern Chad. Because the French never fought in the frontlines following their 1983 intervention and had repeatedly urged Habre not to cross the Red Line saying they would not support him if he did so, Chad's string of victories against the rebels and Colonel Kadhafi's troops must be attributed to the Gorane leader's military abilities and the tenacity and discipline of his men. How, then, did Habre triumph over his enemies?

HABRE AND DESERT WARFARE

Knowledgeable analysts note that, in contrast to Gukuni, Habre had always been a man of discipline, an attribute he sought to inculcate in his fighting men throughout his military career. In his army, they note, Habre made sure that his guerrillas and soldiers felt a part of the decision-making process. To this end, he used, even in the most private Council of War, the technique of centralized "democracy." He and his men might discuss military plans and offensive strategy sometimes from four to five hours without interruption. Once the decision was made during the struggle for power in N'Djamena, for example, Habre would ensure that everyone, including himself, would abide by it, even if at the beginning he had opposed it (Soudan 1981:63). In contrast, Gukuni's leadership is described as having involved unending discussions, as he himself was said to be a man who rambled "forever." The endless discussions and palavers proved detrimental to Gukuni, who, paradoxically, is thought to have been a better operational leader than Habre (Thompson and Adloff 1981:86–86). Habres's War Council decisions would be communicated to the various dispersed FAN units via radio, by horse or Toyota, or on foot, as the circumstances dictated (Soudan 1981:64).

On the battlefield, however, as was the case in the 1986 and 1987 campaigns against Libya, Habre's decision-making process was decentralized to fit the circumstances (but "within the framework of generally understood goals"), because the battles, particularly

at Ouadi-Doum and Matan es Sarra, were fought hurriedly at close quarters (*The Economist* 1987:43). To satisfy his troops, Habre also ensured that they would always have enough to eat and wear. His soldiers received at least 30,000 CFA francs a month whenever the funds were available. Revenues to meet this and other expenses came from the ransom he secured during the Claustre Affair ($2.4 million, 200 Soviet assault weapons, and 100,000 cartridges) (Buijtenthuis 1987:105), the occasional extortions of goods and fees (gasoline, customs fees) from merchants passing through his domain, particularly along the Sudanese border, and assistance from the outside world.

Throughout his military career, Habre maintained his guerrillas (mostly originating from the Anakaza Daza Tubu of Borkou) on a full-time basis in the service of the FAN, unlike Gukuni whose operatives were often part-time herders and soldiers (recruited mostly from the Teda of Tibesti, Ennedi, and Salal), who often served without pay. It should also be pointed out that one reason why Habre acquired the reputation of being virtually unbeatable in combat was his command of the media, which explains why he always attempted to take control of the national radio. In addition, his FAN used to publish their own newspaper called *Al Watan,* which printed short articles and slogans. It repeatedly attacked his opponents, particularly those his followers called the gang of four (Kamougue, Gukuni, Acyl, and Mahamat Abba) (Tale 1981:71).

In the conduct of war, Habre warned his troops to use self-control toward the population. For example, exacting tribute from merchants was an "official act" for Habre, and not an act of banditry. Sometimes dressed in yellow robes, wearing a cap like Fidel Castro or a beret like Che Guevarra, notes Soudan, Habre projected his voice forcefully and spoke with passion. He was a charismatic leader, stressing his anti-French imperialist disdain (although for long he was a francophile), always posing as the uncompromising anti-Kadhafi nationalist (which he is). As a result, French observers have called him *le nationaliste pur et dur* (the pure and hardcore nationalist), who elicited great admiration from his soldiers, many of whom were barely fourteen years old during the 1970s. They addressed him as "patron" or boss (Soudan 1981:64–65). On the one hand, from conviction or expediency, Habre, the guerrilla, portrayed himself as an orthodox Muslim, and maintained close ties with the *marabouts,* such as in 1979 with the Imam of N'Djamena, who assisted him in forcing the French to ask Malloum's air force to stop its bombings. On the other hand, Habre also projected the image of a keeper of true Tubu traditions, as he practiced, among other things, the *Moudou* or the *Fête de Mouton,* a ritual during which the viscera of a lamb are buried, disinterred, and used to forecast one's destiny (Gorini and Criton 1981:13).

Experts might find Habre's psychological profile perplexing. Here is a Tubu with one degree in law and another in economics, a non-practicing Marxist-Maoist who claims to speak for the peasants; a former assistant principal, a former *souspréfet* of Borkou, Mao, and Moussoro, who had also served as director of International and Political Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was such a rising star during the late-1960s that Tombalbaye himself made him his negotiating envoy in Tripoli in 1971. However, after meeting with the rebels, Habre defected and joined FROLINAT in 1972 (Wiseman 1991:85).

Interestingly, on June 13, 1981, Habre was condemned by the N'Djamena Special Criminal Court *in absentia,* accused of murder, torture, and maintenance of crematory facilities against his opponents. If one interprets the court's decision with utmost

circumspection, its accusations seem to conform to what many analysts have said of him. The court called Habre a man of "prodigious intelligence," but one inclined to evil deeds; a leader who does not hesitate to "eat" his opponents, his enemies, or those who dare to express their own opinions and perspectives; a man who is inexorably moved by power; and a man of iron will, who understands the impact of eloquence on the masses (*Cour Criminelle Spéciale* 1981). Lemarchand (1986:65) says of him: "…the impression one gets is of a man of considerable intellectual honesty and integrity, endowed with enormous moral and physical courage." Yet, practically every biographer calls him "ruthless" or uses some similar characterization (Wiseman 1991:85 and Lipschutz and Rasmussen 1978). Decalo (1987:16, 152) describes Habre as "ruthless," ambitious, and a strong leader-administrator, and Gukuni as humble, temperamental, magnanimous, morose, ineffective as a leaderadministrator, and diplomatically naive. In the Chadian political and military environment, violence has become a *modus vivendi* for survival. Of all the Chadian heads of state Gukuni was perhaps the least prone to using violence to solve problems. Habre's profile seems to be that of a "well-adjusted" Chadian head of state!

At war, Habre's strategy entailed, to the extent possible, the control of routes that fed major cities or the strategic locations within the cities he overran. For example, in 1979, during the first battle for N'Djamena, he immediately occupied the radio station and the African "town"—most vital economically and the easiest section to defend. That is why, throughout his forays as a guerrilla, he was never satisfied until he had control over strategic towns such as Abéché, Faya-Largeau, Ounianga-Kebir, or N'Djamena itself. Control of routes and towns also ensured control of the flow of goods necessary to the survival of his troops and the state apparatus.

How did Habre win the battles against Kadhafi's better equipped army in the north? Experts generally agree that he combined the methods of guerrilla and modern conventional warfare into a common strategy. Following the defeats of early March 1986, Kadhafi reinforced the 16,000 troops above parallel 16, which were based, on the eastern axis, primarily at Fada and Faya-Largeau, with the main logistic base at Ouadi-Doum. On the western axis, in the Tibesti mountains, his garrisons were centered at Zouar, Bardai, and Aouzou town (or village), the latter being the logistic basis for this axis. Kadhafi's forces were relatively large for the northern operations, while his regular army, experts point out, was, by this time, almost indistinguishable from the Chadian rebels and the Islamic Legionnaires; the leadership was Libyan and the initiatives were taken by Libyan officers. Habre's troops, on the other hand, were a combination of his own well-disciplined FAN, FANT loyalists, southern *codos,* and defectors from the other factions, such as former members of the CDR, FACP, and FAP. Their control required much organizational talent and *esprit de corps*. In 1987, the major bases for Habre's 14,000 fighting men were Ito, Kalait, and Kouba Olanga.

In an attempt to adapt his fighting to the northern terrain in 1986–1987, Habre's FANT waged guerrilla war in the Tibesti mountains and conventional warfare (Munk-Koefoed 1987:26) in Ennedi and Borkou at Fada, Faya-Largeau, and Ouadi-Doum. By strictly following this strategy, Habre was able to re-take Fada on January 2, 1987, causing heavy casualties to the Libyans. This surprising victory prompted Libya to bomb Arada, 120 kilometers south of parallel 16. On March 19–20, 1987, Habre's troops annihilated two Libyan contingents near Bir-Kora, 50 kilometers south of Oudai-Doum,

destroying a Libyan column advancing to reconquer Fada and re-take Zouar, in Tibesti, on March 21, 1987. As they retreated to their well-fortified base at Ouadi-Doum, Libyan troops were followed by the enemy and suffered one of their worse defeats at Ouadi-Doum proper, where, reportedly, 1,000 Libyans were killed, and their commander, Colonel Khalif Abdul Affar, captured.

The greatest prize, however—Habre's home town Faya-Largeau, under Libyan control since 1983—was captured by government troops on March 27, 1987, where the Libyans are said to have lost 780 people: 700 killed in action and 80 prisoners, in a garrison defended by 1,000 men, while their loss in vehicles reportedly stood at 100. Chadian forces claimed to have suffered only 20 fatal casualties (Munk-Koefoed 1987:26). The loss of Fada and Ouadi-Doum cost the Libyans about one billion dollars in destroyed equipment, including vehicles, aircraft, and ammunition, which they left behind as they hurriedly retreated. The Colonel then ordered that the remaining war materiel be bombed (*African Business* 1987:56). Not surprisingly, to save his international prestige following the loss of Fada and Ouadi-Doum, the Colonel announced publicly that he had withdrawn his troops from Chad to let Gukuni's forces carry on the mission in Tibesti. He claimed that Libya had done its part and had won the contest!

These stunning victories encouraged Habre's troops, under Commander-in-Chief Hassan Djamous,[1] whom Foltz (1988:66) describes as ranking among "history's geniuses of desert warfare," to break Libyan defenses and reach Aouzou on August 8, 1987, reportedly killing some 437 Libyans and losing only 17 government troops. Again, to prevent capture of the war materiel by the Chadian forces, Kadhafi ordered their destruction and, on August 28, 1987, his troops re-occupied the village. At this point, Habre's defense forces had been weakened by the successive battles and Kadhafi's troops had adopted FANT desert tactics of "close-range air strikes," followed by ground troops advancing cross-country in light vehicles, abandoning their previous "ponderous tracked armor." Yet, FANT's most daring feat was yet to come. This was the assault on Matan es Sarra air base on September 5, 1987, where they destroyed some 26 aircraft, including 3 Soviet-made Mig-23 jets, one Mi-24 combat helicopter, and 4 French-made Mirage fighters, as well as 70 Soviet-made tanks, 8 radar stations, and a radio "scrambling device" at the base, while making two runways inoperative in the process (*The New York Times* 1987). According to a former soldier, who saw combat at Ouadi-Doum and Matan es Sarra, and was involved in the 1990 campaigns to maintain the Habre regime, the Chadian forces marched north and northwest into Libyan territory and then turned left and descended over Matan es Sarra to confuse the Libyans. Indeed, as they moved towards Matan es Sarra, Libyan officers took them for Libyan forces and attempted to reinforce them! Chadian forces then split and turned against the Libyans (Azevedo 1995).

Yet again, Colonel Kadhafi ordered the bombing of the remaining material. Chadian government reports claimed to have killed 1,000 Libyans and captured 300 men,[2] while hundreds more fled the base. Military experts, such as Professor William Foltz and retired General Bernard Trainor (USMC), attribute Habre's victory to a combination of Tubu ancient desert warfare (for example, the Commander-in-Chief marching in front of his troops) and modern warfare tactics (Foltz 1987). Also important was the use of modern, lightly-armored infantry, and air strikes.

Just as in times when the camel, and sometimes the horse, provided the greatest mobility in the plains of the desert, mobility was a key to Habre's successes, using, not

horses and camels as in the times of Kanem and Wadai, but, as noted, light, maneuverable vehicles. Libya's heavy artillery was rendered virtually ineffective since the combat was engaged in close quarters, in spite of the fact that the Libyans had dug-in positions here. When Libyan tanks turned their turrets in search of the target, it was often too late: the enemy, breaking through the lines with high speed vehicles, had already inflicted damage to the equipment or the soldiers manning it (*Africa Confidential* 1987:3–4)). Because firing distances were extremely close, one had to be brave and agile to fight in the desert sands and the Tibesti Massif. For example, at Ouadi-Doum, the fighting distance before Milan anti-tank missiles was 400 meters; Panhard armored cars with 90 mm guns, 200–300 meters; light anti-tank rocket launchers (French LRAC and US M72 AZ LAAW), 50–100 meters; and Soviet-made RPG-7s firing at 20 meters, often resulting in the wounding or killing of the gunner himself. As a result, in such close and confusing close combat, targets had to be engaged, as one expert put it, rapidly and instinctively (Koefoed 1987:26).

At Ouadi-Doum, the Libyan troops did not fare any better. Here, two enemy battalions were wiped out in separate engagements near Bir-Kora on March 19 and March 20, 1987, when the FANT set up anti-tank ambushes in the sandhills while Milan missile and rocket launchers fired from hill-top positions and armored cars deployed at junctures and passes between them. Once the "trap was sprung," armed Toyotas rushed in, outmaneuvering Libyan tanks, resulting in the death of one-half of Kadhafi's regular forces and the Islamic Legion. From Bir-Kora, the FANT tracked them down toward Ouadi-Doum where Habre's forces scored one of their greatest victories since 1986.

Mobility, stamina at close-range combat, and knowledge of the terrain (all characteristics of traditional Tubu warfare), were reinforced by continuous supplies brought in by aircraft, mostly Transall C-130 cargo planes, which flew from and to Kalait, Chad's major depot. These were complemented by reconnaissance aircraft from *Epervier,*[3] as well as an extensive spy network made up of rebel defectors. There were, reportedly, 2,000–3,000 experienced desert fighters in 1986 (Foltz 1988:65), who could provide the necessary intelligence. Despite its stronger and larger Air Force, Libya saw its air attacks rendered useless, as its planes flew too high to avoid the FANT surface-to-air missiles. It is reported that, afraid of being shot down, Libyan pilots not only flew at very high altitudes but many even refused to fly their missions over Arada, Kouba Olanga, and Oum-Chalouba (*Africa Research Bulletin* 1987:8433). Latremolière (1983:1601) even claims that the Libyans "did not provide any air cover to their combattants." Moreover, as noted by experts, many of the Legionnaires remained totally confused about the reasons for the war, were not paid regularly, and their officers often had to wait for decisions coming from the so-called Revolutionary Committees in Tripoli. Thus they lacked the practical de-centralized command structure of Habre's forces. Finally, as Foltz (1988:67) amusingly notes, at Fada many Libyan staff members were caught sleeping by the FANT. Their troops were quick to retreat and abandon their vehicles, often to be blown up in the process by fieldmines: "Key in the ignition and motor running is the way we find the tanks," said a Chadian officer.

