

From Cold-War Communist Connection to Post-Cold-War Divergence: Cuba and Ethiopia

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Abstract

My paper will assess the effects that decolonization and communism had on Ethiopia and Cuba during the Cold War. The lasting impacts such concepts had on both countries after the Cold War and into the present day will also be examined. It may be interesting to contemplate that both Ethiopia and Cuba were third-world countries that transitioned into communist nations during the Cold War, but, after the end of the Cold War, only Cuba kept its communist government. Ethiopia was the only non-colonized country in the continent of Africa. Instead of being controlled by outside European nations, Ethiopia was ruled by a monarch for six hundred years. However, in the 1970s, the country was weakened by political in-fighting. In order to restore public confidence and unity, Lieutenant Colonel Mengistu seized power in a military coup and transformed the country into a communist state. As of today, Ethiopia has a formally democratic political system with a federal republic. On the other hand, Cuba had been colonized by the Spanish from the 15th century until the Spanish-American War in the 19th century. In 1959, its US-backed President, Fulgencio Batista, was ousted during the Cuban Revolution leaving the country in the hands of Fidel Castro. Since then, Cuba has been a one-party state under communist rule. Castro would utilize his party to exercise control over all aspects of Cuban life. Through my paper, I will research why out of these two third-world countries with similar desires to unify their nations under communism only Cuba remained a communist nation in the 21st century.

Keywords: communism, Cuba, decolonization, Derg, Ethiopia, Mengistu, TPLF

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Introduction

During the Cold War, two Third World countries transitioned into communist nations in order to unify their people. Ethiopia and Cuba both adopted communist governments in an attempt to bring social order and prosperity to their nations. However, after the Cold War, only Cuba kept its communist government. Within this paper, I will be examining the impacts that socialist concepts had on both countries throughout the Cold War, and the differences between both countries' political developments. The reason why I am researching this topic is because I found it interesting to examine why, after both Ethiopia and Cuba transitioned into communist nations during the Cold War, afterwards only Cuba kept its communist government in the 21st century.

In the 1970s, Ethiopia's government had been weakened by political in-fighting. In order to restore public confidence and national unity, First Lieutenant Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam seized power in a military coup and transformed the country into a communist state. In 1959, Cuba's US-backed President, Fulgencio Batista, was ousted during the Cuban Revolution, leaving the country in the hands of Fidel Castro. Under Castro's rule, the country's communist party exercised control over all aspects of Cuban life. Both cases thus saw the overthrow of government by communist-led groups. However, Ethiopia's communist government ultimately did not last. As of today, the country has a formally democratic political system with a federal republic. In contrast, Cuba has remained a one-party state under communist rule. This paper will utilize research in order to answer the question of how two Third World countries with similar desires to unify their nations adapted to communism and why Cuba remained a communist nation in the 21st century while Ethiopia did not.

Analysis

When analyzing the governmental shifts of both Ethiopia and Cuba during the Cold War, we have to first understand the major global influences of that era. In its simplest form, the Cold War consisted of a state of geopolitical tension between the Soviet Union with its satellite states and the United States with its Western allies after the end of World War II. With most of the world recovering from the devastation of the war, these two super powers had emerged to influence the meaning of social and political modernity. Various scholars have utilized the

Cold War as a starting point to discuss the nature of globalization around the world. In his book, *The Global Cold War*, author Odd Arne Westad argued that the US and Soviet interventionism had shaped both the international and the domestic framework within which political and cultural changes in Third World countries took place. Westad further explained that the Third World elites often framed their own political agendas into conscious responses to the models of development presented by the two main contenders of the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union.² It can be said that both Ethiopia and Cuba had been influenced by the major political ideologies of the Cold War and both had relied on such beliefs to modernize and stabilize their countries.

