The Spectre of Colony:

Colonialism, Islamism, and State in Somalia

by

Richard Bennett Furlow

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Abdullahi Gallab, Chair
Shahla Talebi
Souad Ali

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ABSTRACT

Islamist groups in Somalia define themselves by their opposition. From the pre-Islamist movement of Mohammed Hassan in the nineteenth century to al-Itihaad al-Islaami in the twentieth to al-Shabaab in the twenty-first, Islamism exists as a form of resistance against the dominant power of the era. Furthermore these Islamist groups have all been influenced by the type of state in which they exist, be it colonial, independent, or failed. This work seeks to examine the relationship between the uniquely Somali form of Islamism and the state. Through use of historical records, modern media, and existing scholarship this dissertation will chart the development of Islamism in Somalia from the colonial period to the present and explore the relationship Somali Islamism has with various forms of state.

DEDICATION


To Deirdre, a woman of endless patience

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

my time at ASU but created a wonderful intellectual and collegial environment that allowed me to explore diverse interests.

Last, I especially thank my wife Deirdre and our daughter Julia. Dee encouraged me when I wanted to quit, pushed me when I wanted to slow down, and had confidence in me when I had none in myself. I can never thank her enough. And Julia, quite simply, makes every day better.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Stephen Prothero has described Islam as the most important religion in the world. Prothero writes that "the nineteenth and twentieth centuries may have belonged to Christianity. The twenty-first belongs to Islam."[1] This is in part due to the fact that Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world but also because Islam occupies a disproportionate amount of media attention. It is possible that, at least in part, this interest in Islam is due to the violence associated with Islam and the perceived anti-Western beliefs of some very vocal Muslims. From Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's referencing the United States as "the great Satan" to the emergence of al-Qaeda and the embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, the attack on the USS Cole in 2000, the 9/11 attacks, and the subsequent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, media coverage of Islam often relates to hostile words or acts of violence.

There are a significant number of books about Islamism available. Books by journalists, such as Peter Bergen's *Holy War, Inc.*; by individuals with a particular political agenda, such as Daniel Pipes' *Militant Islam Reaches America*; and by scholars, such as Gilles Kepel's *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, and so on. Works by John Esposito and Olivier Roy have become fixtures in classroom discussions. Most of these works are a part of the Islamic Studies Bubble that occurred post-9/11 when there was a new rush to study Islam, particularly Islam of a more violent or extremist bent. Because

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[1] Stephen Prothero. *God is Not One: the eight rival religions that run the world and why their differences matter. (*New York:Harper One, 2010). P. 63.

this rush to study Islam was precipitated by a single event, most of those works focus on people or groups related to that event e.g. al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, the Taliban, etc.

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that this period of violence means there is a "clash of civilizations" as some would like us to believe.[2] Instead, this can be seen as a clash within Islam--a clash between those who have a stricter interpretation of the Qur'an and what Islam should be and those who have a more progressive view of the faith. The conflict is not between Islam and the West but between Islam and modernity and between those who see the two as compatible and those who do not, a topic to be discussed later in this work.

Much of the existing scholarship that seeks to explain this conflict consists of books and articles about Wahhabism or the Muslim Brotherhood or the Taliban or al-Qaeda. They are found in bookstores, journals, and magazines in abundance. Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Egypt and Saudi Arabia have become the focal points for much of the scholarship about Islam and Islamism. And with good reason. Many significant Islamist figures and thinkers come from or have played a significant role in these countries. But Islamist ideology is not limited to these five countries.

Books like Ahmed Rashid's *The Taliban* and Richard Mitchell's 1969 *Society of Muslim Brothers* described contemporary movements but also looked back at their origins. This work is in that same vein an examination of a modern movement that looks back historically at the circumstances and context in which that movement came into being.

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[2] This refers to Samuel Huntington's article and later book of the same name.

This work seeks to examine an often overlooked part of the world and explain the role Islamism has played there. Somalia has been largely written off, mainly due to its failed-state status. This work will argue that there is a uniquely Somali brand of Islamism--one that combines Islamist ideology with Somali nationalism and is used first and foremost as a means of resistance. To describe this version of Islamism, this work will examine Somalia's religious and political past as a way to explain its present. I will look at Islamist movements from the colonial period (1883-1960), the dictatorship of Said Barre (1969-1991), and the failed-state period (1991-present), and I will explore how various Islamist groups responded during each of these time periods as well as how Islamists in Somalia have developed over time. This will culminate in a closer examination of the Islamic Courts Union and its offshoot *al-Shabaab*, arguably the two most successful Islamist groups in the country.

**Methodology**

Somalia is a difficult place to study for numerous reasons. First, given the chaotic and all too often violent environment that Somalia has been for the past two decades, travel there has been fairly restricted. This is one reason there has been limited scholarship on the country during that period. Much of the existing scholarship on Somalia either took place before the fall of the Barre regime in 1991 or focuses on the semi-autonomous regions of Somaliland and Puntland, both of which have more stability and security than southern Somalia. This lack of scholarship means it is difficult to engage with recent scholarly sources as they are scarce. The few scholarly works that do exist, such as those by Ahmed Samatar, Abdi Ismail Samatar, Peter D. Little, Kenneth

Menkhaus, and Bruce Davidson, largely examine the political difficulties in Somalia. Those texts are critically valuable and will be engaged later as issues of state are central to this work, however, those works are political in nature and do not spend significant amounts of time dealing with the religious landscape of Somalia. In fact, the first, and as of this writing, only scholarly book on al-Shabaab, Stig Jarle Hansen's *Al-Shabaab in Somalia*, literately was published the day before this work was defended.[3]

As traditional scholarship is somewhat limited, alternative means of research were necessary. Islamist groups have a presence on the Internet, whether they run their own websites, participate in chat rooms or message boards, or engage in social media. Here we get direct access to members of a given group. A weakness, though, is determining whether one is who they claim to be. Anyone can pose as a member of al-Shabaab in a given Internet forum, but that does not mean they are who they claim to be. Internet sources such as these are useful but must be used with care.

A second source is news. Some good journalism has come out of Somalia, Jeffrey Gettleman's reporting for the New York Times, for example. Decent reporting is necessary for understanding contemporaneous events transpiring on the ground. Again, there is the question of the source of the news. For this work, well established, respected news outlets were used, not the random blog or web page of an individual who may have a passing interest in the Horn of Africa.

A third, and critically valuable, source or research are NGO reports. The International Crisis Group, for example, has produced a number of in-depth reports about

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[3] Stig Jarle Hansen. *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group 2005-2012*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).

Somalia over the past few years. NGOs typically have access to people a lone academic researcher may not have. As such, these reports are instrumental in the study of Somalia.

**A Brief History of Pre-Colonial Somalia**

Islam has had a connection with Somalia from the very early stages of Islam's existence. In 614 CE, in what is known as the first *hijra*, a small group of Muslims fled persecution in Mecca and made their way across the Gulf of Aden to the Kingdom of Axum, in what is modern-day northern Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, coastal Sudan, and northern Somalia. They landed at the port town of Zelia (Somalia). Ashama ibn Abjar was the Negus or king of Axum and a Christian, and it was believed he would be sympathetic to the Muslims' plight. He was and allowed them to stay in his kingdom. In 616, a second wave of Muslims, led by Ja'far ibn Abi Talib, cousin of the prophet Muhammad and brother of Ali the fourth caliph, made their way to Axum.[4] Some traditions have Ja'far converting the Negus from Christianity to Islam, and there is a tradition by some in these East African countries of claiming to be related to the caliph Ali through Ja'far. While some of the initial group of Muslims returned to Mecca, it is believed that at least some remained in Axum.[5] (Today nearly all Somalis are Sunni Muslims and less than one percent of Somalis are Christian).[6]

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[4] Enrico Cerulli, "Ethiopia's Relations with the Muslim World" in *Africa from the seventh to eleventh centuries*, M. El Fasi and Ivan Hrbek, ed. (UNESCO Publishing, Paris, 1988). P. 575.
[5] Ibid. 575-576.
[6] Library of Congress Country Study

In fact, migration to the Horn continued well after this first hijra.[7] Muslims fleeing conflict within the Abbasid Caliphate in the eighth century fled to the Benaadir coast and founded the port city of Mogadishu.[8]

Conflict continued between the Muslims and Meccans, eventually causing Muhammad to lead his people to Medina in 622 (this move is the more commonly known hijra). The two groups continued to struggle, but by 630 the Muslims defeated the Meccans in Arabia. This changed the nature of the relationship between those in the Horn of Africa and their now-Muslim trading partners. Muslims had a firm grip on Arabia, and traders and merchants were spreading the word in the Horn. Arabs crossed the Red Sea and began to convert the Somalis.[9]

The coast city of Mogadishu became one of the largest and most significant areas of trade. When the Moroccan explorer Ibn Battuta arrived in 1331, he wrote Mogadishu "is a town endless in its size" and "the people are powerful merchants."[10] Early explorers describe the Somali people as dark-skinned or black Berbers, a reference to the largely Muslim, native North African people.[11]

The peak of Somali culture and power in the pre-colonial years came during the Ajuuraan Sultanate from the fourteenth through seventeenth centuries. The Sultanate ruled large sections of the Horn of Africa through the manipulation of water. By controlling wells and using engineering to help control rivers, the Ajuuraan were able to

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[7] Not to be confused the more well-known hijra from Mecca to Medina in 622.
[8] David D. Laitin, *Politics, Language and Thought: the Somali Experience*. (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1977). P.46
[9] Ahmed I. Samatar. *Socialist Somalia: Rhetoric and Reality*. (London: Zed Books, 1988). P 12.
[10] Abu Abdalla Ibn Battuta. *Ibn Battuta in Black Africa* translated and edited by Said Hamdun and Noel King. (London, Rex Collings, 1975). P. 16.
[11] I.M. Lewis, *A Modern History of Somalia: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*. (London, Longman Publishing Group, 1980). P.20

solidify their domination over the Horn.[12] The Ajuuraan were involved in widespread

trade going as far as to trade with the Ming dynasty in China.[13]

During the sixteenth century, the Portuguese Empire made inroads into East

Africa. They had their eyes on Mogadishu, which, given its size and significance, would

have been a major victory. But the Ajuuraan were able to repeatedly fend off Portuguese

attacks, and Mogadishu was never captured.

After the Ajuuraan Sultanate collapsed in the 1700s, due to the rise of the Oromo

and other groups in the area, Mogadishu fell under the control of the Geledi Sultanate. By

1892, the city was under the joint control of both the Geledi and the Sultan of Zanzibar. It

is at this point that the Italians make their way into Somalia.

**Chapter Outline**

This dissertation is essentially divided into two parts. The first part, consisting of

chapters two through five, provides much of the historical and theoretical background to

the text. Here the chapters deal with the three main ideas of the work (colonialism, failed

states, and Islamism) and ground them firmly in Somalia. The second part, chapters six

through nine, look at two recent Somali Islamist groups (the Islamic Courts Union and *al-Shabaab*) and demonstrate how they are descendants of all the Islamist groups that have

become before them; it shows how they embody the uniquely Somali Islamism that has

been passed down to them.

Chapter two will be a literature review. Some of the major figures who shaped the

thinking and outlook of this project will be examined. This will encompass readings that

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[12] Randall L. Pouwels. *Horn and Crescent: Cultural Change and Traditional Islam on the East African Coast 800-1900.* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987). Pgs. 14-16.
[13] Reginald Coupland. *East Africa and its Invaders.* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1961). P 37.

pertain to colonialism in Africa, Islamic thought in particular as it pertains to issues of politics and the state, and modern theories of state. The works of major scholars such as Frantz Fanon, Ashis Nandy, John Esposito and Georg Sorensen among others will be discussed in this chapter.

Chapter three will look at the colonial period in Somalia. It will examine the role that both the Italian and the British played in the region and the effects colonialism had on developing statehood in the country. Chapter three also looks at the resistance movement of Mohammed Hassan to the British occupation. Hassan's movement was the first religiously inspired resistance in Somalia and provides the template for later Islamist movements. The British dubbed him the "Mad Mullah" and attempted to create an identity for him as someone who was crazy and a thief. This was a blatant attempt to discredit Hassan and his followers, but it also served as an example of the more powerful nation-state trying to undermine and defeat the weaker enemy in a cultural context as opposed to a strictly military one. Here the British were trying to define Hassan in order to destroy his credibility. It is also possible that the British legitimately believed that Hassan was inferior and by attributing negative characteristics to him they were reinforcing their own preconceived notions of the man and his people. Defining the Other is a central part of colonialism, and the example of Hassan will be used as a case study of sorts. Hassan was a precursor to the modern Islamist movement and therefore worthy of discussion.

Somali Islamism did not develop in a vacuum. It was a product of whatever local situation existed on the ground and the influence of Islamist thought from around the

Muslim world. Any discussion of the development and influence of Islamism would be remiss if there were not discussion of Hassan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb, the Muslim Brotherhood and the emergence of modern Islamist thought. These early thinkers played a large part in influencing the ideology of later Somali Islamists. This will be the subject of chapter four. Additionally, early Islamist groups such as the Somali Islamic League and its connections to the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Wahhabism in Saudi Arabia will also be examined in chapter four.  It is critical to examine how much of Somali Islamism has been influenced by the development of Islamist ideology outside of Somalia's borders.  This chapter will serve as a platform for a discussion of the relationship between Islam and state in a broader sense.

Chapter five will be an exploration of the notion of failed states.  The development of states and the Westphalian model will be critiqued. Somalia has largely been dismissed due to its failed-state status. The current thinking about failed states will be laid out and critiqued.

Chapters six looks at the Said Barre regime and then bring us up to date. The Islamic Courts Union (ICU) was briefly able to gain control of the southern half of Somalia in 2006, something no one had done since the fall of the Barre regime. This chapter will look at the collapse of the Barre regime and the formation and successes of the ICU and why and how it so quickly collapsed. This will lead directly into chapter seven which will look at the ICU's major offshoot, al-Shabaab, and its role in the Somali Civil War. Al-Shabaab has had many successes and a great many setbacks, all of which will be explored in the chapter.

One of al-Shabaab's more interesting successes comes in recruitment. In chapter eight, al-Shabaab's online media presence, use of social media, and ability to recruit members via online activities will be explored. What impact recruiting non-Somalis has on the group and what that means for the development of Islamism in Somalia will be explored. In addition the case of the Somali-Americans who have been recruited, most notably the group from Minneapolis, Minnesota, will be discussed. This trend of young Somalis returning to Somalia is an example of al-Shabaab's expanding its reach beyond Somalia's borders, and this shift from the traditional, local focus of Islamist groups is significant.

