The Political Economy of Displacement:

Rent Seeking, Dispossessions and Precarious Mobility in Somali Cities [i]

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Abstract

Displacement is urbanizing. Urban violence increasingly contributes to displacement while a growing number of displaced people across the globe seeks refuge in cities. This article builds on original research in four Somali cities to explore the link between violence, displacement and urbanisation. It identifies and comparatively explores three types of urban settlements of displaced people: urban camps at cities' outskirts, inner-city squatter settlements, and relocation areas. The focus of the analysis is on the political economy that underpins the establishment, maintenance and, at times, destruction of these settlements. The article shows that settlements of displaced people are embedded in varied practices of rent-seeking, commercialization of land and housing and speculation on title deeds. Urban reconstruction accelerates rent seeking practices and goes hand in hand with (mass-scale) evictions of displaced people. The article also shows how land ownership is mobilized to retain political rights and citizenship. The examples outline the multiple ways urban land relations are intertwined with practices of sovereignty and citizenship. The findings also attest to observations of a globally expanding rent economy and underscore the arbitrariness and violence imbricated in property relations

Displacement is urbanizing. Expulsions, organised crime, insurgencies and urban warfare are contributing to mass displacement of urban residents across the globe. At the same time a growing number of displaced people seeks refuge in cities. This article studies the relation between enforced mobility and urbanisation and explores precarious forms of urbanity in Somalia and Somaliland.[ii] Acknowledging that socio-spatial processes are at the core of urbanisation and criticizing often rather sweeping perspectives on urban settlements of displaced people, Sanyal (2014) called for in-depth and more nuanced empirical investigations. The article responds to this request and interrogates everyday spatial and politico-economic practices found in urban settlements of displaced people in four Somali cities: Mogadishu, Bosasso and Baidoa in Somalia and Hargeisa in Somaliland.

The study builds on a research project that combined narrative interviews with photo-voice to capture experiences of displaced people living in these cities (securityonthemove.co.uk).[iii] It identifies and comparatively explores three paradigmatic types of urban settlements of displaced people: camps at the cities' outskirts; inner-city squatter settlements; and relocation areas. Camps and squats were constituted through self-settlement of displaced people, relocation areas were organised by international and state actors. The article comparatively

analyses the establishment, maintenance and, at times destruction of these settlements, but puts a particular focus on the political economy that underpins these practices. It looks into the resources that unpin settlements and asks how these resources are generated, distributed, exchanged and used. The article thereby sheds light on the actors and power relations that structure camp live. The comparisons allow the identification of nuances and differences in the way urban marginality and precarity are generated and reproduced. The empirical examples carve out the specific social relations that constitute urban formations at the 'margins', but also show how these relations are shaped by and themselves contribute to economic and political practices with much wider spatial reach, notably humanitarianism, diaspora investment and international statebuilding.

The article first discusses the urbanisation of displacement and surveys an expanding body of literature that brings urban studies in communication with studies on forced migration. It then situates camps on an 'urban continuum' (Darling 2017, p. 181) acknowledging both the quasi urban character of many camps as well as the fact that displaced people increasingly set up settlements in cities After introducing the research design and methodology, the second part of the article explores how displaced people navigated access and organised their settlement in the cities or at the cities' margins. The examples show how settlements were, to varying degrees, embedded in clientelist relations that gave rise to a humanitarian rent economy, contributed to the formation of a petty land and rental market in squatter settlements and to speculation on title deeds. Beyond the search for rents, however, land ownership was also mobilised to retain citizenship. The final and concluding section carves out similarities and differences of urban settlement practices of displaced people and embeds the research findings in the wider discussion on the political economy of displacement and urbanisation.

The conclusion points to the question how 'representative' or 'exemplary' particular city cases can be – a question regularly debated in urban studies. Somali cites provide rather 'extreme' cases of both displacement and urbanisation. The country has topped global displacement statistics for several decades (IOM, 2019),[iv] and both Somalia and Somaliland are characterised by extremely rapid urbanisation driven by, among other factors, mass-influx of displaced people. Because of their severity, however, these cities can make processes and patterns visible that are otherwise difficult to grasp (see Sassen, 2014, p. 211) and can deepen our understanding of the way displacements shape the urban form and on the political economy that underpins displacement induced urbanisation.

The Urbanisation of Displacement: About Camps and Cities

In 2011, the world bank drew attention to a threefold increase of refugees and displaced people within three decades to 42 Million (World Bank, 2011, pp. 5, 61). This number nearly doubled to 70.8 Million in 2019. The overwhelming majority of forced migrants remained within state boundaries, contributing to estimated 40.3 Million internally displaced people (IDPs) (UNHCR, 2019). Camps evolved into a standardized response to regulate and manage mass-scale displacement across and within state borders. A growing body of critical literature on displacement is focussing on camps and is theoretically grounded in Foucault's notion of biopolitics and Agamben's (1998, p. 12) self-declared completion of Foucault's work. Camps are in this literature identified as 'spaces of exception' positioned outside the remits of ordinary law and political normativity, where life is deprived of political agency, rendered bare and disposable (Agamben, 1998). By sustaining and institutionalising camps as 'spaces of exception' in perpetuity and by keeping unwanted populations at bay, camps experiment with social segregation on a global scale (Agier, 2002 p. 323; Bauman, 2004; Lui, 2004; Agier, 2010). Camps, therefore, do not just contain and reproduce bare life, but experiment with the management of unwanted populations. These experiments are, according to Duffield (2019, p. 11) already shaping 'our post-humanitarian future'.