WARLORDS AND WAR CASUALTIES

While the national Armed Forces were battling the enemy, a wide array of factional forces led by obscure leaders roamed virtually anywhere in the country, including N'Djamena, causing havoc and fear among the people. It is therefore appropriate at this point to discuss briefly the concept of "warlords," used often in the literature on Chad in reference to the rebel leaders. Even Decalo (1987:139), for example, says in his book: "In 1984, facing domestic pressures to withdraw from the area, and let the two warlords battle it out themselves, President Mitterrand negotiated a settlement of mutual withdrawal from Libya's Qaddafi and withdrew his 3,000-odd troops." Both William Foltz (1987:3) and Lemarchand (1988:118) have fallen into the popular media trap of calling the leaders of Northern Chad opposing the established government in N'Djamena "warlords." French scholars prefer to use the expression *chef de guerre* (See Latremolière 1983). Unfortunately, those who use the term (s) or have written about it rarely bother to define it; at best, they may describe the characteristics of those they call warlords.

What seems clear is that the term is derogatory; in much of the available literature, warlords have been equated with leaders of mercenaries and bandits. The same applies to the Chadian situation. Webster's *Dictionary* (1982 edition) defines a warlord as "a military commander exercising power in a given region, whether in nominal allegiance to the national government or in defiance of it." James E.Sheridan (1966:1) attempts to provide his own definition when he says that "In Chinese history, the term warlord ordinarily designates a man who was lord of a particular area by virtue of his capacity to wage war. A warlord exercised effective governmental control over a fairly well-defined region by means of a military organization that obeyed no higher authority than himself." Yet, it appears that both definitions are either too loose or inapplicable to Chad. How justifiable is the characterization of the Chadian leaders as warlords on the Chinese model?

"Warlord" became a household word in the West mainly as a result of what happened in China after 1916, when the Manchu ruler Yuan Shikh-Kai suddenly died. The term has also been used in reference to sixteenth century Japanese military autocrats who, through unscrupulous means, caused the collapse of the body politic, leaving the country shattered in "autonomous fragments," finally put back together by a powerful triumvirate (Ellison and Smith 1981). A comparison between the Chinese leaders following the demise of the Manchu Dynasty in particular and the Chadian leaders may elucidate the nature of the Chadian leadership.

Chinese provincial governors and military commanders, some of whom had been part of the Manchu Dynasty, just as Habre, Gukuni, and Kamougue had been members of a government in Chad, and some ex-soldiers and ex-bandits, as happened with some of the Chadian rebels, began asserting their own independence from the central government. However, the analogy may well stop here. The Chinese warlords attempted to form small empires of their own, totally detached from the central republic. Most of them were, furthermore, extortionists, tyrants, murderers, corrupt, and irresponsible, and caused untold misery to their own people (Burns and Ralph 1969:570). Chinese and Japanese warlords and their soldiers caused political, economic, and social damage to their

countries through indiscriminate use of violence, murders, interference with trade, looting, and raping. As Diana Lary (1985:106–110) observes, warlord soldiers "were trained to violence, in principle against the military enemies of their commanders, but just as easily against an unarmed civilian world," while "merchants and their goods were easy prey for armed men," who "seemed capable only of fighting each other, and preying on civilians." Indeed, warlordism ensured that "the power of the warlords rested upon their armies;…warlords could only be destroyed by those who had stronger armies," as they knew only the "logic of violence" (Pye 1971:169).

The picture that comes out of the studies done on warlordism, therefore, is clear. One might define a warlord as a corrupt, ruthless military commander who shows no respect for traditional social values and the law, relies solely on violence to ensure control over his domain, has no ideology, although there have been efforts to classify Chinese warlords as conservative, reactionary, and reformers (See J.A.G.Roberts 1989:30), and shows no concern for the fate of the nation. A true warlord has no principles, no virtues, but only personal ambition, with his means justifying the end. Chad northern rebel leaders have tended to be socialist reformers of the Mao persuasion, while those from the south have tended to oppose strong centralization and advocate reforms that devolve much power to the fourteen prefectures but not in a federalized government. It appears that none of these tendencies were part of the Chinese warlords' solution to the country's political fragmentation.

It is interesting to see how some of the sinologists have dealt with the issue of nationalism versus regionalism in China. Lary (1974:194), for example, as interpreted by J.A.G.Roberts, states that a Chinese "clique ruled the province as an autonomous unit, but this did not mean that it rejected nationhood and nationalist concerns." She maintains that the clique was "both, at the same time" (Roberts 1989:30), regionalist and nationalist. Such an assertion, however, qualifies as a *contradictio in terminis,* even if one invokes Aquinas' thinking, which wisely made a *distinctio mentalis* and a *distinctio in re* two totally different realities. Using his logic one could claim that the warlords were nationalist in intention but not in practice or reality. Such sophism, however, would simply dilute the whole debate as to whether or not the Chinese warlords were separatist. It appears from the evidence, therefore, that fundamentally they were all separatists, and only the military victory of one of them could bring a nationalist state. In Chad, the leaders were separatist neither *in re* nor *in intentione*. They remained nationalists to the end. Gukuni, Habre, and Deby, for example, have never intended to form a government of their own in Abéché, Faya-Largeau or elsewhere, nor did Kamouge aspire, at least publicly, to secede from unitary Chad.

Furthermore, one can hardly characterize Chadian leaders as bandits or accuse them of having killed civilians indiscriminately to achieve their aims. Even Gukuni's shadow government in the north in 1983 was temporary, and was not involved in mass murder. The former GUNT leader's intention was to return to the central government in N'Djamena and work towards national reconciliation, not to lead a secessionist movement. As a matter of fact, the remarkable and redeeming feature of the Chadian civil war has been the consistent aspiration of the rebel leaders to keep the country united. Habre, for example, reiterated twice in June 1984 that he was not desperate to hold on to power and would retreat from the political arena if he were convinced that his departure would assure Chad "peace, unity, and its territorial integrity" (Buijtenhuijs 1987:271).

Although Habre's pronouncements should not always be taken *prima facie,* they are not, nevertheless, the words of a warlord but of a nationalist whose country's unity remains the supreme goal. To be sure, although they certainly committed atrocities and extortions in the process of asserting their leadership and their ambition to prevail over their opponents, Chadian rebel leaders' goal was to become the head of state of a united north and south.

There are other factors that set Chadian leaders apart from the Chinese warlord image. As Colin Darch (1989:37) notes in relation to the inappropriateness of the term in the Mozambican case, in China "warlords were themselves legitimate local rulers, either by tradition or appointment. In return for their autonomy, they respected the legitimacy of the centre. Their autonomy was based on the fact that the armed forces owed allegiance to them, the warlords, not to the centre." In the Chadian case, none of the major protagonists had been legitimate rulers prior to waging guerrilla warfare or taking oath as statesmen. Given the shifting alliances both in Northern Chad and in Southern Chad, it is probably inaccurate to say that the rebel leaders commanded absolute loyalty of their armies, especially in Gukuni's and Kamougue's cases. Within the rebel forces loyalty was fluid.

Another problem associated with the comparative model used by such scholars as Roger Charlton and Roy May is that of militarism and militarization. They argue that "there are striking parallels between the China of that time [1916–1928] and Chad from the late seventies. These take the form of the collapse of central control, the rise of regional centers of power based on personalized rule and military force, and the consequent prevalence of a politics of conflict and war" (Charlton and May 1989:12). They then go on to define militarism and militarization and conclude that "In terms of our own formulation Chadian politics has suffered from an excessive dose of militarism, but not (at least on most conventional indicators) from a corresponding serious case of militarisation" (*Ibid.:* 22–23). Unfortunately for this theory, although the central government in Chad has collapsed in the past, unlike in Mozambique (see Darch 1989:37), it has tended to resurrect every time one protagonist has defeated the other and has, at least one time, lasted a decade, as was the case with Habre's regime. Deby's government has now been in existence for several years, and it might continue for many more. That was not the case in China.

Likewise, there seems to be a major difference between militarism in Chad and the militarism inherent in Chinese warlordism. We may accept here the definition adopted by Charlton and May (1989:16) that militarism is "manifested in the attitudes and behavior both of states and significant groups within the states, insofar as they rely on force as a normal political tactic." In China, militarism was at its "best" in the sense that it came out of the trained military corps. The military, in the classical definition of the term, set themselves apart through three unique factors: training received from professionals; a socially accepted "sub-culture" and behavior (dress code and discipline, for example); and proven or expected effectiveness in battle or when a conflict arises. Arguably, most of the Chadian leaders are self-made guerrillas with little professional training who do not qualify to be classified as military. Once they become statesmen, they either continue to behave as guerrillas or attempt to portray themselves as civilians: they are a hybrid generation that does not quite fit the tradition of Chinese warlords.

One can also take issue with Charlton and May on the issue of militarization. Perhaps at the time they wrote their work, Chad could not properly be called militarized, as they accept the definition of militarization as "an increase in armaments, advances in the destructive capacity of weapons, growing numbers of people under arms and…increase in military expenditures" (Charlton and May 1989:16). Since then, particularly as the French continue to purge the Chadian Armed Forces to make them smaller and more efficient under Deby, the spread of arms and armed former soldiers in the country has increased, particularly in the north, to an extent that justifies the usage of the term militarization. Former FAN and FAP soldiers confirm that they can get weapons any time they wish and sell them. Indeed, it is not uncommon to see private individuals carrying guns in the streets of N'Djamena (Azevedo 1995).

If one were to pursue the comparison, it would appear that Sun-Yat-Sen, who formed his own proto-government at Canton and accepted foreign assistance (just as the Chadian civil war protagonists have done), expounding the motto of "nationalism, democracy, and livelihood," comes closer in aspiration to the Chadian rebel leaders (Burns and Ralph 1969:570ff). Some of Chad's rebels actually proved themselves to be statesmen, as was the case of Gukuni and Habre, and more recently Deby. Unfortunately, as former guerrillas, and, unlike Sun-Yat-Sen, they were not democratic at heart. They attempted to preside over the state as they did over their guerrilla operations, seeking military assistance from wherever offered, even with strings attached. In this context, Charlton and May (1989:21) seem to be correct when they observe that "Probably the clearest point of difference that emerges from a comparison of the two literatures, Chinese and Chadian, is the omnipresence in Chad's story of non-Chadian actors, notably France, Libya, U.S. as well as numerous regional participants." Furthermore, there is almost universal acceptance of Confucianism in China and relative ethnic homogeneity. Thus we would expect to find that politics in China is less complex than in Chad where several major traditional religions as well as some two hundred ethnically and linguistically separated groups crowd each other for political space.

One might say, therefore, that Habre, Gukuni, Deby, Kamouge, and other Chadian leaders are perhaps lords of war because they are good at it but not warlords in the true sense of the word. Consequently, a comparative model between the Chinese and the Chadian situations is only elucidative at best, because it points to more differences than parallels, making the indiscriminate use of the word warlord questionable.

Turning now to the issue of casualties resulting from Chad's vio lent conditions, no reliable figures have been presented on the death toll resulting from the civil conflict, particularly for the period spanning from the 1965 Mangalme revolt to the long and short battles of N'Djamena, the campaigns against Libya in the north, the bloody feuds among the protagonists themselves, and the massacres reported during the 1979–1983 period, especially in the south. Most observers cite the combined figure of 5,000 or 10,0000 dead for the battles for N'Djamena in 1979–1980, some 6,000 casualties in the northern campaigns of 1983, 1986, 1987 (including Libyan soldiers, of whom some 4,000 may have been killed between April-July 1987, with 1,200 reportedly killed at Ouadi-Doum alone) (Tartter 1990:195–197). William Foltz (1988:66) quotes the figure of 4,069 Libyans killed and 890 captured by Chadians troops out of a total of 15,000–20,000 Libyans and Islamic Legionnaires fighting in Northern Chad. Overall, despite the conflict's long duration, it is doubtful that more than an annual average of 5,000 Chadian

and foreign troops (guerrillas included) and civilians lost their lives between 1965 and 1995, except during 1986–1987. At worst, the number approaches 150,000.

Notwithstanding their consistent presence in the former colony, the French, since 1968, have lost fewer soldiers than any of the major forces operating in Chad. In fact, they had more casualties in their earlier engagements when the war had not reached the level of violence of the 1980s. In 1970, for example, they suffered 16 fatal casualties and 19 wounded at Faya-Largeau (Décraene 1981:35). One should, of course, take any estimates of the impact of the war with caution. As always, the media and the leaders have tended to exaggerate the Chadian war and its effect. Decalo (1987:18) claims, for example, that:

> Original estimates of Libya's ground and air support for Gukuni are now seen to have been wildly exaggerated; and there is contradictory evidence suggesting that the entry into the fray to stem Gukuni's largely independent march on N'Djamena was the trigger for increased Libyan involvement on his side—not the reverse, as propounded by the original Franco-American *communiqués*.

Decalo is correct with regard to overstatements often made in the case of Libya. One should, indeed, be suspicious of the numbers circulated by journalists who barely know Chad. But, in light of the information now available following Decalo's revision of his volume in 1987, the assertion that there was a substantial involvement of thousands of regular Libyan troops and Islamic Legionnaires and war materiel in Chad in 1983 is indisputable. We know for a fact that in the June 1983 battles in the north, as many as 1,500–2,500 rebels were engaged in a single battle that lasted 24 hours assisted by an "estimated 2,000-strong mobile column consisting of Libyan regulars and elements of the Islamic Legion equipped with B-12 and B-13 multiple rocket launchers and SAM-7 surface-to-air missiles" (Lemarchand 1985:249). It was the Libyan media that attempted to downplay their country's heavy involvement in Chad's civil war. The international press has been much more careful in its reporting.

In dollar terms, the cost of the civil war can never be accurately gauged. Although official estimates of the cost to maintain the Armed Forces range between 35 and 37 percent of the national budget, the figures are almost meaningless because each Chadian head of state used all the resources available to keep himself in power. In fact, throughout the latter years of the civil war, the state was so bankrupt and the country's situation so chaotic that the government was virtually operating out of empty coffers, without a real budget. So desperate was this situation that the French government regularly bailed out the Chadian government to allow it to pay its civil servants.

CONCLUSION

An analysis of the genesis of state and revolutionary violence in Chad reveals that until 1975, the government was not significantly threatened by the guerrilla war itself, which had few noteworthy successes on the battlefield. In fact, the rebel threat was more political than military; there was national discontent at the way decisions were made in

N'Djamena, not only from the point of view of the northerners but also from that of the southerners. More inclusive policies might have moved the country toward reconciliation after centuries of hatred and mutual suspicion. Indeed, the government of Tombalbaye fell because of the initiative of fellow southerners, who, to ensure their hold on power, immediately appointed another southerner, General Malloum, to succeed him. Malloum's indecisiveness and his lack of vision as a head of state, his ill-conceived expulsion of the French troops, the ineffectiveness and low morale of the Chadian Armed Forces, and the trap into which he fell (on French advice) to appoint Habre as prime minister, were facts that combined to bring his government to its knees. On the other hand, the French betrayed the Chadian state by doing nothing to prevent Malloum from being removed after Habre broke his pledge to be prime minister and not president. As Chad's allies, the French were expected to act as the guarantors of the *Charte Fondamentale* signed in August 1978.