The final chapter will wrap up of all that has come before.  How colonialism in Somalia laid the groundwork for the emergence of Islamism and how the failed-state status allowed this development to continue will all be tied together. The last chapter will also serve as a policy paper or white paper.  Ideas about how the United States government and other Western powers should proceed in future dealings with Somalia will be presented. Was the Transitional Federal Government a success?  Should the U.S. engage directly with members of al-Shabaab and/or other Islamists?  If so, in what way and with what limitations if any?

**Somalia's Current Status**

The Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was established in 2004 to reestablish a national government in Somalia. Its mandate officially ended in August 2012. The scope of this work ends just prior to the handover of power, so much of what is

discussed takes place during the reign of the TFG. That said, it is worth addressing the current status as much as possible, which I will do here and again in the last chapter.

Much of the TFG's efforts were spent fighting Islamists and establishing security, and as a result less emphasis was placed on rebuilding the infrastructure and social welfare. Nevertheless, under the TFG the Roadmap to End the Transition was put into place.[14] A new Constitution was drafted; a new Parliament was put into place; and former university professor and civic activist, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was elected President.[15]

The new Constitution emphasizes Somalia's Islamic nature. It was written this way, in part, to suggest to Islamists that their voice will be heard. To that extent, Article 1 states, "After Allah the Almighty, all power is vested in the people and can only be exercised in accordance with the Constitution and the law and through the relevant institutions."[16] Shari'a is mentioned in the Constitution eight times, and the Constitution is "based on the foundations of the Holy Quran and the Sunna of our prophet Mohamed (PBUH) and protects the higher objectives of Shari'ah and social justice."[17] Islam is the religion of the state and "no religion other than Islam can be propagated in the country."[18] Islam is to be taught in both public and private schools.[19]

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[14] Somalia: End of Transition Roadmap.
http://unpos.unmissions.org/Portals/UNPOS/Repository%20UNPOS/110906%20-%20Initialled%20Roadmap%20%28The%20Annex%29.pdf
[15] Garowe Online. "Somalia Federal Parliament elects Hassan Sheikh Mohamud as President." http://www.garoweonline.com/artman2/publish/Somalia_27/Somalia_Federal_Parliament_elects_Hassan_Sheikh_Mohamud_as_President.shtml Mohamed was elected through indirect election by the members of the Federal Parliament, not through a direct election by the people of Somalia.
[16] The Federal Republic of Somalia: Provisional Constitution. Article 1.
http://www.somaliweyn.com/pages/news/Aug_12/Somalia_Constitution_English_FOR_WEB.pdf
[17] Ibid. Article 3.
[18] Ibid. Article 2.
[19] Ibid. Article 30.

Despite the new government and the successful election and transition of power from the TFG to the Federal Government of Somalia, the recent successful military action against Islamist extremist forces, and the end to a devastating famine, Somalia is still in a delicate position. Weapons are abundant in Somalia. Al-Shabaab, though weakened, still exists and was able to carry out an assassination attempt on the new president two days after his election. Poverty is still high, and the number of refugees and internally displaced persons is significant. Somalia appears to be moving in the right direction, but there is still a long way to go.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This project examines three subject areas within the Somali context--colonialism, state theory and Islamism. All of these have significant theoretical histories and, as case studies, have been applied to various areas around the globe. The grand scope of the project seeks to apply each of these to Somalia, but before that can be done there must be a basic understanding of the prevailing theories surrounding colonialism, state theory and Islamism. In addition to these subject areas, there also must be an examination of the prevailing literature on Somalia itself. All of these will be discussed in this chapter.

It should be noted that the texts discussed here are those that most shaped the viewpoint of this larger work. In some cases, I agree wholeheartedly with their arguments, and in some cases I do not. But these are all books that have had an impact on their chosen field and, thus, were chosen accordingly.

**Somalia**

One of the most well-known scholars of Somalia is the anthropologist and historian Ioan (I.M.) Lewis. His work *Blood and Bone* is the definitive work on the clan and its importance in Somalia.[20] Almost all other works on Somalia and the Somali people will make reference to the clan, this one included, as the clan is central to understanding Somali politics and history. Lewis' work ties the clan system to nationalism and shows its import in the history of Somalia. It is to Lewis that all

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[20] Ioan M. Lewis. *Blood and Bone: The Call of Kinship in Somali Society*. (Lawrenceville, NJ: Red Sea Press, 1994).

subsequent Somali scholars owe a debt of gratitude for making the clan system accessible.

All of that said, there are two fundamental flaws in Lewis' work: one of emphasis, the other of omission. Lewis' description of the clans, while good, is unchanging. Lewis sees clans as fixed in time, and issues of modernity and increasing urbanization have not affected the clan system in any fundamental way. The collapse of the Barre regime and the ensuing dependency on clans, Lewis contends, only support his thesis. Lewis' view is unrealistic, however. Socioeconomic shifts in the country are going to affect any number of societal elements including the clans. Various Islamist groups and other non-state actors have tried, with varying degrees of success, to abandon or circumvent the clan. There is a trend of de-emphasizing the clan in Somalia.

The second flaw is the lack of attention given to Islam. In any country in which ninety-nine percent of the populace is of the same religion, religion is inevitably important to the understanding of that country. Lewis acknowledges Islam but does not include it as central element of Somali society and therefore not central to Somali nationalism and the political landscape. This is a significant oversight in both *Blood and Bone* and his earlier work, *A Modern History of Somalia*.[21] This work will instead argue that Islam in general and Islamism in particular are fundamental aspects of Somali nationalism, from the resistance of Mohammed Abdullah Hassan to the present.

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[21] I.M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali: Fourth Edition* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2002).

Political scientist and Somali parliamentarian Ahmed Samatar argues that too much emphasis has been placed on the clan system.[22] He says the clan is an outdated and increasingly insignificant aspect of Somali society. While it may have been of value at some point in the past, it has lost that value now. Customary and Islamic law (*xeer* and *sharia* respectively) are more important than the clan. That Somalia collapsed after the Barre regime fell had to do more with the lack of political leadership than the power of the clan system. In this I think Samatar is correct. Lewis' work is a great examination of how the clan system worked, but it ends there. Rather than standing in contrast to Lewis, Samatar takes up the issue of clan and brings it to the modern day, where it is decidedly less influential.

If the clan is central to understanding Somalia's past, so is the tradition of storytelling and poetry. This tradition is exemplified in the work of historian Said S. Samatar. His *Oral Poetry and Somali Nationalism* is ostensibly a history of Mohammad Hassan but seen through the lens of his literary work (Hassan was a prolific poet).[23] Samatar's work shows the importance of the oral tradition in Somalia and emphasizes Hassan's role as a political poet. The one drawback of this approach is that it deemphasizes Hassan's importance as a military and religious leader. The strength of the work really lies in its portrayal of poetry as an intrinsic part of Somali culture particularly among the more nomadic and rural Somalis.

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[22] Ahmed I. Samatar, ed. *The Somali Challenge: From Catastrophe to Renewal?* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994).

[23] Said S. Samatar, *Oral Poetry and Somali Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1982).

The clan system sets Somalia apart from much of the world, particularly the West. It adds to the "otherness" of Somalia. Additionally, the so-called failed-state status, which will be discussed in detail later, is an environment in which most people have no direct experience. That also adds to the imagined idea of Somalia. Since the end of the colonial period, Somalia has been an independent democracy, socialist dictatorship, and so-called failed state. One constant during all of these eras is the Islamist group. There have been numerous Islamist groups in Somalia, some of which will be detailed in later chapters, but throughout them all there has been a pattern of behavior. These groups tend to have early successes. They are able to become the dominant force in a given town, for example. They do things such as provide education, ban the use of the narcotic plant *qaat*, decrease violence, etc. These are all seen as good things by the citizens. However, the Islamists will eventually overreach. They will take actions such as banning mixed-gender gatherings enforcing more traditionally Islamic dress instead of Western dress, and, enforcing *hudud* punishments such as amputation of limbs or stoning, etc. Once the overreach occurs, the once supportive citizens push back. This is a pattern that has repeated itself time and time again as will be demonstrated through the course of this work.

**Colonialism**

Colonialism is a broad topic. A later chapter will discuss colonialism in Somalia specifically, but here colonialism and its broad, theoretical aspects will be the subject. One of the issues confronting the study of Africa is the tendency to lump all African states together as if they have one shared history or experience. While it can be useful to

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have general theories regarding colonialism and how African countries were affected by their colonial experiences, it is also true that each country has had unique experiences as well. In other words, what may be generally true of the African experience with colonialism may not be specifically true when it comes to Somalia. Nevertheless, without those general theories, the discussion of the Somali colonial period will be lacking.

Crawford Young, in his discussion of states, makes the claim that the idea of state in the modern sense is defined by a country's relationship to notion of the Western state. In other words, if a state does not fit the European-American normative idea of state, it is considered deviant. "In one way or another core state theory perceives all of these variants as deviant, whether by pathological flaw (the totalitarian state), by temporal sequence (the underdeveloped state), or by classification as exotic other (the Islamic state as "orientalism").[24] Many of these "deviant" concepts can be applied to the African state. Yes, there are totalitarian regimes in Africa as well as underdeveloped or so-called failed states. Additionally, Africa is the very definition of exotic in the Western mind, even in the post-colonial era. African states are considered exotic in some cases due to religion (be it Islam or traditional African religions) or cultural practices. By placing Africa in the realm of the exotic or deviant, African automatically becomes "the Other."

Colonialism is at its core an egotistical exercise. It may be exploitive, racist, and violent, but it is also vain. The colonial power thinks it has a better way of doing things and seeks to force that way onto the colonized.

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[24] Crawford Young. *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective.* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1994). P. 18

Africa, prior to the arrival of European powers was not a land of political chaos. There were organized political structures in place. Whether it was a clan or tribe or kingdom, political structure existed. It was the intervention by colonial powers that derailed these kingdoms.[25] We do not know what would have happened to these political structures if there were no colonial intervention. African historian Basil Davidson argues that they could have developed along a trajectory similar to that of Japan when the feudal society reformed itself from within during the Meiji Restoration and emerged a modern nation-state.[26] This is, of course, mere speculation, and we cannot say with any authority that any or all African communities would have progressed upon a similar path. What we can say with authority is that the colonial period halted the natural development of many African states and forced upon them political models developed by non-African cultures out of non-African histories.

We know the general story of colonialism. A colonial power comes in and creates arbitrary borders, not factoring in realities like tribal territories and grazing patterns, and begins to exploit both the natural resources of the land and the native inhabitants for their own financial and geopolitical gain. Unfortunately, once the African colonial period ended, it was not as if communities could simply return to the way they were pre-colonialism. Borders were established and recognized by the world at large, and it was not financially feasible to not do business with former colonial powers thus, said powers still had some semblance of control over their former territories.

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[25] Basil Davidson. *The Black Man's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State*. (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1993).
[26] Ibid. pp 40-42.

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There was an attempt in Somalia, for example, to bring all Somalis together as one nation after the colonial period ended. During the colonial period, Somalia had been divided into three different colonies, French, Italian, and British. Somalis were spread among all three colonial areas plus parts of Kenya and Ethiopia. While Somalis may all be part of one ethnic group and one religion, they are divided along clan lines. Those clan divisions, as well as the effects of colonial divisions, caused the effort to create one cohesive Somalia to fall apart.

Crawford Young points out that some of the elements that make up a state are missing from the colonial state. He argues that for a state to be a state, sovereignty is required. The colonized state lacked sovereign status as it is controlled by another. Second, he says the colonized state was not an actor in the international scene. This is somewhat debatable, as the colonized state, by definition, had relations with a (foreign) colonial power. This relationship may have been negative and exploitative, but it was a relationship nevertheless. Colonized states were not equal trading partners nor parties in any type of treaties, but they were involved, even if tangentially, in the international sphere, as a supplier of goods and labor. Third, Young argues that colonized states were denied nationhood. Nation implies a natural community. The people of a nation share a history and ethos that is not necessarily defined by borders. In Young's definition, nation and state are not synonymous. Due to the lack of sovereignty, the lack of international activity, and the lack of nationhood, Young considers the colonized state not a true state but rather a subdivision of state.

The common theme in Young's critique of a colonized state as a state is the lack of freedom. Colonized states lack the freedom to control what goes on within their borders; they lack the freedom to engage in international trade or treaties; and the people of the state are forced together rather than developing in any naturally occurring way.

Philosopher and political scientist Achille Mbembe's *On the Postcolony* epitomizes the conventional understanding of the colonial experience.[27] Colonial powers' main purpose was to exploit the people and resources of a particular area. Yet they felt the need to 'civilize' them as well. Colonizers sought to educate the colonized, both in an intellectual and a religious sense. The colonizers were the source of power, and when they left that sense of power was transferred to new rulers. The power of these rulers is exaggerated, and they have become mythologized. New African rulers have simply replaced old colonial ones.

Another aspect of the colonial experience is the justification the colonial powers gave for their actions. Political psychologist Ashis Nandy tries to explain this rationale in his work, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism*.[28] The common explanation for colonialism offered by Mbembe, that the colonial powers were trying to "civilize" the "barbaric" Africans while simultaneously expanding their own empires and spheres of influence, is not disputed by Nandy, but he believes these explanations do not go far enough. He believes that there is an innate desire for domination within humanity. It manifests itself in a variety of ways, including men over women, adults over children, and the modern over the savage. These polarities define the

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[27] Achille Mbembe. *On the Postcolony*. (Berkley: University of California Press, 2001.)
[28] Ashis Nandy. *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983).

relationship between the colonizers and the colonized. Nandy uses the British in India as his case study, but the general theory can be applied to other colonial powers in other locations. The colonial powers represented progressive achievements in science, technology and cultural development, and there was a collective psychological need to put these developments into action.

Nandy does not limit his discussion to the psychology of the colonizing power but also engages the mindset of the colonized. He argues that colonization "colonizes minds in addition to bodies."[29] This means that the colonial powers exist everywhere, not just in a physical structure or a presence in the streets, but in the minds and attitudes of the colonized.

One observation that is worth pointing out is the distinction Nandy makes between the elites and the non-elites. The non-elites have an easier time resisting the colonized mind than the elites, who deal on a more direct basis with the colonizing powers. Proximity to the colonizers, it seems, has an effect on the degree to which the colonized mind takes hold. Nandy is quick to point out that that does not mean that the elites are any less authentic in their Indianess (as he is using India as his examples) but that they represent one strata of Indian society while the non-elites represent another.

