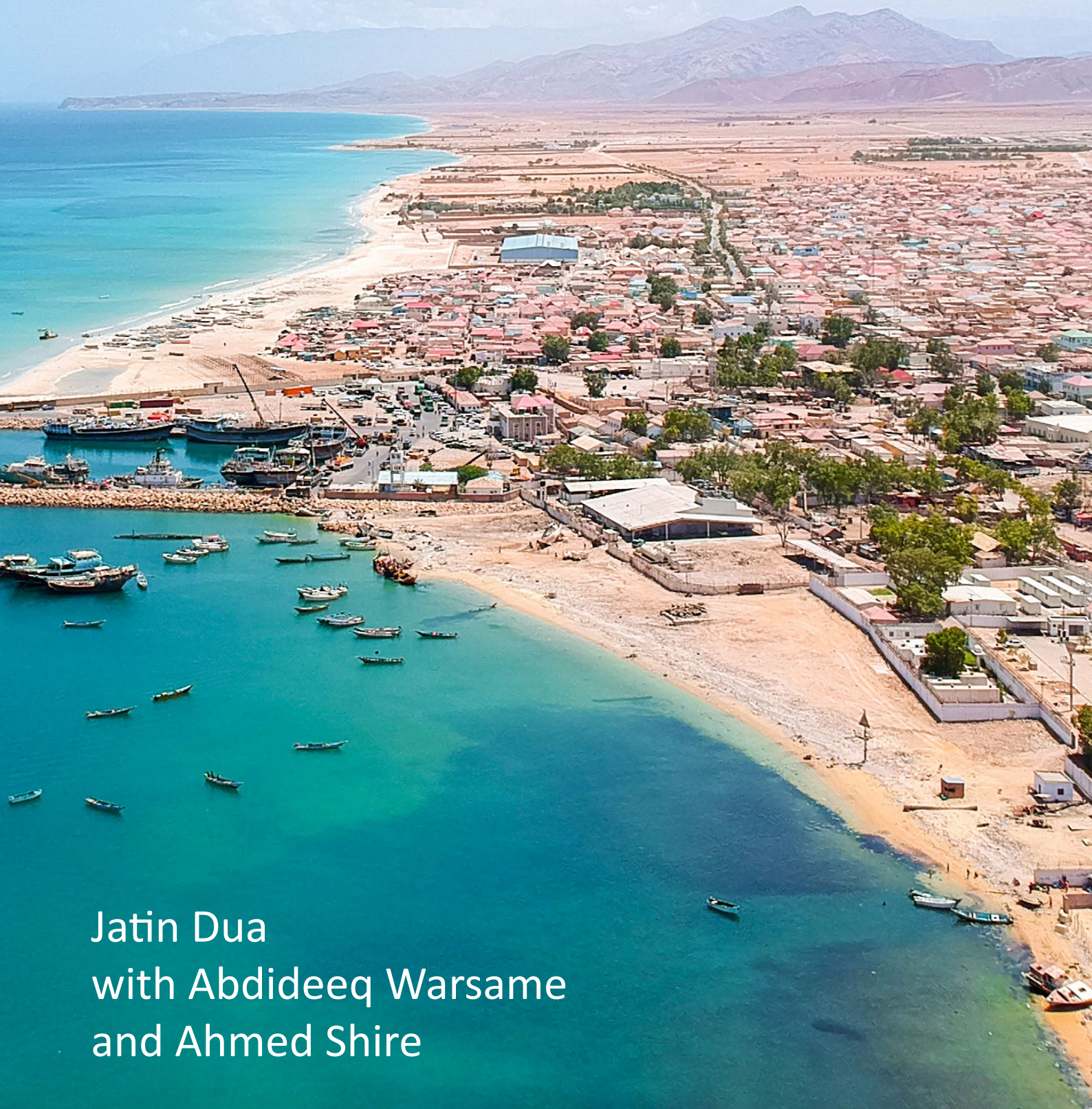


Bosaso and the Gulf of Aden

Changing dynamics of a land-sea network



Jatin Dua
with Abdideeq Warsame
and Ahmed Shire

Contents

Summary	5
1. Introduction	6
2. The emergence of Bosaso	8
The Somalia Civil War	8
Becoming a livestock hub	9
3. A changing neighbourhood	12
Bosaso and Yemen	13
Impact of the civil war in Yemen	15
The informal fuel economy	17
Yemenis in Bosaso	19
4. Conclusion	22
Glossary of acronyms, words and phrases	23
Bibliography	24



.....

Cover image: Bosaso Port © Abdirahman Bulshaawi

This report was written by Jatin Dua (University of Michigan) with Abdideeq Warsame (Puntland State University) and Ahmed Shire (Puntland State University). Research was also conducted by Abdirahman Adam Ibrahim (Puntland State University).

This report is a product of the X-Border Local Research Network, a component of DFID's Cross-Border Conflict—Evidence, Policy and Trends (XCEPT) programme, funded by UKaid from the UK government. The programme carries out research work to better understand the causes and impacts of conflict in border areas and their international dimensions. It supports more effective policymaking and development programming and builds the skills of local partners. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the UK government's official policies.

The Rift Valley Institute works in Eastern and Central Africa to bring local knowledge to bear on social, political and economic development.

Copyright © Rift Valley Institute 2020. This work is published under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).