Agamben's rather sweeping interpretations, his failure to acknowledge differences among camps as well as his tendency to neglect agency have been criticized (Oesch, 2017; Martin, 2015; Bakonyi et al., 2019). A newer body of literature therefore follows Hannah Arendt rather than Carl Schmitt (on whom Agamben builds), in identifying people's ability to retain agency, start anew and act in cooperation with others, as the essence of the political (Arendt, 1998). Humans try improve their living conditions, even if this requires them to circumvent or contest dictates of political authorities (Sanyal, 2014). They are therefore not easily reduced to bare life. Migration, even if violently induced, is embedded in socio-economic and political struggles and requires creativity and decision making. To invoke Bourdieu (1977), the set of cognitive structures and practical schemes that are deeply inculcated in people's bodily dispositions (social habitus) alongside forms of capital at people's disposal, shape the ways in which displaced people act in the midst of ruptures and crisis, and determines the measures they take to mitigate existential threats. Sustained displacement as well as prolonged camp life therefore develop generative potentials, and settlements for displaced people often start to constitute social fields in their own right, fields in which new social rules emerge, and where new subjectivities are formed. Acknowledging the relational and transitory character of

displacement, this article tries to resist the scientific-administrative urge to define and categorise both displacement and displaced people.[v] Instead, displacement is conceptualized broadly as comprising any form of enforced dislocation and enforced mobility, which may also include phases of confinement (Mountz et al, 2012). Force, again, can comprise a variety of practices, such as authoritarian rule, direct and more subtle forms of violence, forms of deprivation or, more generally, unbearable living conditions, whatever their causes.

Camps, especially if they persist over years, tend to develop characteristics that resemble those of 'ordinary' settlements: goods are traded, markets emerge, shops and restaurants open, churches or mosques organize their congregations, schools and health centres provide services etc. Constituting permanent, relative large and dense settlements, camps develop urban characteristics (Wirth, 1938). Notions like 'city-camp' (Agier et al., 2002) or 'accidental city' (Jansen, 2018) were coined to capture similarities between cities and camps without, however, smoothing out the difference between them. After all, most camps are governed globally and remain embedded in an aid industry which preserves, as outlined above, the camps' status as spaces of exception.

Camps, therefore, seem to shape life in ways 'that exist nowhere else' (Agier et al., 2002, p. 322). The rootedness of camps in humanitarianism, for example, tends to diminish the degree of heterogeneity, anonymity and social stratification that constitute 'urbanism as a way of life' (Wirth, 1938). The continuous movement, flux, and restlessness identified as characteristic of urbanism (Magnussen, 2000, p. 298) is in camps restricted by its social liminality and, at times, even physical confinement. Instead, the opposite, pausing and waiting, seem to become a core characteristic of prolonged camp life and of what is now labelled as 'protracted displacement' (Couldrey et al., 2009). A rather peculiar form of 'humanitarian urbanism' (Jansen, 2016) or 'un-urban urbanism' (Sanyal, 2014, p. 558) seems to emerge in camps.

Against this context it is hardly surprising that the large majority of displaced people try to avoid camps and with them the tight grip of humanitarian registration, encampment and management altogether, and instead 'self-organise' and 'self-settle' forming a variety of 'camps' and settlements (see Agier, 2010, p. 36-46). In global comparison between 60% and 80% of displaced people move to cities (Muggah et al., 2018, p. 1), where they often build-up camps or squat in delipidated building. Instead of treating camps as bounded entities, Darling (2017, p. 181) therefore suggests to position them 'on an urban continuum' acknowledging different settlement types as well as the quasi urban character of many camps. This reading does not abandon the notion of exceptionality, but follows Ong (2006) rather than Agamben

by acknowledging that spaces of exception are layered and neither established in a political nor a spatial vacuum. They are created in particular contexts, at particular times and within places that are themselves already constituted by fields of power-laden relationships. Spaces of exception are also embedded in and shaped by a (global) political economy, even if this economy is dependent on what Roy (2010, p. 30) called 'development capital', that is goods, ideas and money distributed through international development institutions.[vi]

A number of studies have shown that the execution of exceptionality requires political decision making and involves negotiations, prominently in the case of camps, between state sovereigns/rulers, international humanitarians, and displaced people. The political economy that underpins displacement and settlement of displaced people has, however, only recently received academic attention, and remains remarkably understudied (Hammar, 2014b). This article sets out to explore parts of the urban continuum focussing on the political economy that constitutes and sustains different types of urban settlements of displaced people. It addresses two main questions: which actors were involved in the establishment and manage of the settlements, how were they involved and what is their relationship to each other? Which resources are used to underpin, sustain or change settlement practices and how are they generated, distributed, exchanged and used?

To answer these questions the article builds on a research project that combined narrative interviews with photo-voice to capture experiences of displacement and settlement in urban settings (securityonthemove.co.uk). Overall 175 interviews were conducted, 148 in the course of project period (Sept-2017 – April-2019) and 36 interviews during follow up visits between July and December 2019. Among these were 155 narrative interviews with displaced people who were living in different types of settlements in Mogadishu, Baidoa, Bosasso and Hargeisa, and 29 semi-structured interviews with city authorities and members of international organisations. Most interviews were conducted in Somali, either by the Somali Co-Investigator (Co-I) of the project or by a locally recruited researcher who accompanied the Co-I in the respective city. The Co-I and the four researchers received training in interview techniques and research ethics and cooperated in the development and translation of the interview guideline. Researchers were encouraged to enter into a dialogue with the informants and to discuss topics rather than following a questionnaire type interview style. Narrative interviews were complemented with a photo-voice approach: 10 displaced people in each city were equipped with cameras to document a week of their lives in their settlements. The photos, some of which are shown in the article, were later presented by the photographers and discussed in small

groups. These discussions were moderated by two members of the research team. Both interviews and photo-voice discussions were recorded, transcribed into English, and coded using MAXQDA.