How valid are claims that the civil war was an ethnic conflict reinforced by regional differences? Until the first battle of N'Djamena, which marked the beginning of the real, open civil war in Chad, the conflict was mainly a contest among northern politicians and southern politicians, with the northerners trying to topple the regime in N'Djamena and reverse the political situation created by the French in 1960. In February 1979, however, the aims of the violence shifted: the civil war became a contest for power between northern politicians, with the south retreating, apparently waiting to see how the northerners would resolve their differences. Gukuni and Habre, both Tubu and Muslim, battled each other as if they had nothing in common, losing, in the process, the perspective that led them to revolt against N'Djamena in the first place. The conflict was now a fratricidal war. The Arabs, scattered across the plains and the hills of the Sahel, entered the contest and fought against their own allies. The North-South struggle recurred in the form of the contest between Habre and his former lieutenants, Idris Deby and Hassan Djamous (both Zaghawa), who conspired to overthrow him. In the end, Deby turned out to be the beneficiary. On an unprecedented scale, the organized and non-organized violence and destruction in the country increased—as a function of new and more destructive technology, the chaos brought about by the violent clashes among the northern nationalists themselves, erratic French policies, and foreign military interference and support for the various factions.

Ahmat Acyl, former National Assembly deputy from Batha, provides a clear example of the problem among the northerners. As a leader of the CDR—and an Arab who coordinated Gukuni's activities with the Libyans—he let the northern neighbor behave like a big brother to the Arabs, just as Russia had done vis-à-vis the Serbians prior to WWI. In the process, Acyl became one of Gukuni's archenemies. In a sense, as one analyst looking at Chad's past noted, the centuries-old rivalries between the Teda and the Daza and between the Tubu and the Arabs (Ouled Rachid, Kereda, and Dazo), resurfaced during 1979, although this time the disputes were not over pasture and wells, stolen cattle, or mutual cultural contempt (Kalflèche 1981a:10). It was a contest over who could control the state, fueled and magnified by Libya's shifting alliances.

The major result of the first and the second battles of N'Djamena was national bankruptcy and the collapse of the state and, for the first time, the ascent to power of the northern elite, via the GUNT (under Gukuni). Bankruptcy and the disintegration of the state continued through Habre in 1982 and Deby in 1990. Unlike Gukuni's short-lived

regime, Habre's government, in spite of its frightening security forces, was characterized by a considerable degree of factional reconciliation. Also, under Habre, the territorial division of Chad essentially ended, in spite of what seemed like French gestures towards federalism.

The greatest threat to Chad's stability remains the proliferation of instruments of violence. As long as the central government does not possess a force that is capable of repulsing autonomous factions attempting to usurp government power, Chad will revert to a state of anarchy. None has expressed this concern better than Reyna (1995b:19) when he says that "The structural history of post-colonial Chad has…involved both the accumulation and dispersion of violent force," making it almost imperative that:

> First, the contest for control of the state must be violent. Second, as autarkic institutions of violence win, the state tends to disintegrate. Third, when autarkic institutions of violence have won, they become government institutions of violence, allowing the state to disintegrate. The preceding means that the fields of force in Chad are not only dispersed, they are unstable.

NOTES

1. In 1985, Habre had appointed Hassan Djamous, successful officer during the campaigns against Libya and the remnants of the GUNT, Commander-in-Chief of FANT, only to be betrayed by his trusted appointee in 1988. For further discussion of the reorganization of the army, see Tartter, pp. 175–200.
2. The Islamic Legionnaires, reinforced by Libyan troops, grew to 12,000 by 1986, with 4,000 stationed at Ouadi-Doum, 3,000 at Zouar, 3,000 at Faya-Largeau, and 2,000 at Fada. Reportedly, in February 1987, the total force under Libya in the north rose to 16,000, but declined to 11,000 by March 1987.
3. *Opération Epervier* was based at various strategic locations in Chad: N'Djamena, Moussoro, Abéché, and Biltine, but in late 1987, following the string of victories of the FANT, only 150 engineers out of the Operation remained in the Borkou-Ennedi-Tibesti Prefecture, entrusted with the dangerous task of disposing of the land mines around Faya-Largeau.

Chapter *SEVEN*
Foreign Involvement and the Escalation of Violence in Chad

No study of Chad could be complete without considering the role of external forces in its history. This chapter focuses on foreign involvement in the affairs of Chad and attempts to ascertain whether or not individual states and international organizations contributed to the escalation or de-escalation of violence and bloodshed and to the stiffening of the political differences among the various protagonists. Reflecting the relative significance of the roles played by interventionist forces, the order of discussion followed below will be: France, Libya, the United States, Nigeria, Cameroon, Sudan and Egypt, other African states, and the Organization of African Unity.

THE PROGRESSION OF A NEO-COLONIAL RELATIONSHIP

According to the military agreements signed by the Chadian state and France immediately following independence, the latter, if invited by an established or legitimate government, may intervene in the affairs of its former colony to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity. But the issue of what constitutes a *de facto,* that is, a functioning and an internationally recognized government in Chad, and a *de jure* or legitimate state that must be safeguarded in case of an internal and external threat, became complicated during 1979–1982. No scholar has yet been able to provide a satisfactory answer to the on-going debate over whether France has an obligation to assist any regime that pops up in N'Djamena. If, indeed, one uses the litmus test of legitimacy on the continent of Africa, very few governments would pass it, given the irregularities of the process by which most post-colonial African leaders have acquired power!

France, at the invitation of the various heads of the Chadian state—François Tombalbaye, Felix Malloum, Gukuni Wedei, Hissein Habre, and Idris Deby—has maintained almost a permanent military presence in the country. Tombalbaye requested the continuation of the French troops in BET following independence in 1960, a force that he angrily dismissed in January 1965, as a result of a misunderstanding with the former colonizer and his attempt to assume total control over Chadian territory. Yet, in August 1968, Charles de Gaulle sent a small French contingent to Chad at the request of Tombalbaye to fight FROLINAT's insurgency. By 1972, it appeared that French troops had succeeded in turning the tide of war in favor of the government. Thus, in August 1975, General Felix Malloum ordered French troops out of Chad, only to change his mind three years later. French troops, brought back under General Louis Forest, simply marked their presence in the country, did nothing to protect the government in power, and left in May 1980, following a chaotic effort to implement the Lagos Accords. Before

leaving, however, it had contributed, through its "active neutrality," to the fall of Malloum's government.

Thereafter, French policy vacillated between verbal threats to Kadhafi and pressure on N'Djamena to negotiate a political settlement with its northern aggressor, despite the fact that most governments in Africa, particularly the francophone states, knew that the Colonel's intentions went beyond simply propping up a *protégé* in Chad's capital. At this point, France was clearly intent on punishing Malloum and teaching a lesson to any Chadian leader who did not follow orders from Paris. Thus, even when the Chadian state seemed to be at the brink of collapse, France remained aloof. When Chad's merger with Libya was announced in January 1981, for example, as one scholar put it,

> The major surprise was the passivity of the French government, which, in spite of conclusive evidence of the Libyan advance southward, made only a token reaction. Some observers attributed this to President Giscard's desire not to be militarily involved on the eve of a presidential election, others to the disillusionment with Africa following the fall of Emperor Bokassa in CAR, but there was some foundation for a more pragmatic theory—that there was an understanding between France and Libya as far back as 1978, based on their own solid economic cooperation (Whiteman 1988:12).

Notwithstanding hesitations on the part of France, at the request of Habre and under pressure from francophone African states and the U.S., some 3,500 troops supported by Jaguar fighter-bombers, called *Operation Manta* (Stingray), the largest French expeditionary force ever assembled in Africa except for Algeria's liberation war (Lemarchand 1984:65), returned to Chad in July-August 1983, primarily to prevent Libya from annexing Northern Chad. At that moment, Libya's proxies threatened N'Djamena. Gukuni had retreated to Bardai in June 1982 with 3,000–4,000 troops made up of elements from the CDR, FAP, FAT, the First Liberation Army, the Volcan Forces, and FAO, who coalesced to form the *Armée Nationale de Libération* (ANL). Together they overran Faya-Largeau in June and Abéché in July, and on August 10, 1983, using Libyan artillery and MiG-23 and Su-22 fighter bombs (Lemarchand 1985:250).

Manta arrived too late, however. Habre's forces not only had lost Faya-Largeau but had also been forced to retreat 200 miles (330 kilometers) south, where they were to be met by the arriving French forces along parallel 15, on the Abéché-Salal-Moussoro line, in the west. Chad had also suffered heavy casualties—1,000 troops. About one-third of its Armed Forces were killed or captured. Yet, Habre's men were subsequently able to secure Abéché, while the French drew a "Red Line" covering parallel 15 and later 16, beyond which rebel and Libyan forces were not allowed to advance. Following a lull, French troops again left Chad in September-November 1984, Mitterrand and Kadhafi having reached an agreement on September 17, 1984. This provided for the mutual and simultaneous withdrawal of their forces from Chad. It is interesting that in France, even in the media, the 1984 aborted agreement with Colonel Kadhafi was initially hailed as a *coup* attesting to Mitterrand's diplomatic skills and resolve on the Chad issue. Soon, however, it became "a source of considerable embarrassment for the French and the occasion of recriminations between Paris and N'Djamena" (Lemarchand 1988b:121).

As it is now known, the Colonel did not abide by the agreement. Instead, he fortified his position in Northern Chad and increased the number of troops that constituted the so-called Islamic Legion. Curiously, the French president was so adamant in his belief that Kadhafi could not fool him that, despite contrary American intelligence reports and evidence from the French National Defense Secretariat showing that there were at least 3,000 Libyan soldiers still stationed in Northern Chad, he continued to claim that the Colonel had all but pulled his troops out (Lemarchand 1985:254).

Asked about a possible trick by the Colonel on the agreement, Mitterrand said on September 18, 1984: "We have guarantees of material and moral order. Material guarantees: Everybody knows, there will be African observers. Moral: We [he and Kadhafi] are people who respect our word. Our credibility is at stake. We are about to begin a new era of friendship between us" (Buijtenhuijs 1987:284). Three months later, however, the world realized who had scored a major diplomatic victory: Khadafi, a Third World leader, making the French president look diplomatically naive.

Accordingly, in spite of Habre's urgent appeals throughout that period, French troops did not return to assist him until February 1986 (with *Opération Epervier*), when Libyan and rebel troops had actually crossed the Red Line, after overrunning Oum-Chalouba, Ziguey (in Kanem), and Kouba Olanga and advancing rapidly to capture N'Djamena itself. *Epervier,* however, was a very limited operation, comprising no more than 1,200 men during the critical period, and was supported only by a few Jaguar bombers based at N'Djamena airport. This force was nothing but a deterrent to Kadhafi's troops, because most of the victories that followed on the side of Chadian troops must be attributed not to France but to Habre's soldiers who fought courageously, forcing the enemy virtually to abandon the north altogether, except for Aouzou.

France was reluctant to participate in the 1986–1987 operations against Libya because it had warned Habre repeatedly that French forces would not fight if he dared to go beyond the Red Line. This was precisely what the Chadian head of state did, eventually re-taking Aouzou and destroying an enemy base inside Libya's territory. Two specific questions remain concerning French involvement in the Chadian civil war: (1) How great was France's military and political involvement in the affairs of its former colony? (2) How did this involvement assist in preventing further bloodshed or did it escalate the war in the country?

Since the 1960s, some scholars have debated the motives of French intervention in Chad. The arguments usually center on strategy: Chad, situated in the heart of Africa, has served as a springboard for France's military interests in Africa by enabling her to have easy communication with her other former colonies from West to East Africa. Economic considerations have also played a role in French foreign policy in the region. It must also be said that French involvement in Chad has always been limited in scope, in duration, and, unfortunately, in commitment. During the 1960s and 1970s, the French government, clearly committed to the post-independence Accords, intervened and engaged in offensive operations against the northern rebels, a policy that had considerable success during the 1960–1965 period in BET and elsewhere between 1969–1979. This commitment began weakening during the last years of Valéry Giscard D'Estaing's presidency, partly as a result of on-going eco nomic negotiations with Libya, particularly those regarding oil (see the Elf-Acquitaine Society aborted deal that embarrassed the French in 1981) (Dumoulin 1981:84).

Military arrangements (mainly the supply of heavy military weapons to Colonel Kadhafi), as well as the attempt by Western donors during the 1980s to link financial and technical assistance to economic and political reforms on the continent, played their own part. It has now been revealed that, before he left office in 1981, Valery Giscard d'Estaing urged Mitterrand to get rid of the regimes in N'Djamena and Tripoli with the assistance of the United States. Mitterrand is said to have disliked the idea and delayed his action until 1990 (*International Herald Tribune* 1995:5). When he took office, Mitterrand, a socialist, made it his policy, whenever feasible, not to overtly assist notorious dictators in Africa, or any rulers whose governments were anti-French. If military assistance was to be provided to protect or restore a regime, it had to be the last resort, limited in size, and of short duration.

The implementation of French policy prior to and even during Mitterrand's presidency remained selective and continued to support friendly regimes even if these were violating human rights, as happened in the Central African Republic during the presidency of Giscard d'Estaing and in Gabon and Cameroon during Mitterrand's tenure. In the two last countries, Mitterrand's presidency provided substantial political and financial assistance to protect the incumbents. During the 1970s and 1980s respectively, French military involvement in Chad consisted of troops numbering between 1,500 men and the 3,500 troops of *Opération Manta.* Despite its relative small size, *Manta* was an expensive operation for the French, costing an estimated 3 million FF ($600,000) a day and 560 million FF ($112 million) for fiscal year 1983 alone (Buijtenhuijs 1987:266).

Throughout the 1980s, French involvement and strategy in Chad were more defensive than offensive, and consisted mainly of air cover for Chadian troops, thus minimizing the number of French fatalities. The most indelible French act in the Chadian war was the February 16, 1986 bombing of Ouadi-Doum, a Libyan Air Force base strip, near Faya-Largeau, which was put out of service for some time. It is interesting to note, however, that, one day after the bombing, the Libyans were able to fly a Tupelov-22 undetected, from Faya-Largeau to N'Djamena, to the surprise of the French military. It dropped three bombs, obviously revealing a flaw in their defense of the capital.

The unpreparedness of French troops and their apparent disinterest in the defense of the former colony were reflected in the puniness and decrepitude of the weaponry brought to N'Djamena and Abéché. Colonel Spartacus (pseudonym for a French colonel knowledgeable of the French operations in Chad) ridiculed the performance of *Opération Manta* and the military equipment used to defend Chad against the rebels and their Libyan allies. He noted, for example, that *Manta* was inferior both to the force that took Kolwezi in Zaire in 1977 and to *Opération Barracuda* that ousted Bokassa in CAR. He ridiculed the French aircraft sent to Chad, the weak communication network, the inadequacy of the N'Djamena airport, the deplorable state of the troops themselves, and their accommodations, and the fact that very few French knew what their Army was doing in Chad (Spartacus 1985:105).