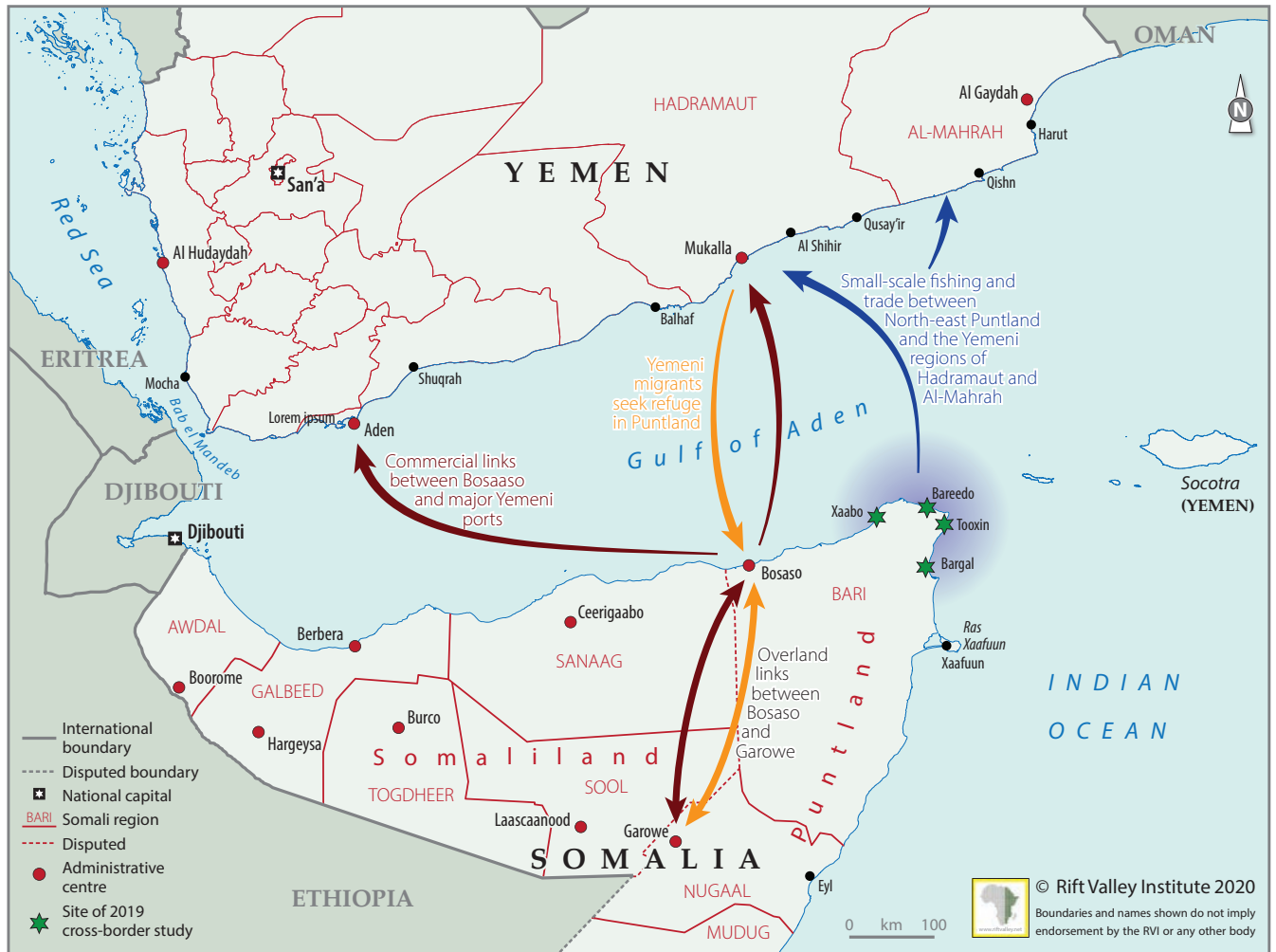


The Asia Foundation



CARNEGIE
MIDDLE EAST CENTER

Bosaso and the Gulf of Aden



Base map data source: OpenStreetMap

Summary

- Port cities in both Somalia and Yemen historically, and in the current moment in 2020, enabled the flow of goods, people and ideas, creating transregional networks and economies. These networks and economies have been central in shaping social (including religious), political and commercial life in both Somalia and Yemen. These maritime connections have been essential in navigating the political and environmental volatility caused by the long-term effects of state failure and civil war in both countries.
- Shifting demands in global markets, the continuing civil war in Yemen and wider transformations wrought by the growing presence and competition among Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, specifically the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia and Qatar, in both Yemen and Somalia have reshaped trade and mobility across the Gulf of Aden. This has had important consequences for regional security and geopolitics. It has also had significant and understudied impacts on economic life and livelihoods in the region.
- The port of Bosaso emerged as the major port for Puntland due to the ability of key actors in the city to navigate shifting geopolitical currents that resulted from the collapse of the central government in 1991. Without access to ports, newly returned Darod traders transformed Bosaso into a gateway to Yemen and the wider trading world of the Red Sea. Drawing on long-standing historical links between Yemen and Somalia, as well as kinship networks on both sides of the Red Sea, Bosaso provided a haven for goods and livestock coming in and out of Somalia.
- As the main export product for Somalia, including Puntland, livestock trade has been central to the rise and sustenance of the port of Bosaso. The development of the port into a livestock hub was dependent not only on channelling long-distance land-based pastoral economies but also on the creation of an infrastructure of quarantine authorities that issued export licenses and health certificates for the direct export of livestock to lucrative markets in the region.
- The Yemen civil war has proven to be both peril and possibility for the Bosaso port. A number of traders and imports and exports have suffered due to increased insecurity and political instability. At the same time, the civil war has also provided quick profits from a short-lived but lucrative black market for oil smuggling.
- The Yemen civil war, rising insecurity and geopolitical wrangling over the port of Bosaso also reveal wider shifts in the region. New actors, itineraries and systems of connectivity, including the rise of China, Oman and Turkey as trading partners; the increasing prominence of ports in Somaliland and Somalia such as Berbera, Mogadishu and Kismayo; and a move to formal banking and air travel, are changing and perhaps marginalizing Bosaso's position in the region.

1. Introduction

This report is the second in a series looking at the relationship between modern-day Puntland, a semi-autonomous region of north-east Somalia, Yemen and the wider Gulf region. It focuses on the port city of Bosaso. Along with Berbera—the largest port in neighbouring Somaliland—Bosaso is a key node in the relationship between Somalia and Yemen, principally its main ports of Mukalla and Aden. The first report in this series (published in June 2019) focuses on the remote north-eastern Bari region, specifically the coastal towns of Bargall, Bereeda and Abo, with an emphasis on the fishing industry and the connected trade in frankincense.¹ This research was conducted among fisher folk, traders and others who move across this maritime zone. It emphasizes the fluidity and continuity of identity and mobility across northern Somalia and Yemen, and the importance of trust, kinship and protection in shaping and governing this economy.

In contrast, the research for this report was conducted primarily in Bosaso (the main port in Puntland) and, to a lesser extent, Garowe (the state capital). The research methodology is built around qualitative in-depth interviews with key actors involved in the movement of goods and capital in this trade corridor. This is supplemented with a desk review of secondary literature on the historical and contemporary nature of trade and mobility in this region. A central goal of the research methodology is to foreground the voices and experiences of those involved in long-distance trade. Given the general lack of quantitative data on trade and mobility, as well as the insufficiency of categories such as ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ and ‘legal’ and ‘illegal’ to adequately capture the dynamics of this trade corridor, an actor-centred qualitative approach has the potential to reveal dynamics that are obscured by either a sole focus on the formal economy or a more security-centric perspective.² This phase of the research focuses on the main imports and exports that cross the land and sea border: Livestock, foodstuff and fuel. It also describes the increasing presence of Yemenis in Bosaso and other cities in Puntland—a consequence of outward migration by those fleeing the continuing civil war in Yemen.

The place of Bosaso in the relationship between present-day Puntland and the Gulf region is rooted in a long history of multilayered interactions. Somalia and Yemen have deep historical and present-day links. Past and present forms of mobility and exchange across the maritime borders of the Gulf of Aden have been central in shaping social (including

¹ Nisar Majid and Khalif Abdirahman, ‘Mobility, Trust and Exchange: Somalia and Yemen’s Cross-border Maritime Economy’, London and Nairobi: Rift Valley Institute, 2019.

² Finn Stepputat and Tobias Hagmann highlight the importance of trade corridors in shaping what they term as the ‘politics of circulation’, which refers to the co-production of political order and economic circulation in Somaliland, specifically in Berbera. See: Finn Stepputat and Tobias Hagmann, ‘Politics of circulation: The makings of the Berbera corridor in Somali East Africa’, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 37/5 (2019): 794–813.

religious), political and commercial life in both Somalia and Yemen.³ Both states have suffered from long-term civil war and state collapse, and their close linkages—often mediated in the maritime and littoral spaces—have been crucial for navigating environmental and political volatility.

Shifting demands in global markets, the ongoing civil war in Yemen and wider transformations wrought by the growing presence and competition among Gulf Cooperation Council countries (GCC), specifically the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, in both Yemen and Somalia have significantly reshaped trade and mobility across the Gulf of Aden.