Urban Warfare in Mogadishu and Baidoa: A brief introduction

Somalia has been characterized by violent conflicts, wars and insurgencies since 1991, when the military government that ruled Somalia for over three decades was brought down by a clan-based insurgency. Competing for political power and territorial control, clan militias and their leaders (warlords) destroyed the state apparatus and divided the southern half of the country into a patchwork of small-scale political entities. Warfare and violent conflicts were mainly concentrated in south-central Somalia. Two of the cities under focus, Mogadishu and Baidoa, were heavily affected and saw the rise (and often also fall) of a range of violent actors, among them clan-based and Islamist militias and international intervention forces. From the early 1990s onwards, Mogadishu became the main focus of power-battles between militias from the Hawiye clan-family,[vii] which led to the division of the city into areas controlled by militias from different Hawiye sub-clans. During the same period, the agriculturally productive southwestern region, and the regional capital Baidoa, faced raids and occupations from clan militias external to the region. By the mid-1990, however, locally dominant Rahanweyn clans formed their own militia that shielded the region from further attacks. Clan militias, however, are notoriously unstable, and the Rahanweyn forces (like their Hawiye counterpart) fragmented along sub-clan lines (Bakonyi, 2013). Baidoa, as regional capital, remained contested among Rahanweyn splinter-groups, which occasionally tried to underscore their authority claims with violence. The city was, until the mid-2000s, characterized by a situation of no-war-no-peace.

The formation of a Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in Kenya at the turn of 2004/05 considerably changed political dynamics in Somalia. Unable to take control of Mogadishu, the TFG established its headquarters in Baidoa while most of the Mogadishu warlords returned to 'their' city. Meanwhile, however, a Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) had risen to power, defeated the warlords and placed the city under a single administration in the first half of 2006. From here, the UIC expand its power across south-central Somalia. Shortly before UIC forces reached Baidoa, Ethiopian military intervened on the side of the TFG, ousted the UIC and helped the TFG to establish a seat in Mogadishu.

By 2007, Ethiopian forces were complemented by (and later partially integrated into) the African Union Mission In Somalia (AMISOM). Deployed in support of the transitional government, AMISOM and TFG troops were soon involved in an Islamist insurgency spearheaded by Harakat al-Shabab al-Mujahideen (al-Shabaab). Until 2008, al-Shabaab managed to take control of south-central Somalia, including Baidoa. Mogadishu, however, became once more the centre of warfare, this time between AMISOM troops and TFG militias on one side and al-Shabaab on the other. All parties involved were accused of indiscriminate use of violence, including shelling of residential neighbourhoods (HRW, 2010). Thousands lost their lives in these years, and spiralling waves of displacements let to the establishment of a corridor of camps at Mogadishu's outskirts.

During 2011, al-Shabaab was forced to withdraw first from Mogadishu and within three years lost nearly all urban centres to the TFG and AMISOM. The TFG ended its transition period in 2012 with the formation of a federal parliament and government. The Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) gained international recognition and an increasing number of international actors have since supported Somalia's efforts towards stabilisation, statebuilding and reconstruction. The Somali state, however, rather resembles 'a series of city-states' under the nominal control of the FGS and its national and international backers (Jaspars et al., 2019, p. IV), while the countryside remains firmly under the control of al-Shabaab. The Islamists continue to pose a significant threat to security launching regular (suicide) attacks against governmental, international and civilian targets, especially in Mogadishu.

Navigating Urban Settlements: Clientelist Commercialisation of Camp Spaces

In the context of prolonged phases of violence, international interventions, and more recently stabilisation and statebuilding programmes, Mogadishu and Baidoa were characterised by both large scale out- and in-migration. In the midst of the war against al-Shabaab, Somalia was hit by a severe drought which forced hundreds of thousands of people to leave their homes and to seek refuge in the newly 'liberated' cities, prominently Mogadishu and Baidoa. By 2017 more than 500,000 displaced people, thus around a quarter of Mogadishu's inhabitants, were estimated to live in hundreds of camps in and around Mogadishu (MoPIED, 2017, p. 156). In Baidoa, displaced people are estimated to have outnumbered the initial city residents. In 2019, international organisations counted over 400 camps hosting over 50,000 households (app 200,000 people) (CCCM, 2019).

Insert here Image 1 (Caption: Daud, 07/2018, Camp in Mogadishu)

Displaced people interviewed in Mogadishu and Baidoa were mainly living in self-established camps at the fringes of both cities (Image 1). The overwhelming majority of displaced people fled from violence and droughts, often a combination of both. Upon their arrival, they usually relied on brokers to find a place to settle. These brokers are referred to as camp-leaders by the displaced people, and as 'gatekeepers' by humanitarian actors (HRW, 2013; Bryld et al., 2013). Interviewees in Mogadishu explained how they arrived without a place to settle until they were picked-up by a camp-leader who took them to 'their' camp and demarcated a piece of land on which the newcomers could set up huts. In many cases, these leaders also helped the displaced through their first weeks in the new city. Nagan (01/2018),[viii] a 30-year old woman who fled to Mogadishu ten months before the interview outlined how she was helped by a camp-leader when she arrived in Mogadishu:

> When we came to Mogadishu, we had nowhere to go. We were sitting on the street when the lady[1] who runs the camp came and took us in. It took us two months to get used to living here and she took care of us during that time.
> Interviewer (I): Did she give you food?
> Yes, she took care of us until we could stand on our own feet. She fed our children and she used to cook Ugali [maize porridge] for us in the mornings. She supported us until we adjusted. She is a good woman, praise God.

Many interviewees explained how they were initially 'taken care of' by a camp-leader, and several expressed gratitude for leaders' support. An interviewee in Bosaaso even described how the camp-leader 'became like a mother for the displaced people' (Edna, 12/2017). A similar association with caregiving was used by Tadalesh, himself a leader of a camp in Mogadishu. Tadalesh (05/2019) described a good camp-leader as someone who helps displaced people 'when their family members are sick, donates blood when in hospital and in need of blood, searches for emergency assistance, and inquires in the morning to know how their night was.'