Another example of the colonized taking on the colonizer's mentality is demonstrated in post-colonial scholar Mahmood Mamdani's *When Victims Become Killers*. Mamdani's book seeks to explain why the Rwandan genocide occurred. His argument is that Belgium, the colonial power that ruled Rwanda from the 1920s to the 1960s, intentionally created ethnic strife between the Hutu and the Tutsi. The Belgians

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[29] Nandy, xi.

supported Tutsis politically, so they created a myth of Tutsi ethnic superiority. They claimed that Tutsi had larger skulls and thus larger brains making them intellectually superior. Tutsi skin was lighter than Hutu skin, giving rise to the idea that Tutsi had some Caucasian ancestry.[30] All of this is demonstrably false and even laughable today, but it led to segmenting of the Rwandan people and ethnic division that eventually culminated in the Rwandan genocide of 1994.

Mamdani's work shows the bifurcation of various African societies. Mamdani argues that colonial powers split the native inhabitants into citizens (primarily urban) and subjects (primarily rural).[31] Upon leaving, the colonial powers left the urban citizens in charge. But these urban citizens did not earn their right to govern; they were given power by the former colonial masters. Mamdani suggests that this legacy of colonialism has led to negative consequences for Africa's present. This bifurcation eventually led to uprisings against those in power and/or corruption by those seeking to maintain their unearned power. Either way, this bifurcation has, Mamdani suggests, led to the stagnation of many African nations.

Like Nandy, Mamdani is looking at the effects of colonialism on a specific country, but Mamdani does somewhat support both Nandy and Mbembe's conclusions. Mbembe argues that colonizers want to exploit the natural resources of an area, which the Belgians certainly did, but also to transfer power to those "deserving" of it, in this case, the supposedly more evolved Tutsi. Nandy suggests that the more tied to the colonizer

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[30] Mahmood Mamdani. *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001) pgs 43-48.
[31] Mahmood Mamdani. Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

one is, the more likely one is to identify with them. The Belgians placed Tutsi in positions of political power and convinced them they were superior. Tutsi maintained that air of superiority until the Hutu majority finally gained control of the country. Mamdani's work is an example of how one can use the examination of a particular country or a case study to illustrate part of a larger colonial theory.

Somalis are a homogeneous ethnic group, but there are divisions along clan lines. Interestingly enough, in Somalia it was not the colonial powers who divided the people along clan lines but the Somali political establishment itself. There is often talk of transcending clan divisions--Siad Barre spoke of it yet eventually came to rely primarily on his own clan. The Islamic Courts sought to move beyond the clan, yet inter-clan rivalry forced them to restructure the court system to accommodate the clan system. Al-Shabaab often claims to be above clan divisions, yet many sub-groups within al-Shabaab operate within the clan system. The clan system is slowly eroding, as evidenced in part by these movements to do away with the clan, but it can still be a structure for people to fall back on if support is needed.

At one point the psychological need for domination took the form of military expansion, acquiring territory and creating new social and political structures for the "savage" people of Africa. Today that need is met through aid and nation-building. No longer considered savage ("Third World" is the new "savage") but still dependent upon the Western world, the people of Africa are given money and medicine (developed by advanced Western science and technology). In addition western views of democracy and human rights are exported as well. That psychological need to be dominant, to change

"the other" into something more like us, still exists. It just manifests itself differently. Aid is seen by some as a means for Western powers to keep African states in some form of subjugation.  The effects of colonialism have far from disappeared.

When discussing colonialism, it is difficult to avoid Frantz Fanon's work *The Wretched of the Earth.* For that matter, when discussing *The Wretched of the Earth,* it is hard to avoid the topic of violence. The advocating of violence is the common interpretation of Fanon's work. Imperial powers achieve and maintain power through the use of violence. In a 'fight fire with fire' approach, Fanon advocates the use of violence against the imperial powers in order to achieve liberation. Violence when done by the oppressed is akin to an affirmation of life. They are abandoning their victimhood and adopting a liberating mentality. In situations in which there was a peaceful independence such as in Zambia (formerly Northern Rhodesia), the potential for violence still existed. According to Fanon, the national bourgeoisie, that is the new authority and leadership that has taken over from the colonial power, appropriate "the old traditions of colonialism…its military and police."[32] In other words, the peaceful transition of power does not always mean a peaceful existence. For Fanon, the national bourgeoisie is, practically speaking, no different than the colonial power.  They have the same narcissistic tendencies and desire to maintain power as the imperialists.[33] He also makes it clear that it is the peasant class, those not a part of the industrial working class but more likely rural farming or nomadic people, who are the key to overthrowing colonial powers. The national bourgeoisie is in essence a continuation of the colonial rule, and the

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[32] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963), 76.
[33] Ibid, 98.

industrial working class has been conditioned by the colonial powers. So it takes a group sufficiently removed from the colonial system to effect change.

The problem with Fanon is that he does not merely accept the use of violence as a means to independence: he advocates it. Peaceful resistance is certainly possible; we need just look to Mohandas Gandhi or Martin Luther King, Jr., or Nelson Mandela to see famous examples of that. Of course, not every situation or struggle has a Gandhi or King or Mandela, and often violence occurs. It may even be necessary. But should it be required, as Fanon seems to suggest? Violence has lasting effects on its victims, but it also affects the perpetrators. To suggest that the average worker or citizen take up arms and engage in insurrection does not take into consideration what the aftermath of that violence may be. Fanon's glorifying focus on violence seems to undercut his nobler goal of independence.

Albert Memmi's classic work *The Colonizer and the Colonized* has, if not a sympathetic view, at least a more compassionate view of the colonizer. Memmi's work is assuredly anti-colonial and in no way a justification of colonialism. But he sees the psychological effects of colonialism as negatively impacting both the colonized and the colonizer. The colonizer is trapped in a new and foreign world; one that he resents and comes to hate, and therefore he hates the inhabitants of that world as well. Freedom for the colonizer is a return home, which is also the key for the colonized. If the colonized achieve liberation, it necessarily sends the colonizers back from whence they came, achieving freedom for both.

Both Fanon and Memmi were writing at the beginning of the post-colonial period and were witness to this transition. Additionally, they had personal experiences with colonialism (Memmi in Tunisia and Fanon in Martinique and Algeria). Post-colonial studies, as a field, did not exist at the time of their writing, but it is safe to say they contributed greatly and are considered patriarchs of the discipline. Their goals are the same—to try to explain the reasons for and effects of colonialism and to pull apart all of the related issues such as race and power.

When the colonial period was coming to a close, aid was beginning to flow to Africa. Aid to Africa begins with the end of World War II and the success of the Marshall Plan in Europe. The Marshall Plan was an aid-based success. Roughly $13 billion was dispensed to fourteen European countries over a five-year period. It led to the revitalization of Europe after the devastation of the war. But the Marshall Plan delivered aid to countries that asked for it and to more or less stable governments. Appling that same model to Africa would prove to be much more difficult and would have different results.

Nevertheless, based on the positive outcomes in Europe, it was logical to think that providing aid to other areas of the world would have similar success. The problem, as economist Dambisa Moyo points out in *Dead Aid*, is that this aid was entering African countries right as they were gaining independence. These countries "may have been independent on paper, but independence dependent on the financial largesse of their former colonial masters was the reality."[34] The wealthier former colonial powers were

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[34] Dambisa Moyo, *Dead Aid: Why Aid is not Working and how there is a Better Way for Africa*. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010) P. 13-14.

still exploiting the natural resources of these newly independent countries, and the dependent countries still needed the financial support of the former colonial powers. Dependency theory replaced colonialism.[35] The former colonial powers exploited the people and natural resources of the former colonies, but now rather than doing so by the barrel of a gun, they flexed their economic muscles to gain benefit. Beyond economics, the former colonial powers still played a role in education (often Eurocentric) and choosing political leaders. While no longer a colonial presence, these countries still had a profound cultural impact on their former colonies.

This aid, set against the backdrop of the Cold War, served two purposes: it provided a collective sense of good for the giving nations, and it was strategically necessary for advancing the geopolitical goals of the two superpowers. There is something that feels good about helping others, both on a personal level, and on a collective societal level; a nation helping another boosts national pride. It also maintains a sense of superiority, which in turn can also boost national pride. It allows the giving nation to maintain a feeling of superiority without enforcing authoritarian policies, what post-colonial theorist Homi K. Bhabha calls "the feel of the colonial ruler."[36]

Additionally, during the Cold War both the United States and the Soviet Union were interested in attracting as many countries as they could to their respective sides. If providing aid was a means of attracting a client state, then so be it. Furthermore, the

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[35] Dependency theory states that poorer countries export commodities which wealthier nations make into products that in turn get sold back to poorer nations at a higher cost. This prevents poorer nations from making economic gains as the cost of their imports always exceeds the cost of their exports. This could be seen as simply an effect of capitalism or it can be seen as an intentional means of keeping the poorer nation weak.

[36] Homi K. Bhabha "Forward: Framing Fanon," in *The Wretched of the Earth* by Frantz Fanon. (New York, Grove Press), xii.

potential client state reaped the benefits of having two superpowers compete for its attention. The client state could potentially receive a sizeable amount of aid (money, weapons, medicine, food, etc.) and could theoretically pit the two superpowers against each other. Whoever gives the client state the best deal gets a regional ally.

The way aid is handled needs to be reevaluated in order to address issues of corruption and ineffectiveness. The system of aid is structured in such a way as to be fundamentally beneficial to the aid giving country. If the government of the country receiving the aid does not behave in a manner acceptable to the aid giving country, then said aid could be diminished or cut off entirely. This makes the receiving country beholden to the giving country, setting up a colonial power dynamic. In Moyo's conclusion, the best way to assist Africa in the 21$^{st}$ century is for most aid to be cut off in favor of loans and harsher penalties. This is a bit drastic bordering on draconian, but her analysis of the impact of aid on newly independent African nations is quite insightful.

Taken together, these texts describe the full scope of colonialism: the motivations of the colonialists, the reaction of the colonized and the effect colonialism had on the respective countries and people.

**State Theory and Practice**

The long term effects of colonialism were devastating. First, the new and often arbitrary borders have led to disputes, often violent, over territory and authority.[37] The fact that ethnic groups may be dispersed into two countries does not necessarily cause those countries to work together but instead can breed animosity leading to violence.

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[37] Christopher Clapham. *African Guerrillas*. (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1998).

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Second, during the colonial period, real power was held by the colonizers.  When they left, there was a leadership vacuum.  Few high level bureaucrats, judges, and politicians had any practical experience running a country. This was very much the case in Somalia. We will see that in the years prior to independence, one of the more difficult tasks was to get a fully Somali government up and running. Once it was, it did not last for long.

Third, one of the more obviously negative impacts of colonialism was the creation of cash crops and the exploitation of Africa's natural resources.  If they were to compete in a rapidly globalizing world, control of those resources would have been a huge help. Without them African nations were pushed further into the negative.

Fourth, education was lacking.  Colonial powers set up schools but schools based strictly on European models and therefore not particularly relevant to African societies. Those who were educated were among the elite, which caused stratification between the elite and the masses.[38]

There is also an argument that normal cultural development was oppressed during this period.  African art, dance and literature were "primitive" compared to European art and therefore largely ignored.

One of the more obvious, but still relevant, aspects of colonialism was outright racism.  Young claims the colonial period mirrored the apex of racism[39] (it is unclear how one measures that, but to be sure there was no shortage of racism during the colonial

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[38] Young, P. 164.
[39] Young, P. 280.

period).  African culture was seen as having little redeeming value, which explains the devaluation of African cultural enterprises such as art and literature.

British historian Paul Kennedy argues that the history of the nation-state is inexorably linked to the history of war.[40]  He says that the need to finance wars, combined with the decline of the feudal system in the $15^{th}$ and $16^{th}$ centuries, brought about the nation-state.  The colonial period then follows with a military and commercial expansion of the newly formed nation-state.  Extending Kennedy's theory, it could be argued that the Cold War provided a reason for the nation-state to survive.  There were power struggles at play, and the threat of violence existed (not to mention the actual violence of the Vietnam War and the Soviet War in Afghanistan among others).  States remained central to the struggle between the two superpowers.  With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the clear global dominance of the United States, the struggle between states was diminished.  This is not to say there are not issues between states.  The animosity between the U.S. and North Korea or Iran is evidence that conflict still exists but not at the level of the Cold War.

While states struggle for power, a failed state is usually defined by what it cannot do.  Whatever government exists does not have physical control of the country.  It has lost the ability to provide basic services to the citizenry, which often leads to increased criminal activity.  The government also lacks the ability to engage with other countries.  Often the limited government that does exist is divided and plagued with so much in-fighting that it is unable to function.  Robert Rotberg, one of the foremost failed-state theorists, offers another criteria to the list: ongoing violence.  Violence exists on a

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[40] Paul Kennedy. *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*. (New York, Random House, 1987). P.70.

consistent basis in a failed state, according to Rotberg.[41] Most of the above conditions can apply to current day Somalia. Government is limited in Somalia and is unable to provide much in the way of security, support, or services to the Somali people. Guns are rampant, and violence is commonplace. In spite of this, it is still possible to challenge the notion of Somalia as a failed state. Other, non-governmental, forces have taken up the slack left by the government and are capable of providing some resources to the people.

Linking violence to failed-state status seems logical, yet it ignores areas of non-failed states that have significant violence as well. For example, there are places in the United States, far from a failed state, that police officers refuse to go. Additionally, it is clear that the U.S. does not have complete control over its border with Mexico, and there are places along that border of significant violence. Despite this possibility of violence in some areas and the lack of control over others, no one argues that the U.S. is a failed state. This is not a perfect parallel, of course, but it goes to the larger point of what constitutes a failed state. There is a loose set of criteria in place, but they are far from definitive.

The Washington D.C.-based think tank the Fund for Peace and the magazine Foreign Policy release the Failed State Index every year. This has become the standard go-to guide for discussing failed states. They have twelve criteria for determining whether a state has failed, including economic indicators, social indictors, and political indicators.[42] The 2012 Failed State map lists virtually all of Africa as red (critical—the worst rating) or orange (in danger). Presumably, North Korea is listed as critical due to

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[41] Robert Rotberg. *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*. (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2004). P. 6.
[42] Failed State Index. http://www.fundforpeace.org/global/?q=fsi-about

the massive food shortages and the totalitarian nature of the regime, a regime that has been in power for three generations and has had little political upheaval.[43] North Korea is by no means a good place to live, but authoritarian does not necessarily equal failed. One major problem with the index is that it does not give a clear indicator of whether a country is improving. It simply sticks countries into categories. It is a simplistic, good-bad classification that is devoid of nuance. While the intentions may be good, the entire endeavor comes across as neo-colonial. Most of Europe, including, Greece which has had extreme economic and political insecurity for the past two years, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States are all classified as stable. Apparently white people do not live in failed states.