In order to further examine the developments in both countries, this paper will utilize concepts of comparative history. Comparison and generalization from comparison are basic analytical techniques within the social sciences and may be used to the end of dislodging exceptionalist, Eurocentric, or other restrictive assumptions.³ Some scholars have argued that there are significant differences between comparative history and world history. Michael Adas, a student of Philip Curtin's Wisconsin comparative history program in the late 1960s, offered a description of a comparative analytical approach. He theorized that the difference between world history, or what he had termed the "grand narrative," and comparative history was that in the case of the former one traced key themes and processes in a broad global perspective, while the other promoted a method of historical analysis that had been developed by travelers in other social science disciplines.⁴ Serious comparative analysis in historical writing involved choosing a world historical process, pattern, or theme worthy of investigation, and then selecting a limited set of relevant cases for detailed systematic study. In this case, it would be examining the political transition of Ethiopia and Cuba into communist states, and understanding the lasting impact that such transitions had around the globe. In contrast, Patrick Manning, another student from the Wisconsin program two years ahead of Adas, argued that comparison is a specific analytical strategy rather than a field of

² Odd Arne Westad. *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, (New York: Cambridge University Press 2005), 3.

³ Ross E. Dunn, Laura J. Mitchell, and Kerry Ward, ed. *The New World History: A Field Guide for Teachers and Researchers*, (Oakland: University of California Press 2016), 332.

⁴ Michael Adas discussing his Comparative History theory found in *The New World History: A Field Guide for Teachers and Researchers*, (Oakland: University of California Press 2016), 333.

history.⁵ By understanding comparisons in this way, we can see them as similar to other analytical strategies such as the quest to understand connections between historical phenomena or the proper chronological sequencing of developments. This would be similar to researching what led up to the political shifts of Ethiopia and Cuba in order to find out their lasting impacts.

Whatever the case, through these new concepts of comparative history, the scope of interest of historical studies had been widened with a view to perceiving and explaining differences in cultural history and world history. As University of Chicago Professor Kenneth Pomeranz suggested, present-day studies now highlight the importance of long-distance relationships in the formation of all regions of the world, not just Europe.⁶ After World War II, new knowledge of Asia, Africa, and Latin America had rapidly accumulated. Professor of Modern European History at UCLA, Lynn Hunt, argued in her book, *Writing History in the Global Era*, that the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War had allowed globalization to fill an ideological vacuum.⁷ She went on by claiming that globalization explained the fall of the Soviet Union as its state-directed industries could not compete in the electronic global economy that emerged in the 1980s. However, when Hunt tried to explain that communism collapsed due to the amount of contradictions within Marxist theorem, she revealed her Western understandings and biases toward Socialist ideology. Hunt was right when stating that “most global histories are transnational or comparative,”⁸ and that the Cold War brought about “new concepts around globalization and comparative history.” Still, much of her argument expressed that ideas of exceptionalism, or Eurocentrism, remained within the field of history and social sciences even after the Cold War. In order to understand the global impacts of the Cold War, we will have to first consider the different global histories that had developed directly from this tension-filled political era.

When comprehending Cold War global political transitions in a historical sense, we can refer to the works of scholars Sebastian Conrad and Pamela Kyle Crossley. According to Sebastian Conrad, in his book *What is Global History* (2016), the Cold War had ushered in

⁵ Patrick Manning’s argument regarding comparison found in, *The New World History: A Field Guide for Teachers and Researchers*, (Oakland: University of California Press 2016) 333.

⁶ Kenneth Pomeranz discussion on globalization concepts found in *The New World History: A Field Guide for Teachers and Researchers*, (Oakland: University of California Press 2016), 347.

⁷ Lynn Hunt. *Writing History in the Global Era*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company 2014), 46.

⁸ Hunt, *Writing History in the Global Era*, 63.

new global histories that seemed to cover everything around the world. In connection to the study of Ethiopia and Cuba's political developments, global history of the Cold War allows for the analysis of both countries on a world stage,⁹ helping to break away from a strictly European perspective to instead focus on an African and Latin American perspective. After the Cold War, the concepts of globalization and civilization began to emerge as Third World countries broke away from systems of colonization to form new independent nations. Old Eurocentric approaches to history had been reversed by new diverse concepts around civilizations such as Afrocentricity or Sinocentrism.¹⁰ However, some historians preferred transnational historiography as opposed to the term "global," since the approach could easily be used as an imperialists discourse under a Western imposition. This is how we get a pattern of, "indigenous responses to the Western challenges," included within the study of Latin America and the West as well as Africa and Imperialism.¹¹ This paper will strive to avoid such misconceptions in order to present a more neutral analysis.