Displaced people and camp-leaders enter into clientelistic, and thus with respect to power clearly lopsided relationships that provide many opportunities for abuse (see HRW, 2013). The support some of the leaders provide can nonetheless create emotional bonds evoking notions of family membership and parental responsibilities of care, support and protection. The leaders appear as the last resort of help, and, as many interviewees in Mogadishu and Baidoa outlined, are generally more present, visible, active and have a greater impact on their lives than

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[1] Note that campleaders/gatekeepers are male or female.

humanitarian organisations. The activities of camp-leaders can therefore not be reduced to mere calculations of benefit, although the leaders clearly do aim to generate economic opportunities from this relationship.

Camp-leaders provide displaced people with access to urban land and try to connect the camps with aid organisations. If they are successful, leaders take a share of this aid. The three main sources of income for camp-leaders are provided by humanitarian food supplies, humanitarian cash donations and contracts for service infrastructures. Displaced people and camp-leaders have developed a common understanding of this practice. In Mogadishu, displaced people share up to 50% of the incoming aid with the leader. This, for example, included the $10 expense allowance they received for participating in the photo-voice discussion, of which participants had to hand over $4. Food aid is usually distributed to the camp households in order to prevent monitoring officials from identifying fraud. However, a few hours after the successful delivery, members of the camp committee, often displaced people nominated by the leader to support the daily camp management, move from door to door and re-collect a certain percentage of the distributed items which is then sold on the main markets in Mogadishu (field notes, Mogadishu, 07/2018). In the case of cash support, leaders equally request a share and camp dwellers have to forward a percentage of the received money. Leaders and landowners often register relatives with agencies establishing so called 'rice huts', shelters erected solely to increase the head-count and thus the provision of aid to the camp. Beyond food and cash distributions, the facilitation of building contracts, usually for basic service and infrastructure developments such as the establishment of water points, toilets, houses or schools, are another lucrative source of income for camp-leaders who take their share with the contractors (field notes Mogadishu 07/2018).

Insert here image 2 (Caption: Ibrahim 07/2018 shows a camp that successfully attracts humanitarian contracts: 'In our camp we only have 2 toilets, not enough for us. But in this neighbouring camp, these latrines are more than forty-seven, although there are no people here in that camp, maybe four or five people […] it is all about politics')

The interviewed camp-leaders and committee members did not deny the diversion of aid but rationalised it as necessary redistribution to private security-providers and landowners. Displaced people have no choice in sharing the aid. Most interviewees did not, however, complain too much, knowing that they do not have other options. Eney (01/2018), a mid-aged man in Baidoa, outlined: A camp-leader is 'someone who is asking for something for you […]. So, we are saying may Allah get something for us and for them.' This statement is characteristic of clientelist relations which usually encompass complex links between patrons, brokers and

clients intersecting at different levels of power while providing benefits to all parties involved (Roniger, 2004, p. 353-4).

Rather than relying solely on humanitarian supplies, interviewees in Mogadishu and Baidoa emphasized their attempts to accessing the labour market. Men usually tried to get work as porters at construction sites or on markets, while the majority of women sought day jobs as housemaids and cleaners. Camps, therefore, evolved in both cities into unprotected labour reserves. The earnings from casual labour, however, were hardly sufficient to ensure regular meals for the families of displaced people, or to provide access to schools and healthcare.

Dynamics of brokerage differed between Mogadishu and Baidoa. Camp-leaders in Mogadishu did usually not own the land on which displaced people settled. They, however, often hailed from the same clan groups than the landowners, many of whom have seized land and houses during the war in the 1990s. Their clan affiliation enables the gatekeepers to negotiate terms of settlement and protection. The majority of displaced people in the Mogadishu camps come from clans with little power in the city, and therefore require a broker to undertake negotiations for their settlement and to arrange protection by placing them under the umbrella of the more powerful (land-owning) clan. In contrast, most displaced people in Baidoa belonged to locally dominant clan groups and felt, as Salman (Baidoa 01/2018) put it, that 'Baidoa is our town'. It is, however, important to keep in mind that people living in urban camps were generally poor prior to their displacement. Clans themselves constitute social fields of power in which displaced camp dwellers populate a subordinate position having at their disposal limited social, economic and cultural resources (capitals in Bourdieu's terms). Their clan-affiliation provided displaced people in Baidoa with a certain room to manoeuvre social and economic relations and to get access and control over space. Camp-leaders in Baidoa, for example, were often displaced themselves, but had over time managed to acquire necessary cultural and social capital in the city to establish and organise 'own' camps. With respect to economic benefits, the practices of gatekeeping in Baidoa were nonetheless similar to those in Mogadishu and camp-leaders equally requested their share from humanitarian supplies and contracts, which they had to share with the landowners and other locally more powerful actors.

The cut from humanitarian aid provides a form of land rent which the displaced have to pay if they want to settle. Land rent was defined by Harvey (1982, p. 330) as 'payment made to landlords for the right to use land and its appurtenances.' Displaced people outlined how aid is shared in exchange for protection, shelter, and to compensate landowners. The combination of displacement and humanitarian interventions provided a 'set of conditions (and implicit

corresponding social relations)' (Ward et al., 2016, p. 1764) that animated humanitarian rent extractions by enabling land owners and camp leaders to tap into the circuits of development aid. Rent, however, constitutes a form of 'value grabbing', as it circumscribes a distributional (rather than productive) process, skimming off surplus without engaging in 'productive circuits of expanded capital valorization' (Andreucci et al., 2017, p. 28-9). In Mogadishu's and Baidoa's camps, rent extraction (or value grabbing) is embedded in clientelistic relations between landowners, camp-leaders/gatekeepers and displaced people, relations that are fostered by humanitarian engagement.