France's commitment to the former colony, particularly following Tombalbaye's death, was apparently never strong, while its behavior both at the *Champs Elysées* and at the *Quai d'Orsai* has been erratic and deceptive. For example, in Paris in 1979, the government was supporting the regime of Felix Malloum, but its troops, under General Forest, stood inert, claiming neutrality in the civil war. After actively preventing Malloum's aircraft from annihilating Habre's and Gukuni's positions, Forest urged a

cease-fire that, in the long run, favored the rebels and caused the ouster of Malloum and the total collapse of the Chadian state. Arguably, the behavior of Forest and his officers, who admired Habre, was not passive but what some have sarcastically called "active neutrality." As Robert Buijtenhuijs (1987:264–266) points out, "It would have been impossible without the complicity of the French army" for Gukuni to come out victorious in 1979.

The first battle of N'Djamena, despite its relatively short duration, had tragic consequences. Beside the further physical damage to the capital, it caused the death of thousands of Chadians and resulted in an unprecedented flight of people from the city. Most Sara and many other Chadians (70,000–100,000 altogether) left N'Djamena and headed south or toward Kusseri. As the result of the general's action, the capital city became entirely a Muslim town. Ironically, the French once considered to be the "white devils," so hated by the northerners, now became their darlings. As one journalist observed: "The sentiment of hostility that prevailed eighteen months ago toward the French soldiers has disappeared" (Décraene 1981:48).

While Kadhafi was occupying Northern Chad in 1981, business with the Colonel aimed at selling oil to France and military aircraft to Libya remained almost as usual between the two adversaries. Worst of all, the agreement on the simultaneous withdrawal of troops from Chad in 1984 was made behind the back of the Chadians, whose head of state warned the French president that, because Libya would not abide by it, the agreement was a grave mistake (*Jeune Afrique* 1993:17). Indeed, the so-called Red Line was never a true *cordon sanitaire* or a *Maginot* line, for it was barely defended by French troops—it was nothing but a ploy to buy time, constructed in the hope that the Colonel would withdraw without a fight. The agreement was based on bad intelligence and only affirmed France's unwillingness to defend its former colony. Furthermore, the Red Line signaled to almost every Chadian that the former mother country was not averse to seeing Chad divided.

Finally, the 1990 covert support for the overthrow of Habre by Idris Deby made a mockery of Paris' claims of non-interference in Chad's internal affairs. Deby marched from Abéché to N'Djamena virtually unopposed by French troops, particularly on the last leg. French contempt for the Chadian government was obvious since 1975 when Paris went over the heads of the authorities in N'Djamena to negotiate the release of Mme. Claustre with the rebels, directly, in exchange for a handsome $2.4 million ransom to FROLINAT.

French intervention confused an already confused situation, as it supported one leader or faction against another, based upon which would best serve France's and not Chad's interests. There have been other mixed signals from the guarantor of Chadian sovereignty. For example, from June to August 1984, while Hernu was saying to the public: "French soldiers will not leave Chad as long as there is a Libyan soldier there" (see Buijtenhuijs 1987:279), the French engaged in secret economic and military negotiations with Kadhafi. On the Aouzou annexation, official French statements were often contradictory. For example, in 1983, Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson declared unequivocally to the media that Aouzou was Chadian territory. But a few days later, Mitterrand put a damper on the declaration when he said: "My predecessors considered this dispute an affair between Tripoli and N'Djamena. I think just as they." He then went

on to quote Habre who had apparently said, in a different context, that he was willing to meet Kadhafi face-to-face to discuss peace.

Significantly, throughout the 1983–1987 period, the French avoided any direct combat with the rebels of the defunct GUNT or with the Libyan forces, even in retaliation against their crossing the Red Line (Tartter 1990:199). There's no doubt, of course, that Kadhafi's strength, although perhaps not matching that of France, was still formidable, and direct confrontation with his forces could cost the lives of many French soldiers. The fate and safety of the 2,500–3,000 French expatriates in Chad who had not been evacuated was another consideration for Paris in case an actual war broke out. These considerations accounted for Mitterrand's hope that the 1984 agreement would hold, and made him seem convinced of Libya's trustworthiness.

LIBYA'S MEDDLING IN CHADIAN AFFAIRS

There are a number of reasons for Libya's involvement in the internal affairs of Chad. First, strong ethnic ties remain even today between the Arabs and the Tubu of BET and Kanem and those of Southern Libya. Religion as well as centuries-old trade links and a similar Arab culture and language have provided an important continuum of contact between the two neighbors. The border dispute between Libya and Chad, brought to a crisis with the annexation of the Aouzou Strip by Colonel Kadhafi in 1972–1973, further explains why Libya continued to show interest in the turn of events in Chad. Libya's involvement over the years has consisted of outright intervention, appropriation of territory, and an attempt to impose an Islamic republic on Chad or force a total merger of the two countries, with Libya playing the dominant role, of course. Consequently, it appears that Libya has contributed more to the escalation than the de-escalation of the factional in-fighting in Chad, worsened the fratricidal feuding among the northern Muslim leaders and their followers, heightened the devastation of the unending civil war, particularly in the north, and hastened the destruction of the state, since the early 1970s.

Initially, Libya stayed out of the conflicts of its southern neighbor. Active assistance to the rebels started only after the overthrow of the royal regime in Libya in 1969 by Colonel Kadhafi and his young fellow officers. Prior to that, assistance to Chadian rebels consisted mainly of informally training a few guerrillas and government inaction as contraband goods and weapons were smuggled across the frontiers by members of FROLINAT (Decalo 1987:176–177). But with the arrival of Kadhafi, Tombalbaye viewed with concern the Colonel's increasingly harsh rhetoric against "Western imperialists, Zionists, and their puppets" (a clear reference to him because his government was, at the time, allowing refugees from Libya opposed to the Colonel to enter Chad).

Consequently, Tombalbaye threatened to support the royalists if Kadhafi would not stop flirting with FROLINAT in the name of fostering Pan-Arabism and a Pan-Islamic community of nations in North and Central Africa. When he uncovered a plot to overthrow him in 1971, Tombalbaye pointed the finger at the Colonel and immediately severed diplomatic relations with Libya, promising to step up assistance to supporters of the deposed King Idris. In a counter-reaction, Kadhafi extended his recognition to FROLINAT as the sole representative of the Chadian people, and began energetically and

overtly to provide weapons, training bases, and mercenaries in the effort to topple the regime in N'Djamena. Relations, however, were soon normalized in a formal treaty in December 1972, negotiated through the mediation of President Hamani Diori of Niger (paving the way for Kadhafi's visit to Chad in March 1974). Normalization of relations also included Chad's breaking diplomatic ties with Israel and Libya's pledge of more than $920 million in assistance to Chad. It was also at this time (1973) that Kadhafi occupied Aouzou and began fortifying it. The annexation of the Aouzou Strip, a surface area of some 114,000 square miles (about 100 kilometers long and some 60 kilometers wide inside Chad territory), caused severe factional quarreling among the rebels, especially between Habre (who remained uncompromising on the issue), and Gukuni who, even as president of Chad, chose not to raise the issue publicly. Gukuni claims, however, that he too never acquiesced in the annexation (Buijtenhuijs 1987:32).

The ascent to power of Malloum further strained relations between Chad and Libya, which stepped up its assistance to the northern nationalists, especially Gukuni. Following the government reverses on the battlefield in February 1978, which resulted in the loss of Faya-Largeau, when some 2,500 (about one-fourth) of Malloum's soldiers surrendered to Gukuni (Lemarchand 1985:247), Kadhafi caused severe humiliation to the Chadian head of state. He summoned Malloum to Sebha and Benghazi on February 23–27 and March 27, 1978 to sign a cease-fire with Gukuni in the presence of President Kountche of Niger and the Vice-President of Sudan.

This cease-fire was to be supervised by a military committee of Libyans and Nigerians. But the meeting itself forced the N'Djamena government to meet face-to-face for the first time with FROLINAT. Under the remaining terms of the agreement, Chad's Supreme Military Council was forced to recognize FROLINAT as legitimate and pledge to include it at some point in the central government. This pledge explains, in part, the *Charte Fondamentale,* signed in August 1978, which brought Habre to N'Djamena as prime minister. However, the agreement, forced on Malloum by Presidents Valéry D'Estaing, Mobutu, and Nimeiry, was seen by the southern and southwestern elements as proof of the head of state's weak leadership (Kelley 1986:67).

The Sebha and Benghazi cease-fire had been just a strategy for Kadhafi to further strengthen his northern *protégé*. A stronger Gukuni soon reneged on it and called for the immediate overthrow of Malloum. In fact, on April 15, 1978, five days after the Benghazi cease-fire, Gukuni advanced south, and in battles fought in May and early June 1978, at Ati and Djedaa, on the highway leading from N'Djamena to Abéché, defeated a large force of government troops (2,000 killed or captured). The survivors fled north, abandoning the "ultramodern equipment" they carried (Thompson and Adloff 1981:75).

The actual fall of Malloum's government occurred in March 1979, following the first battle of N'Djamena. The Kano Accords paved the way for Kadhafi's *protégé,* Gukuni, to become the Chadian head of state five months later, in August 1979. At this point, Kadhafi was so determined to topple Malloum's government for enlisting Habre as prime minister in August 1978, that he even met with southern leader Abdelkerim Kamougue in Tripoli in May 1979. Kadhafi promised him assistance against Habre's forces even though there was no friendship or religious bond between the southern leader and the Colonel. Immediately thereafter, assistance to Kamougue began to arrive.

In a move to strengthen his position, on June 25, 1980, Gukuni signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with Libya. Colonel Kadhafi then sent unprecedented

military assistance to N'Djamena. Observers noted that some 4,000 Libyan soldiers and their modern tanks flew through Maiduguri, Nigeria, landing in Chad in December 1980. Douguia town, some 40 miles from the capital, became their military base (Legum 1980–81: A41). This treaty was followed by a stunning announcement on January 6, 1981, in the aftermath of Gukuni's visit to Tripoli, that Libya and Chad had signed another treaty merging the two into one Islamic republic. Libya pledged to provide so much financial aid to rebuild Chad (some $3 million for six months just to begin with) that some experts called the treaty Libya's "Marshall Plan" for Chad (Neuberger 1982:57).

However, due to adverse international reaction to the merger—a significant miscalculation on the part of the Colonel that virtually galvanized world opinion—no one has been able to assess the actual circumstances that led to the treaty and the precise nature of the merger, which both Gukuni and Kadhafi tried to downplay later. To this end, they described it only as a "union" of peoples and not of states, and as a "first step" toward closer collaboration. Significantly, with the exception of Acyl (Foreign Minister and CDR-FACP delegate), every Chadian cabinet minister who attended the talks—Mahamat Abba (Interior, member of the FLP/FACP), Lossinian Naimbaye (Agriculture, FAT member), and Tchari Assounon (Education, FAO member)—was stunned by the announcement and refused to accept the Accord (See Hailey 1969). Most observers believe that intense pressure, threats, and the immense financial package pledged by the Colonel led Gukuni to "sell his political soul."

As might be expected, the agreement greatly diminished Gukuni's stature as a nationalist and a statesman. He was already accused of condoning the annexation of Aouzou by the Libyans. Keith Somerville notes that prior to the announcement of the merger, Gukuni had held a meeting with Nigeria's President Shehu Shagari at which he told the Nigerian that two of his military commanders had gone to Libya for consultations and had disappeared. In his own visit to Tripoli, he claimed, he learned that the two envoys had been killed by dissidents and that he himself had been warned not to oppose the treaty if he wished to remain in power and enjoy Libyan support (Somerville 1990:67). To the surprise of Kadhafi and Gukuni, however, even the Muslim community in Chad was apparently outraged by the announcement. A Libyan merchant in N'Djamena is reported to have said, "Even dogs in Chad oppose the unification" (Neuberger 1982:52).

The hasty and surprising withdrawal of Libyan troops from the Chadian capital in November 1981 and their replacement by the OAU Inter-African Force (IAF) resulted from two major factors. The first was the negative international response to the merger, namely, pressure from the OAU, France, and the United States. The second was the serious disagreements between Kadhafi and Gukuni, who was now seen as a Libyan puppet. Certain disagreements led to actual fighting between the FAP and the Libyan Legionnaires in the eastern Sahel as early as October 1981.

As expected, Libya's withdrawal received much attention from statesmen and observers alike in Africa and elsewhere. It appears now that, contrary to what has been said about Gukuni's lack of character, he was forceful in his insistence that the Libyans withdraw from Chadian soil. Perhaps this was because rumors claimed that Libya was ready to impose on Chad its system of People's Councils and that Ahmet Acyl of the CDR, an Arab and favorite of Kadhafi, was planning a *coup d'état* against Gukuni. According to a *communiqué* reported by the French press, Gukuni demanded the

complete and unequivocal withdrawal of Libyan forces from Chadian territory (and implicitly from Aouzou), beginning with an immediate evacuation of troops from N'Djamena and the Chari-Bagirmi Prefecture. Details for withdrawal from other parts of the country, effective December 31, 1981, were to be left to a Chadian Ministerial Council and the Libyan authorities. The official *communiqué* added that a pan-African force would progressively replace the departing Libyans. Yet, for the Colonel, withdrawal did not mean abandonment of the goals he had set for Chad. It meant re-grouping and strengthening Chadian northern bases and searching for someone else as Chad's leader, as both Gukuni and Habre were now unacceptable. In fact, the 10,000-man force removed in 1981 from around N'Djamena was simply relocated to Aouzou garrison, which previously had been guarded by 4,000 Libyan troops. Things having turned out the way they did, however—Habre occupying the Chadian "White House"—and finding that neither Acheikh Ibn Oumar nor Ahmat Acyl (who died on July 19, 1982), both pro-Libyan leaders of the *Conseil Démocratique de la Révolution* (CDR), could match Gukuni's appeal among the rebels, Kadhafi once again stood by Gukuni against Habre and overran government strongholds in the north in mid-1983. During the 1984 stalemate resulting from the aborted simultaneous withdrawal agreement with France, Kadhafi further fortified his positions in the north and, to the surprise of everyone, crossed the French "shifting sands" Red Line in February 1986.

The Colonel is said to have had a Legion Army of 16,000 soldiers in the north (including 7,000 Muslim mercenaries from Chad, Niger, and other Muslim African states trained by Syria, North Korea, and Palestinian commandos), organized in three well-supplied battalions, at Chicha, 80 kilometers south of the main base at Faya-Largeau. Libya had at its disposal, in Chad alone, at least 60 aircraft, 300 armored cars, and several Mi-8 and Mi-24 helicopter gunships stationed at the 4,200-meter-long Ouadi-Doum airstrip, protected by a battery of surface-to-surface-air missiles (Henderson 1986:73). Libya's involvement in Chad in 1983, therefore, was considerable and no longer amounted to simple assistance to a *protégé*. As Lemarchand (1985:249) aptly puts it,

> Despite appearances to the contrary, the second Libyan intervention (1983) differs from the first (1980) in one fundamental respect: When Libya first moved into Chad it was at the request of the GUNT, to bring to an end Habre's dissidence; the 1983 intervention, on the other hand, was clearly directed against a government that enjoyed the official recognition of the vast majority of the OAU. It was the repeated failure of Kadhafi to gain for his client the recognition of the OAU, first at the [two] Tripoli Summits in 1982 and at Addis Ababa in 1983, which convinced him that force was indeed the only alternative to diplomacy.