Rotberg makes a distinction though, between a failed state and a collapsed state. In a collapsed state, non-state actors rise to prominence. Warlords are able to take over small sections of the country and establish some minimal control. Chaos still reigns in these states and violence is prevalent. Rotberg considers Somalia the only existing collapsed state.[44] In a sense Rotberg is correct: non-state actors have emerged in Somalia. But not all non-state actors are bad. Certainly warlords, pirates, and militias all use violence to seize and maintain power, but other non-violent religious groups, businesses, NGOs, and aid organizations also operate in Somalia. These are non-state actors, but they have a positive effect on the communities in which they operate.

Danish professor of international politics Georg Sorensen points out that states are almost always in flux and subject to change and evolution. He feels that we are entering

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[43] Elliot Ross. Failed Index. Foreign Policy June 29, 2012.
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/06/29/failed_index?page=0,0
[44] Ibid. P. 11

a period of the post-modern state. By this, he simply means that the way a state will look

and function in the future is unclear. Sorensen argues that a state is based not just on the

economic realities of the world (a smaller world due to globalization for example) but

also on the value system of the people of the state.[45] In other words, a moderate Islamic

state would look different from a conservative Christian state even though both exist in

the same world and maybe even the same region.

Sorensen's theory of the post-modern state looks broadly at the world and how all

states may evolve. But his theory works, at least partially, for failed states as well. If the

strong federal government that is most common throughout the world does not exist in

failed states, people of those states adapt. Religious groups, warlords, pirates, small

political groups, clans, businesses, foreign aid and non-governmental organizations all

serve to fill the vacuum left by a lack of federal government. They provide food, water,

power, education, and medical treatment.

Mathew Horsman and Andrew Marshall argue that the world is becoming more

tribal.[46] Not that there is an increase in tribes but that smaller organizational units such as

tribes are beginning to reassert themselves. This means that within the traditional state

borders, tribes are becoming more and more autonomous. This increase in tribalism is

limited to those countries in which the tribal system actually exists. Hence Somalia,

Ethiopia, the Sudan, and so on see movements intent on breaking up those countries,

while France, Britain, and Germany seem relatively stable.

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[45] Georg Sorensen. *The Transformation of the State: Beyond the Myth of Retreat*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004). P. 12.
[46] Mathew Horsman and Andrew Marshall. *After the Nation-State: citizens, tribalism and the new world disorder*. (New York: HarperCollins, 1994).

One thing that troubles Western states is the seeming lack of authority in many

African states.  Part of the purpose of a nation-state is to provide an authoritative body

that makes and enforces laws over a specifically defined territory.  If, however, within a

given state there are multiple threads of authority (a tribe in the south, another in the

north, a formally recognized government with limited physical control, business

conglomerates that operate independently with little to no oversight, etc.) then who do the

standard Western states deal with?  It is clear that with the world getting smaller due to

globalization, countries must interact with one another.  Western states cannot simply

ignore the 'messy' states.  Be it for reasons of physical security or commerce, states from

across the globe are becoming dependent on each other.

Peter Steinberger's *the Idea of the State* is a defense of the state,[47] not a defense of

particular actions of a particular nation, but a defense of the idea of state. He argues that

the state is a necessary and critical institution. His is essentially a cost-benefit analysis.

The benefits of the state outweigh the costs. Steinberger acknowledges the devastation

the state can cause (World War II and the Holocaust were state sponsored), but even that

devastation does not supersede the value of the state in his view.

Steinberger stays in the theoretical realm and rarely discusses any practical issues

that confront the state. He ignores failed states altogether, ignores non-state actors such as

business conglomerations, terror networks, or drug cartels; he ignores other intra-state

divisions such as clan or tribe and discusses war only in the abstract.  Theoretically, his

argument makes sense, but practically it is unclear.  What is clear is that Steinberger is

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[47] Peter J. Steinberger. *The Idea of the State*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)

discussing Western states. He is looking at the European model, and that ignores much of the rest of the world, including the development of the African state.

Benedict Anderson's concept of an "imagined community" is one of profound impact when it comes to the concept of the state.[48] Anderson argues that a nation is a socially constructed community that is imagined by the people who are a part of it. Once colonial powers began to expand, these imagined communities took root. Therefore, one could live in India, for example, but still be British, not just in terms of citizenship but in terms of identity. These communities exist regardless of the type of governmental system in place (democracy, dictatorship, etc.) and regardless of where an individual happens to be.

While Anderson's work is largely about nationalism, it opens the door to different approaches to the idea of state as well. State is largely seen as the political apparatus of a nation, but as was pointed out earlier, sometimes that political apparatus takes on unorthodox forms. Anderson rethinks and broadens our understanding of nation, so, too, we can broaden our understanding of state. A state need not merely be a system of elected officials or complex bureaucracies. It can also be non-state actors, tribes, and business communities that serve the people and fulfill many of the typical functions of the bureaucratic state.

All of this illustrates that our ideas of state can evolve. Later there will be a discussion of state and how it has evolved and what that means for so-called failed states such as Somalia. But what the authors above seem to collectively suggest is that the

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[48] Benedict Anderson. *"Imagined Community: Reflections of the Origin and Spread of Nationalism."* (London: Verso, 1983).

nation-state is not the end form of government and that states as they exist now are evolving, for better or worse.

**Islamism**

Chapter four will examine the origins of modern Islamist thought and look at some of the key figures such as Hassan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb. The next few pages then will not be a historical look at Islamism but instead a look at theories about Islamism.

Islamism is somewhat difficult to understand, as there is no agreed upon definition of the term. On one hand, a distinction can be made between those who have Islamic beliefs and those who have Islamic beliefs mixed with political ideology. Is Islam a religion only, or is it a way of life that encompasses both religious and political spheres?

Note the use of language when it comes to this topic. To say "Islam and politics" implies that they are separate and distinct. If Islam is all encompassing, it is more accurate to discuss the religious aspects of Islam and the political aspects of Islam.

Olivier Roy sees Islamists as determined to capture the state.[49] Revolution and seizure of the state will allow Islamists to create an Islamic state (although what that state will look like will vary depending on the Islamists in charge).

Another line of thinking, one outlined in an International Crisis Group Report, is that Islamism, or political Islam as the report puts it, is a creation of the Americans in order to explain the 1979 Iranian Revolution. The term 'political Islam' began to be used in the aftermath of the Revolution, but it "presupposed that an 'apolitical Islam' had been

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[49] Olivier Roy. *The Failure of Political Islam.* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1994).

the norm until Khomeini turned things upside down. In fact, Islam had been a highly politicized religion for generations before 1979."[50]

Salwa Ismail views the rise of Islamism more as a social movement than anything else. The events that help define Islamist activity such as the Iranian Revolution, the assassination of Anwar Sadat, the bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993, and so on, were all Islamist acts but were not the same. The motivations behind each of these were different, as were the intended goals. But they all fall under the banner of Islamist activity.

John Esposito makes the case that religion and politics are linked in Islam and that they are linked as a result of, at least in part, colonialism. Esposito argues that Islamic revival was a result of internal discord among Muslim societies. These revival movements then led to states, such as the Wahhabi movement and the formation of Saudi Arabia.[51] By the nineteenth century, "the internal weakness of the Islamic community was compounded by the threat of subjugation to the Christian West."[52] The response to the threat of colonialism varied from adoption of Western ideals to outright rejection of the West. For Esposito then, Islamism is merely an extension of other Islamic revival movements. It is a response to a perceived threat, in this case modernity encapsulated by Western ideals.

Ismail takes issue with Esposito's analysis. First, she argues that there is no empirical evidence to suggest that Muslims have determined their states to be "decayed whenever the Shari'a was not applied or when rules of moral propriety were

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[50] International Crisis Group Report No.37. *Understanding Islam*. March, 2005. P.2.
[51] John Esposito. *Islam and Politics, 4ᵗʰ ed.* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1998)P.33.
[52] Ibid. p.33.

transgressed."[53] Furthermore, she rejects the notion that Islamist movements today are a continuance of the prior revival tradition.

The idea that modern Islamism is a continuation of the revival tradition is an argument made by John Voll. He asserts that religion is the motivating factor, not politics or economics, and the actions today are guided by the past.[54] Voll identifies four types of Islamic activism: adaptationist, conservative, fundamentalist and individualist.[55] These are the four possible responses to a given challenge to the community. Ismail finds these too broad and says there is nothing particularly Muslim about them. Why couldn't Christians have a conservative response to a problem or Buddhists an individualist one? How is Islamic adaptationism any different than some other group adapting? Voll offers up a way of classifying responses and actions but does nothing to contextualize these responses.

Voll gets some support for his claim that Islamism is a part of the revival tradition form Alex de Waal, activist and scholar of the Horn of Africa. He agrees that Islamism is a continuation of Islamic revivalism. De Waal places modern Islamism in the same category as the Wahhabi movement of eighteenth century Arabia and the Madhi movement of nineteenth century Sudan.[56]

[53] Salwa Ismail. *Rethinking Islamist Politics: Culture, the State and Islamism*. (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2003). P. 7.
[54] John Obert Voll. *Islam, Continuity and Change in the Modern World*, 2nd ed. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press). P.4.
[55] Ibid. Pgs. 21-23.
[56] Alex de Waal, ed. *Islamism and its Enemies in the Horn of Africa*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004). Pp 4-5

Voll claims that an intellectual legacy of revival exists between older reform movements and today's. Ismail questions that belief, as not just the time but the places, people, and even cultures involved are very different.

The term Islamism is, unfortunately, obtuse. The Islamic Republic of Iran seems Islamist, as it derives from a conservative, Islamic-based political movement. But it is Shia, and most leading Islamists have been Sunni, and modern Islamist groups such as al-Qaeda view Shi'ism as heretical.[57] So, too, Saudi Arabia has the feel of Islamism as it has a conservative, Islamicly based government. But Saudi Arabia is also a monarchy, a system of government that flies in the face of the rule by the people that most Islamists theoretically endorse. In addition, Saudi Arabia is linked to Wahhabism, an ultra-conservative, salafi interpretation of Islam. Wahhabism places emphasis on the Qur'an and hadith and rejects *kalam* (reasoned debate) when it comes to matters of theology. Salafism is an attempt to stay true to original Islam, that being the time of Muhammad and his companions, and to reconcile that world view with that of the modern world. Wahhabism, also wants to reflect the time of the prophet but is less concerned with blending in with modernity. Yet both salafism and Wahhabism are often used interchangeably and are often seen as versions of Islamism. Islamism, however, does not necessarily seek to reestablish a world similar to that of Muhammad and his companions. Islamism is much broader. The goal is a government that is inspired and guided by Islam.

One element of Islamism that is up for much debate among Islamists is the manner in which they should achieve power. One view is the top-down approach in which Islamist forces seize control of the government via revolution or coup and then

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[57] Mehdi Hasan. "The Great Divide." New Statesman, Feb. 11 2010.

attempt to force Islamist ideology on the general public. Another approach is from the bottom up. Here Islamists try to gain the popular support of the people and then attain power via elections or some other method granted by the majority populace of the country. These latter Islamists are generally considered more moderate, as they do not look to violent overthrow as a means of furthering their cause.

Islamism is often linked to conservative movements, but here we are generally talking about groups or individuals who advocate violent overthrow of a government and a top-down implementation of Islamism. It is true that most notable Islamists have had a conservative interpretation of Islam, but that does not mean that Islamism must be conservative in nature.

One other matter must be addressed—that of Islamism as it relates to secularization. The idea behind secularization is that as societies modernize religious belief will decline. And it is true that in the United States and, especially, in Europe we have seen a drop in religious belief and worship practices. In his highly regarded work *Public Religions in the Modern World*, Jose Casanova tries to amend the secularization theory a bit.[58] Rather than suggest that religion will simply go away as a result of modernization, Casanova argues that there is a "deprivatization" of religion. Rather than accept the privatized role that secularization theory suggests they occupy, religions are attempting to expand their roles. If modernity means advances in economic or political matters, then religions will immerse themselves in those very economic or political matters that secularization theory says they should have nothing to do with. While all of

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[58] Jose Casanova. *Public Religions in the Modern World*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994).

Casanova's case studies are Christian in nature (the role of the Catholic Church in Spain, Poland, Brazil, and the U.S. and the role of evangelical Protestantism in the U.S.) it is easy to see Islamism as supportive of Casanova's ideas.

Islamism is a response to modernity. It is not a push back against modernity but rather a way for Islam to invest itself in multiple aspects of a given society beyond the spiritual realm.

**Conclusion**

If a word could sum up the above examination of literature it is this: power. The work on colonialism is clearly about power. The dominant subjugating the weak is a clear theme running through Nandy's, Mbembe's and Fanon's work. Moyo picks up that theme in the post-colonial era and argues that power dynamics are still at play but now take the form of aid.

States, too, are about exhibiting power: power over their own people, power over other states and other people. Even within failed states, there is a battle for power among warlords, pirates and other criminal organizations, businesses, and religious groups.

Islamists also want power, although it is clear from the above works that the underlying motivations for Islamists is not as clear. There is no uniformity about exactly what Islamism is or its relationship with Islam as a whole.

The fracturing of Somalia is deeply tied to power. Warlords sought power after the fall of Siad Barre. Pirates, Islamists, and the Transitional Federal Government all vied for power in the aftermath of Barre's fall. After decades of rule, the Somali people have thrown off their colonial shackles and are determined to have independent self-

governance. But there is a vast dispute over what that governance should look like. The colonial experience in Somalia has had a profound effect on Somalia's present. We must place that history in context in order to understand Somalia's current status.

What follows will explore all these subjects as they relate specifically to Somalia. First, comes an examination of the colonial period in Somalia that doesn't just to describe the environment but shows the beginnings of Somali nationalism, a nationalism that is tied to Islam. Somalis used Islam as a tool of resistance against the colonial powers. But this form of Somali-Islamic nationalism was not limited to the colonial period. It was used during the dictatorship of Siad Barre and has been used as a means of resistance during the so-called failed-state period as well. There is a link between Somali nationalism, Islam, and resistance. That is the core of this work. And it begins with colonialism.

Chapter 3

SOMALIA ITALIANA AND BRITISH SOMALILAND

A core philosophical underpinning of this work is that history matters. That may seem straightforward and simplistic, but it is nevertheless worthy of mentioning. History shapes societies. It helps create a narrative for a given people that in turn influences their actions and motivations in the present. This is as true for the Somali people as it is true of anyone else. Are there any current living Somalis who remember the Italians entering Somalia? Are there any who remember resistance to the British colonial powers? As those acts were over one hundred twenty years ago that seems highly unlikely, yet those historical events and their consequences have shaped Somalia and Somali perspectives ever since. What follows in this chapter is not merely a collection of facts laid out in chronological order; it is a description of the structure on which Somali views of foreign intervention are built. It is not a series of dates and names and places; it is the beginning of a pattern of resistance. That resistance may have been a failure in the colonial period, but the collective memory and humiliation of it lit a fire of resistance among the Somali people that has yet to be extinguished.