Urban Reconstruction: From Humanitarian Rents to Accumulation by Dispossession

After the (Transitional) Federal Government managed to take control of Mogadishu and Baidoa, international aid in support of statebuilding and reconstruction increased considerably. This aid, together with investments from local companies (prominent among them the money transfer companies), and the global Somali diaspora, has initiated the rehabilitation of Somalia's war-torn urban systems. Mogadishu and Baidoa are currently characterized by a building boom: governmental buildings and offices are rehabilitated; residential houses are renovated and newly built; hotels, shops, malls and restaurants are open; transport-, communication and service infrastructures are (unevenly) assembled throughout cities. Urban reconstruction, however, has gone hand in hand with the commodification of land which is in this process transformed into what Harvey (2012, p. 28) classified as a 'fictitious form of capital that derives from expectations of future rents.' Such expectations choreograph many of the contemporary struggles over urban space in Somalia and Somaliland (RVI et al., 2017). They contribute to spiking land and real-estate prices, which, in turn, have drawn the attention of cities' elites to land on which displaced people settled, and they have initiated mass-scale evictions in Mogadishu and Baidoa. Over 204,000 displaced people were for example evicted in the first half of 2018, more than in the whole year before,[ix] and thereby pushed further and further to the cities' outskirts (NRC, 2018; Bakonyi et al., 2019).

Camp-leader Tadalesh (05/2019) outlined how he was affected by such evictions and explained how he found new land at Mogadishu's far outskirts:

> We were evicted from a camp in [name of a central] district. We lived there for nine years. When owners of the unused land see that the city has expanded to their lands, they evict displaced people and either sell the land or rent it. We were asked to empty the land since we lived there for many years. We vacated it. We occupied another area. The owners of the new settlement welcomed us. We gave them some money. We live

in the camp for six months now. In the last six months, we have not received any humanitarian aid.

I: How did you lease the land?

Lease has several meanings. We don't pay monthly rent. At the beginning, we pay a money called *bowd-jebis* [introductory payment] to the owners of the unused land. The people responsible for the land are either owners or protectors [holding it for the owner who is absent, often abroad]. If they are the owners, they meet and take the decision about the settlement of the IDPs. They then ask us to pay some money to them. They collect about $500 for each block of land. Each block consists of either 8 pieces of land or 16 pieces of land. If you want 8 blocks, 10 blocks or 12 blocks, which depends on the number of families you have, it is multiplied to $500. That is how they lease the *goof* [vacant land]. When the IDPs receive humanitarian assistance, the *goof* owners want their share. They will not ask you for money if you don't receive assistance. They want 10% of the aid distributed in return of the land they gave us.

Other interviewees confirmed the payment practice described by Tadalesh, who also explained that leaders often have to borrow the money needed to get access to vacant land. Large-scale in-migration in conjunction with urban reconstruction have significantly reduced available spaces for settlements. Tadalesh also described how evictions start when camps develop service industries and establish businesses linking them to the wider city, thus developing locational qualities that animate landlords to speculate over future revenues (fictitious capital).

The unprecedented number of evictions attest to the speed with which Somalia's devastated cities are transformed into frontiers of capitalism, accessed through investments in the built environment and speculations on urban land rents. The original rent practices, i.e. the skimming of aid supplies, continues in camps at the outskirts, but is in the city centre replaced by more conventional forms of land speculations. The expected generation of land rent animates the way urban reconstruction unfolds in Mogadishu and Baidoa. Rents and with them 'the ability to cash in on locational advantages' determines the (re-)ordering of urban landscapes across the globe (Swyngedouw, 2018, p.8), even at the unruly edges of the global system. The vast corridors of camps that are surrounding many Somali cities, however, accentuate the rising levels of inequality that accompany such speculations. They, therefore, provide an example for the displacements, dispossessions and expulsions that authors like Harvey (2004) or Sassen (2014) identified as central feature of globally deepening capitalist relations. Camps constitute new frontiers of capitalism, a capitalism, however, that increasingly relies on rents and seems to foreground 'non-productive forms of value appropriation' (Andreucci et al., 2017). And while rent-seeking innovatively choreographs evictions and dispossessions (Harvey, 2004),[x] settlements of displaced people are transformed into massive reservoirs for precarious labour, in Somalia and elsewhere (Agier, 2010, p. 56-59).

Silent encroachment of the market: Commercialisation of squats in Hargeisa

Hargeisa, today capital of the self-declared but internationally unrecognised Republic of Somaliland, was nearly completely destroyed in 1988. Fighting against an emergent insurgency in the Northwest of the country, the military government decided to bomb the two largest cities in the region, Hargeisa and Burao, from the air (AW, 1990). Thousands of people were killed. A mass-exodus of city residents occurred, mainly across the Somali-Ethiopian border and into refugee camps hastily established by UNHCR. Hargeisa and Burao lay in ruins. The bombardment, however, contributed to mass-uprising in the Northwest which soon spread to the central and southern regions and eventually led to the defeat of the military government in January 1991 (Bakonyi, 2009). Following a series of locally driven peace and reconciliation initiatives, Somaliland declared independence in May 1991. The country's success in peace- and state-building initiated a large-scale return of refugees, which was supported by the UNHCR and the Somaliland government between 1996/97 and 2005.

Many of the returnees who did not possess land or houses in Hargeisa and could not move in with relatives squatted on public land where they established make-shift huts, or moved into ruins and abandoned buildings, prominently the former Statehouse and Stadium. Nasteexo (12/2017), a woman in her mid-30s who settled 14 years ago in the Stadium area explained:

> When we came back [from Ethiopian refugee camps] we found that we had no another option and we settled here and we are still living here. They say you will be relocated this and that day but we are not relocated yet [….] We found empty land and we settled there and are still here.

The initial squatters were soon joined by other returnees who wanted to stay close to their relatives or former refugee camp neighbours. Others stayed for a while with relatives or rented a room in the city, but joined the squatters when they did not want to overstay their welcome or could no longer afford the rents. Hargeisa's reconstruction and rapid growth has been accompanied by the development of a vibrant property market and prices for land and housing have steadily increased. Over the years, many urban poor and people more recently displaced by droughts contributed to the speedily increasing population density in the squatter settlements.