Assistance had, in fact, become an act of outright aggression.

Libya's crossing of the Red Line in early February 1986 was a fatal mistake that revealed the Legionnaires' military vulnerability because, as described earlier, the close battles that ensued forced the enemy to retreat, allowing Habre's forces to capture Aouzou temporarily and destroy Libya's Matan es Sarra air base.

The causes of Libya's defeat have been analyzed both in the scholarly community and in military circles. These mention the following factors: Libya's unfamiliarity with the

Chadian terrain; the low morale of the Legionnaires, most of whom never understood why they were fighting, contrasted with the high morale of the Chadian troops, led by experienced and determined commanders such as Hassan Djamous, Idris Deby, and Hissein Habre, himself (fighting on the frontline); domestic unrest in Libya; the American bombing of Benghazi and Tripoli in April 1986, which paralyzed the Colonel on the international front; the superiority of the French Air Force; the heavy equipment carried by the Libyan soldiers, which slowed their mobility; and the constant disagreements and bickering between Gukuni's soldiers and the Legionnaires, who at times fought pitched battles against each other, as occurred around Fada on August 2–28 and November 14,1986. In this last encounter Libya lost one aircraft, 3 T-54 tanks, and 20 soldiers.

Everywhere in Libya, supporters of Gukuni were arrested in retaliation for these defeats. Gukuni, himself, was detained in November 1986 and wounded in Tripoli in a cross-fire between Chadian and Libyan supporters and his faction, which led some journalists to label Libyans as "killers of Chadians," a claim Libyan Foreign Minister Hamil Hasan Mansur categorically denied in Brazzaville on November 10, 1986 (Henderson 1984). Following this series of unpleasant incidents, it was said that Kadhafi's only remaining friend was Rakhis Manani, GUNT defense minister and Acheikh's number-two man. The latter (leader of the CDR), however, had already abandoned the GUNT, and lost clout among the nationalists. In fact he was contemplating reconciliation with Habre, as he eventually did. It appeared that Kadhafi had run out of a strategy to oust or weaken Habre in Chad and restore Gukuni to power.

So, the overthrow of Habre by Deby, who received assistance from Libya as well as asylum when Habre's troops went after him in 1989–1990, was greeted with joy by Kadhafi, who warned African leaders that anyone dealing with America, as did Habre, would find the same fate as the former Chadian head of state. The Colonel was the first to recognize the new government and to sign treaties of friendship and cooperation on several levels. His recognition of Deby did not, however, mean that his intentions *vis-à-vis* Chad had changed. The Aouzou Strip was still under Libya in early 1994 (before the International Court of Justice rendered its verdict in Chad's favor in February 1994), while the several military and air bases in the south were being fortified with "concentric minefields, dug-in fighting positions, light caliber air defense weapons, armor, artillery, and combat aircraft," apparently defended by 3,000 troops (*Africa Research Bulletin* 1991:3091). Overall, the fact that France did not contemplate severing diplomatic relations with Libya throughout the conflict proves beyond a doubt that Kadhafi's policy in Central Africa was carefully crafted and by and large successful prior to 1987. Although he wished to see France out of the region, the Colonel never contemplated breaking relations with his Western European client (Neuberger 1982:67). And, on this last goal, he was not outsmarted by France.

We turn our attention now to Libya's impact on Chad's internal order. Libya's involvement in Chad contributed to the militarization of the north and the south (as he sent large quantities of armament and ammunition to Kamougue). The price for this was significant: a great number of casualties among Chadian troops and citizens (in N'Djamena and the north), and among its own soldiers who, reportedly, died in the thousands. On the political level, Kadhafi's interference and his shifting support among the rebel leaders had the effect of further fragmenting the more than eleven factions

operating almost unhindered in the country. Indeed, because of its constantly shifting list of *protégés,* Libya is to blame for the intensification and escalation of the conflict among the various factional leaders, who could not survive without looking for external support.

Certainly, the real motives for the Colonel's active involvement in Chad are no longer a secret, and, although they are peripheral to the issue of violence in this study, they need to be mentioned: to create a client state in Libya's southern "underbelly," an Islamic republic modelled after the *Jamahiriya,* that would maintain the closest ties with Libya, or unite with Libya; to keep the Aouzou Strip as Libyan territory, whether or not it was endowed with vast quantities of uranium and other minerals; to chase the French out of the region; and to use Chad as a base to expand Libya's influence, and perhaps, territory, in Central Africa, just as the archaic states of Kanem, Wadai, and Baguirmi, centuries earlier, had attempted to use the frontier zone as "fields of empire."

In order to achieve these goals, Colonel Kadhafi was willing to use every means at his disposal as the circumstances dictated—religion (Pan-Islamism), violence (war), financial assistance ("Marshall Plans"), and appeals to ethnicity and race (Pan-Arabism), all couched in his Third Universal Theory expanded in *The Green Book*. To that end, he placed a heavy financial burden on his country. For example, throughout this period, the Libyan state acted as a real "war machine," as its purchase of war-related materiel indicates. With an army of only 68,000 men, Libya spent $4.2 billion on armaments in 1983, representing about 26.6 percent of total government spending, while arms imports totalled $1.9 billion in 1986. From 1979 to 1985, at the height of the Chadian war, Libya's arms imports from the former Soviet Union alone reached $5.8 billion, $850 million from France, and $700 million from Italy (Henderson 1986:74).

It is remarkable, therefore, that, notwithstanding this impressive arms budget, Chad, spending 26 times less in real dollars, was able to trounce Libya's adventurism in 1986 and 1987. The fantasized ideal of creating a socialist state (informed by Islam and the democratic ideas of Rousseau) led him, as successor to Nasser and as a *rasoul* (prophet), to interfere in the affairs of the weak Chadian state. At present, his designs upon Chad seem to be on the shelf, but no one can be sure that one day a scenario of Libyan tanks rolling once again over Northern Chad might not be repeated.

THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION AND CHAD

The role played by the United States, although limited and of short duration, contributed to the relative cessation of hostilities in the country from 1983 to 1990 and to the withdrawal of Libyan troops in 1981 and 1986. U.S. involvement in Chad was dictated by the shift in the administration's policy in Washington following the election of Ronald Reagan. The president was alarmed by the apparent expansion of the former Soviet Union ("the Evil Empire") around the world, including Africa, through its supposedly "terrorist" proxies such as Libya, Ethiopia, and Syria. The Cold War was heating up when Kadhafi intervened militarily in Chad during the 1980s. One analyst noted: "U.S. motivations in Chad [were] geared toward frustrating Colonel Kadhafi's goals in the region, fostering an image of strength and reliability with other long-term as well as new African friends, and safeguarding pro-Western regimes and other strategic interests in the region of northeast Africa" (Kelley 1986:119).

As a result of the new activist policy, Washington spent more money on military hardware for Chad between 1981 and 1982 than ever before—at least $20 million more than during the entire 1962–1982 period, when all assistance to Chad amounted to some $65 million—about $3.2 million a year (Tartter 1990:200 and Byrnes 1990:166). Once the Reagan Administration designated Habre as the man who could stand tall against Kadhafi, it channelled funds (about $10–12 million) to him through the CIA, along with military supplies taken out of Sudanese and Egyptian stocks (Byrnes 1990:166). In 1982 alone, the U.S. provided some $16,606,000 in economic assistance to Chad (Kelley 1986:17). In July 1983, when Habre recaptured Faya-Largeau, the Reagan administration sent $15 million in military aid, above and beyond the $10 million already announced (Whiteman 1988:13). In 1986 alone, U.S. assistance amounted to $25 million (Foltz 1988:65).

As a means of reinforcing its commitment, the United States signed, in 1983 and 1984, a formal accord with Chad, the Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement, which provided for the training of Chadians in military administrative organization, in the Air Force, weaponry, military engineering, and military police. Eventually, the U.S. trained Chadians to handle surface-to-air missile systems, commonly known as “Red-Eye missiles” (Kelley 1986:122). In addition, the Reagan Administration, assisted by such francophone African heads of state as Joseph Mobutu and the late Felix Houphouet-Boigny, exerted pressure on the French to intervene on behalf of Habre in 1986. France felt so irritated by this that it accused the U.S. of escalating the crisis in Chad. Washington’s veiled threat to France was that, if Paris did not act, the U.S. would take the initiative, and thus shatter France’s image throughout francophone Africa.

As a way to underscore his point, President Reagan not only wrote Mitterrand but also sent a special envoy, General Vernon Walters, to Paris on August 6, 1983, to urge the French president to intervene. Following his meeting with Walters, Mitterrand is said to have stressed: “There are no French soldiers in Chad and there will be none” (Whiteman 1988:13). Apparently the general had attempted to convince Mitterrand that “French air strikes against rebel positions, supported by American F-15 fighter escort and AWACS planes, was the only sensible strategy” to deal with the Chadian crisis (Lemarchand 1985:250). Mitterrand’s government hesitated to act but, in so doing, became an object of derision—when Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson told the National Assembly in early December 1984 that the Libyans had only defensive military equipment in Chad, the Chamber was uproarious.

There was also suspicion in some quarters in Washington and Paris that France and Libya had made a secret agreement (perhaps as early as 1978), whereby Chad would be divided, leaving the north to the rebels under Libya, and the south, perhaps led by someone of the stature of Kamougue, to be called the Logone Republic, under French influence. Reportedly, in 1978, Kadhafi told Valéry D’Estaing: “Leave me my Muslims and I will leave you your blacks” (Andiamirado 1981:79). Consequently, many observers believed that Mitterrand would act against the Libyans only if they were to take N’Djamena. When finally France acted in 1983 and 1986, it was in large measure due to the success of the Reagan Administration’s uncompromising attitude toward Kadhafi and the fear of losing French credibility in Africa.

French reluctance to intervene on Habre’s behalf, however, at the time when such intervention could have turned the tide of war in favor of the government may have

played a decisive role in Libya's decision to begin its February 1986 offensive. U.S.pressures appear to have been instrumental in prompting the French to procrastinate at first. In the end, says Lemarchand (1985:250), "Sting-Ray was not so much a belated recognition of the wisdom of the American position as it was an eleventh-hour effort on the part of Mitterrand to avoid losing credibility with the majority of French-speaking African states." Further, in a visit to the White House on August 3, 1983, Reagan publicly praised Mobutu's "courage" for having sent the 2,000 paratroopers along with three Mirage aircraft to N'Djamena and for having remained "America's faithful friend for 20 years." Thus, because of reluctance to act every time Kadhafi made a move, "from the late Tombalbaye to Malloum, from Malloum to Goukouni, and from Goukouni to Habre, the French [were] back to square one, desperately trying to shore up a client on the shifting sands of factionalism and civil strife. Indeed, *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*" (Lemarchand 1985:255).

However, Reagan's most dramatic (though unintended) action on behalf of Chad was his bombing of Benghazi and Tripoli in April 1986, in which Kadhafi barely escaped death. The unexpected attack diverted the Colonel's attention from the war front in Chad and thus facilitated Habre's victories in late 1986 and early 1987. The subsequent international embargoes during the 1990s against Libya (for allegedly having masterminded the bombing of PANAM Flight 103 in 1988) further weakened Libya's adventurism in Central Africa. Thus, although the United States contributed to the proliferation of arms into Chad, its decisive stand *vis-à-vis* French hesitations in 1982, 1983, and 1986, contributed to the cessation, at least temporarily, of the hostilities in the country. Under these conditions, therefore, the U.S. did not approve the overthrow of Habre in 1990 (whose bodyguards were former U.S.marines) (Reyna 1995a: 10). Incidentally, Habre had also allowed an American CIA operative of "unknown connections" (*Ibid.:* 8) named "Fred" to train some 600 Libyan prisoners of war as *contras,* who would have been eventually commissioned to destabilize the regime in Tripoli. By 1990, the strong perception and fear that Kadhafi would repeat his 1980, 1983, and 1986 adventures had subsided in Washington. Disturbing, however, were reports in 1995 that the CIA was channelling considerable financial resources to the *Mouvement Pour la Démocratie et le Développement* (MDD), sometimes known as the Chadian Khmer Rouge. As a supporter of Habre, the MDD engaged in lethal incursions against the Deby regime in the Lake Chad area (*Africa Confidential* 1993:6). Overall, however, one must say that, the major failure of U.S.foreign policy in Chad in 1980–1990 was its inability or unwillingness to compel Habre, through sanctions if necessary, to respect human rights in the country and move rapidly toward democratic reforms. Habre's security apparatus is accused of having murdered or executed some 40,000 people (Miles 1994a:46).

Finally, practically every informed Chadian believes that the major reason Habre lost the confidence of the French was his drift toward the United States as evidenced by his attempt to give concessions for oil drilling to American companies, his visit to the United States, and his consent to the training of the Libyan *contras* (Azevedo 1995). It seems clear, however, that by 1995 U.S. interest in Chad was waning, reflected in the closing of the AID mission in N'Djamena. As Miles (1995b:64) puts it, "…with a problematic start-up to the democratization process, let alone good governance there, the United States [is]

prepared to maintain formal rather than cordial relations." This US posture will most likely remain so for some time to come.

AFRICAN STATES AND THE CHADIAN CONFLICT

For the most part, individual African states showed little interest in the Chadian imbroglio until the late 1970s, when Libya's involvement seemed to be going beyond mere support of rebels to the annexation of a part of Chad and imposing a regime totally subservient to the Colonel. Besides Libya, of course, the countries that, for obvious reasons, could not remain totally detached from the events in Chad were its neighbors, Nigeria, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Sudan, and Niger.

Nigeria shares borders, communications networks, and transportation routes with Chad; it also has a problem based on religious differences between north and south that could be aggravated by events in the neighboring republic. Nigeria has also experienced the Biafran civil war (1967–1970), caused by the attempt of a defiant ethnic group that was discriminated against to secede from the federal union. In that Nigerian civil war, however, Chad, under François Tombalbaye, had supported the federal government even though France had become involved in support of the secessionists. At times, Nigeria assumed a constructive role in the Chadian affair, although instances of uneven and paternalistic attitudes toward the protagonists and even aggressive behavior against the regime in N'Djamena heightened the Chadian conflict.

