Dr. Samatar Publishes His Latest Work on Socialist Somalia

By Charles Sovik

On Friday, March 3, a warm reception was given to Dr. Ahmed I. Samatar for his publication *Socialist Somalia: Rhetoric & Reality*. Over 30 members of the St. Lawrence community were in attendance including several professors from the Government Department and the University Librarian, Richard Kuhta, who also introduced Dr. Samatar.

Dr. Samatar is an Assistant Professor in the Government Department. His concentration is in international political economy, Third World development, and African Politics. He is a member of the National Editorial Board of *African Studies Review*, the professional journal of the African Studies Association. Dr. Samatar is also a contributing Associate Editor for the journal *NorthEast African Studies*, published by Michigan State University.

Dr. Samatar’s publication, released at the end of 1988, is a study on the search for development in Somalia. "It is an insight into the heartless contradictions of a peripheral capitalist political economy and the continuing struggle of the people of Somalia," said Dr. Samatar. "There exists a disjunction between the statements and policies of the state, and the realities of life among the Somali people. The book is a search for an explanation of this conundrum."

The publication is a culmination of archival work and interviews with Somali peasants, business leaders, and Government officials that began with a six month field study in 1982 and 1983. Among the Government officials interviewed was Siyad Barre, President of Somalia. Dr. Samatar said that Barre’s military regime was proud of what it had accomplished. The regime’s self-congratulations is what led Dr. Samatar to predict that a civil war would occur in Somalia. "A lack of democracy and economic stagnation create explosive situations. What is there to live for?"

Dr. Samatar chose to do his doctoral dissertation on the economic and political situation of Somalia for two reasons. First, the topic is not studied well. Second, as a native of Somalia, he wanted to contribute to the realities in a scholarly and academic way. "For the people of East Africa," said Dr. Samatar, "I hope it’s a contribution, especially to the debate on the definition of development and possible alternatives."

Dr. Samatar feels that his publication will coincide nicely with the increasing number of Third World studies at St. Lawrence University.

Dr. Samatar is currently working with two other scholars on a conceptual book regarding theory and models of how to study East African politics. It is to be released within two years.

A second edition of *Socialist Somalia* is expected to be released in the winter of 1989. Presently, there is an exhibit at the S.L.U. Young library dedicated to the publication.

Burrows’ Senior Honors Thesis Evaluates Feminism In Islam

By Michael Hicks

Islam is a religion and a culture that is subject to many misconceptions by the Western world. For senior S.L.U. student Elizabeth Burrows (E.B.), this issue spurred her to write a 118-page Senior Honors Thesis, which focuses on the problems that arise when rural women in Muslim societies are forced to contend with the influx of Western ideologies.

Burrows is a national finalist for a Thomas B. Watson (of the IBM corporation) fellowship, which grants $13,000 dollars to a candidate who proposes to use the money for study in a certain field. Should Burrows win the fellowship, it is her intent to study in Egypt and Tunisia, since she feels that “Egypt and Tunisia typify the processes involved in the modernization of Muslim states.”

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Burrows feels "reevaluates the stereotypes that exist about men and women, and examines the sources of these stereotypes and inequalities."

Since high school, where she was chairperson of the school’s League of Democrats, Burrows has been concerned with the inequalities that exist between men and women throughout the world. This concern, along with the desire to study the inner dynamics of world cultures, led Burrows to choose Anthropology as a major.

With this background, Burrows participated in the Kenya Internship Program during the spring semester of her sophomore year. Here she was involved in an internship that required her to teach English to children in a pre-school. While education and labor clearly broaden a woman's world to encompass greater opportunities and expectations, it is unclear whether these opportunities would occur in the life of a Muslim woman," explained Burrows.

"Burrows expresses the crux of her thesis is that the expansion of the capitalist political economy has transformed traditional socio-economic systems in the Muslim world, such that women’s conditions are deteriorating."

The thesis is based on the framework of feminism, which Burrows feels "reevaluates the stereotypes that exist about men and women, and examines the sources of these stereotypes and inequalities."

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