However, settlement practices of newcomers differed as there was hardly any vacant land left. Early squatters had over the years replaced their make-shift huts with shacks of corrugated

iron-sheets. Iron sheets also began to replace the thorn hedges that used to delimit the plots of land on which the displaced settled.

Insert Image 3: Sucad 07/2018 Hargeisa Statehouse

The encroachment of rent relations was actively promoted by squatters, who demarcated and fenced off land and shelters and started to rent out plots or built extensions for newcomers. These squatters transformed their huts and shacks from 'subsistence shelter' into 'shanty town real estate' (Amis 1984). The growing demand for affordable housing increased income from rents: 'initially the rent for two rooms was $50 in a corrugated-steel house per month, but the same bedrooms today are about $80' (Queresha, Statehouse 12/2017). Squatters also started to sell their plots. Aadil, a man in his 30s who lived 17 years in the Statehouse explained:

> People came here one by one. Those who came here in the beginning have fenced land. That land belongs to them now. Most of them brought their relatives, but if he or she wants to sell, he can do that. So, if a poor person who could not afford the expenses of the other neighbourhoods comes here and finds someone who is selling a plot of land, he can buy it and then he can settle there.
> […]
> I.: If the government owns the land, how can residents sell it to another individual?
> It is a temporary sale, for example if the land in the other neighbourhoods cost around $30,000, you can buy a plot of land here for $1,000, and it is for temporary settlement. The person selling it is selling part of the land where he was settling (Aadil, Statehouse, Hargeisa).

Similar to the cities in Somalia, spiking land prices drew the attention of people with necessary political networks and adequate economic resources to invest in real estate development to these settlements. In 2009, the government of Somaliland announced plans to relocate people from the Statehouse and Stadium but has not (so far) provided adequate land elsewhere. Evictions from government owned land cannot easily be enforced in Hargeisa, where most squatters come from the major clan groups, and are part of the clan-based (patronage) networks that underpin political power in Somaliland's state apparatus (Tahir, 2016).[xi] Clan affiliation provide in Hargeisa, similar to Baidoa, opportunities for negotiating access to (public) land. They also provide a means to resist unpopular policies.

Sovereignty is partly produced as ability to define rules, prominently those of property, and to differentiate between what constitutes formal/informal, or legal/illegal practices. Beyond mere categorisations, however, sovereignty also includes the power to decide which forms of informality and illegality can be accepted, which forms should disappear (Alsayyad et al., 2006, pp. 8-9), if at all, and how these categorisations are policed. In states dominated by

clientelistic networks, such decisions have to be balanced against the need of political leaders to gather and maintain allies and supporters, and to accommodate the needs of particular social groups. The affiliation of the majority of squatters with dominant clan groups provides them with a certain degree of power vis-à-vis state authorities, at least with respect to protection from evictions and demolitions that characterise cities in Somalia.

The steady stream of in-migration, together with population growth, contributed to the rapid densification of the squatter settlements, leading to congestion and overcrowding. The few relocation initiatives that have so far been conducted by the Somaliland government did not relieve the situation, as the 'next day the vacated place was occupied by new people' (Ugbaad, Statehouse 12/2017). The option to participate in a relocation scheme drew people from other neighbourhoods and rural areas into the inner-city squats. A young woman, explained that she came only recently together with a group of people to Hargeisa's Mohamed Moge settlement, hoping that she 'maybe could get a plot' through a resettlement scheme. A young man who grew up in the Statehouse explained in similar vein that many people started settling in the Statehouse expecting 'that the government will give them land in the future' (Bilal, Statehouse 12/2017). Relocation initiatives tend to pull people into cities, a trend that could also be identified in Baidoa where relocation was in planning during the interviews. Such schemes increase demands for housing, provide new opportunities for rent generation and contribute to the encroachment of market relations in camp and squatter settlements.

Becoming a Displaced Person and Retaining Citizenship

This last empirical section focusses on relocation areas in Bosasso, a port city at the north-eastern corner of Somalia, and commercial capital of Puntland. Puntland was established as an autonomous region in 1998, re-established administrative structures, and became after 2012 a member state of the newly formed Federal Republic of Somalia. Bosasso was largely spared from mass violence. Due to its relative stability, its central role in a steadily evolving trade economy and its close proximity to the Arabian Peninsula, the city has attracted a large number of migrants since 1991. Bosasso's population increased dramatically, according to some sources from 30,000 in the end 1980s to currently 600,000 people (Varming, 2017, p. 10).

Similar to Mogadishu and Baidoa, many displaced people in Bosasso have experienced evictions and displacements. Cawo (12/2017), for example, a woman in her mid-thirties, fled Mogadishu as a teenager after her brother was killed. She initially lived with in-laws until she

moved to an inner-city camp from where she was evicted. She then moved to a new camp outside of Bosasso for which an international organisation negotiated a 5-year settlement plan:

> After that [living with in-laws] a new IDP settlement emerged called *Ismabooqato* [no visiting each other] and displaced people informed themselves that anybody can relocate and settle at the new location. I relocated to the new place and bought construction items to build my makeshift hut. I settled and stayed in this location for a while. So, this was my case of becoming an IDP. The building of my own makeshift hut and settling down made me feel relaxed and alleviated my suffering and anxiety about recurrent relocations. I felt like I had a permanent home and did not want to worry any more about relocating. I settled, stayed and some of my kids were born in this place. I also understood the environment and the way of living in Bosaaso and the sources for living. After a while, we have been instructed to move to another location as the owner wanted to use his land. We came to this far away IDP camp. So, we shifted several times and, thank God, finally we were lucky, and we were supported to have these metal houses built.