Nigeria was a member of the Conciliation Committee established by the Organization of African Unity in 1977, along with Cameroon, Niger, Gabon, Senegal, and Mozambique. It was therefore understandable that the western neighbor would call for the meetings of the various factions to negotiate a cease-fire, assist in the establishment of a viable government in Chad (although Nigeria's military government itself could not pass the litmus test of legitimacy), and recommend measures that would ensure an enduring peace, i.e., disarmament of the roaming armed "bandits" and the establishment of a new national army. The Accords (Kano I and II and Lagos I and II) creating two temporarily functioning governments of national union known as GUNT, described in preceding chapters, were an achievement of Nigerian diplomacy between 1979 and 1982.

Unfortunately, Nigerians acted at times as bullying big brothers. For example, cutting oil supplies and closing the border with Chad, as Nigeria did in 1980 and 1981, were designed to prove Nigeria's power and leverage against N'Djamena, should the regime not go along with its solutions. Further and perhaps most damaging, during the early 1970s, Nigeria had its own favorite rebel group, the Armed Forces of the West (FAO) or the Third Army, formed in Kanem in 1977, under the leadership of Aboubakar Abderahmane, a Kanembu who had broken away from Gukuni's FAN. With the knowledge of the Nigerian government, many Nigerians from Maiduguri and those aligned with the Kanembu provided moral, financial, and military support to the movement. In addition, because Abderahmane agreed with Obasanjo's opposition to Libya's expansion in Central Africa, the General (who summoned the Kano conferences), "forthwith became his 'protector.'" This can certainly be characterized as interference in Chad's internal affairs. As Lemarchand (1988b:117) has noted, "By casting his lot with Abdel-Rahmane's Third Liberation Army, Obasanjo gave further impetus to intra-

factional rivalries while at the same time prompting Qadhafi to up the ante." Obasanjo also provided the FAO with funds and training ground for its recruits at Maiduguri, 100 kilometers from N'Djamena (Thompson and Adloff 1981:113). Furthermore, it is known that even the well-respected Obasanjo often engaged in "arm-twisting" of the various factional leaders to ensure that Nigerian views would prevail (Kelley 1986:71–72).

In April 1979, the Nigerian government was said to favor an unknown nationalist to lead the first GUNT, Mahamat Lol Chowa. Thus, when the factions' leaders, including Habre and Gukuni, agreed to choose Chowa as President of the State Council in April 1979, they were under the impression that they were pleasing Nigeria, which actually favored Abderahmane, now unacceptable to other Chadian factions. At one point, Abderahmane was presumed dead (Buijtenhuijs 1987:145) but he surfaced at the Lagos meeting on May 27, 1979, claiming that his own officers had held him under house arrest.

In a desperate attempt to exact concessions from Gukuni and Habre at Kano, Nigerian officials went as far as holding the two Chadian leaders under house arrest Reportedly, the two had scorned the pompous Nigerian special envoy, General Yar' Adua, at the meeting (Buijtenhuijs 1987:132). They were released only after they agreed to Nigerian and Libyan demands regarding the proposed composition of the government of national union. This, however, had the counter-effect of bringing Habre and Gukuni together as well as of "predisposing Chadian opinion against further Nigerian attempts to impose Nigeria's candidates on any future governing body at N'Djamena" (Thompson and Adloff 1981:114). Exclusion of certain factions from Kano I, furthermore, forced the formation, in June 1979, of the *Front d'Action Commune* (FAC), under Libyan-supported leader Mahamat Seid as president. FACs aim was to fight the Nigerian sponsored government.

Experts point out that both Libya and Nigeria, in 1979, preferred Gukuni over Habre, and made sure that the first and the second GUNTs would not be headed by Habre. This explains in part why Gukuni led the second GUNT in August 1979. In addition, Nigeria seems to have exerted such pressure on Malloum that he had to resign from the government altogether. Finally, Obasanjo's government unwisely insisted that only its troops supervise the cease-fire and the implementation of the terms agreed on at the meetings. Reports indicate, however, that because the Nigerian contingent was ill-prepared for the task, and acted as an occupying force, it was scorned and resented by the Chadians. As a result, the various Chadian factions began coalescing to throw the Nigerian force off Chadian soil, ironically compelling General Louis Forest to escort it out of the country (Neuberger 1982:55). Still, Nigeria's leaders deserve some credit, for they acted swiftly and their action perhaps contributed to Kadhafi's decision to shelve the announced January 6, 1981 merger treaty between Chad and Libya. As soon as the merger was announced, the ruler of Nigeria at that time, Shehu Shagari, sent Nigeria's fourth infantry division to the border and urged Libya to withdraw immediately, declaring that an attack on Chad would be considered an attack on Nigeria (*Africa News* 1991:12, 15).

In summary, Nigeria had reasons to be involved in the Chadian conflict. Its involvement was well-intentioned, but at times went beyond the call of international responsibility, especially when it wanted to outdo the French and the Libyans. As Zartman (1986b: 27) points out, for a mediator to succeed, he must possess three

attributes: legitimacy, leverage, and stakes. As the negotiations and the conferences multiplied, the legitimacy of Nigeria's mediation came into question. Furthermore, Nigeria's refusal to engage its forces in N'Djamena to prevent factional fighting in March-April 1979 and to keep the peace, and its failure to provide another force, as called for by its own agreements at Lagos in August 1979, further shattered its leaders' legitimacy as mediators. One can therefore say that Nigeria's leverage, "the ability to produce a broadly acceptable outcome," was absent in the implementation of the Lagos Accords.

Cameroon, whose northern region has geographic and religious problems similar to those in Northern Chad (Hooder and Harris 1967:289), followed the most prudent and conciliatory policy toward Chad, i.e., it always supported the government in power! In 1963, for example, Ahidjo deported Ahmed Koulamallah, while both he and his successor, Paul Biya, made sure that Cameroon would not be used as a military base by any of the factions in the country. As a member of the Conciliation Committee established by the OAU in 1977, Cameroon (unlike Nigeria and Senegal) refused to send troops to Chad, with or without OAU sponsorship, but agreed to provide humanitarian assistance to refugees flocking to Kusseri and Poli in 1979–1982. Cameroon's attitude led some scholars to belittle its policy-makers and characterize their stand as inactive or too conservative (See Le Vine 1963 and Ndive-Kofele 1981.)

Both Ahidjo and Biya condemned the annexation of the Aouzou Strip as well as the Chado-Libyan friendship and the merger treaties announced in 1980 and 1981, respectively (Azevedo 1987:220). When, in 1983, there were doubts as to whether Cameroon supported Habre and the U.S. involvement in the Chadian conflict, Biya told journalists:

> As far as Cameroon is concerned, in reality, we recognize not governments as such; we recognize the states. At this point, however, when one looks at the situation realistically, one realizes that it is Habre who governs Chad effectively. Cameroon therefore holds a realistic point of view and recognizes the government in place, one that governs effectively, that is, the government of Hissein Habre (*Message du Renouveau* 1984:304).

He added that on the issue of foreign intervention (in this case, American involvement, which Kadhafi was labelling as aggression), a sovereign country had the right to call for assistance from whomever it chose. Indeed, by the time the OAU met at its summit in June 1983, most member states had adopted Cameroon's posture and recognized Habre as president of Chad. Habre's international recognition as head of state was made easier by Mitterrand's introduction of him as President of Chad at a francophone summit in October 1982, the action of the United Nations International Conference on Assistance to Chad in Geneva in November 1982, and the Conference of the Non-Aligned States that year (Kelley 1986:48).

As a gesture to Cameroon's support, Habre was the first African head of state to visit Biya in the aftermath of the presidential guard's attempted *coup* in Yaounde on 6–9 April, 1984. Observers have also pointed out that among the guarantors of the Kano Accords, Cameroon was the only one favoring the presence of French forces in Chad and

UN intervention in 1979. In fact, it provided transit through its territory to *Opération Manta* in 1983. We can, therefore, conclude that Cameroon's prudent policy towards Chad has been constructive and has not contributed to the escalation of the war and civil unrest in the neighboring state.

Sudan, Chad's eastern neighbor, has had a foreign policy that swings according to the whims of the leadership in Khartoum. Pressure from certain Islamic fundamentalist circles, ethnic affinity, and ideology have always been the determinants of its foreign policy toward Chad. Following the Mangalme uprisings of 1965, Tombalbaye rightly accused Sudan of harboring rebels intent on overthrowing his government, forcing him to close the border. When a few people were killed in Wadai in 1966, Tombalbaye held the Khartoum government responsible and accused Sudanese authorities of providing military training to the rebels and of harboring a government-in-exile whose aim was to transform Chad into an Islamic Republic of northern Muslims alone (Thompson and Adloff 1981:117). Subsequently, Tombalbaye sent Chad's eastern neighbor an ultimatum over its assistance to the rebels. Fortunately for both countries, war was averted when the rebels misbehaved in Sudan, carrying out fatal factional disputes between followers of Siddick and Baghalani in Darfur and harassing Sudanese citizens living along the border (Bouquet 1982:218).

A conciliatory intervention by President Hamani Diori of Niger led to the re-opening of the border on September 30, 1967. Henceforth, relations between the ruling government in Chad and the Sudanese state remained friendly until the late 1980s. Nimeiry's ascent to power in 1969, who, in 1970, ordered a halt to the assistance offered to the rebels, resulted in a marked improvement in relations between the two. Subsequently, the Sudanese government refused sanctuary to the guerrillas along its border and, with Egypt, began coordinating its policy on Chad. Both Anwar Sadat and (later) Hosni Mubarak disliked the Colonel's interventionist policy in the region. Indeed, when the Chado-Libyan merger was announced, Nimeiry was reportedly so upset that he said: "The war in Chad has only begun," meaning that Sudan would have to play a stronger role to assist Habre who was, at the time, re-grouping his .forces to wrest power in N'Djamena. Nimeiry supported Habre's stance on Kadhafi, thinking that because Habre was an army commander he was more effective than any of the other Chadian nationalists, Gukuni included.

As Libya's neighbors, both Sudan and Egypt felt threatened by Khadafi's expansionist policy as reflected in its interference in the affairs of Chad. Consequently, Nimeiry began providing logistical and military assistance to Habre and was the major promoter of the *Charte Fondamentale* that led Malloum to seek reconciliation with Habre and offer him the position of prime minister. The overthrow of Nimeiry in April 1985, however, radically changed the policy of Sudan *vis-à-vis* Habre since the new military *junta,* fundamentalist in religious persuasion, developed closer ties to the Colonel.

It was from this rapprochement that, in coordination with Kadhafi, the Sudanese regime allowed Idris Deby and his Zaghawa combattants to establish military bases along the border in 1989. From there the former Habre commander-in-chief was able to overthrow the regime in N'Djamena in late November 1990 (Neuberger 1982:53). Habre accused the Sudanese of conspiring (with French complicity) against him. Sudan's coordination of policy with Colonel Kadhafi in the late 1980s, when the political and economic life of N'Djamena was finally returning to normal under Habre, disrupted a

process that would have accelerated the reconciliation of the Chadian factions, sped the move toward democratic reforms, and allowed the uninterrupted rebuilding of the country's infrastructure. Instead of focusing its energies on resolving its internal conflict and stopping the genocide perpetrated in the south by the Muslim north, Sudan chose to ally itself with the Colonel and assist in the removal of a regime that was bringing Chad back to life. In gratitude, Deby closed the headquarters of the Sudanese Liberation Movement in the Chadian capital.

Egypt has been the most consistent Arab friend of regimes in N'Djamena, especially after Habre took over, mainly because of its uncompromising stand against Colonel Kadhafi. In 1977, Vice-President Mubarak came to N'Djamena to coordinate policies with Sudan and Chad and preempt Colonel Kadhafi's destabilizing foreign policy in the region. Furthermore, during the 1980s, the U.S. diverted much of Egypt's (and Sudan's) weapon arsenal to Habre to ensure that he could withstand the Colonel's unpredictable moves. Algeria was in Kadhafi's corner at first, particularly concerning the Aouzou Strip dispute, but remained quiet during the months of heavy fighting in the north of Chad. In fact, Algiers had competed with Libya for the "honor" of supplying training, military bases, and money to the Chadian rebels. Algiers soon realized, however, that it could not match Libya's level of involvement in Chad, and therefore limited its assistance to providing asylum to the rebels.

In the remainder of Africa, most of the anglophone as well as francophone states at first followed the developments in Chad from a distance, although they occasionally became vocal at the OAU summits against Colonel Kadhafi's foreign policy in Central Africa. Such was the attitude of Kenya and Zambia (whose president Kenneth Kaunda, as Chairman of the OAU, made several attempts to mediate the crisis), and also Zimbabwe (following its independence in 1980). Under Jerry Rawlings, however, Ghana maintained a good rapport with the Colonel. Indeed, at the time of the announcement of the merger between Libya and Chad, Kadhafi sent a special envoy to Accra to explain Libya's foreign policy. It appears that Rawlings supported Kadhafi's policy in principle, but this did not extend to the case of Chad (Somerville 1990:79).

Most former French colonies, particularly Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Niger, Central African Republic, Guinea, and Gabon, with the exception of Congo, Burkina Faso, and Benin, adopted a strong stance against Libya. Only the last three francophone countries showed reluctance in denouncing Kadhafi outright and openly criticizing Libya's expansion in Central Africa. Gabon, one of the OAU-appointed conciliators of the Chadian conflict, provided salaries for Chad's civil servants and offered Malloum four of its aircraft to assist in the fight against Habre and Gukuni. Sasso Nguesso, Congo's president, one-time Chairman of the OAU during the 1980s, denounced the announced Chado-Libyan merger as "imperialist," but tried his best to ensure that Habre and Kadhafi would meet face-to-face. Together, the francophone leaders not only served as the moral conscience of Africa for the preservation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Chad but also exerted enormous pressure on François Mitterrand to intervene in 1986, especially after Libya violated the Red Line the French had created. This was dramatized at a francophone mini-summit in Bujumbura, Burundi, in 1985, when Mitterrand became so irritated on the Chadian issue that he asked those heads of state who criticized him to volunteer to go to Chad themselves. In unflattering and undiplomatic language, he reminded Habre that it was Habre, himself, who had courted Kadhafi and the Libyans

prior to taking office in N'Djamena: "Sometime ago, you, and not I, invited the Libyans to .come to Chad!" To which Habre replied: "I did not invite him [Kadhafi]; at that time I was in the bush." Mitterrand retorted: "No. You were not in the bush but in Libya…" (*Jeune Afrique* 1993:18). It is most likely that, had the heads of state in francophone Africa been soft on their "homologue" in Paris, the outcome of Libya's legionnaire invasion of Northern Chad might have been more ominous for the former French colony.

Zaire, although not a former French colony, has maintained cordial relations with Paris since Giscard d'Estaing sent French troops to Shaba in 1977. In fact, Zaire was one of the few African countries participating in the OAU Inter-African Force of 1981. As a gesture of friendship, and determined to stop Libyan "aggression" and Nigeria's meddling in Chadian affairs, Zaire sent 2,000 paratroopers to guard N'Djamena in June 1982, while Habre was leading his troops against Gukuni's and Kadhafi's incursions in the north. Mobutu likewise provided invaluable training to Habre's soldiers in Zairean military camps.