**The Beginnings of Italian Colonialism**

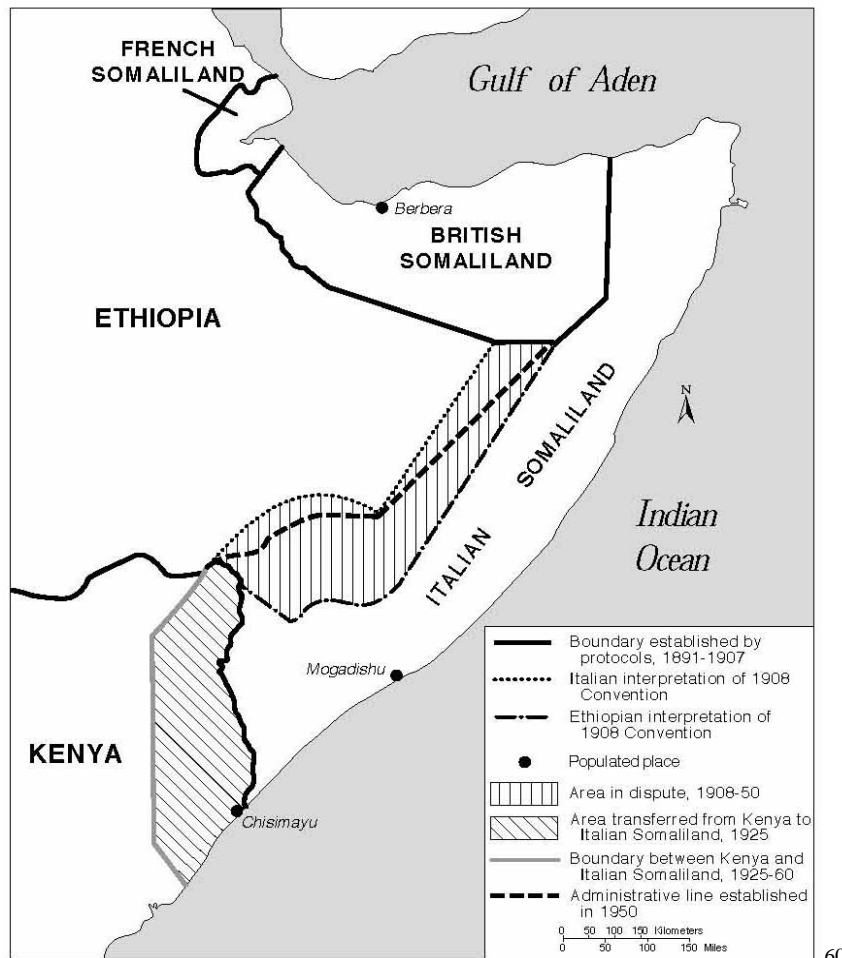While Somalia's history goes back centuries, for our purposes it begins with one of the most significant events in the nineteenth century: the Scramble for Africa. European powers became interested in Africa largely for the potential mineral wealth that lay in Africa's soil. Somalia was a little different in that it was not mineral wealth that attracted the European powers but its strategic location. The Suez Canal opened in 1869

making it possible for ships to travel from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea. This meant that ships traveling from Europe to India, for example, would no longer have to travel around Africa. Somalia borders the Gulf of Aden which leads to the Red Sea and is therefore a prime spot for a port. If this land were occupied by hostile forces with naval capabilities, they could make it close to impossible to travel between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, rendering the Suez Canal useless.

The French and British were interested in northern Somalia for its strategic location and to keep an eye on each other.[59] By 1884 the British had carved out a portion of northern Somalia known as British Somaliland, and by 1886 the French had a smaller cut known as French Somaliland (present day Djibouti). This left the majority of Somalia uncontested and therefore ripe for the Italians to take over.

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[59] Abdi Ismail Samatar, *The State and Rural Transformation of Northern Somalia, 1884-1886.* (Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1989). P. 31.

FRENCH SOMALILAND

Gulf of Aden

Berbera

BRITISH SOMALILAND

ETHIOPIA

ITALIAN SOMALILAND

Indian Ocean

Mogadishu

KENYA

Chisimayu

Boundary established by protocols, 1891-1907
Italian interpretation of 1908 Convention
Ethiopian interpretation of 1908 Convention
Populated place
Area in dispute, 1908-50
Area transferred from Kenya to Italian Somaliland, 1925
Boundary between Kenya and Italian Somaliland, 1925-60
Administrative line established in 1950

0  50  100  150 Kilometers
0    50    100   150 Miles

60

No single centralized government ruled all Somalia when the Italians entered.

Instead there were a number of Sultanates with varying degrees of power and stability.

Most of the more powerful Sultanates were centered on coastal areas such as Mogadishu,

Hobyo, and Merca. These were seafaring people and had established trade with Egypt,

Arabia, and India.[61] Generally the more in-land Somalis had a highly decentralized and

pastoral way of life.[62] Every family was independent and thus had its own economy; they

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[60] The Center for Justice and Accountability. http://www.cja.org/article.php?id=436

[61] Edward A. Alpers. "Gujarat and the Trade of East Africa, c. 1500-1800" *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* vol.9 no. 1 1976. p.22-44.

[62] Ahmed I. Samatar. *Socialist Somalia: Rhetoric and Reality*. (London: Zed Books, 1988). P.9-10.

produced what they used. However, these families were linked together through the clan. The clan would come together in times of crisis or to celebrate their common ancestry. Clanism can be useful during times of crisis or when confronting a common enemy, but it can also lead to problems when differing clans vie for land or power. This was the environment the Italians entered.

Italy was late to the colonialism game and far behind the other major colonial powers such as Britain, France, Portugal and the Netherlands. Those countries had colonial assets in other parts of the world, whereas Italy had to place the bulk of its efforts in Africa.[63] The Italian colonial experience was somewhat different from that of the major European powers. Italy was not a unified country until 1861. This means the territorial expansion efforts did not begin until much later than those of Britain or France. Second, Italy's colonial history existed under both liberal and fascist rule (Mussolini's National Fascist Party did not come to power until 1922). For an imperial power, Italy was relatively poor. One rationale for the existence of Italian colonialism was as a means of dealing with the poverty problem. Under both liberal and fascist governments, colonialism was seen as a way to create employment opportunities.[64] Those unemployed in Italy could get work in the expanding Italian colonies of Somalia, Libya, and Eritrea.

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[63] Giampaolo Calchi Novati, " 'National' Identities as a By-Product of Italian Colonialism: A Comparison of Eritrea and Somalia," in *Italian Colonialism: Legacy and Memory*, eds. Jacqueline Andall and Derek Duncan. (Bern: Peter Lang AG, 2005, 47.
[64] Ruth Ben-Ghiat and Mia Fuller eds. *Italian Colonialism*. (New York: Palgrave MacMillian, 2005). Pgs. 3-4.

An Italian trader based in Zanzibar named Vincenzo Filonardi was chosen to lead the Italy's efforts in Somalia. As head of the Italian consulate in Zanzibar, Filonardi had frequent contact with the Sultan.[65]

While locked out of the northern coast of Somalia by the British and French, the Italians still believed the long east coast of the country could be valuable for its port potential. Beyond servicing ships headed in or out of the Red Sea, these ports could be used as access points for supplies and equipment headed further inland into Africa. The Jubba River was central to the Italian efforts.[66] The Jubba goes from the Indian Ocean near Kismayo in Somalia all the way to the Ethiopian border where it then splits into three rivers that go deep into Ethiopia. Travel along the Jubba would be the most obvious and effective means of getting goods in and out of the region.

Ostensibly, the area near the Jubba River was controlled by the sultan of Zanzibar, but outside of a few Zanzibari posts the sultan had very little control over the Somali people.[67] This meant that the Italians would have to deal, not just with the sultan, but with local Somali leaders as well who were thought to be openly hostile to Europeans.[68] Additionally, the Italians were not going to be successful without the help of the British. The British saw the Italians as no threat and were eager to have an ally against the French. As the British were more concerned with their own efforts in Egypt, they were more than content to let the Italians have Somalia.[69]

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[65] Robert L. Hess. *Italian Colonialism in Somalia* (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1966), 17
[66] Ibid, 15
[67] John S. Galbraith. "Italy, the British East Africa Company, and the Benadir Coast, 1888-1893." The Journal of Modern History Vol. 42, No.4 (Dec. 1970) P.551
[68] Charles Euan Smith to Lord Salisbury, June 4 1888, Salisbury Papers, Oxford.
[69] Galbraith, 550-552.

Somalia at the time was divided into a number of sultanates. Yusuf Ali Kenadid, the sultan of Hobyo, sought to expand his area of control (which included parts of Mogadishu) and entered into a deal with the Italians. The Sultanate of Hobyo became an Italian protectorate.[70] Theoretically speaking, this meant Kenadid was still in charge but had the military support of the Italians. However, after entering into the deal with Kenadid, the Italians also entered into similar deals with Kenadid's rivals making the Italians the protectorates of multiple, competing sultanates. By 1889, Italy was fully invested in Somalia.

Once the Italians managed to get control of Kismayo and access to the Jubba, they worked to sign treaties with local chiefs in order to get access to the land. They wanted not only to have access to the river but the entire Benadir coast. By 1893 the Royal Italian East African Company was established in Somalia.

The motivating factors for colonialism are many. On the one hand, obtaining mineral resources or the strategic acquiring of land makes sense on a practical level. This helps a given country's bottom line. Robert Hess argues that this was the main motivating factor for Italian colonialism, in contrast to that of other European countries.[71] David Chidester argues that many Europeans saw Africans as not having any religion at all.[72] Here, then, we see a societal rationale for colonialism--to bring God to the heathen. While for some, there was an Italian version of France's *mission civilisatrice* (civilizing mission), for the majority it was a matter of commerce and economics. As mentioned

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[70] Abdisalam M. Issa-Salwe. *The Collapse of the Somali state: the Impact of the Colonial Legacy*. (Haan Publishing, 1996). P.35
[71] Hess, 1.
[72] David Chidester, *Savage Systems: Colonialism and Comparative Religion in Southern Africa* (Charlottesville, The University of Virginia Press, 1996), 74.

above, there was a poverty/population problem in Italy, and expansion was a means to deal with it. Until 1929 there was conflict between the Italian government and the Catholic Church as to Catholic statehood. As the Italian government was interested in expansion for economic reasons, the Catholics opposed the government's actions, in part, because the government would not formally recognize a Catholic state. This meant that despite its deeply religious roots, Italy's colonial endeavor was not backed up by missionary activity.[73] This may also help to explain why there is virtually no Christian population in Somalia today, whereas that is not the case in other former colonial states.

Redie Bereketeab surmises that there is a desire to create statehood as a rationale for colonialism.[74] Statehood is seen as the proper way of things in more advanced Europe, so it should be in Africa. The problem the Italians ran into in Somalia was an utter lack of a sense of statehood. A single, unified Somalia had never existed prior to the colonial period. Instead, as mentioned earlier there was a series of sultanates, the most prominent being the Sultan of Mogadishu, and even his reach was limited. During the colonial period, Somalia was divided into Italian Somalia, French Somaliland, British Somaliland, British Kenya, and Ethiopia.[75] Even during the establishment of the Africa Orientale Italiana, during which Italy controlled a great deal of the Horn of Africa including Ethiopia, Somalia was still not unified. Not until after World War II, did the Somalia with the borders we know today come into being. However, there are still large numbers of Somalis in the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, meaning there has yet to be a time in which all ethnic Somalis exist in one state.

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[73] Hess, 1-3.
[74] Redie Bereketeab, *Eritrea: The Making of a Nation 1890-1991* (Uppsala, Uppsala University, 2000)
[75] Novati, 64.

The Royal Italian East African Company was a largely commercial enterprise with some support by the government. However, in 1905 the company came under sole control of the Italian government due to a brewing controversy over slavery.[76] From the beginning of the Italian efforts in Somalia, it was clear that slavery existed in the region. Prisoners from other tribes would be used as slaves. While the Italians officially condemned the practice of slavery, they did nothing to prevent it and, in fact, reaped the benefits of slave labor.

Public pressure in Italy demanded that the government take over the company and make an active effort to combat slavery. It did so but at the expense of upsetting the Somali tribes, who argued that slaves "were necessary for their way of life."[77] In October, 1905, Somalis began to revolt over the issue of slavery. This put the Italians in a very awkward position: they would need to use military might to enforce a policy that the Italian public felt was a moral necessity but that stood in contrast to traditional Somali culture. Italian Foreign Minister Tommaso Tittoni wrote that "it is necessary for the government to assert itself materially *and morally* over the populations surrounding the Benadir stations."[78]

This was the first major act of resistance by the Somalis in the south against the Italians. While their main argument was that slavery was an important aspect of Somali culture, they backed up those assertions by claiming slavery is acceptable in Islam. While the Qur'an does permit slavery, there are rules about the treatment of slaves and acting

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[76] Hess, 76-87.
[77] Ibid. 87.
[78] Tommaso Tittoni to Tommaso Carletti, May 1, 1907 quoted in Hess, P 89. Emphasis is mine.

benevolently toward them.[79] In reality, the use of slavery in the Qur'an is a direct result

of the time period of Muhammad. Slavery was the custom in seventh century Arabia and

that was incorporated into the Qur'an. So too slavery was the custom in Somalia in the

nineteenth century and the Qur'an was used to justify it.

By March of 1908, the slavery issue had been largely dealt with. Slavery was not

totally abolished, but many slaves were freed and some of the harsher aspects of slavery

were no more. More important for the Italians, the public outcry had diminished, and the

increase in military activities meant that they had control of most of the coast. Wanting to

capitalize on this success, the governor, Tommaso Carletti, asked for and received more

troops and the Italian expansion continued.

Ethiopia was always the goal for the Italians. By 1910 there was an increase in

nationalist tendencies in Italy. The nation wanted a strong army and navy and an increase

in expansionism. This meant a strong military presence in Somalia, and by 1914 the

Italians were no longer limited to the Benadir Coast and the Jubba River; they had control

of virtually all of Somalia right up to the Ethiopian border.[80]

The new governor of Italian Somalia, Giacomo De Martino created a policy that

was very useful for the Italians--he put Somali chiefs on the payroll.[81] The chiefs were

paid based on their corporation with the Italians. De Martino protected the chiefs'

traditional powers, such as enforcing Shari'a law as well as *xeer*, traditional Somali law.