Cawo confirms the common understanding of displacement in Somalia and Somaliland as she self-identified as displaced person[xii] only when she left her in-laws and decided to settle on land particularly designated for displaced people. The alignment of places of settlement to status as 'displaced' was common in all Somali cities, excluding those who join relatives or live in rented accommodations across the city. In Bosasso and Mogadishu, this categorization is further underscored by clan affiliations, as the majority of 'camp'-residents come from clans that do not hold political power in these cities. However, people who benefitted from similar relocation initiatives and were moved to the fringes of Hargeisa were in popular parlance also referred to as displaced, although they mainly belonged to the locally dominant clans. Settlements of displaced people, therefore, provide further examples for the way status designations and stigma are territorialized (Wacquant et al., 2014). In Somalia and Somaliland, such territorializations complement and at times foster the common categorizations of people through lineage affiliation.

In Bosasso international organizations have, together with the municipality, established a cluster of settlements for displaced people at the edge of the city, some based on fixed-term settlement agreements with landowners, others donated to the government and transferred to the displaced through an incremental tenure model (Bakonyi et al., 2019, p. 89). Cawo's narrative shows that even temporary settlement agreements provide displaced people with relief from emotional and economic distress caused by tenure and housing insecurity. However, Cawo and many other inhabitants had received notice to evacuate two of the settlements shortly before the interviews were conducted, and therefore regularly recalled previous experiences of evictions. Fear from evictions resembled those of displaced people in Mogadishu, only that

people in Bosasso expected the municipality to support their relocation and to provide a place for settlement.

The power- and helplessness that people felt while waiting for the municipality's decision was outlined by Astur (12/2017), who lived in the camp for three years:

> We have no option but to follow the order in case it happens. I am not alone, and I think the committee will inform us where to move and settle. We have to wait for them and see what they say to us, but we are ready for whatever decision they make since we have no say about this issue.

Waiting is, as Bourdieu (2000, p. 228) reminds us, 'one of the privileged ways of experiencing the effect of power,' as it requires submission to the authority of others. This was clearly expressed by Astur who did not want to move but was left with no other choice than to wait until the municipality, landowners and humanitarian organisations decided about her future. Stories about potential places for relocation were circulating amongst the interviewees, only increasing their worries. They feared to be pushed further to the outskirts which would increase prices for transport, potentially disconnect people from the city's labour market and imply weakened security arrangements. Others, however, also emphasized that the relocation could be accepted if combined with land ownership thus preventing further evictions and displacements. Absame (12/2017), the deputy chairman of one of the two settlements awaiting evictions explained:

> I.: Is the government clearing land for the refugees to settle?
> Yes, also Abdi Wali [President of Puntland] said there is no one called a refugee. You have stayed here for so long and you will be part of the local area.
> I.: Are you ready to settle that far place away from the town?
> We have no problem with that place as long as we are given a plot of land which we own. [In this case] the bus fare doesn't matter.

Locational security becomes a priority for people who have lived through cycles of displacement. Interviewees in Bosasso who were able to benefit from one of the 'permanent' relocation schemes emphasized the benefits of land ownership, including options to commercialise the acquired land by renting out the houses, rooms, or extensions or by selling the newly acquired houses should one decide to move back to the city or to settle elsewhere.

Absame's emphasis on the acknowledgement of the rights of residence of displaced people by the then President of Puntland, additionally points to the intertwinement of landownership with belonging and citizenship. Formal ownership of land attests to a shift in status from a displaced person to a resident. The complex entanglement of belonging and land ownership was outlined by Rooble (12/2017), an older man living with his two wives and families in Bosaaso for nearly three decades:

I.: When you go to the market, what do you feel about yourself? Do you feel like a resident of the area or a displaced person?

Now I am in Bosaaso town. Before I was a displaced person. I think of myself now that I am a person of this place. But I don't have land here. But I have shelter. So, I am relaxed in my mind. I feel it in my heart that I am in my country.

[…]

I.: So, you made Bosaaso your new hometown?

Yes, but I'm in an area for displaced people. And while I have a homeland, I don't have land or property here.

I.: You are an old man and want to see out your days here, but do you want your family to continue to live here as displaced people?

I don't want, but I don't have money to buy land. I can wait for Allah to give us money, then I will make them people of this area.

Displaced people from non-local clan groups are in Somalia and Somaliland often viewed as danger to the imagined clan-based homogeneity of society and polity, a view that underscores layered claims to sovereignty and citizenship. Ownership of land transforms a displaced person from someone hosted by others to a person 'from the area', even if one does not, like Rooble and his family, belong to one of the locally dominant Darood clans.

Conclusion: Somalia Rising?

An influential strand of urban studies argues that the deepening of capitalist relations increasingly blurs the boundaries between city and countryside (Brenner et al., 2012), thereby de-constituting cities as the 'only morphological embodiment of urbanisation' (Arboleda, 2016, p. 96). Studies on displacement have confirmed this argument. They have emphasized the resemblance of camps and cities and have showed how new forms of urbanism have emerged in the interplay of humanitarianism, sovereignty and displacement. This article has used the example of four, rapidly growing Somali cities to further interrogate the socio-spatial practices of displacement and urban settlement. It examined the politico-economic practices in camps at cities' outskirts, inner-city squats and resettlement areas on urban peripheries. Although living conditions of residents in these settlements differed, the lives of all interviewees were characterized by severe precarity and existential and structural uncertainty. Displaced people were trapped in liminal spaces, confronted with housing and tenure insecurity, and facing the danger of eviction.

Among the strategies displaced people developed to navigate the urban environment were the mobilisation of clientelist relations; the commodification of land and houses; the speculation on title deeds; and the activation of politics of belonging. Displacement and urban resettlement

generate their own political economy which defines options for settlements and determines their spatial forms. Space is, as Wacquant (2010, p. 165) outlined (and these Somali examples exemplify) deployed both as product and medium of power. The way displaced people were able to lay claim on particular places was shaped by their ability to accumulate general and place specific political, economic and symbolic resources while entering into relations with urban brokers and landowners.