In general, by 1981, most African states had turned against Libya's policies in Central Africa. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the only leader never critical of Kadhafi was the now disgraced Mengistu Mariam of Ethiopia, who went so far as to justify the merger with Chad as conforming to one of the goals of the OAU. Unfortunately for Kadhafi, however, Mengistu was selected OAU Chairman over him in June 1983. Thereafter, relations between the two leaders cooled off.

THE OAU AND THE VIOLENCE IN CHAD

The performance of the OAU in Chad was disappointing, given the gravity of the crisis. Indeed, Libya's incorporation of Chad territory—the first time that a member state had done so to another sovereign member state—was in contempt of the OAU charter (Zartman 1986b:18). Yet, for the most part, the OAU avoided the conflict. It finally decided to consider the matter only after Malloum threatened in 1977 to take the case of Libya's interference and the annexation of the Aouzou Strip to the United Nations. Seeking UN intervention would have exposed the ineffectiveness of the Organization.

Malloum followed through on his threat, forcing the Security Council to meet on February 17, 1977. In response, France exerted enough pressure on Chad that it withdrew its complaint in favor of an international conference. Thereafter, the UN remained virtually uninvolved in the Chadian conflict throughout its duration. Fear of embarrassment finally forced the OAU to appoint a Conciliation Committee made up of Cameroon, Nigeria, Niger, Senegal, Gabon, and Mozambique. The major OAU operation was the failed mission of the 1981 Inter-African Force (IAF). Regrettably, the IAF was badly financed. It relied on some $12 million pledged by the United States (which was assisting Habre at the time) to fulfill its unclear mission in Chad and it was short on troops (only 3,800 actually reached N'Djamena), while Togo, Niger, and Guinea revoked their decision to participate in the proposed multinational force.

Even worse, once the contingent from Zaire, Senegal, and Nigeria was in place in N'Djamena, its Nigerian Commander-in-Chief, General Geoffrey Ejiga, understood his mission to be the prevention of factions from fighting each other, while the GUNT thought the force was there to defend the "legitimate" regime, as the departing Libyans

had done. Thus, when Habre's and Gukuni's troops began fighting in June 1982, the IAF simply looked on. As one scholar noted:

> The collapse of the Gukuni regime in June 1982 had far-reaching implications: it dealt a severe blow to French policies in Chad, spelled the defeat of the formula advocated by the OAU Committee on Chad, and exposed the utter impotence of the OAU peace-keeping force on the ground. For this triple defeat the Reagan administration could claim much of the credit (Lemarchand 1985:248).

As one recalls, Reagan had not only exerted pressure on France to intervene decisively but had also assisted Habre financially and militarily.

Perhaps the OAU deserves credit for making things extremely uncomfortable for Colonel Kadhafi after the 1981 merger announcement. It refused to seat any Chadian delegation at its summits until 1983; collectively (but not by a vote) it condemned the Colonel's idea of a merger with Chad; according to most observers, the OAU forced him to withdraw unexpectedly and hurriedly from Chad in November 1981; it denied the Colonel the chairmanship of the OAU in 1982 and 1983; and, until mid-1982, it provided moral support to the GUNT. Denial of the chairmanship of the OAU seems to have had a greater impact on the Colonel than most observers expected. Thus Zartman (1986b:17) writes on the issue:

> In the attempt to hold an OAU summit in 1982, the Chadian question was kept alive by Libya, and when the summit was finally held in Addis Ababa in June 1983 and Mengistu Haile Mariam of Ethiopia was chosen to preside rather than Qaddafi, the Libyan leader left in a huff and stormed back to Tripoli to unleash Gukuni's forces.

On balance, the OAU action or inaction on Chad remained more of a failure than a success throughout the conflict. Indeed, the Organization procrastinated in its handling of the conflict, gave unclear instructions to its Commissions, and was generally paralyzed by its fear of Colonel Kadhafi. As Zartman (*Ibid.:* 29) again notes, "In the end, one weakness leading to another, [the OAU] even defaulted on its obligations to uphold colonially inherited borders and to denounce military invasion by a neighboring country."

Finally, we could not end this chapter without mention of the role the former Soviet Union may, or may not, have played in Chad's conflicts. The Soviet Union, then a superpower, seems to have been only indirectly involved in Chadian affairs as a major supplier of arms to Kadhafi's regime in exchange for oil. But the Soviets never considered Libya an important ally and were not convinced that it could match French power or control Chad for a sustained period. Furthermore, analysts point out that the Soviets reasoned that Kadhafi would be eased out of office by a combination of economic crises and American pressure. When the United States crossed the so-called "line of death" demarcated by Kadhafi on the sea and bombed Libya in April 1986, the Soviet Union did nothing but present a *pro forma* protest (Lemarchand 1988:179) and refused the request of Libya's General Jaloud that the northern African country be accepted as a member of the Warsaw Pact. Instead, the Soviets were annoyed that Kadhafi's

inexperienced officers used Soviet SAM-5 missiles during the Sirte incursions against the United States, allowing the rival superpower to measure the effectiveness of the missiles (Michaud 1986:30).

It is also clear that throughout the Chadian conflict, the Soviet Union never provided direct assistance to the warring parties being supported by Libya, never succeeded (if they ever attempted) to determine the direction of Libya's domestic and foreign policy, and never considered Libya's Jamahiriya socialism worth comparing with Soviet communism and socialism. As one expert observed at the time, "Seen through the prism of the Kremlin's orthodoxy, Qadhafi is, at best an 'idealist'; at worst a 'Muslim fanatic'" (Lemarchand 1988:180), who, despite their long friendship, never allowed the Soviet Union to have military bases in his country. By choice, perhaps, and from Kadhafi's own need to demonstrate his independence, the Soviet Union never succeeded in using Libya as a proxy for its foreign policy in Northern and Central Africa, although it must have appreciated the diversion Kadhafi was causing U.S. foreign policy at the time. It appears, however, as Habre complained in January 1987, that the Soviets did provide some advisors and technicians to Colonel Kadhafi at Aouzou and Ouadi-Doum. One can therefore conclude that the Soviet Union only remotely contributed to the conflict and violence in Chad and that during the post-Cold War era, beginning in 1988, whatever was left of the Soviet-Libyan relationship had little effect on the war in Chad.

CONCLUSION

Had the Chadians been left alone, even without France's intervention, they might have eventually come up with an acceptable leader or one that might have weakened the military power of the various factions and protagonists. What foreign intervention did was to escalate the war, increase the number of dead on the battlefield, and make it difficult for the factions to reconcile. It does not necessary follow, of course, that foreign intervention always leads to more fighting and more bloodshed. That occurs only when the assistance is limited and the intervention not decisive, as was the case of both French and Libyan interventions in Chad.

Nigerian initiatives at Kano and Lagos bore no lasting results and the Inter-African Force intervention was ineffective, as it had no clear mission and its troops were unprepared to defend the regime in N'Djamena or the GUNT, which the OAU supported. The interventions by the Nigerians and the OAU were so ill-conceived and unclear in their objectives that they created more confusion than help in attaining peace and security in the country. In the end, the constant but limited military and financial assistance to N'Djamena and the various factions did nothing but further militarize the conflict, thus increase the incidence and impact of the country's instruments of violence.

Indeed, factional, governmental, and foreign interventionist troops together with instruments of mass destruction introduced a new level of violence. Although the number of deaths and the degree of physical destruction are still uncertain, it is clear that three decades of war may have caused as much death and suffering as half a century of the wars of the predatory states of Central Sudan. The involvement of foreign troops, especially those of France, did nothing but escalate the human and physical destructiveness of the machines of war.

Libyan financial and logistic support to the rebels during the 1972–1980 period kept the rebel movement alive and made it impossible for any government in Chad, be it that of Tombalbaye, Malloum, or Libya's *protégé* Gukuni (once he turned the cards against Colonel Kadhafi) to govern effectively, despite the intervention of French forces. The more frustrated the leaders in the capital, the more violent their regimes in N'Djamena became. Unfortunately, as the Libyans escalated their involvement in Chad in order to overthrow the regime in the capital (1983–1987) and achieve their expansionist goals, the French intervened with the goal of simply creating a stalemate. Sadly, the Colonel continued to outsmart the French. As Zartman notes: "In no case until 1983 was foreign intervention an escalation to call [i.e., to force the other party either to retreat or to negotiate]. Only in 1983 did that [intervention] become a forcing strategy and it worked in a limited sort of way" (Zartman 1986a:19). What eventually brought about a cease-fire (1983–1990) between Chad and Libya and among the rebels, and restored some stability to the war-torn country, was primarily the resolve of the Chadians themselves.

A collision of French and Libyan interests made it even more difficult for Chad to escape the protracted quagmire. Afraid of losing an important customer, the French were unwilling to unleash their superior power against the Libyans. The more the French hesitated, the more the Libyans dared to advance south of parallel 16, endangering every regime in N'Djamena and threatening Chad's territorial integrity. Ironically, the French, along with the Soviets, had been the major supplier of the war equipment Libya was using in Northern Chad against the French and the Chadians. It is known, for example that, between 1970 and 1983, France sold Libya some .116 Mirage II and 32 Mirage F1, 90 launching pads for anti-aircraft Crotale missiles, dozens of air-to-air 530 Magic missiles, and some 40 Allouette III and 8 Super-Frelon helicopters (*Nouvel Observateur* 1983:24). Had it not been for the determination of the Chadian leaders not to let their country be absorbed by Libya or divided by French passivity and betrayal, Chad, as an independent unitary entity, might not be on the world map today. Ultimately, in spite of internal disagreements, protracted in-fighting, and erratic policies, it was the determination of the Chadian leaders themselves and the blood of Chadian citizens and not the actions of France or the United States that safeguarded the country's territorial integrity.

Chapter *EIGHT*
At The Crossroads: Lessons and Prospects

The preceding chapters have suggested that the violent and inhumane pre-colonial politics of Central Sudan strained relations among the region's inhabitants, brought about unending feuds and slave raids, and contributed to constant warfare among states. Repercussions of those terrifying and terrible times echo even today. Historical evidence supports the claim that the unequal relations between enslaved and enslaver which, in some areas, did not end until the 1920s, contributed significantly to modern Chad's problems. Under the circumstances, what is Chad's future? This last chapter, building upon the preceding chapters and the past, attempts to provide insights into Chad's prospects for survival.

CHAD'S VIOLENCE IN ARCHAIC AND MODERN TIMES

In pre-colonial Chad, religion was used as a pretext for raiding Southern Chad, but, as Tunisi (1851:288–289) observed, few of the sultans, the raiders, or the soldiers had the spread of Islam on their minds. We can therefore conclude from the previous chapters that, although organized, the killings that occurred in the wars and during the raids had the character of actual murders and state-led massacres. Thomas Aquinas differentiated between offensive and defensive war. He defined justified offensive war as one that redresses an injury *(iniuriam vindicandam)* or attempts to recover property taken *(possessionem recuperandam),* and justified defensive as one waged against the force used by another state (society) or designed to repel an attack *"bellum quod instituitur ad vim ab alia republica illatam vi repellendam"* (Noldin 1957:322). These distinctions, which have been generally upheld by our modern world, made no sense whatsoever in Central Sudan. The indiscriminate regional violence was accompanied by frightening and often deadly results, and the "primitive" ways of disposing of the enemy encouraged marauders, mercenaries of fortune, and adventurers, most conspicuously, Rabah Fadlallah, who spread terror in the region. Prior to the French conquest, the populations of Chad and Central Sudan lived more in hostility than in harmony. It was, unlikely, then, that even Wadai, the last of the major empires, and, later, the French, could have ever succeeded in uniting the region. So it appears that the French tried to do the impossible when, in 1920, they declared the colony united. In sum, the pre-colonial history of the region was a saga of temporary conquest and not of permanent incorporation, integration, or assimilation.

The same can be said of the post-colonial era. Blaming Tombalbaye for the ills of Chad does not adequately explain the conflicts of the country. So divided was the colony on the eve of independence that it is difficult to defend the thesis that any of the leaders at that moment could have more effectively united Chad. Similar policies would have been

followed by Sahoulba (Moundang chief from the Mayo-Kebbi Prefecture), Koulamallah, and Abbatcha, just to name a few non-Sara leaders. These would have been regionally-based, favoring Muslim Chad over the south, thereby settling scores and grievances about their region being favored or disfavored by the French during the colonial period. Undoubtedly, Tombalbaye must be blamed for a style of personal rule, particularly during 1971–1973. Without exculpating him, it must be said, however, that this characterization could fit any African ruler during the 1960s and 1970s.

Tombalbaye and Malloum unwisely pursued a policy that was based on subtle vindictiveness and ethnicity and failed to devise a strategy that would have brought the northerners into the government in a meaningful way. Furthermore, the two Sara leaders lost the chance the French offered them to contain the rebellion during the early 1970s. For example, allowing Arabic to become a second official language in Chad might have gone a long way towards reducing northern grievances. Malloum, in particular, assumed power without any plan of addressing the country's problems, and disgraced his southern base by capitulating, in 1979, to the combined force of the rebels' offensive and Nigerian pressures, a behavior that was totally unbecoming of a general.

Kamougue, whom I call the "Talleyrand" of Chad for his ability to survive against all odds and for serving under so many regimes (Malloum, Gukuni, Habre, and Deby), behaved not much differently from the northern politicians, constantly switching sides and even accepting an alliance with Kadhafi in 1979–1980. The undisputed leader of the south prior to Habre's presidency, Kamougue allegedly was as vindictive as his northern counterparts in the pursuit of personal rule. Except for Habre, the northerners also showed little concern for the welfare of the country they were attempting to keep together. The battles they engaged in, particularly those of N'Djamena, not only destroyed and bankrupted the state, but devastated the economy, weakened the national Army, and caused a virtual partition of the country. In the process, they turned the Chadian conflict from a regional contest into a quest for personal ambition.

FROLINAT certainly had grievances to settle but, because of the personal ambitions of its leaders, it, too, went beyond what it first attempted, namely, to topple the regime in N'Djamena. From its own internal divisions, its lack of a program for the country once it had seized power, and its reliance on Colonel Kadhafi, who played one leader against another in pursuit of Libya's hegemony in Central Africa, FROLINAT betrayed the trust of its own people and, in the process, dealt a severe blow to the state, while compromising Chad's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Had the pre-1979 civilian and military regimes had a clear plan of action and followed a firmer and wiser foreign policy toward Libya, they would have trounced FROLINAT, which was desperately divided along personal and ethnic lines. The nationalist movement went from a "jacquérie" to a full blown armed resistance and a successful guerrilla movement not through internal cohesiveness and determination but from the blunders of the central government. Because of N'Djamena's indecisiveness and the often inexcusable poor performance of Chadian national troops, it won the deadly contest.