In particular, the civil war in Yemen (2015 to the present) has had major consequences for local and regional security relations. It has also had important and understudied repercussions for the land and sea economies that structure this region. In addition to shedding light on the often-hidden modes through which communities on both sides of the Red Sea have navigated larger geopolitical and geo-economic currents, a focus on Bosaso, and the transregional political economies that are reliant on its port, provides insights into the evolving nature of connections across maritime space and the continued importance of oceanic connections in shaping economic, social and political life, especially in the context of conflict and uncertainty. Specifically, the port of Bosaso brings to light an important facet of trade across land and sea networks and the ports that facilitate this movement. In addition to geographic and ecological factors, the rise and fall of ports is tied to political and economic shifts at a local, regional and global level. The civil war in Yemen both highlights the versatility of Bosaso as a node in a transregional trade network and makes visible a larger story of the port's fluctuating fortunes.

3 Important historical scholarship highlights the centrality of mobility in shaping societies on both sides of the Red Sea. For example, see: Samson Bezabeh, *Subjects of Empires/Citizens of States: Yemenis in Djibouti and Ethiopia*, Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2016; Lee Cassanelli, *The Shaping of Somali Society: Reconstructing the History of a Pastoral People, 1600–1900*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982; Jonathan Miran, *Red sea citizens: cosmopolitan society and cultural change in Massawa*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009.

2. The emergence of Bosaso

For centuries, port cities on both sides of the Gulf of Aden have enabled the flow of goods, people and ideas, creating cross-continental and transregional networks of connectivity. As early as the first century CE, tales from ports in the Land of Punt appeared on papyrus in Greece.⁴ The intermingling of coastal cities and pastoral hinterlands throughout this region created a rich and vibrant caravan-trading world from the tenth century onwards. The takeover of Aden in 1839 by British forces eager to establish a fuelling station for steamships, and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, further solidified linkages and connections across the Gulf of Aden. Amidst the rise and fall of empires, the Red Sea coast has constantly stretched outward—across the hot, salty Gulf of Aden—connecting these seemingly desolate port cities with worlds of exchange far beyond their shorelines.

The port of Bosaso lies in the narrow coastal strip that runs alongside the Red Sea, known in Somali as *guban* (burnt). Hot and humid for most of the year, temperatures in Bosaso are routinely over 40 degrees Celsius, especially during the *xagaa* (summer) from June to August, when a persistent dry wind blows from the interior. This time of year is also a lean one for the port due to the dependence on non-containerized traffic, especially *dhow*s (traditional sailing vessels) from South Asia. These vessels make more limited runs across the Indian Ocean due to rough winds and high swells caused by the south-west monsoon (roughly from July to September).

The Somali civil war

Until the 1990s, Bosaso was a relatively minor port town.⁵ As a traditional elder notes:

In 1986, Bosaso was a small town with a small natural harbour. I remember there were only small boats at the port that mostly travelled between Yemen and Bosaso. ... Trade was only connected to Aden and Mukalla.⁶

⁴ Lionel Casson, *The Periplus Maris Erythraei: Text with Introduction, Translation, and Commentary*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989. More recent scholarship emphasizes the centrality of port-making in the Horn of Africa and elsewhere as crucial to projects of geopolitical rivalries and economic sovereignty. For example, see: Brenda Chalfin, 'Recasting maritime governance in Ghana: The neo-developmental state and the Port of Tema', *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 48/4 (2010): 573–598; Jatin Dua, 'Ambergris, Livestock, and Oil: Port-making as Chokeypoint Making in the Red Sea', *Ethnos*, DOI: 10.1080/00141844.2019.1696861; Laleh Khalili, *Sinews of War and Trade: Shipping and Capitalism in the Arabian Peninsula*, London: Verso Books, 2020.

⁵ Unlike Berbera and Zeila to the west in Somaliland, which have been historically important port cities, Bosaso is a relatively recent port.

⁶ Interview with traditional elder, Bosaso, 10 September 2019.

The rise of Bosaso as a major port is directly tied to the civil war and the collapse of the Somali state in 1991. As the military regime of Siad Barre consolidated power in Mogadishu in the 1970s, traders from northern Somalia moved to Mogadishu in order to benefit from the protection of the state. In the early 1980s, livestock exports from the northern port of Berbera nonetheless accounted for approximately 75 per cent of the recorded foreign income in Somalia.⁷ At the same time, however, as the country edged towards civil war in the 1980s, government repression of regional rebellions by groups claiming Berbera and the region currently known as Somaliland, initially directed all maritime traffic to Mogadishu.

The central government also sought to develop an alternative to Berbera and established new port facilities in Bosaso, linking the port to the rest of Somalia through the construction of a major highway. Initially, the port was intended as a subsidiary port to Mogadishu. A livestock trader confirms this: 'Before the civil war, goods imported through Bosaso port used to transfer to Mogadishu for taxes and then return to Bosaso for commercial purposes.'⁸

After the central government fell in 1991, and the civil war spread, the ports in Kismayo and Mogadishu closed (the latter for a decade). From 1991–1993, Bosaso was one of the only modern ports facilitating movement in and out of Somalia. The Berbera port was being contested between the incipient Somaliland government and the Isa Musse, a sub-clan of the Isaaq clan that was not well-represented in the government at that time.⁹ The civil war and the parallel clan-based re-territorialization of Somalia also consolidated the rise of Bosaso, as it provided an outlet and safe haven for the mostly Majerteen traders returning to their clan homelands.¹⁰ Bosaso also served many of the other Darod sub-clans of the wider Somali regions, including southern Somalia, North Eastern Province (Kenya) and the Somali region of Ethiopia.¹¹

Becoming a livestock hub

The establishment of Puntland as a sub-national region in 1998 brought greater regularization of port traffic. The nascent Puntland authorities gave Bosaso the authority to issue livestock export licenses. Transporting goats, camels and cattle across the Bab-el-

7 Alex de Waal, 1996, quoted in Markus Hoehne, 'The Rupture of Territoriality and the Diminishing Relevance of Cross-cutting Ties in Somalia after 1990', *Development and Change* 47/6 (2016): 1379–1411.

8 Interview with livestock trader, Bosaso, 12 September 2019.

9 Ahmed Musa and Cindy Horst, 'State-formation and economic development in post-war Somaliland: the impact of the corporate sector in an unrecognized state', *Conflict, Security and Development* 19/1 (2019): 35–53. From 1991–1993, Bosaso was the cheapest port for imports and exports in Somalia. Traders from the Ethiopian town of Hart Sheik, a major trade hub, used to import goods from Bosaso in spite of the relative proximity of the port of Berbera in relation to Hart Sheik. Ahmed Warsame, email correspondence with author, June 2020.