In reviewing the dominant political ideologies of capitalism and communism, Crossley explained that through modernization all cultures will eventually converge. The division between "capitalist" and "communist" systems would be overcome by the homogenizing effects of living in industrialized societies.¹² This would explain how Ethiopia could transition from a monarchy to a communist state to a federal republic in short time. However, this would not be true in the case of Cuba as the process of merging cultures and ideologies had notably stalled after the country's transformation into a communist state. Both Ethiopia and Cuba desired to modernize their countries through the transition of culture and political ideologies, yet Cuba continued to stabilize its country under a communist-led government into the 21st century. To find out why, we have to go deeper into the global histories of both countries.

After centuries of being controlled by foreign powers, the island of Cuba experienced a political revolution that put control of the country into the hands of the Cuban Communist Party. Cuba's revolution would inspire a range of left-wing states and movements within

⁹ Sebastian Conrad. *What is Global History?* (Oxford: Princeton University Press 2016), 117.

¹⁰ Conrad, *What is Global History?*, 176.

¹¹ *Ibid*, 218.

¹² Crossley, *What is Global History?*, 65.

Third World nations, including the Ethiopian Revolution.¹³ For the Soviets, three aspects had dominated their thinking regarding the Third World in the 1960s. They were concerned about Chinese influence after the Sino-Soviet split, they had reevaluated the party's views on the potential for socialist revolution in the Third World, and they were impressed, but also irritated, by Cuba's willingness to confront the US. In the United States, the rising communist movements within the Third World caused US policymakers to give certain regions more attention. After becoming militarily involved in the Vietnamese civil war from 1964 onwards, Washington gained a sense of immediate danger in regard to Third World developments, and especially toward the developments in Cuba. The revolution itself within the country was meant to inspire radicals all over the Third World. It had begun as a nativist rebellion against foreign influence, but gradually it had transitioned into a Marxist experiment.¹⁴ Fidel Castro had left the regime of President Fulgencio Batista because he had believed it to be allied with US exploitation of the island and that it was incapable of carrying out major social reform. Castro promised that the Cuban revolution would allow all Latin Americans to overthrow US control and create new independent states.¹⁵ During the revolution, Castro utilized his anger at his country's political incompetence and his strong sense of being a model for future revolutions throughout the continent to gain control of Cuba.

In 1956, Castro developed his anti-US feelings after leading a small band of revolutionary fighters against President Batista's government, however he had not claimed to be a Marxist during the early stages of his revolution. Castro learned that throughout his guerrilla war against President Batista's regime, the Cuban president had been receiving weapons from the United States. This solidified the US as the true enemy to his socialist revolution. After President Batista's forces were defeated in 1959, the US intensified its policies toward Cuba. Fidel Castro had become a true communist threat right at America's door step. His Cuban Revolution even attempted to signal a hemispheric plan for revolution.¹⁶ In retaliation, the United States prohibited most exports to Cuba, cutting off the country's

¹³ Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 158.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 170.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 160.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 171.

economic lifeline.¹⁷ At the same time, the CIA began to train Cuban exiles in hit and run tactics to be implemented along the Cuban coast. Finally, during the presidency of John F. Kennedy, the US broke off diplomatic relations with Cuba and prepared plans for an invasion. Castro's revolutionary plans were a direct threat to President Kennedy's plans to reform the US-Latin American relationship.¹⁸ The success of Castro's revolution in 1959, coupled with the failed US invasion in 1961, caused Castro to assert a more communist persona. His victories had set off a dominant leftward trend in his thinking. Castro had also developed a strong admiration for the Soviet Union after meeting with Soviet representatives in Mexico. The Cuban Communist Party would establish new proposals and plans for a new type of state in Cuba, based on the Soviet model.