He also created the Colonial Troop Corps, a military force made up of Somalis, Eritreans,

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[79] Ronald Segal. *Islam's Black Slaves: the Other Diaspora.* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001). P. 35-38
[80] See map in Hess P. 95.
[81] Hess, P. 108.

and Arabs but led by Italian officers, and a Somali Police Force made up of Somalis and Italian military police officers. He created an effective system of indirect rule; the Somali's were given a good deal of latitude and responsibility but ultimate authority lay with the Italians.

World War I put a halt to development of Somalia. The Italians were more concerned with European matters. The post-war period was not much better. Somalia's economy stagnated and the colony was somewhat adrift. It remained that way until a new government took over.

**Somalia's Islamist Antecedent and Resistance Against the British**

Mohammed Abdullah Hassan was born in or around 1856 in northern Somalia in Buuhoodle, right on the modern day border of Somalia and Ethiopia.[82] This was at the time part of the British Somaliland Protectorate. From early on Hassan was groomed for a religious life. He completed his formal religious education by the age of 10 and was then tutored by his father, a respected sheikh, and other religious leaders. He was taught extensively in hadith (the sayings and deeds of the prophet Muhammad) and sharia.[83]

As an adult Hassan travelled to Mecca to further his study and go on the hajj. At some point during this journey, he met Sheikh Muhammad Salih of Sudan, founder of his own religious order, the Salihiyya. Salih had been greatly influenced by the Wahhabi movement in Arabia and was familiar with the Sudanese Madhist movement in Sudan,[84]

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[82] Abdi Sheik-Abdi. *Divine Madness: Mohammed 'Abdulle Hassan 1856-1920*. (London: Zed Books 1992). p 47.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Mohamed Ahmed was a Sudanese religious leader who, in 1881, claimed to be the Mahdi, the Islamic redeemer who will come before the Day of Judgment. Sudan at the time was ruled by a Turkish-Egyptian government with support from the British, a situation resented by the Sudanese people. Ahmed claimed to be the Mahdi, gathered support from the Sudanese, and led an armed rebellion against the government.

a movement that combined religious and nationalist elements and opposed colonial powers.[85]

Hassan travelled around the Middle East for at least four years before returning home and establishing a Salihiyya center in Berbera, a port district on the Gulf of Aden. Salih had made Hassan an official deputy and essentially his emissary in Somalia.

By the time of his return, Hassan had fully embraced Salih's teachings. Hassan spoke out against the use of *qaat*, as well as other stimulants such as coffee and tea. He demanded a much stricter adherence to prayers and prayer times, as he felt the religious community had become too lax. He railed against materialism and other attributes he saw as Western, such as hair styles, clothes, and books.[86] This protest against all things Western was Hassan's first foray into rebellious activities. Berbera was a part of British Somaliland, and the importing of Western clothes and materials made money for the British. While certainly not the violent rebellion that would come later, this was an indication that Hassan was opposed to British involvement in Somalia.

Hassan was also distressed by the efforts of French missionaries to convert Somali children to Catholicism.[87] While this was not the primary mission of the British or the Italians, the fact that a colonial power was attempting to subvert Islam was enough to make Hassan wary of colonial powers in general.

Hassan was not initially successful in convincing his fellow Somalis to reject Western culture, however. Hassan was, of course, not the only Muslim leader active in

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[85] Sheik-Abdi. 47-48.
[86] Abdi, 58-59.
[87] B.W. Andrzejewski and I.M. Lewis. *Somali Poetry: An Introduction*. (Gloucestershire: Clarendon Press, 1964). p 54.

the area. But rather than try to integrate himself with the already existing religious establishment, he immediately began to insult and reject them. He viewed the established Sufi efforts of revival "as feeble, even heretical."[88] Others preached tolerance of the Westerners, whereas Hassan viewed this as antithetical to leading a proper religious life. Hassan's aggressiveness was not well received by other religious leaders, the occupying British, or the general Somali populace.

After the initial rejection of his teachings, Hassan moved inland near his birthplace to start again. This move was good for Hassan in large part because there was far less influence from the British the farther one got from the coast.[89] The inland Somalis were less Westernized, so preaching against Westernization was not controversial. Hassan refined his teachings and over time gathered quite a significant following.

Hassan's rebellion began with a letter. While Hassan was opposed to British rule and Westernization, there had been no indication that he was proposing any sort of violent uprising prior to 1899. In March of that year, he received a letter from the British vice-consul, Harry Edward Spiller Cordeaux. The letter stated that a Somali man had stolen a British-owned gun and was believed to be among Hassan's followers. It demanded the gun be returned. Hassan responded:

"There is no God but God and Muhammad is the Prophet of God!

Oh, man! I have not stolen anything from thee nor from anyone else. Seek thy object from him who has stolen of thee, and serve whom thou pleaseth!"[90]

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[88] Ibid, 59.
[89] Ibid, 61.
[90] Abdi, 62.

While Hassan was insulted by Cordeaux's accusation of theft, Cordeaux was in turn insulted by Hassan's disrespectful attitude. Upon receipt of his letter, the British labeled Hassan a rebel. From the British perspective, Hassan was gathering a potentially violent force of followers and had expressed explicitly anti-British sentiments. They saw their fear of Hassan as justifiable. Hassan, on the other hand, prior to the letter incident, did not seem to express any interest in controlling any land or people outside of his small inland community.

Hassan's first acts of hostility begin just after the letter incident. These early attacks were limited to far off outposts rather than major military camps. The British were concerned because Hassan had gathered a large number of fighters, up to 3000 men, and a significant number of rifles. They expressed their concern in reports to the War Office in London. However, these fighters were not a professional army and would come and go as they saw fit. This lack of discipline and training meant Hassan was unable to conduct the types of raids the British feared he would. He had a number of early setbacks, including accusations that he was not sincere in his desire to take on the British, which led to desertions.[91]

In spite of these initial setbacks, Hassan was able to grow his numbers and gather support from among the locals. By the end of 1899, it was not just the British but the Italians and Ethiopians who were concerned with Hassan. As it turned out, that concern was justified. Hassan's first major offensives were not with the British but with the Ethiopians. Hassan's forces did not dominate these battles, but they did serve to increase his legitimacy among the Somalis. It also demonstrated to the British and Italians that

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[91] Abdi, 93.

Hassan was not all talk but was really prepared to fight. This was a fight the British and Italians felt was inevitable.

Hassan's army became known as the Dervish Army, its name taken from the Sufi tradition. Traditionally, dervishes are Sufis who engage in ascetic practices in order to reach a higher spiritual understanding of God. This description in no way describes all members of Hassan's army. Nevertheless, this was the name attributed to them.

One of the early British leaders tasked with defeating the Dervishes was the commissioner for the Somali Coast, J. Hayes Sadler. In his request for arms, he suggested that once his troops were fully armed and operational, the defeat of Hassan would take roughly one month.[92] It would instead take twenty years.

**Method versus Madness**

Mohammed Hassan's war was primarily a war of resistance, but it was clear that if he were successful he would need something to take the place of colonial rule. It was not enough to simply repel the British and Italians, Hassan also developed nationalist interests in hopes of creating an independent state.

Hassan's war of resistance was justified by his use of religion. One view is that Hassan fought everyone who was not on his side; if you weren't with him you were against him. But lack of total support is an extreme justification for killing someone. Hassan was criticized for killing Christian Ethiopians as well as other Muslims. The killing of British or Italians, most of whom were Christian, was not an issue, as they were seen as acting as an imperial force. The justification for killing them, then, was nationalistic rather than religious. The Ethiopians were another matter. They were native

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[92] India Office Records, 1307/157 (1899).

to the area and had a legitimate claim to land and resources. The Ethiopians, however, allied themselves with the "English Infidels," so war on them was justified.[93] Hassan saw the colonizers as "Christian colonizers."[94] In addition to the long-standing rivalry between the Somalis and the Ethiopians, the Ethiopians were Christian, and that was apparently enough justification for fighting them.

The rationale for killing Muslims was along the same lines as that use for killing Ethiopian Christians. Muslims who sided with the "infidels" were not true Muslims and, therefore, their deaths were justified.

Hassan was not simply interested in military victory either. Other than being the leader of the Dervishes, Hassan is known for being a very good poet. These two things are not as distant from each other as one might expect. Much of Hassan's poetry was used to glorify his actions and put down his enemies. It was poetry as propaganda. One of his more famous poems came in 1913. The Dervishes had just defeated Colonel Richard Corfield, a colonial officer tasked with capturing or killing Hassan. Corfield was killed in battle, and the poem, *The Death of Richard Corfield*, was intended to insult his memory and demoralize his troops.

> You have died, Corfield, and are no longer in this world,
> A merciless journey was your portion.
> When, Hell-destined, you set out for the Other World
> Those who have gone to Heaven will question you, if God is willing;
> When you see the companions of the faithful and the jewels of Heaven,
> Answer them how God tried you.
> Say to them: 'From that day to this the Dervishes never ceased their assaults upon us.

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[93] Sheik-Abdi, 106.
[94] Andrzejewski and Lewis, P. 54.

The British were broken, the noise of battle engulfed us;
With fervor and faith the Dervishes attacked us.'
Say: 'They attacked us at mid-morning.'
Say: 'Yesterday in the holy war a bullet from one of their old
rifles struck me.
And the bullet struck my arm.'
Say: 'In fury they fell upon us.'
Report how savagely their swords tore you,
Show these past generations in how many places the daggers were
plunged.
Say: '"Friend" I called, 'have compassion and spare me!"'
Say: 'As I looked fearfully from side to side my heart was plucked from
its sheath.'
Say: 'My eyes stiffened as I watched with horror;
The mercy I implored was not granted.'
Say: 'Striking with spear-butts at my mouth they sliced my soft words;
My ears, straining for deliverance, found nothing;
The risk I took, the mistake I made, cost me my life.'
Say: 'Like the war leaders of old, I cherished great plans for victory.'
Say: 'The schemes the djinns planted in me brought my ruin.'
Say: 'When pain racked me everywhere, men lay sleepless at my shrieks.'
Say: 'Great shouts acclaimed the departing of my soul.'
Say: 'Beasts of prey have eaten my flesh and torn it apart for meat.'
Say: 'The sound of swallowing flesh and the fat comes from the hyena.'
Say: 'The crows plucked out my veins and tendons.'
Say; 'If stubborn denials are to be abandoned, then my clansmen were
defeated.'
In the last stand of resistance there is always great slaughter.
Say: 'The Dervishes are like the advancing thunderbolts of a storm,
rumbling and roaring.'[95]

Hassan is clearly expressing ridicule in this poem. He is pumping up his troops

(the advancing thunderbolts) while showing that his opponent, in this case Corfield, will

lose the war and then experience the torments of hell.

Many of Hassan's poems attempt to insult or humiliate his enemies. *The Sayyid's*

*Reply* is directed at the British. In it Hassan "turns each charge made against him into an

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[95] B.W. Andrzejewski and I.M. Lewis, *Somali Poetry: an introduction*. (Gloucestershire: Clarendon Press, 1964) p. 110.

attack upon his accusers."[96] *A Message to the Ogaaden* is another in which he tries to convince the Ogaden tribe to give up its alliance with the British.

In addition to military themed poetry, Hassan also wrote about Islam. *The Path of Righteousness* encourages people to hold on to Islam and reject Christianity while *The Road to Damnation* stresses what it is to be a good Muslim. The poetry is important not just because it gives us a glimpse into the man who wrote it, but because it establishes a tactic that will be adopted and updated by later Somali Islamists like al-Shabaab when they release statements extolling the virtues of Islam while gloating and humiliating their opponents, as we will see in chapter eight.

**The Mullah in Today's Somalia**

Mohammad Hassan waged battle with the British, Italians, and Ethiopians for twenty years. He died in 1920, probably of influenza, never having been defeated by the colonial powers. Hassan's impact in Somali popular culture should not be understated. He was the first Somali nationalist. Prior to the colonial period there was no sense of a Somali national identity. An unintended consequence of colonialism in a largely tribal area is that it can create a sense of nationalism among the native people. That is what happened in Somalia and Mohammad Hassan channeled that feeling into a revolution. Clan allegiance was not his concern but rather a free Somalia. This alone puts him in the category of notable revolutionaries throughout history.

Beyond his nationalism though, was his religious devotion. Hassan's nationalism was informed by his faith. That may be his greatest contribution to Somali society: there is no Somali nationalism without Islam, there is no Somali resistance without faith. Part

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[96] Ibid, 74.

II of this text will make clear that the framework established by Hassan is still used today by modern Islamists: pro-Islam; pro-Somalia; anti-clan; often anti-Christian; most certainly anti-Western; anti-Western-backed governments such as Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda; propaganda driven; uncompromising. Mohammad Hassan was the first Somali nationalist and the first Somali revolutionary, a pre-cursor to modern Somali Islamism, and his legacy continues today.

**The Fascist Government**

Benito Mussolini came to power in Italy in a non-violent coup in October 1922. Prior to assuming power, Mussolini had not been particularly pro-colonialism. However, once in office he became convinced that Italy needed an empire.[97] All the reasons given for building an Italian Empire by Mussolini and his predecessors proved to be ineffectual in the end. Italians never settled in Libya or East Africa in the numbers that Mussolini or his predecessors had hoped. Only about 50,000 Italians had settled in the colonies by the time Mussolini came to power, but he envisioned ten million Italians populating the colonies.[98] Additionally, these colonies never provided the economic benefit that they were intended to.

Casare Maria De Vecchi, a trusted ally of Mussolini and supporter of Italian Fascism, became the colonial governor for Somalia a year after Mussolini assumed power. He strengthened the Somali Police Corps and demanded that chiefs who were deemed uncooperative turn over all weapons and ammunition.[99] Not surprisingly, some

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[97] David Mack Smith. *Mussolini's Roman Empire*. (New York: Viking Press, 1976). P32-33.
[98] Ibid, 33.
[99] Hess, 151-153.

chiefs resisted, and De Vecchi moved to strip them of their weapons by overwhelming force.

Additionally, despite their previous admonition against slavery, Italian plantation owners would capture Somalis and force them to work on the plantations. They were beaten with whips and allowed to become malnourished.[100] Young girls were sometimes taken to service the sexual desires of the colonialists in what was called the 'Madame system.'[101]

De Vecchi also sought to raise revenue in Somalia through the implementation of new taxes. Prior to his tenure as governor, Somalis only paid import and export taxes. De Vecchi instituted a hut tax, business tax, income tax, and a bachelor tax for single men between the ages of twenty-five and sixty-five.[102]

By 1928 De Vecchi had increased Italian controlled land by taking over some of the remaining independent sultanates in northern Somalia, stabilizing southern Somalia, and raising revenue. He returned to Italy a success.