10 Hoehne, 'The Rupture of Territoriality'.

11 Interview with livestock trader, Bosaso, 12 September 2019.

Mandeb straits to major markets in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Oman and the UAE requires an export license that includes a medical clearance certificate issued by a recognized quarantine authority. Prior to the civil war, Somali government quarantines provided the necessary paperwork and certification. In addition, the government restricted livestock exports to merchants who possessed official letters of credit (LC) and livestock brokers would only sell livestock to those merchants.¹²

After the civil war, there were no restrictions on joining the livestock trade, so many more people entered the market.¹³ The absence of quarantine facilities and quality control measures meant, however, that Somali livestock was restricted from entering a number of regional markets. In the 1990s, livestock first travelled to the Port of Aden in Yemen where it would be processed and then re-exported to the more lucrative markets of Saudi Arabia and the UAE.¹⁴

Yemen became a re-exporting centre for Somali livestock due to the absence of restrictions there, the presence of *wakiils* (agents) and kinship ties between people in Yemen and Somalia, as well as short transit times by boat. As one livestock trader in Bosaso succinctly summarizes: ‘Yemen is like a market in Somalia.’¹⁵ Yemeni livestock re-exporters made considerable profits, too: ‘If we sold a goat to a Yemeni merchant for USD 80, they could then sell it on for USD 160 because they had the certificate to send to Saudi Arabia.’¹⁶

The livestock trade is marked by a degree of volatility and risk, especially for exporters, who generally pay major costs—ranging from ‘broker fees, feed material, *mahjar* (quarantine) services, port fees and the cost of renting the boat’ in advance.¹⁷ Prior to the civil war when a formal banking system operated, traders possessed LCs and money transfers were done from a bank in Somalia to a bank in the destination country on credit with rates negotiated between banks. Even during the heydays of the Barre regime, however, most livestock traders sought to circumvent official channels and used systems such as the *franco valuta*, which blurred the boundaries between official and unofficial commerce.¹⁸ After the civil war period, the absence of LCs and banks, along with the collapse of the *franco valuta* system, meant that the capital risk was taken on by the livestock trader. This risk created a degree of uncertainty for livestock traders because regulatory shifts and climate and political volatility could lead to great losses

¹² Interview with livestock trader, Bosaso, 12 September 2019.

¹³ Interview with livestock trader, Bosaso, 10 September 2019.

¹⁴ Food and Agriculture Organization, ‘Review of the Livestock Sector (IGAD Countries)’, Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2014.

¹⁵ Interview with livestock trader, Bosaso, 10 September 2019.

¹⁶ Interview with livestock trader, Bosaso, 10 September 2019.

¹⁷ Interview with livestock trader, Bosaso, 10 September 2019.

¹⁸ The *franco valuta* system entails paying remittances in form of goods traded. Jamal describes it as ‘a system to procure imported goods for Somali consumers – bought by Somali dealers, from money earned by Somali workers abroad and purchased by the workers’ relatives at home’. Vali Jamal, ‘Somalia: Understanding an Unconventional Economy’, *Development and Change* 19/2 (1988), 212.

within the trade. When Yemen eventually stopped allowing livestock re-exports in 1995, the lack of LCs or health certificates meant many traders lost significant revenues due to an inability to export livestock to other ports and ‘about six companies closed down at that time’.¹⁹

By 2004, the Puntland government established quarantine facilities backed and sometimes operated by Saudi and Emirati companies. Bans on the export of livestock from Somalia to the Gulf following outbreaks of Rift Valley Fever in 1998 and 2002 were also rescinded in these years. The quarantine facilities provided the paperwork and test results necessary for the export of livestock and regularized trade once more. Between 2005 and 2015, an average of 100,000 cattle, 20,000 camels and 1,500,000 goats travelled through the port of Bosaso annually to destinations that included Yemen, Oman, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Egypt, Qatar and Libya.²⁰ Fifty-two per cent of this livestock originated in the interior regions of Puntland, with the rest coming from southern Somalia (30 per cent) and Ethiopia (18 per cent).²¹ This livestock trade peaks during the *Hajj* season, when large livestock carriers are moored in the port and ready to transport livestock across the Red Sea to the port of Jeddah in Saudi Arabia.

Livestock has been the lifeblood of the port of Bosaso. As the manager of a livestock quarantine notes, ‘*Xooluhu waa petrol-ka Soomaaliya*’ (Livestock is the petrol of Somalia).²² The transformation of the port into a major livestock hub was dependent on the ability of key actors in Bosaso to navigate shifting geopolitical currents that resulted from the collapse of the central government in 1991. Without access to ports, newly returned Darod traders transformed Bosaso into a gateway to Yemen and the wider trading world of the Red Sea. The establishment of quarantine facilities in recent years funnelled and cemented this role as a trading hub, though the risks and volatility of the livestock trade in conjunction to geopolitical shifts and port competition emphasize the precarious nature of Bosaso as a livestock hub. In interviews, many traders note factors that inhibit livestock exports through Bosaso such as: Lack of access to formal banking systems, including the ability to procure LCs; an absence of formal insurance mechanisms; traders preferring improved port capacity and logistical links in Berbera and Mogadishu; and, finally, growing local insecurity. The transformation of Bosaso thus reveals the intertwined nature of regulatory shifts, political authority and transregional trade in establishing and sustaining trading hubs, such as seaports, in the region.

¹⁹ Interview with livestock trader, Bosaso, 12 September 2019.

²⁰ Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit–Somalia, Market Data Update Archives. Accessed 15, July 2020. <https://www.fsna.org/products/bulletins/market-data-update/archives?page=1>.

²¹ IGAD Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development. ‘Livestock associations field visit meeting minutes’, Nairobi: Intergovernmental Authority on Development, Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development, 2015. (On file with author).

²² Interview with quarantine manager, Bosaso, September 2019.

3. A changing neighbourhood

The strategic importance of the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea has meant that wider geopolitical forces have shaped transregional economic networks in this part of the world. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 led to a regional scramble for littoral real estate by imperial powers. One result was the British takeover of Aden as a refuelling and garrison port, along with ports along the Somali coast. A large Somali community (primarily Isaaq and Warsengeli from the present-day territories of Somaliland and Puntland) settled in Aden and intensified pre-existing commercial and social links between Somali and Yemeni peoples.²³ In the post-colonial twentieth century, the region became a focus for Cold War rivalry. Earlier in the twenty-first century, the Al-Qaeda attack on the *USS Cole* as it was being refueled in Aden Harbor on 12 October 2000 and the dramatic upsurge in Somalia piracy from 2008 onwards has led to a renewed securitization of the Red Sea, including the presence of multinational naval patrols.

In recent years, geopolitical wrangling between Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, in particular the rivalry between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, has led to a scramble for control over ports and trade networks in the Horn of Africa. In 2017, Dubai-based DP World—one of the largest port operators in the world and backed by the Dubai government—won a 30-year concession worth USD 336 million to develop and manage the Bosaso port. This port deal was controversial from the outset, with protests over fears of increases in taxes and other fees marring the announcement of this deal.

In 2019, the Maltese port manager for the Bosaso port was killed in an ambush en route to the port. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for this attack, accusing the port developers of ‘looting Somalia’s resources’.²⁴ Subsequently, an investigative report by the *New York Times* implicated Qatar in this attack by releasing an audio recording of an alleged phone call between a business person close to the Emir of Qatar and the Qatari ambassador to Somalia. In this phone call, the business person claims that the militants had carried out the bombing in Bosaso to advance Qatari interests by driving out its rival, the UAE.²⁵ This has been denied by both Somalia and Qatar, and emerges at a time when the government of Qatar has revealed plans to build a port in Hobyo that would rival Bosaso for maritime trade in the region. Similarly, Dubai has established concessions with the Somaliland government to run the Berbera port, leading to further port rivalries in the region.