In fact, not only was FROLINAT divided militarily but, as late as 1976, its five major leaders—Hissein Habre, Gukuni Wedei, Abba Siddick, Mohamad Baghalani, and Mahamat Abba—could not get along. The fratricidal wars between Habre and Gukuni underscored the liberation movement's weaknesses which the central government could have exploited politically and militarily to its own advantage. Thus, the blame for the fall

of the two southern-based regimes must be laid partly on the shoulders of Tombalbaye's civilian government and partly on the *Conseil Supérieur Militaire* of Malloum. Habre demonstrated in 1986–1987 what a well organized and disciplined Chadian National Army could do, despite the diverse backgrounds of his troops.

SLAVERY AND RELIGION IN CENTRAL SUDAN

There have been a number of attempts made to find the major root(s) of the Chadian conflict. Many stress the pre-colonial religious and political conditions and the changes brought about by colonialism. These describe how the formerly enslaved populations were beneficiaries of the colonial order at the time of independence (Buijtenhuijs 1987:19–21). Others focus on the religious and regional differences, exacerbated by the colonial legacy, as does Bernard Lanne (1981:53–56). Foreign interference and ethnic differences between north and south aggravated by the colonial situation are emphasized by Lemarchand (1980:449–471). French analyst J.Pouget (see Gatta 1985:434) has explained the Sahelian conflicts (in Mali, Niger, Chad, Mauritania, Chad, and even Ethiopia) as a racial struggle between black and white, noting that, wherever Muslims (whites) rule, blacks fight, and wherever blacks are in power, the nomad or Sahelian (whites) refuse to accept their rule. These approaches and schools of thought have some validity, except perhaps for the black-white confrontation thesis, which seems far-fetched. Indeed, who are the whites in this region?

It would appear, however, that the underlying historical root of the conflicts preceded France's colonial mis-administration, and was the hostile relationship between the northern and the southern populations provoked by the slave trade. Arguably, Chad can resolve its ethnic and religious differences more or less successfully, just as other colonies have, but the memory of past slavery is alive and continues to determine and inform people's perceptions of one another and their actions. Indeed, as recently as 1959, when the colonial administration suggested changing the colors of the national flag from green (the color of Islam), yellow, and red (also the colors for Mali, Ghana, Guinea, Congo, and Cameroon), to blue, yellow, and red, the Muslims are said to have objected vehemently to the move on the grounds that blue, yellow, and red were the colors of the "pagans" or the *kirdi,* of the "infidels and slaves!" (Gatta 1985:174).

The memories of slavery and the slave trade and of social stigmatization are too fresh in peoples' minds, particularly in the south, to be forgotten and forgiven. Under these circumstances, the potential for political catastrophe due to socio-cultural and economic differences, a legacy of the distant past aggravated by colonial misadministration, was such that even François Tombalbaye himself reportedly suggested to France in March 1959 that the colony be divided into north and south (Whiteman 1988:8). Memories of mutual distrust and mistreatment were undoubtedly fresh even at independence; less than a generation had passed from the time of the slave raids. Indeed, several descendants of the enslaved south and sons or grandsons of northern enslavers such as Abba Siddick, born in Central African Republic and a grandson of one of Rabah Fadlallah's generals, had become prominent politicians. In this context, religion became a major divisive factor in Chad only because the most active slavers were Muslims and slaving activities were justified on the basis of Islam. Consequently, in the minds of the southerners, slavery

remained synonymous with Islam and viceversa. Islam alone was not the sole source of the country's present conflict. But, as Gatta (1985:434) accurately notes, in Chad (and Sudan), Islam complicated the matter because here it was influenced by "modern trends and is much more politicized" than in other Sahelian states such as Mali, Niger, and Mauritania. To this must be added Chad's and Sudan's proximity to the Middle Eastern Arab-Israeli conflict. In Chad, unlike in Sudan, however, Islamic Libya's direct involvement has raised the political and military stakes and heightened the country's permanent state of tension, which the pre-colonial slaving had created in the first place. It appears that it might take a few centuries for past memories to be forgotten just as is the case in other countries with slavery, like the United States, Brazil, and Sudan. What complicates the matter in Chad, unlike in the United States, however, is the fact that the enslaved were the majority.

FRANCE AND THE FOREIGN FACTOR IN THE CHADIAN CONFLICT

The French did not help at all to build better relations among Chad's people. Unlike in most other French colonies, Chad's situation was unfortunate from the beginning. The frontiers are extremely irregular and confusing (which brought about the Aouzou Strip dispute with Libya); its conquest was left not to the French government but to the initiatives of individual explorers, intrepid military conquerors, and adventurous expatriates, while its administration was entrusted to inexperienced civil servants who implemented erratic and discriminatory policies (Bouquet 1982:230). One also needs to underscore the impact of colonial maladministration and the effect of discriminatory and differential policies, explained in the previous chapters. In the north, the French interfered little with the functioning of the traditional political and economic system, but in the south, they actually distorted or destroyed it altogether. As we saw, the appointment of illegitimate chiefs in the southern region weakened the bonds between the people and their traditional leaders, contributing to unprecedented political chaos. The African authorities lived and operated in a no-win situation:

> Collecting head taxes, recruiting soldiers and levying forced labor caused devastation in the countryside. Village chiefs became puppets and then ruthless agents of exploitation. If they failed to levy tax, they were removed and imprisoned. If they were successful in colonial terms they were detested by the peasants who were their own people (Diop et al. 1993:62).

In the final analysis, it is difficult to determine whether psychologically it was the people or their leaders who suffered most from the imposed colonial yoke. The brevity of the colonial period itself and the short transition from the system of the *indigénat* to independence (a period actually plagued by a succession of short-lived ineffective governments) only accentuated the long-seated differences that came to the fore after 1965. On the brevity of the colonial period, Chad experts Jean Cabot and Christian Bouquet (1973:240–241) argue that the "real" Chad did not begin until the end of World

War II. French use of violence to maintain the semblance of a state during the colonial period followed the continuum of violence prevailing in Central Africa prior to conquest. More precisely, the French replaced one sort of violence with their own brand (Gatta 1985:34, 93). As for the post-colonial state, its structure and methods of fostering and compelling cohesion were nothing but a mirror of the colonial state, but now run by Africans. Indeed, as Buijtenhuijs (1978:183) puts it, "The post-colonial state is the child of the colonial state, which, by definition [was] a violent and arbitrary state. The fact that the state that succeeded the colonial state is dependent and unstable comes from the concept of the nation-state itself."

It seems appropriate to note at this point that the uneven application of colonial policies was not restricted to Chad; it happened in most of Central Africa and the Sahelian region. In Sudan, for example, the British favored the already established structures in the north and proceeded to develop that part of the condominium at the expense of the south, resulting in a reverse situation from that of Chad. In Sudan, it was the northern Muslims who inherited the colonial state. No wonder both countries have experienced civil war. Just as in Chad, in Sudan the issue of slavery, which, until the 1880s, was much more intense than in its western neighbor, undergirds the protracted conflict. In Cameroon, differences based on religion, region, ethnicity, and pre-colonial histories did not result in civil war. The reasons were simple. Unlike François Tombalbaye in Chad, President Ahmadou Ahidjo in Cameroon instituted a type of "affirmative action" for the underprivileged regions. Furthermore, in Cameroon, the use of slavery justified by religion was not as intense as it was in Chad just prior to 1920.

Fortunately, unlike in Cameroon's former Anglophone provinces and Southern Sudan, where many leaders are now clamoring for secession, virtually every respect`ed leader in Chad wishes to maintain a united country, rejecting any kind of federalism or secession. This is one of the hopeful signs for the country's future. However, for this ideal to be realized, Chadians must take several steps: they must find an institutional framework that will respond to the "nation's" cultural and economic diversity and not just to whims of executive ministerial reshuffling as a balancing act; reexamine the size and ethnic composition of the country's fourteen prefectures to perhaps break up ethnic and religious power blocks and provide resources on a more equitable basis; and introduce an innovative educational system that is truly Chadian, one that explicitly calls for and serves Chadian nationalism. In this context, therefore, a military solution, as recent experience has shown, will not work in the long run.

A question that students of Chad must answer is whether foreign intervention of the magnitude seen during the 1980s was justifiable. If one holds the view that a legitimate or a *de facto* government has the right to defend itself by soliciting assistance from the community of nations, then one could argue that the French had a stronger case for intervention because they were invited by an internationally recognized government, although not, perhaps, by a legitimate regime following the overthrow of Tombalbaye. There are indeed Chado-French military Accords signed after independence that obligate France to rescue a Chadian state requesting assistance.

The same could not be said of Libya, however, except perhaps for the brief period the GUNT was in power. It is clear now that Chad's northern neighbor sought control over the embattled country, ultimately through annexation of its territory. In the case of the OAU, its short-lived intervention to keep the peace would certainly have been legitimate

had its forces been sent to perform such a mission. Instead, the aborted task contributed to further bloodshed among the factions and not to peace or reconciliation.

CHAD'S FUTURE

It is clear from the preceding that when the French left in 1960, Chad was a nation divided along geographic, political, social, and religious lines. Perceptive administrators, such as the last High Commissioner Daniel Doustin (1958–1960), who at the eleventh hour suggested a federation, realized that the French had failed to prepare the diverse peoples of the colony to live and co-exist peacefully and in solidarity as a nation following independence. It is said that even President Charles de Gaulle did not think that the colony could ever be viable, particularly the BET in the North, a *préfecture* that he unsuccessfully suggested to Tombalbaye in 1962 be reserved for Algeria's *pieds noirs* (Alima 1981:97).

When the French left, the imbalance in educational opportunities between North and South was clear, as the literacy rates indicated: 6.3 percent in BET; 5.3 percent in Kanem; 3.8 percent in Batha; 2.8 percent in Biltine; 3.8 percent in Wadai; 14.6 percent in Salamat; and 22.6 percent in Chari-Bagirmi, 28.7 percent in Guéra; 28.9 percent in Mayo-Kebbi, 40.5 percent in Tandjile; contrasted to 55.0 percent in Moyen-Chari; 58.4 percent in Logone Oriental; and 61.4 percent in Logone Occidental (Khayar 1976:93). During the early 1980s, it was generally estimated that, while 90 percent of the children in the deep south, in the Logone Prefecture, for example, attended school, in Batha the rate was 5 percent, and 10 percent in Kanem and Wadai (Kalfleche 1981b:20). The same neglect and differential treatment held true for health: the North did not have a single hospital or infrastructures for the Islamized societies to develop their resources. Under the circumstances, there was no doubt that southerners had the upper hand in modern skills as independence approached. Consequently, northern authorities, as happened in Northern Nigeria, were either lukewarm regarding independence, when they realized who would inherit the colonial state, or attempted to stop it altogether. As Bouquet (1982:233) notes, "One should not lose sight of the fact that the French first supported a northern party: the UDT, and that Chad's independence was almost delayed at the request of northern Muslims." One of the best known northern Muslim politicians and statesmen (from Chari-Bagirmi), Ahmed Koulamallah, for example, contacted French authorities in Paris in a last-minute attempt to prevent Chad from falling under the leadership of the south.

The northern leaders, so recently the dominators and enslavers of their neighbors, could not accept the idea of not holding the reins of power in an independent Chad. As many scholars have pointed out, northerners could not conceive of ever being ruled by their former slaves or their direct descendants while the acephalous, egalitarian, and community-oriented southerners, leading a totally different lifestyle, could not forgive and forget their former enslavers once the French, at the last minute, irreversibly decided to let them inherit the colonial state. Up until the last years of colonialism, French authorities had planned through the UDT to let the north rather than the south control post-colonial Chad because they viewed the PPT as an enemy of France and as a racist political organization. Eventually, however, colonial administrators became paranoid

about the northerners' seeming identification with the Pan-Arab and Pan-Islamic movements in Algeria and other Maghreb territories, as well as with the nationalist philosophies of Abdel Nasser of Egypt. As a result, Ahmed Koulamallah became such a distrusted politician within the colonial administration that he had to declare publicly in 1958: "I am French and I will continue to be," and denied that he had ever been a member of an Arab organization or a Nasserite (Cornet 1963:23).

Hindsight suggests that by using violent means to maintain the colonial state, as Frantz Fanon (1974:5–53) noted about colonialism in Africa, the French were following the footsteps of the region's tradition and were able only to postpone a violent crisis that erupted into a rebellion when outlets for the expression of grievances had been shut by an otherwise weak post-colonial regime. French colonial policies had indeed succeeded in transforming the peaceful Sara into a violent society that resorted to murdering its own leaders.

In this context, the development of the south and the education of some Sara, who later inherited the colonial state, was an accidental exigency of French colonial domination. It was, as Walter Rodney (1972) called it, education and development by contradiction and not by policy or design. In fact, among the French Equatorial colonies Chad still had the lowest number of educated Africans. If the French "loved" or showed preferential treatment for the southerners, it was because such "love" was a way of furthering the colonizer's policies. Even so, on the eve of independence, the entire colony of Chad had only one law school graduate and one graduate of the French Overseas National School, and, contrary to the spirit and the letter of the *Loi Cadre* of 1956, only a handful of southerners actually became full French citizens.

Given the complexity of the Chadian situation, can there be a heuristic framework for analyzing the roots of the country's violent politics and presaging its future in contemporary affairs? From this onlooker's standpoint, any perspective that overlooks the paramount role of the adversarial historical relations, the negative impact of colonialism, and the uniquely hegemonic tendency of the region's Islam, as well as the country's centrifugal ethnic cleavages and geographic diversity cannot explain Chad's present dilemma. As for the future, Chad is likely to remain volatile and in turmoil for some time, subject to the vagaries and whims of both distant and contiguous states, until a more trans-ethnic and religiously more tolerant visionary leadership emerges. Such a leadership would require moral courage, political determination, and the staying power to de-politicize the army and reduce its intrusive role in national politics; the ability and desire to withstand external pressures; and the will to govern in the name of all, without recourse to exclusionary politics or theocratic sectarianism.

In a sense, Chad will require an Aristotelian kind of leadership (drawn from the best educated in society) with the wisdom of a Leopold Senghor, able to grasp the impact of historical and cultural forces on modern national politics, the reconciliation skills of a Hamadi Diori, the firm magnanimity of a Nelson Mandela, and the economic pragmatism of a Jerry Rawlings. For foreign policy, Chad will need the independent-mindedness of an Abdel Nasser who kept, almost instinctively, the interests of the Egyptian people in his heart. Such a leadership is not easy to find but neither are Chad's problems easy to solve.

All said and done, therefore, should Chad ever recover from the crisis, it will be primarily through its own initiative in peaceful conflict resolution. Thus far, Chad's conflict provides a clear example of a war whose outcomes are negative rather than

constructive. What provides hope for the future, however, as noted in the preceding chapters, is the fact that, during the entire civil war period, none of the leaders vying for power wished to see the country disintegrate into separate units along ethnic, religious, or regional lines. Thus, we might say that, in spite of their personal ambitions to occupy the seat of power in N'Djamena, the leaders of the rebellion and the defenders of the *status quo,* both in the north and in the south, have remained nationalists at heart.

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