To Fidel Castro, the Soviet Union represented a form of modernity that truly emphasized the type of social justice that he hoped to build in Cuba, however he had no plans to replicate all of Moscow's models. In an effort to fight off US aggression, Castro had set out in 1959 to gain support from other countries, and especially from the Soviet Union.¹⁹ Eventually, the Soviets established trade agreements with Cuba, sponsoring the Cuban revolution in the process as an important economic link. Soviet leadership even provided a deterrent against US attacks and after their meeting in 1960, Khrushchev became convinced that Castro was "a genuine revolutionary."²⁰ The decision to place nuclear missiles in Cuba in 1962 was meant, in large part, to convince Castro that Moscow had made a strategic decision to defend and assist the country. However, after the missile crisis in October, the Soviet Union began to cool off its relationship with Cuba. This infuriated Castro and convinced him that Cuba needed to develop its own revolutionary strategy away from Moscow. The Cuban leadership's disappointment toward the Soviet capitulation to the US during the missile crisis led the country to seek out new directions for its foreign policy.²¹ In his mind, Castro envisioned Cuba to be a new model for developing Third World countries. Supporting revolutions within these regions was seen by him as a historical necessity and a major defense against an American attack on Cuba.

¹⁷ Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 170.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 171.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 172.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 174.

²¹ *Ibid*, 175.

With the Soviet Union distracted by its increasingly tense relationship with China in the mid-1960s, Castro strived to appeal to socialist unity within developing regions around the globe. However, despite trying to create unity with other communist parties in Third World countries, Cuba faced obstacles at every turn. In particular, the Latin American Communist Parties rejected Cuban interference in their countries. In response, Castro diverted his attention to Africa, establishing a more ideological and strategic relationship in the process. By aiding African liberation movements, Cuba believed it was hitting a weak spot of American imperialism.²² Castro's top aid, Che Guevara, was put in charge of aiding foreign revolutions from 1961 onwards. He would be sent to support the communist uprising in Congo only to fail against the US-supported regime there. Similar to the Soviets and the Americans, Cuba strived to establish a political ideology of their own development that other Third World nations could follow. When that turned out to be unsuccessful in certain regions, such as in Congo and Bolivia, Cuba realized that some Third World nations were inadequate for their political strategies.²³ Rather than its revolutionary theories, Cuba's willingness to give military, medical, and educational aid would gain the most support amongst Third World nations around the globe.

In contrast, Ethiopia's communist government never desired to establish such ambitious socialist foreign policies. Instead, the African nation would choose to focus on domestic affairs while striving to maintain support from the Soviet Union. However, even before a communist state was established in Ethiopia, the country's leaders had fought to maintain the nation's importance within the world. Being an African country ruled by a domestic government for six hundred years, Ethiopia's Emperor Haile Selassie had actively worked to assure the country's importance and sovereignty during the Cold War. In 1953, Ethiopia signed agreements with the United States which allowed the US access to military bases in return for economic and military aid, establishing a special relationship that lasted until the 1970s.²⁴ At the same time, the Soviet Union was determined to establish a presence to counter American influence within the area. It did so by creating an alliance with Ethiopia's neighbor, Somalia, after the nation declared independence in 1960. The Soviets

²² Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 177.

²³ *Ibid*, 179.

²⁴ Donna R. Jackson. *Jimmy Carter and the Horn of Africa: Cold War Policy in Ethiopia and Somalia* (North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc 2007), 6.

maintained this alliance by providing economic and military aid to Somalia throughout the 1960s. In response, Ethiopia turned to the US for aid against a growing Somalian threat.²⁵ However, the US did not want to repeat a situation similar to that of Vietnam, promising only a modest build-up of the Ethiopian army throughout the 1970s. Emperor Selassie desired more and traveled to Washington to request \$450 million in military equipment.²⁶ However, the Nixon administration was distracted by the developing Watergate scandal and, in turn, was unable to give the Emperor's visit a great deal of attention, causing the trip to be seen as a failure in Ethiopia.

When a natural disaster in the form of a drought developed in the mid-1970s, the Ethiopian government made the mistake of attempting to ignore the situation, giving radicals a reason to undermine the government's authority. Mutinies within Ethiopia's military in 1974 over living conditions and pay, along with an ill-timed increase in gas prices, would prove to be the tipping points toward revolution. The Soviet Union's hopes for a stronger presence in Africa were finally answered, when in 1974 the Ethiopian Revolution caused the deposition of Emperor Haile Selassie and the country to be ruled by a coalition known as the Derg.²⁷ However, the Derg did not establish any foreign connections after its successful revolution. In 1976, one of the Derg leaders, First Lieutenant Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam, decided to secretly visit Moscow to establish a military aid agreement. This would consolidate a new relationship between Ethiopia and the Soviet Union. When Mengistu seized power after having his political rivals shot, the US cut off all military aid to Ethiopia.²⁸ However, the US did not cut off all relations with the African country and instead choose to maintain limited ties with the Mengistu regime.