One area the colonial power had ignored was education. As mentioned before, there was not real Christian follow-up to the government's mission in Somalia.[103] The government did not take a role in education in the region until 1929. By 1935 ten schools and five orphanages were run by the government, but Hess claims these did little by way of a "civilizing mission in Somalia."[104] Part of the reason to increase education was the

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[100] Estelle Sylvia Pankhurst. *Ex-Italian Somaliland: How it was Acquired, How it was Ruled, Its Future.* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1952). P.139.
[101] Ibid, 208.
[102] Hess, 160-161.
[103] Education is often the purview of Christian missionaries in colonial areas.
[104] Hess 169-170.

hope that the Somali youth would take to fascism. The fascist government in Rome feared that the nationalism taking root in neighboring Kenya would spread to Somalia as well.[105] Despite this, education for Somalis ended with elementary school.[106] No upper levels of education were available to them.

The Ogaden is a disputed area claimed by both Somalia and Ethiopia as their own. In 1934, an Ethiopian force arrived at an Italian garrison in Walwal, a territory within the Ogaden. The Ethiopians demanded that the Italians and Somalis leave. A skirmish broke out between the two sides, leaving 107 Ethiopians and an unknown number of Somalis and Italians dead.[107] Mussolini had been planning for war with Ethiopia as early as 1932, but the Walwal Incident gave him the excuse he needed to launch it.[108] Geoffrey Garratt contends that what happened at Walwal was a "carefully staged 'frontier incident.'"[109]

With Mussolini's war machine in place, the Italians and Somalis marched into Ethiopia. By June of 1936, Addis Ababa had fallen, and Italy declared one colony in the Horn of Africa consisting of Ethiopia, Somalia, and Eritrea, which became known as Africa Orientale Italiana (Italian East Africa). This would be the peak of the Italian enterprise in the Horn of Africa, however. Four years later, Italy would be embroiled in World War II, and by 1941 the British had overrun Italian East Africa. Mogadishu fell in

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[105] Mack Smith, 36.
[106] Hess, 188.
[107] Anthony Mockler. *Haile Selassie's War*. (Oxford: Signal Books, 1984). P. 39
[108] Ibid. 42.
[109] Geoffrey T. Garratt. *Mussolini's Roman Empire*. (New York: The Bobbs–Merrill Company, 1938). P. 54.

February 1941, Addis Ababa in April that same year, and the Italian colonial period officially ended on the 27th of November, 1941.

**Operation Caesar**

The British reinstated Haile Selassie as emperor in 1941, marking the return of an independent Ethiopia. The British, however, decided to hold on to Libya, Eritrea, and Somalia until the war ended and their fate could be determined.[110] Once again Somalis found themselves unable to determine their own fate, with their future in the hands of non-Somalis. Animosity still existed between the Somalis and the Ethiopians, as shown by Emperor Selassie's claim to both Eritrea and Somalia.

The British hoped to get the U.S. to help administer and dismantle the Italian colonies, but it was reluctant. The U.S. was interested in controlling Japanese territories after the war and did not want to be stretched too thin. Additionally, the Americans feared Soviet interest in the Horn of Africa and did not want to get pulled into a conflict with the Soviet Union over former Italian colonies.[111]

In the aftermath of World War II, Italy attempted to hold on to many of its colonial assets. This was not up to Italy, though, but up to the victorious powers and the United Nations. Italy, like all of the defeated nations, was at this point not a member of the U.N., so had very little influence over the proceedings. The U.N. General Assembly wanted the defeated Axis powers to retain as little influence as possible over emerging nations such as the former colonial states. Additionally, Britain and the United States felt

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[110] Saul Kelly. *Cold War in the Desert: Britain, the United States and the Italian Colonies, 1945-52*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000). P 6.
[111] Kelly. 7-8.

that, given the animosity toward Italy in the Horn of Africa, a ruling in favor of Italy had the potential to cause outrage and violence in the Horn.[112]

The British Foreign Office proposed to unite Somalia with British Somaliland and the Ogaden in an effort to create a Greater Somalia. Ethiopia agreed to give up its claim to the Ogaden in return for more control over Eritrea and, therefore, more access to the sea. The British would then have to maintain a trusteeship over this Greater Somalia, which would be difficult–given the heavy toll Britain paid during the war--or be forced to return it to the Italians or hand it to the Soviets.[113]

No one liked this plan. The Americans did not want to take control of the land themselves but did not want the Soviets to get it; the Soviets felt they were being boxed out of Africa; and the British were reluctant to control such a large area, given their other commitments around the world. Also, there was a well-founded fear that the Ethiopians would not make good on their promise to give up the Ogaden. Independence was not even considered, as there seemed to be no one in Somalia who could unify and effectively control the entire country. This left the Italians.

In the end, Italy lost nearly all of its former colonial states: Libya, Eritrea, and Ethiopia. But it was given a ten-year trusteeship over Somalia.[114] Italy did have an Ethiopia problem, though. The frontier borders between the two countries had never been agreed upon, and Ethiopia demanded that the British hand over Somalia only up to the straight-line border that appears on most maps, thereby giving the Ogaden back to

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[112] Novati, Giampaolo Calchi "Italy in the triangle of the Horn: Too May Corners for a Half Power" The Journal of Modern African Studies Vol. 32 Issue 3, 1994. pg 373.
[113] Kelly. 12-15.
[114] The British retained control over British Somaliland and the Italian trusteeship granted them authority over the rest of the country.

Ethiopia. The British, Italians, and Ethiopians eventually agreed on the straight-line border. Ethiopia further objected to the fact that the U.N. was handing over control of Somalia to a country that was not a U.N. member.[115] Adding to this conflict was the suspicion by the Ethiopians that Italy had plans to reestablish some semblance of a colonial presence in the Horn, using Somalia as a starting place.[116] Ethiopia and Italy also disagreed on Eritrea. Italy supported Eritrea's autonomy, whereas Ethiopia saw Eritrea as a part of it. This meant that from the beginning of the trusteeship, Italy was in conflict (non-violent) with Ethiopia, which made for tense times along the long border between Somalia and Ethiopia.

Italy's trusteeship was to last ten years, at which point Somalia was to reach independence. Hector McNeil, Minister of State at the British Foreign Office, was skeptical as to whether Somali independence could really be achieved in ten years.[117] Nevertheless, in March 1950 the Italians implemented Operation Caesar, the handover of power from the British to the Italians.[118]

The Italians had many hurdles to overcome in Somalia beyond the feelings of animosity felt by many Somalis. The Italian economy had collapsed as a result of the war, and at the time they were given the job of administering Somalia, the Italians themselves were receiving millions of dollars in aid via the Marshall Plan. This meant the Italian administration in Somalia was operating with limited economic resources.[119]

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[115] Ibid, 149.
[116] Ibid, 145.
[117] Kelly, 127. Referencing FO 371/73904/J8989/15113/122, McNeil to Bevin, 14 November 1949.
[118] Ibid 146-147.
[119] Paolo Tripodi, "Back to the Horn: Italian Administration and Somalia's Troubled Independence." *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 32 No. 2/3 (1999) p 369.

Additionally, the administration had to deal with clans in a way that previous Italian administrations had not had to. Very little consideration of clans had been given during fascist rule, but now under this 'kinder, gentler' Italian administration, clan considerations would have to be addressed. For example, the Hawiye were located mainly in the Mogadishu area and had had long-standing dealings with the Italians. The Hawiye favored the trusteeship, whereas the Darod, made up mostly of the Somali Youth League, an anti-Italian political party, did not.[120]

The Somali Youth League was formed during the British rule after World War II, and by the time of the Italian trusteeship it was the foremost political party in the country. The SYL quickly proved to be the most organized Somali-run organization in the country. The Italians found them to be a radical group, but, given their popularity, the administration was forced to deal with them. By 1956 a Legislative Assembly was convened, and the SYL won 43 out of 60 seats.[121] Abdullahi Issa, an early member of the SYL, was elected Somalia's first Prime Minister.

British Somaliland was granted independence on June 26, 1960, and became the State of Somaliland. Five days later, on July 1st, the Trust Territory of Somalia was also granted independence and merged with the State of Somaliland to form the independent Somali Republic.

**The Somali Republic**

When the Italians entered Somalia, they entered a country that was essentially stateless. The sultan of Zanzibar had limited authority over the region, and the individual

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[120] Ibid, 361.
[121] Samatar, 54.

local chiefs and sultans had control over very limited areas. It was as decentralized as could be. It was in this disparate environment that the Italians had to create a state.

Italian policy toward Somalia was inconsistent at best. For some, colonizing Somalia was a practical matter relating to the poverty issues in Italy. For others it was a means of economic growth, which ultimately failed. And for some it was about prestige, being a colonial power like Britain or France. For that last group, the fact that Somalia was chosen was irrelevant; it was simply a means to an end.

Italy had a system of indirect rule in Somalia. It did nothing to dismantle the clan system or make major shifts in legal systems (sharia and xeer were still used by the clans with Italian approval). Chiefs were co-opted rather than overthrown or replaced. The Italians never got involved with the clans or even made much of an effort to understand the clan system.[122] Nor did they attempt to create any political system for the Somalis based on anything other than the clan. At the end of World War II, there were no political parties in Somalia other than the Fascist party of the Italians. The only other political division was among clans.[123]

While the Italians never seemed to have an explicit racial attitude towards the Somalis, they did maintain an air of superiority. They had a paternalistic attitude, describing the Somali as "children under the guidance of their Italian father."[124]

When the Italian trusteeship came into being in 1950, it had ten years to turn Somalia into a functioning, Western-style state. Here lies the heart of Somalia's problems in the following years. The Italians were to take western values and structures and apply

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[122] Hess,180-181.
[123] Ibid, 182.
[124] Ibid, 180.

them to an area that had never before had any type of centralized government. While the Somalis now had political parties, they were only a few years old and, for the most part, not very organized.

On one hand, it is hard to blame the Italians. What were they supposed to do after all? They understood European-style states. They understood democracies and monarchies, socialism, and fascism, all systems with strong centralized powers. It makes sense that they would attempt to instill European-style values on an African nation. Additionally, they were trying to get back into the world's good graces after being on the losing side of a devastating war. It is safe to assume that when Britain, the U.S., and the other Western powers gave Italy the trusteeship, they were expecting not just an independent, but a Western-style Somalia, and Italy was going to give them what they wanted.

A multitude of obstacles stood in the way of this endeavor, not the least of which was that the Somali language had no written form, and there was considerable debate as to what a written Somali language should look like. Some advocated for a Latin script, while other wanted an Arabic-based script, and a third group argued for a uniquely Somali script. There was certainly more affinity for the Arabic script rather than the Latin based one. However, as David Laitin points out, "the Arabic language and script are vowel-poor, while the Somali language is vowel-rich, and that in Arabic, vowels can often be omitted without loss of meaning, whereas in Somali, vowels are critically important for meaning."[125] The battle over language went on for years, during which time

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[125] David D. Laitin. *Politics, Language and Thought: the Somali Experience*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago press, 1977). P. 85.

English, Italian, and Arabic were all used to varying degree on official documents and in schools. Not until 1972, was the Latin script officially adopted.

Beyond the language issue, was the simple fact that Somalis had no experience running a government. The entire civil service, which was being run by the Italians, had to be transferred to the Somalis. This meant they needed to be educated in how to run various departments.

During the entire time Somalia was an Italian colony, it was supported economically by the Italian government. It also received a great deal of international monetary support. By 1960, when Italy handed over control to a sovereign, independent Somali government, Somalia was still not economically self-sufficient. Somalia was free but still on very shaky ground.

Chapter 4

THE VARITIES OF ISLAMISM IN SOMALIA

Islamism is a term about whose definition there is no agreement. It has been used synonymously with phrases such as "political Islam," "Islamic fundamentalism," or "radical Islam." It has been linked to conservative movements but can be seen as progressive as well.[126] Islamism is often seen as anti-modern, but, as we will see, that is not necessarily the case.[127] Islamism is religious, political, and it provides a sense of identity, one that is uniquely Muslim and distinct from the West.[128]

This chapter will explore some of the definitions of Islamism and how Islamism as developed over time. This chapter will also discuss how in Somalia, Islamism has largely been a tool for resistance. The model for this was the pre-Islamist Mohammad Hassan, who was discussed earlier. But numerous other Islamist movements have followed in Hassan's footsteps.

**A Problem of Definition**

The earliest uses of the term "Islamism" date to the mid-1700s. It was used as a way to describe the Muslim religion and as a synonym to the now obsolete term *Mohammedanism.*[129] The term Mohammedanism was an attempt by Western scholars to show that Muslims, like Christians, had a religion centered on a prophet. However, it was eventually realized that the role Jesus plays in Christiantiy and Muhammad plays in Islam

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[126] Tarek Osman. *Egypt on the Brink: From the Rise of Nasser to the Fall of Mubarak* (Yale University Press, 2011). p.111.
[127] Lara Deeb. *An Enchanted Modern: Gender and Public Piety in Shi'I Lebanon*. (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2006). P. 4, 15.
[128] Graham E. Fuller. *The Future of Political Islam* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003)p. 17.
[129] Martin Kramer. "Coming to Terms: Fundamentalists or Islamists?" Middle East Quarterly (Spring 2003) 65-77.

respectively are not parallel, as Muslims do not worship Muhammad as Christians worship Christ. Hence, a new term was needed. In the 1800s, we see the French beginning to use the term Islamism (*Islamisme),* but in this sense it simply meant Islam.[130] All of this ignores the fact that Muslims referred to their own religion as Islam. By the beginning of the twentieth century, both the terms Mohammedanism and Islamism were on the way out, and the religion of Muslims was referred to in the West by its proper name--Islam.

In the 1970s and 80s, we get an increase in Islamicly motivated resistance groups taking violent action, much of it directed at Israel. Groups such as the Palestinian Liberation Organization, Abu Nidal Organization, Hamas, Hezbollah, Egyptian Islamic Jihad, (who played a role in the assassination of Egyptian president Anwar Sadat) among others all participated in acts of violence with Islamic undercurrents. Additionally, political movement led to the rise of the Islamic Republic in Iran and the National Congress Party (and ideological predecessor to the National Islamic Front) in Sudan. While not all of these organization would be considered Islamist, there was a need to find a new term to distinguish these religio-political organizations from orthodox Islam.