²³ Scott Reese, *Imperial Muslims: Islam, Community and Authority in the Indian Ocean, 1839–1937*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018.

²⁴ ‘Port Manager killed in Somalia’s Puntland State’, *BBC News*, 4 February 2019.

²⁵ Ronan Bergman and David D. Kirkpatrick, ‘With Guns, Cash and Terrorism, Gulf States Vie for Power in Somalia’, *New York Times*, 22 July 2019.

Beyond geopolitics, regional trade shifts—in particular the rise of Dubai and Oman as alternative transshipment points for imports and exports to Somalia—have had a significant impact on traders based in Bosaso. Many merchants interviewed for this report note that in the previous decade a number of businesses relocated to Oman and Dubai in order to benefit from these preferential trade links.²⁶ Underlying local transregional trade networks have been adept at navigating these geopolitical and regional economic currents. The viability of Bosaso was the result of changing local, regional and transnational contexts. Equally, the escalation of the Yemen conflict from 2015 onward affected the flow and directionality of trade. In particular, the war in Yemen is seen as one reason for the recent downturn in the fortunes of Bosaso. As a local trader notes: ‘Somalis can shift from Dubai–UAE but they cannot shift from Yemen.’²⁷ Traders who were interviewed repeatedly emphasize that Yemen is not simply a major trading partner but that these trade networks are often guaranteed by and dependent on pre-existing social and kinship networks. Additionally, visa-free travel, the ease of doing business in Yemen, particularly in the Hadhramaut and other regions of southern Yemen, due to the presence of *hawala* (money transfer system) networks and clan-based systems of conflict resolution, led many traders to note the enduring nature of commercial ties and the blurred boundaries between trade and social life for both Somalis and Yemenis.

Bosaso and Yemen

By the 1990s, the then still recently established port of Bosaso was already connected to the main Yemeni cities of Taiz, a major industrial hub, and Sanaa, the capital and main hub, through the port cities of Hudaydah, Mocha, Aden and Mukalla.²⁸ A *wakiil* (agent) explains that traders from Somaliland use Mocha for imports and exports, whereas traders from Puntland prefer Mukalla, which is nearer to Bosaso, and Somaliland and Puntland traders both also use the Port of Aden.²⁹

Modernization and investment, including in containerization, at the Berbera port means that Berbera is partially integrated in global shipping routes, with container vessels making routine stops at the port of Berbera. This has led to high volume and high value container ships regularly travelling between Jeddah, Berbera and Aden. In contrast, the main trading vessels between Bosaso and Yemen are smaller Indian and Pakistani *dhow*s. These trading vessels, a number of which are owned by Bosaso-based Somali business people, have been instrumental in navigating the risks and restrictions imposed by trade sanctions, port capacity, piracy and war. In recent years, as piracy has raised insurance rates for commercial shipping and the cost of importing goods to the heavily import-dependent economy of Somalia, *dhow*s have sought to fill the gap left by cargo ships, and make regular trips between Sharjah and Bosaso. While these traditional sailing vessels

²⁶ Interviews with traders, Bosaso and Garowe, September 2019.

²⁷ Interview with trader, Bosaso, 15 September 2019.

²⁸ Interview with trader, Bosaso, 15 September 2019.

²⁹ Interview with *wakiil*, Bosaso, September 2019.

and the trade network that they constitute were crucial in transforming Bosaso into a trade and livestock hub during the Somali civil war and the piracy boom in the region, they also reflect the limitations of Bosaso in terms of its port capacity and competitiveness.

In addition to livestock, a variety of other goods are also transported on *dhow*s and other smaller vessels that sail between Bosaso and Yemen. Prior to the civil war in Yemen, for example, items such as honey, frankincense, butter, *ghee* (clarified butter), charcoal and fish were exported to Yemen, and imports from Yemen included medicines, food-stuffs and packaged food, beverages, clothing and other consumer items.³⁰ As this list of trade goods indicates, high value and manufactured goods came from Yemen, with Bosaso exporting primary products, which has resulted in negative trade balances with Yemen and other trade partners. The Bosaso trade network also shows the underlying inequality in trade relationships between Puntland and Yemen, which both results from and perpetuates the structural poverty of northern Somalia in comparison to Yemen.

As with livestock, value transfer prior to the disruptions caused by the Yemen civil war mostly occurred through *hawala* networks and other money transfer agencies, or occasionally cash would be sent directly on boats going between Bosaso and Yemen. A central Somali figure in facilitating trade between Bosaso and Yemen is the *wakiil*. As a former agent who was based in Sanaa until 2016 explains:

For Somaliland, there were nine agents and three warehouses [in Sanaa]. For Puntland, ten agents and two warehouses. Our role was to collect goods [from across Yemen] and bring them to the warehouses before they were transported to ports for export to Somalia. ... Agents are responsible for transporting goods to the port cities, clearing port requirements, hiring boats, as well as loading goods on to the boat. Traders pay [the agent] a fee for the services.³¹

Some agents are *Wuwaladiin* (mixed Yemeni–Somali) who are long-term residents in Yemen, others are Somalis who have lived in Yemen and have a familiarity with the trading and political landscape of the country. Agents can be members of the clan of the Somali trading firm or a Somali shareholder of that business who travel to Yemen to facilitate imports and exports.³² The majority of Somali traders who have trade links with Yemen are from Puntland and Somaliland, with Somalis from southern Somalia not usually involved in this trade network.³³ Similarly, in Yemen the main trading partners for Somali businesses include those with Yemeni–Somali ancestry or those who hail from communities in southern and coastal Yemen, including the Hadhramaut region.³⁴

30 Interview with trader, Bosaso, 15 September 2019.

31 Interview with *wakiil*, Bosaso, September 2019.

32 Interview with *wakiil*, Bosaso, September 2019.

33 Interview with *wakiil*, Bosaso, September 2019.

34 Interview with *wakiil*, Bosaso, September 2019.

One interviewee also mentions that traders often marry Yemeni women in order to get Yemeni passports, and facilitate travel and residency in Yemen.³⁵

In discussing trade relationships with Yemen, an oft-repeated sentiment on the part of respondents from Somalia who were interviewed is the idea that ‘Yemen is a copy of Somalia’, which emphasizes the ease of making and sustaining trade relationships, the centrality of kinship and social networks in perpetuating trade relationships and indicating that the future of Puntland is inextricably tied to events across the Red Sea.

Impact of the civil war in Yemen

In 2011, an uprising in Yemen forced the long-term president of the country, Ali Abdullah Saleh, to cede power to his deputy, Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi. Since then, the country has descended into a prolonged civil war, as Houthi rebels seized control of parts of northern Yemen, including the capital Sanaa, and forced President Hadi into exile in 2014. In March 2015, a coalition of mostly Sunni Arab states, led by Saudi Arabia and backed by the United States, the United Kingdom and France, carried out airstrikes against Houthi strongholds in the north, which they believed to be a proxy of Iranian influence. Saudi-led airstrikes and naval blockades also targeted Yemeni ports such as Hudaydah. After Houthi fighters fired a missile at the capital of Saudi Arabia on 4 November 2017, Saudis sealed sea, air and land access to Yemen.