With the establishment of a communist state in Ethiopia, the US slowly moved its military presence and influence away from the African nation. Feeling that his country would lose economic and military aid from the Soviet Union due to new agreements being made with Ethiopia, Somali leader, Siad Barre decided to establish a relationship with the US. Still, the Carter administration chose to limit its relationship with Somalia out of fear of repeating

²⁵ Dr. Henry A. Kissinger. Rep. No. I-2563 *Your Meeting with Emperor Haile Selassie* at The White House. Memorandum for the President (May 15, 1973).

²⁶ David A. Korn. *Ethiopia, The United States and the Soviet Union* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press 1986), 2.

²⁷ Korn, *Ethiopia*, 7.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 7.

another Vietnam-like situation. After being notified that the US was prepared to close its Kagnaw station, which was a US military base in Ethiopia, Mengistu used the opportunity to order the immediate closure of four other major US military stations around Ethiopia. The American consulate in Asmara, USIS (US Information Service) offices throughout Ethiopia, the US Military Assistance Advisory Group Office, and the US Navy's medical research center, known as NAMRU, were all ordered to close.²⁹ The Carter administration's stance of having a limited influence in Africa still remained, even as a war erupted in the Ogaden region between Ethiopia and Somalia in 1977. US involvement in the Ogaden War remained at the diplomatic level. On the other hand, the Soviet Union chose to support Mengistu through military supplies and Cuban troops.³⁰ On March 9th, 1978, Siad announced that all Somali forces would withdraw from Ethiopian territories.

Similarly to Castro in Cuba, as Ethiopia gained victories over US influence and continued to gain Soviet support, Mengistu began to increasingly adopt the Marxist theorem in his political rhetoric. He also began to think of himself as a socialist revolutionary. In 1974 Mengistu established a Ten-Point Program that proclaimed socialism to be Ethiopia's chosen path.³¹ Mengistu had been a first lieutenant within the Ethiopian army, he had even been sent to the US for military training in 1963 at a base in Alabama. It could be argued that during his time in the United States, Mengistu developed an anti-US outlook after being discriminated against in Alabama due to his dark skin color. During his time in Fort Meade, Mengistu got into a bar-room brawl over a racial slur.³² After he was reprimanded, Mengistu left the country with a negative feeling toward American society and government.

During his time as President of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Mengistu established numerous policies meant to modernize the country, however none could stop the growing resistance to his rule. Choosing to follow the Soviet model for modernization, Mengistu established state ownership of industry and commercial sectors, created a large standing army, and set into motion sweeping social and cultural transformations.³³ At the same time, growing resistance movements began to develop within

²⁹ Korn, *Ethiopia*, 28.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 31.

³¹ *Ibid*, 111.

³² *Ibid*, 109.

³³ *Ibid*, 155.

two main areas, Eritrea and Tigray. Traditionally, the Eritrean and Tigrayan rebellions had worked closely together and had reinforced one another. The Eritrean insurgency traced its origins from Italian colonization around the late 19th century to the defeat of Italian forces at the hands of the British in 1941. During the Cold War, the common motivation that connected all Eritreans together was their common hatred of governments in Addis Ababa, from monarchical to Marxist-Leninist, regardless of whether they allied themselves with either the West or the East.³⁴ After Mengistu gained control in Ethiopia and obtained subsequent Soviet support, the Eritreans formed the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and gained support from a number of Arab states. The Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF) had formed after the impact from the Ethiopian Revolution caused major regional dislocations. Like the Eritreans, the Tigrayans also favored a Muslim-controlled government. During the 1980s, the ELF and the TPLF insurgencies were committed to fighting the Ethiopian military, causing Mengistu to focus his attention to constantly defending against both groups.