All settlements were, albeit to varying degrees and in different forms, embedded in clientelist relations that have emerged at the intersection of political and economic power within the context of fragmented sovereignty characteristic for Somalia and to a lesser extent also Somaliland. Clientelism was most pronounced in camps in Mogadishu and Baidoa, where it evolved into a strategy through which displaced people tried to solve their most pressing issues, such as establishing shelter, receiving protection and (sometimes) humanitarian aid.[xiii] The intersection of clientelism with displacement and humanitarianism, however, laid the ground for a humanitarian rent economy allowing landowners and camp-leaders to capitalise on aid flows. Clientelist relations are based on power differences, and while camp-leaders provided displaced people with access to urgently needed resources, brokers (camp-leaders) and patrons (landowners, government officials) used their power to generate humanitarian rents by diverting and commodifying international aid.

In Hargeisa, clan-based clientelist networks have so far protected people squatting on public land from forceful evictions. Here, the initial squatters have taken possession of land and contributed to the emergence of a (petty) land and rental market. Where public land was initially taken over by people in need of housing, squatters actively contributed to the encroachment of market relations by fencing off and renting out land and houses. Spatial power was here displayed in the early squatter's ability to demarcate, partition, arrange and eventually commodify pieces of urban land. Plans by the government and international organizations to relocate residents further contributed to land speculations and drew people in search of economic opportunities into the squatter settlements.

Land, however, is a very particular kind of property and land ownership is not easily reduced to economic benefits. While property always circumscribes social relations, land is deeply intertwined with feelings of belonging and claims of sovereignty and citizenship. This became particularly visible in Bosasso where displaced people started to settle decades ago without, however, being fully accepted as citizens. Ownership of land provides locational security, but also bears the promise of 'becoming a local' and the prospect of retaining citizenship and

political agency. In Somalia layered boundaries of belonging are constituted at the intersection of clan affiliation, property regimes (land ownership) and variegated sovereignty practices. While sovereignty continues to be (violently) negotiated, citizenship is 'graduated' (Ong 2006) as it is to a lesser extent determined by abstract codifications of rights, but is conditional and partial, linked to particular places, kinship (clan) and ownership of land. The above discussed tendency of displaced people to move towards cities, catalyses struggles and conflicts of belonging and political membership, and likely remoulds and renews citizenship practices. In Somalia as elsewhere, however, 'cities remain the strategic arena for the development of citizenship' (Holston et al., 1996, p. 188).

The urban reconstruction and building boom that currently characterises major Somali cities is regularly interpreted as a sign of recovery of the crisis-ridden country. Somalia has even been positioned in the Africa Rising narrative (Hammond, 2013), celebrated by economists, international organisations and academia alike. Urban reconstruction and economic development, however, have a violent underbelly as logics of accumulation are underwritten by destructions, dispossessions and expulsions. Searching for new economic opportunities, investors and political elites transform urban land into fictitious forms of capital and contribute to the expansion of a rent economy, which precipitates, in Somali cities and elsewhere, mass-scale evictions of displaced people and urban poor. Evictions enforce and tighten private property claims on land and houses (even if in ruins). The arbitrariness and violence imbricated in private land ownership (Blomley, 2003) is therefore particularly pronounced in Somalia as it is neither concealed nor mitigated by legal regulations.

In many Somali cities, displaced people are entrapped in cycles of displacements. They are, as an elder from a group of landowners in Mogadishu outlined, 'always on the move.' The elder rationalised this mobility as attempt of displaced people to benefit from the aid industry: 'Whenever they hear about a camp whose residents are receiving aid, they move to it. […] They lead different lives' (elder, Mogadishu 01/2019). What the elder omitted, however, was that the mobility of displaced people is hardly a lifestyle choice but is caused by the migrants' vulnerability and lack of protection. This exposes them to cycles of violence, forced evictions, and living conditions that barely allow for their survival.

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[iv] Internationally generated statistics do usually not differentiate between Somaliland and Somalia. All numbers provided in the article should be treated as rough estimates.

[v] The term displacement or displaced people is used without differentiating between refugees, returnees or internally displaced. Such state-centric and legalistic categorisation do neither reflect nor help to analyse the complex realities of displacement in the Horn of Africa (and elsewhere). Conceptualisations of displacement are discussed by Hammar (2014a).

[vi] Roy seems to use the term capital in the radically de-economized sense emphasized by Bourdieu (1983) referring to any kind of resources that can be accumulated, distributed, redistributed or destroyed. In a Marxian interpretation, development aid would rather constitute a form of rent engendering distributional rather than productive relations (on capital and rents see Andreucci et al., 2017).

[vii] The Somali society is structured by a segmentary lineage or clan system. Among the major clan-families are Hawiye, Dir, Darood and Rahanweyn (Digil and Mirifle). Additionally, there are so-called minority groups that do not neatly fit in the lineage system.

[viii] Names are aliases, the camp names were redacted and the exact date of the interview is withheld to guarantee anonymity and safety of informants. All interview extracts were copy-edited.

[ix] See https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/troubling-trend-sees-evictions-somalia-double, (accessed 01 July 2019).

[x] While Marx described the violence of the so-called original or primitive accumulation as a prerequisite of capitalism, Harvey (2004, p. 74-76) has coined 'accumulation by dispossession' to emphasize that violent dispossessions are an intrinsic part of expanded capital reproduction.

[xi] People in Somaliland who either squatted on smaller public places or entered into arrangements with private landowners regularly experience evictions.

[xii] Cawo mostly used the term IDP (Barakacayaasha), but at times also refers to herself as refugee.

[xiii] Clientelism as problem-solving was identify by Auyero et al. (2017).