The blockade of Yemeni ports, aerial strikes and naval patrols had an immediate impact on trade and commerce on both sides of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. In the immediate aftermath of the blockade, there was a severe shortage of goods in Yemeni markets. A Somali cloth merchant in Bosaso explains that:

We used to import clothes from Yemen and also had a store in Sanaa but we closed it in 2015, when the war started. Due to the war, Yemeni traders were not able to import clothes from China and since [we exported the clothes from China], we left Sanaa and returned to Bosaso.³⁶

Currently, Somali traders can only source goods from Yemen that are manufactured there. There are other shortages in Bosaso linked to the crisis in Yemen, in particular such items as eggs, medicines and women’s clothing.³⁷ A former trader of Yemeni–Somali heritage describes the downturn in his Bosaso business as a result of the civil war in Yemen:

I started my business in 2004 [in Bosaso]. I am Muwalad from northern Yemen. Before the Yemen war started in 2015, I owned three big shops in Bosaso. I used to import fragrance and perfume from Yemen and [business] was booming. I used to send my products to all Somali regions, where I have customers who

³⁵ Interview with trader, Bosaso, September 2019.

³⁶ Interview with shopkeeper, Bosaso, September 2019.

³⁷ Interview with shopkeeper, Bosaso, September 2019

liked the products I provided. When the Yemen civil war started, all my business stopped and I lost USD 60,000 due to the war. After that, I tried unsuccessfully to shift my business to Oman and Dubai.³⁸

The Yemen crisis has seen port closures, the rise of militia checkpoints and informal taxation, and shortages of foreign exchange (US dollars), slowing the pace and increasing the price of trade for Somali importers. As one wholesaler explains, 'A box of medicine used to cost USD 4 but now costs USD 8. Logistics have gotten more expensive as well, with the rental price for 10 cartons increasing from USD 20 to USD 70.'³⁹ In addition, the absence of commercial flights has meant that all transport is via sea, with boats often stopping at beaches and other informal harbors. This has led to an increase in transit times, greater transport costs and an overall decrease in the volume of imports between Yemen and Somalia.

While there has been a decline in the import and export trade, the export of Somali livestock has weathered the downturn over time. During the initial phase of the Yemeni conflict, Somali livestock was exported from all parts of Somalia; however, as an *Al Jazeera* report notes, in 2016 only 2,000 camels left the port of Mogadishu.⁴⁰ Traders in Bosaso also note a similar initial downturn, although most traders now claim that Somali livestock exports have bounced back and continue to arrive to Aden and Mukalla, despite the continuing conflict in Yemen.⁴¹

The livestock trade has also helped sustain imports from Yemen to Somalia. A foreign exchange shortage resulting from the currency crisis in Yemen, in addition to the closure and disruptions to direct banking and money transfer services between Yemen and Bosaso, has led to the development of new systems of money and value transfer. In this system, a Somali livestock exporter sells animals in Mukalla and receives cash in Saudi riyal (SAR, the de facto currency in Yemen) from his or her Yemeni counterpart. The exporter then contacts a Somali importer in Bosaso who wants to buy goods in Mukalla. Once an agreement is reached between these two parties, the Somali importer transfers US dollars to the bank of the livestock exporter in Somalia, and the livestock exporter hands over the riyals to the company representative in Mukalla.⁴² This system has allowed Yemeni traders to circumvent the lack of availability of US dollars in the country and allowed Somali importers to continue doing business in Yemen, while also avoiding dealing in Saudi riyal. Additionally, the use of livestock as essentially a barter mechanism has helped traders from both countries navigate the difficulties caused by the closure and disruptions to direct banking and money transfer services in Yemen.

³⁸ Interview with Yemeni male business person, Bosaso, September 2019.

³⁹ Interview with trader, Bosaso, September 2019.

⁴⁰ Hamza Mohamed, 'Somali Camel Traders Pay the Price of War in Yemen', *Al Jazeera*, 21 June 2016. Accessed 18 March 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/04/somali-camel-traders-pay-price-war-syria-160411092956190.html>.

⁴¹ Interview with livestock trader, Bosaso, September 2019.

⁴² Interview with livestock trader, Bosaso, September 2019.

In addition to functioning as a temporary solution to the disruptions caused by the Yemen civil war, this system has diversified Somali trade networks. In recent years, a number of commercial banks have opened up in Puntland and livestock traders have shifted to formal banking, alongside using the more well-known *hawala* money transfer systems. One major advantage of formal banking is being able to trade directly with partners in Oman, the UAE, China, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, India and Turkey through bank-to-bank transfers. Money deposited by importers in these new retail banks in Puntland can thus be reinvested in payments to business partners in places where Somali businesses increasingly are reaching out for greater profits and expanded economic opportunities.

The Yemen civil war has significantly affected regional geopolitical configurations and disrupted supply chains and long-standing commercial relationships between Yemen and Somalia. At the same time, old historical and social links have ensured the resilience of these trade networks, emphasizing the important role the extraverted economies in Yemen and Somalia have played in negotiating political and climate-induced upheavals. This articulates itself in the emergence of novel forms of payment systems that circumvent money transfer and currency disruptions, as well as in the continued use of older trade networks such as the Mukalla–Bosaso corridor. The impact of the Yemen civil war on the port of Bosaso, however, also reveals wider shifts in the organization of trade networks in the region, including a shift away from kin-based trade networks to formal banking and a reorientation in trade to other (newer) markets. These processes were occurring prior to the Yemen civil war but have been accelerated and made even more visible by the conflict. The shifts resulting from the crisis in Yemen highlight the evolving relationship between Yemen and Somalia, and the changing role of Bosaso in sustaining these connections.

The informal fuel economy

There are still profits to be made amidst the general hardship caused by the war. As one business person notes, '*Caano daatay dabadood laqabey*' (Even spilt milk can be saved).⁴³ The informal trade in fuel, in particular, provided an important source of quick profits for many fuel traders, especially at the beginning of the Saudi-led blockade in 2015, when fuel prices in Yemen increased rapidly due to shortages and the devaluation of the Yemeni rial (YER).

The fuel and petrol trade in Puntland—largely based out of the Bosaso port—is mostly run by small individual companies owned by local Somali traders. Prior to 2015, traders recall that most fuel used in Somalia was imported from Yemen. While many traders who were interviewed note that fuel exports from Yemen were often restricted, traders procured this fuel through an informal network of Yemeni army officials and Somali dealers, who facilitated movement between Yemen and Bosaso. During this period, due

⁴³ Interview with cloth merchant, Bosaso, September 2019.

to the absence of petrol pumps and refinery facilities, fuel was distributed in Somalia by street-side vendors—often women, who would set up stalls alongside roads and sell directly to vehicles.

In addition to petrol, cooking gas and kerosene were also imported from Yemen by sea prior to 2015. A trader who claims his company was the first to import cooking gas to Bosaso, in 2006, describes the operation as one built and sustained through social networks that facilitate this larger trading system. As he explains, ‘Cooking gas was very expensive in the UAE and you could not sell it at such a high price in Bosaso. So, we bought empty gas containers from the UAE, and took them to Yemen to fill with cooking gas.’⁴⁴ He then goes on to describe the logistics of bringing cooking gas to Bosaso:

We own a small boat, which could carry up to 900 cooking gas containers. We had a *wakiil* in Yemen who bought the gas in Yemen and was paid a commission. In addition, we paid a tax per trip of USD 990. Our boat travelled two to three times per month to Bosaso.⁴⁵

As the trader further explains, although cooking gas exports from Yemen were officially restricted, his company was granted an exceptional permission from the regional governor of Al-Mahra. This southern Yemeni region along the Omani border enjoys a degree of autonomy from Sanaa and the central government. These social networks were central to the maintenance and, importantly, profitability of the pre-war fuel and gas trade between Yemen and Somalia.