Toward the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s, Ethiopia suffered through intense political infighting caused by insufficient government responses to key issues. As both the ELF and the TPLF continued their assault against Mengistu's government, the people of Ethiopia began to feel ignored. Mengistu's policies did not create the hunger or malnutrition, but they did make the effects of both much more difficult for the population to deal with.³⁵ Gorbachev's continual Soviet aid only seemed to postpone the inevitable collapse of Mengistu's government. The Ethiopian president even tried to create new economic agreements with Cuba and East Germany only to gain little success with either one. During his trip to Berlin in 1989, Mengistu's army tried to unseat his leadership through a military coup.³⁶ After surviving the coup, Mengistu still faced an economic meltdown due to further reductions in the prices of Ethiopian exports.

By 1990, Mengistu had dissolved communal farming and instituted new market reforms as well as established that he was now ready to work with the United States. However, the US was not convinced and hesitated in reestablishing trade agreements with Ethiopia.³⁷ Seizing its opportunity, the TPLF advanced on Addis Ababa while the ELF

³⁴ Korn, *Ethiopia*, 158.

³⁵ Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 361.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 390.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 392.

liberated almost all of Eritrea, isolating the Derg's main army of 200,000 men in the region of Asmara. On May 21st, 1991, the United States agreed to facilitate Mengistu's hasty removal from power to exile him in Zimbabwe, and recognized a new TPLF dominated federal government in Addis Ababa.³⁸ Through the TPLF's guidance, a new federal republic was established.

Conclusion

When examining the major differences between Cuba and Ethiopia's political developments during the Cold War, two key factors emerged.

Firstly, the interest in maintaining a strong communist government did not equally manifest in the two countries. Fidel Castro had been highly motivated to overthrow President Batista's government in the 1950s, however he established a new purpose for his revolution only after realizing that the US was aiding his enemies and challenging his rule at every turn. Castro fully accepted the Marxist theorem as he had understood it to be a tool in creating unity amongst all Third World countries around the globe and as a tool for opposing US imperialism. Cuba even strived to do more for the Third World than the Soviet Union, challenging the communist superpower's legitimacy to intervene in the Third World. In contrast, Mengistu Haile Mariam never set out to turn Ethiopia into a socialist model of modernity for other Third World nations to follow. Instead, Mengistu primarily wanted to legitimize his rule as president of Ethiopia and to establish stable trade relations with the Soviet Union. Although it is true that he despised the racialized aspects of US society and disliked major US influence within the region, Mengistu still did not fully cut off relations with the United States.

Secondly, the factor of regional geography played an important role for both countries. Ethiopia had to deal with an immediate threat at its border from Somalia as well as with the threats from the TPLF and ELF insurgencies within its territories. Cuba, on the other hand, was an island in close proximity to the United States and Latin America. Although both nations faced immediate foreign threats, each nation had a different way of responding to enemy intimidation.

³⁸ Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 390.

Castro utilized the constant threat of US aggression to strengthen Cuba's communist ideology, while Mengistu responded to growing threats by reinforcing his rule over Ethiopia. The failed attempts by the United States to overthrow Castro or undermine his rule only motivated him to intensify Cuba's efforts in establishing itself as a socialist model of modernity. After the Cuban Missile Crisis ended with the Soviet Union yielding to the United States, Castro had lost faith that the USSR would truly support his global socialist revolution. This caused Cuba to take center stage in establishing new foreign relations with developing communist movements within Third World nations. Meanwhile in Ethiopia, Mengistu struggled to maintain his government's legitimacy as he faced numerous threats all around. Unlike Castro, Mengistu did not want to do anything that would dissatisfy the Soviet Union, fearing that they would cut off military and economic aid. Mengistu also did not see Marxist theorem as a tool for establishing a new political ideology. Instead, he only viewed it as a way to solidify his presidency and justify his totalitarian rule. The downfall of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia would come through underestimating the influence of the rising insurgencies, ignoring the needs of the people, and the inability to find a socialist common ground with the regions religiously diverse population. In the end, the main reason why Castro's government continued after the Cold War, while Mengistu's regime collapsed in 1991, was that Cuba had a unified society, facing a persistent adversary in the form of the United States.

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