The Yemeni conflict had a major impact on this former trade circuit, including trade blockades that turned into a short-term opportunity for major profiteering. As one trader notes:

When the Ali Abdalla Salah regime collapsed, Somalis started exporting fuel and gas to Yemen. Many Somali traders made huge profits and got rich in a short period of time. They would buy a barrel of fuel at USD 90 from reserves held in Bosaso and sell it to Yemeni traders at USD 220. Sometimes whole boat loads would go from the UAE to Yemen, even though its manifesto noted its destination as Bosaso.⁴⁶

US sanctions on Iran had also created a black market for Iranian oil that circulated through the maritime region. Somali traders in Bosaso imported fuel from Iran, primarily on *dhow*s and other ships, held this fuel in reserves in Bosaso and then re-export this fuel to Yemen at a premium.⁴⁷

While extremely profitable, this trade was not without its risks. Traders who were interviewed note that at times due to heavy fighting in Yemen, transport trucks were stopped,

⁴⁴ Interview with fuel merchant, Bosaso, September 2019.

⁴⁵ Interview with fuel merchant, Bosaso, September 2019.

⁴⁶ Interview with fuel merchant, Bosaso, September 2019.

⁴⁷ Interview with fuel merchant, Bosaso, September 2019.

leading to supply shortages. The Emirati navy also routinely stopped boats at sea for inspections, causing delays or even loss of cargo if the ships were found in violation of the embargo. The increase in surveillance at sea, including seizures of Somali-owned boats by the Iranian Navy, and the arrest and imprisonment of Somali crew members by Iran for allegedly smuggling oil, marked an end to this brief period of war profiteering.⁴⁸

The informal oil trade exemplifies wider logics of the legal trading network: It highlights the close relationship between legal and unsanctioned trade. Oil smuggling networks emerged out of pre-existing trade networks that were built on systems of kinship and trust, such as the special permissions given to Somalis to export fuel by officials in Al-Mahra province due to close historical ties between northern Somalia and this region. It also highlights the condition of peril and opportunity in which ports such as Bosaso operate, where trade and profits are built on degrees of informality. Yet, it is precisely this informality that makes these trade networks and port cities vulnerable.

Yemenis in Bosaso

The history of mobility and movement between northern Somalia and southern Yemen have resulted in port cities such as Aden, with long-standing Somali residents who were active in the commercial and political life of the city. Northern Somalia has also been home to numerous Yemeni communities. One of the most well-known is the Arab Salah (or Meheri) community, which hails from the Al-Mahra region in southern Yemen. The members of this community continue to speak Somali and Mehri as their native languages, with significant movement back and forth between Somalia and Yemen. In contemporary Somalia, the presence of the Arab Salah community extends from Puntland to the former Muduq province in central Somalia (now part of the Galmudug federal member state).⁴⁹

As conditions in Somalia deteriorated during 1980s, and especially following state collapse and civil war in the early 1990s, high numbers of Somalis fled to Yemen. There are an estimated 500,000 Somalis living in Yemen since the outbreak of the Somali civil war.⁵⁰ In addition, a significant number of Somalis, Ethiopians and Eritreans transit regularly from northern Somalia, including Bosaso, across the Red Sea on *tahriib* (irregular migration), en route to their final destination in Europe and the Gulf countries.

The civil war in Yemen has seen a reversal in migration flows. At the beginning of the war, a number of Somali (as well as Yemeni–Somali) agents, traders and refugees returned to Puntland. In recent years, there has also been an increase in the number of Yemenis

⁴⁸ Interview with fuel merchant, Bosaso, September 2019.

⁴⁹ Mohamed Haji Mukhtar, 'Arabic Sources on Somalia', *History in Africa: A Journal of Method* 14 (1987): 141–172.

⁵⁰ Laura Hammond, 'Somali refugee displacements in the near region: Analysis and Recommendations', Paper for UNHCR Global initiative on Somali Refugees, Geneva: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, High Level Panel on Somali Refugees, 2014.

who have sought refuge in Puntland. It is estimated that since 2015, more than 14,000 Yemenis have fled to Somalia, many by boat from Mukalla and Aden to Bosaso, where the UNHCR and other relief organizations have established reception centers for these new arrivals.⁵¹

The majority of Yemeni refugees who arrive in Bosaso emphasize previous familial and business connections as being reasons they chose to travel to Puntland.⁵² This war-time mobility also marks a shift, with mobility across the Red Sea not being framed within social networks and kinship connections. For many of these new arrivals, Puntland is a destination of last resort: These refugees describe the hardships they face in Somalia, ranging from lack of support from local administrations and international development organizations to difficulties with the Somali language.⁵³

In the absence of a robust infrastructure to accommodate refugees, a number of small-scale initiatives are emerging throughout Somalia, such as the Yemeni community school in Mogadishu, which provides basic education to Yemeni children displaced by the war. In Puntland, local organizations and Yemeni refugee groups have sought to provide support to Yemeni refugees in Bosaso. The arrival of Yemeni refugees has also led to small-scale economic impacts for the local economy. For example, a number of Yemeni refugees have started businesses in Bosaso, primarily in the restaurant, home decorating and grocery sectors. A number of these businesses have been set up as a result of a partnership between Yemeni business people and local Somalis, or individual Yemenis bringing their capital to Bosaso.⁵⁴

These businesses, especially restaurants, have found it difficult to stay profitable in Bosaso. There are several reasons for this, including lack of local experience on the part of Yemenis. For example, the seasonal population shifts in Bosaso mean that many Somalis only stay in the city for eight months of the year, due to the extreme climate. There have also been a number of business disputes between Yemeni and Somali partners, which have resulted in conflicts, police arrests and court cases. Some of the cases are resolved by traditional Somali elders before they reach the courts. Often, however, traditional elders will not intervene in these disputes, emphasizing the shifting nature of relations between Yemenis and Somalis in Bosaso.⁵⁵

These narratives highlight the complicated nature of the relationships between Somalis and Yemenis. While systems of trust still exist and the idea that Yemen is a replica of Somalia is still often repeated, the Yemen civil war also shows up the limits of trust and the role of formal institutions, such as the courts, in mediating relations between

⁵¹ Nisan Ahmado, Sahra Eidle Nur and Hussein Aden, 'Yemen Unrest Makes Somalia Unlikely Safe Haven for Refugees', *Voice of America News*, 14 December 2019. Accessed 18 March 2020, <https://www.voanews.com/extremism-watch/yemen-unrest-makes-somalia-unlikely-safe-haven-refugees>.

⁵² Interviews with Yemenis, Bosaso and Garowe, September 2019.

⁵³ Interview with project manager, Kaalo Aid and Development, Bosaso, September 2019.

⁵⁴ Interview with project manager, Kaalo Aid and Development, Bosaso, September 2019.

⁵⁵ Interview with project manager, Kaalo Aid and Development, Bosaso, September 2019.

Yemenis and Somalis. The crisis in Yemen further reveals the economic potentialities and risks of these new mobilities. As with the wider trading network centred on Bosaso, the experience of Yemenis in Bosaso since 2015 reflects both the continuities and transformations of the relationships between Yemen and Somalia. While longer histories and kinship-based networks help facilitate mobility (however unequally) across the Red Sea, the Yemen civil war has simultaneously placed further stress on these linkages and revealed new actors and new forms of mobility that are not tied to these kinship-based systems but portend the possibilities and perils of new itineraries and a shifting role for Bosaso in a changing regional neighbourhood.

4. Conclusion

The Yemen civil war emphasizes wider ways in which trade networks centred on Bosaso have been affected by local, regional and global shifts. The growth of Bosaso as a major centre of commerce in Somalia was tied to the ability of key actors in the city to successfully navigate national upheaval following the collapse of the Somali central government. Drawing on long-standing historical links between Yemen and Somalia, Bosaso provided a haven for goods coming in and out of Somalia. The extraverted nature of the Somali economy meant a reliance on seaports and the world of Red Sea commerce to navigate the perils of statelessness. The rise of Puntland helped transform Bosaso into a livestock hub through the creation of quarantines and the issuance of export certificates by the Puntland government. While structurally unequal, the trade links between Yemen and Bosaso highlight long histories of mobility and connectivity in the region, a connectivity forged through kinship and social ties.

At the same time, the very conditions that led to the rise of Bosaso—a kinship-based trading network that allowed mobility and commerce across maritime borders—also make the port vulnerable to wider regional transformations and competition from ports connected through containerization to the wider sinews of global commerce. The Yemen civil war has been both peril and possibility for the Bosaso port. It also reveals wider shifts, whereby new actors, new itineraries and new systems of connectivity—from the rise of China, Oman and Turkey as trading partners to a shift to formal banking and air travel—create a changing and possibly marginalised role for Bosaso in facilitating commerce and connectivity in the region. As numerous traders who were interviewed note, beyond the upheaval caused by the Yemen civil war, increasing insecurity, the lack of containerization and port politics between the UAE, Puntland and the central government point to a new chapter for Bosaso, which could signal a more challenging future for the port city.

Glossary of acronyms, words and phrases

<i>dhow</i>	(<i>Arabic</i>) traditional sailing vessel
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Countries
<i>ghee</i>	(<i>Sanskrit</i>) clarified butter
<i>guban</i>	(<i>Somali</i>) burnt
<i>hawala</i>	(<i>Arabic</i>) traditional money transfer system
<i>khat</i>	(<i>Arabic</i>) a mildly narcotic plant (<i>catha edulis</i>) native to the Horn of Africa
LC	letter of credit
<i>mahjar</i>	(<i>Somali</i>) quarantine
<i>tahriib</i>	(<i>Somali</i>) irregular migration
UAE	United Arab Emirates
<i>wakiil</i>	(<i>Somali</i>) agent
<i>xagaa</i>	(<i>Somali</i>) summer

Bibliography

- Ahmado, Nisan, Sahra Eidle Nur and Hussein Aden. 'Yemen Unrest Makes Somalia Unlikely Safe Haven for Refugees', *Voice of America News*. 14 December 2019. Accessed 18 March 2020 (<https://www.voanews.com/extremism-watch/yemen-unrest-makes-somalia-unlikely-safe-haven-refugees>)
- BBC News. 'Port Manager killed in Somalia's Puntland State'. 4 February 2019.
- Bergman, Ronan and David D. Kirkpatrick. 'With Guns, Cash and Terrorism, Gulf States Vie for Power in Somalia'. *New York Times*. 22 July 2019.
- Bezabeh, Samson. *Subjects of Empires/Citizens of States: Yemenis in Djibouti and Ethiopia*, Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2016.
- Cassanelli, Lee. *The Shaping of Somali Society: Reconstructing the History of a Pastoral People, 1600–1900*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982.
- Casson, Lionel. *The Periplus Maris Erythraei: Text with Introduction, Translation, and Commentary*. Princeton: Princeton University Press (1989).
- Chalfin, Brenda. 'Recasting maritime governance in Ghana: The neo-developmental state and the Port of Tema'. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 48/4 (2010): 573–598.
- Dua, Jatin. 'Ambergris, Livestock, and Oil: Port-making as Choekpoint Making in the Red Sea'. *Ethnos* (May 2020).
- Food and Agriculture Organization. 'Review of the Livestock Sector (IGAD Countries)'. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2014.
- Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit–Somalia. Market Data Update Archives. Accessed 16 July 2020. (<https://www.fsnaui.org/products/bulletins/market-data-update/archives?page=1>)
- Hammond, Laura. 'Somali refugee displacements in the near region: Analysis and Recommendations'. Paper for UNHCR Global initiative on Somali Refugees. Geneva: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, High Level Panel on Somali Refugees, 2014.
- Hoehne, Markus. 'The Rupture of Territoriality and the Diminishing Relevance of Cross-cutting Ties in Somalia after 1990'. *Development and Change* 47/6 (2016): 1379–1411.
- IGAD Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development. 'Livestock associations field visit meeting minutes'. Nairobi: Intergovernmental Authority on Development, Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development, 2015.
- Jamal, Vali. 'Somalia: Understanding an Unconventional Economy'. *Development and Change* 19/2 (1988): 203–265.

- Khalili, Laleh. *Sinews of War and Trade: Shipping and Capitalism in the Arabian Peninsula*. London: Verso Books, 2020.
- Majid, Nisar and Khalif Abdirahman. 'Mobility, Trust and Exchange: Somalia and Yemen's Cross-border Maritime Economy'. London and Nairobi: Rift Valley Institute, X-Border Project, 2019.
- Miran, Jonathan. *Red sea citizens: cosmopolitan society and cultural change in Massawa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009.
- Mohamed, Hamza. 'Somali Camel Traders Pay the Price of War in Yemen'. *Al Jazeera*. 21 June 2016. Accessed 18 March 2020. (<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/04/somali-camel-traders-pay-price-war-syria-160411092956190.html>)
- Mukhtar, Mohamed Haji. 'Arabic Sources on Somalia'. *History in Africa: A Journal of Method* 14 (1987): 141–172.
- Musa, Ahmed and Cindy Horst. 'State-formation and economic development in post-war Somaliland: the impact of the corporate sector in an unrecognized state'. *Conflict, Security and Development* 19/1 (2019): 35–53.
- Reese, Scott. *Imperial Muslims: Islam, Community and Authority in the Indian Ocean, 1839–1937*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018.
- Stepputat, Finn and Tobias Hagmann. 'Politics of circulation: The makings of the Berbera corridor in Somali East Africa'. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 37/5 (2019): 794–813.

Bosaso and the Gulf of Aden: Changing dynamics of a land-sea network is the second report in a series looking at the relationship between modern-day Puntland, a semi-autonomous region of north-east Somalia, Yemen and the wider Gulf region. It focuses on the port city of Bosaso, which, historically, built its economic fortunes on easy access to the sea lanes of the Gulf of Aden and markets of the Arabian Peninsula. However, the dynamics of this maritime space are not static and have shifted according to the changing security and economic dynamics of a region at the centre of larger geopolitical processes, including the war in Yemen. In amongst these changes, Bosaso's future now seems less certain.