The cases of Iran and Sudan are illustrative of the complication regarding what is or is not Islamist. Francois Burgat has called both countries Islamist, creating an equivalency between the Islamic Republic of Iran, which came to power in the aftermath of a people's revolution in 1979, and the Islamist Republic in Sudan, which came to power via a coup d'etat ten years later.[131] This equivalency is not universally accepted,

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[130] Ibid.
[131] Francois Burgat. *Face to Face with Political Islam*. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003). P. 123.

however. Abdullahi Gallab argues that Islamists typically are products of a public education system. They are more often than not, not formally trained religious scholars and are often resentful of the *ulama*, the formally trained Islamic scholars often seen as the authoritative interpreters of Islam.[132] The system in Iran, a predominantly Shia nation, is set up precisely so that formally trained clerics are in control. Khomeini's *Vilayat-e Faqih* (Guardianship of Jurists) places power in the hands of the Muslim elite rather than in the hands of the Muslim people at large. It is said that the prophet Muhammad stated the "scholars are the heirs of the Prophets," and this idea becomes the basis for placing power in the hands of the Islamic scholars.[133]

Iran is very different from Sudan, in which the coup that led to the establishment of the Islamist republic was led by military officer Omar al-Bashir, albeit with significant influence and input by Hasan al-Turabi, a lawyer by training and a leading Sudanese Islamist. Al-Turabi was not a formally trained theologian and was often critical of the ulama.[134] He felt the ulama based their theology and jurisprudence on books that were hundreds of years old. The ulama were outdated and thus insufficient arbiters of Islam in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Al-Turabi saw the Sudanese Islamist state as the model for the rest of the Muslim world.[135] This idea that there can be a beacon of Islamism that will influence global Muslims is one that is shared by many Islamists and has its roots in the works of Egyptian Islamist Sayyid Qutb. The new Sudanese government went so far as to work with international Islamist groups, such as al-Qaeda,

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[132] Abdullahi Gallab. *The First Islamist Republic: Development and Disintegration of Islamism in the Sudan*. (Burlington: Ashgate, 2008). P. 8.
[133] Sunan ibn Majah, Chapter 1. http://ahadith.co.uk/ibnmajah.php
[134] Gallab, P. 63.
[135] Gallab. P. 16.

to come up with a plan to implement their global Islamist agenda. A military coup was successful in establishing an Islamist state in Sudan, and the thought was that it could be replicated in other weak Muslim nations. Pressure from the international community eventually led the Sudanese government to expel Osama bin Laden from the country in 1996, and increased tension between al-Turabi and al-Bashir led to the disbanding of the government and eventual arrest of al-Turabi.[136] Islamism is no bulwark against in-fighting and changing allegiances. The beacon of Islamist Sudan did not last.

One last example of Islamism manifesting itself in a state is the case of the Taliban of Afghanistan. The Taliban are often seen as the prime case study in the discussion of Islamism achieving power. There are a number of stories mythologizing how the Taliban came into being, but one is generally considered accurate. In 1994, some locals came to see Mohammad Omar, a mullah at a small Afghan madrassa. They told Omar that a local warlord had kidnapped two girls, shaved their heads, and brought them to the warlord's camp where they were repeatedly raped.[137] Mullah Omar gathered about thirty men, only half of whom were armed, and went to the camp. They successfully freed the girl and executed the warlord.

Some months later, two warlords in Kandahar were fighting over a young boy they both wanted to rape.[138] Omar's group intervened and freed the boy. These incidents led to Omar's being asked to become more active in solving disputes. Omar asked for no rewards, only that he be allowed to establish an Islamic system for settling such disputes.

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[136] Ibid. pgs. 127-131
[137] Ahmed Rashid. *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia*. ( London: I.B. Tauris, 2002) P. 25.
[138] Ibid. P. 25.

Omar's actions brought him to the attention of the Pakistani government, which was looking for allies in Afghanistan to help secure trade routes. Then President of Afghanistan, Mohammed Najibullah's government had little control outside of Kabul, and dealing with warlords is unstable and problematic at best. The Pakistani government began to supply Omar's group, the Taliban, in exchange for its securing fueling posts and clearing roads. Pakistanis crossed over the border and began to join Omar's group. The Taliban began to score victory after victory over the warlords, and by the end on 1994 had complete control of Kandahar, Afghanistan's second largest city.[139] Their successes continued, and by September, 1996 the Taliban had captured Kabul, and therefore, Afghanistan.

Prior to 2001, a case could be made that the Taliban in Afghanistan were very similar to al-Shabaab in Somalia. They were focused on local issues and governance and had little interest in any sort of global caliphate or waging violent jihad outside of Afghanistan. They did, however, host al-Qaeda, and when al-Qaeda attacked the U.S. on September 11th, 2001, the Taliban's and al-Qaeda's fates became inexorably linked. Over a decade later, the Taliban still exists and is still at war with the U.S. and allied countries.

The pre-2001 Taliban was different from the Islamists in Sudan. From its inception, Sudanese Islamists saw themselves as an example for the rest of the Muslim world. The Taliban did not. The Sudanese Islamists had a global agenda, whereas the Taliban were limited to Afghanistan. Even today, much of the Taliban's rhetoric has to do with getting the U.S. and it allies out of Afghanistan, not spreading Islamism beyond its borders.

[139] Ibid. Pgs. 26-30.

Iran, whether you define it as Islamist or not, has attempted to Islamize the nation from the top down. In Sudan, an attempt also was made to force Islamist ideology upon the larger society from the top down. In Afghanistan, however, Mullah Omar got the people on his side before achieving power. Where Omar failed was his increasing dependence on Pakistan and non-state actors such as al-Qaeda. This sped up his ascent to power but at the expense of fully changing Afghan society. He had a large number of supporters but had not won over the vast majority of the Afghan people prior to taking over. All three examples are different. The respective governments came to power in different ways (revolution, coup, civil war) and have different views on the role Islam should play in government and society. Even thought they have different views on what Islamism is, all three "feel" Islamist because they all have a conservative, anti-secular, Islamic disposition. The cases of Iran, Sudan, and Afghanistan demonstrate the complexities of Islamism and how we define it.

To return for a moment to the evolution of the terminology, in the U.S. the term "Islamic Fundamentalism" was used initially to describe what we now called Islamism. This caused a number of problems, however. The word "fundamentalism" has Protestant Christian origins. In the 1920s, there was a schism in the Presbyterian Church in America between liberal Christians who embraced modernity and conservative Christians who adopted a more literal view of biblical teachings and rejected the notion that Christianity and science, for example, could be reconciled. The most notable event to come from this time period is the Scopes Monkey Trial in which a public school teacher was tried for

teaching Darwinism. From the 1920s to the late 1970s, the term "fundamentalism" was specifically used to describe conservative Christians and Christians only.

With what appeared to be the rise of a conservative Islam, the term "fundamentalism" was transplanted to a Muslim context. Many scholars, such as Bernard Lewis and John Esposito, argue against the use of the term given its Christian origins.[140] Esposito further argues that the term is not particularly useful. It has been used to describe both the unstable, anti-American Qaddafi regime in Libya and the "low-key, pro-American" Saudi regime in Saudi Arabia.[141] These regimes do not have much in common, yet have both been labeled fundamentalist. Therefore the term "fundamentalism" does not tell you anything about these regimes.

Nevertheless, there has been an expansion of the term "fundamentalism" rather than a movement away from it. The Fundamentalism Project argues that fundamentalism is a religious reaction in opposition to modernity. Fundamentalism is not specifically Christian but exists across traditions.[142] Mark Juergensmeyer, while not as explicit as the Fundamentalism Project, seems to make a similar argument.[143] Fundamentalism can be Christian, or Muslim, or Jewish, or Sikh, or Buddhist, and on and on. Fundamentalism exists, or has the potential to exist, in multiple traditions. Even atheism has

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[140] Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988) p. 117. John L. Esposito. *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality*, 3rd edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) p 5-6.
[141] Ibid. p 6.
[142] *Fundamentalisms Observed* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991). p. vii.
[143] Mark Juergensmeyer. *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*. (Berkeley: University of California Press 2000).

fundamentalist elements to it. Alister and Joanne McGrath refer to the New Atheism movement as "atheist fundamentalism."[144]

As with the earlier use of the term "Islamism," the modern usage also originated with the French. There was a fear that using "Islamism" to describe new movements while older texts used the term to describe Islam in general might confuse people. It may seem as if scholars were saying these radical groups were representative of Islam as a whole.[145] Nevertheless, the term caught on, and by the early 1990s was being used in the U.S.

One difficulty is separating the political from the religious. In Philip Hitti's book *Islam: A Way of Life,* the text is broken down into three main sections dealing with Islam as religion, as politics, and as culture.[146] This encapsulates one view of Islam--that it is all-encompassing. If that is the case, then there is no Islamism at all. Everything is Islam, and political matters are just one aspect of it. Bassam Tibi argues that the political needs to be stripped clean from the religious.[147] The implication is that the two are linked together, but, according to Tibi, that is negative and they need to be separated. How do we distinguish between what we see as normative, religiously focused Islamic practice and the politically driven Islamism if they are both under the banner of Islam?

Islamism is a reaction to the domination of the West. In the first half of the twentieth century, pan-Arabism sought to unite some of the newly independent Middle

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[144] Alister McGrath and Joanne Collicut McGrath. *The Dawkins Delusion: Atheist Fundamentalism and the Denial of the Divine* (London: InterVarsity Press, 2007). p 48.
[145] Kramer. P 71.
[146] Philip K. Hitti. *Islam: A Way of Life*. (St. Paul: The University of Minnesota Press, 1970).
[147] Bassam Tibi. *The Challenge of Fundamentalism: Political Islam and the New World Order*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

Eastern states. While the majority of people in the Middle East are Muslim, this was not a predominantly Islamic movement. It reached its apex in the late 1950s/early 1960s. But while nationalist movements and pan-Arabism were reaching their climax, another more religiously based ideology was on the rise: Islamism.

Discussions on the origins of Islamism inevitably begin in Egypt with the Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood has been discussed at length elsewhere, so I will just provide a thumbnail sketch of its origins here.[148] Hassan al-Banna (d. 1949) founded the group in 1928 largely as a reaction to the invasiveness of Western culture and British domination in Egypt. He opposed not only the Western influence on Egyptian society but also the Egyptian Muslims who allowed it.

Politically, al-Banna did not see any separation of mosque and state in Islamic writings or tradition. This was a core belief of the Muslim Brotherhood. The prophet Muhammad was a religious, military, political, and cultural leader. This was the societal structure he created and, therefore, was the basis for an ideal society. Al-Banna did not look at the world as an Egyptian or an Arab. His perspective was first and foremost that of a Muslim.[149]

Al-Banna was raised in a very religious household. His father, Shaykh Ahmad 'Abdur-Rahman al-Banna, was a respected scholar of hadith although he himself had little formal religious education. The senior al-Banna was in contact with many prominent Islamic scholars of the day, and young Hasan spent time around this group of

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[148] See Richard P. Mitchell. *The Society of Muslim Brothers.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969) and *Princeton Readings on Islamist Thought.* Roxanne L. Euben and Muhammad Qasim Zaman eds. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

[149] Al-Banna, Hasan. *The Five Tracts of Hasan al-Banna.* Translated by Charles Wendell. (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1975). p.6

scholars growing up. One friend of Ahmad al-Banna was Shaykh Muhammad Zahran, an instructor at the local mosque school. Like Hasan's father, Shaykh Zahran did not have the formal religious education of many Islamic scholars. Zahran was clearly a mentor to Hasan and is praised in the latter's memoirs for his gifted teaching abilities and piety.[150]

Hasan al-Banna was pro-active in his religiosity even in his youth. He was criticized by schoolmates for being too zealous, as in his opposition to school uniforms because they violated his perception of appropriate Islamic dress. Al-Banna wanted "to enforce moral correctness" whenever he felt it necessary.[151] Beyond the clear impact his religious upbringing had on him, al-Banna was also affected by the revolution in Egypt in 1919, when he was just thirteen years old. While al-Banna may not have been a revolutionary himself, he was of a generation that was old enough to remember both a colonial life and the nationalist pride that came with independence. Religious devotion and desire for activism coalesced inside him just as he was coming of age.

In addition to al-Banna's personal journey and relationship with Islam, he also had a long history to look back upon. From its inception until the nineteenth century, Islamic lands and people largely had been independent. There were dynastic imperial states that encompassed a multitude of ethnicities with semi-autonomous local areas linked ostensibly to a caliph.[152] It is in the nineteenth century that many Muslim lands became subject to colonial rule, including al-Banna's homeland—Egypt. This is a dramatic role reversal for Islam. Now, rather than independent, Muslims around the

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[150] Brynjar Lia. The Society of Muslim Brothers in Egypt: The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement (Reading UK: Ithica Press, 1998). Pgs 22-25.

[151] Ibid. P. 26.

[152] Jeffry Halverson. *Theology and Creed in Sunni Islam: The Muslin Brotherhood, Ash'arism, and Political Sunnism* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010) p. 61.

world are subjects to Western, Christian powers. It should not be surprising then that when al-Banna envisions a pushback against Western powers, it is centered around Islam. Besides being a religion, Islam was a once-great force in the world, and it could be so again.

Patriotism and nationalism were Western concepts imposed on Muslims. Al-Banna believed that the feelings and emotions that patriotism and nationalism inspired could be found in Islam, but he experienced resistance from the people when he tried to express his feelings. "When you try to acquaint the Eastern peoples–they being Muslim--with the fact that this is to be found in Islam in a state more complete, more pure, more lofty, and more exalted than anything that can be found in the utterances of Westerners and Europeans, they reject it and persist in imitating the latter blindly, claiming that Islam belonged in one category and this ideology in another."[153] What al-Banna was coming into conflict with was the idea that there is a separation of religion and politics, a notion he completely rejected.

Upon al-Banna's death in 1949, Sayyid Qutb became the main ideological center of the Muslim Brotherhood and Islamism in general. For Qutb "Islamism's first principle is *hakimiyyat Allah*, God-Government."[154] This is the foundational idea of Islamism and is in agreement with al-Banna's idea that the time of the prophet was an ideal time. Western ideas of statehood that evolved from the Treaty of Westphalia (discussed in the next chapter) are irrelevant. Democracy is premised on the idea that man is subject only to himself. But this view is flawed as man is subject to God. Therefore, a God-centric

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[153] Al-Banna. p. 48
[154] Peter R. Demant. *Islam vs. Islamism: The Dilemma of the Muslim World*. (Westport: Praeger, 2006). p 100.

government is the ideal. It is worth noting that not all Muslim Brothers were enamored

with Qutb's ideas. Hassan al-Hudaybi, the leader or General Guide of the Muslim

Brotherhood after al-Banna's death, disagreed with Qutb's assertion that the Islamic

governments of the era were really not Islamic.[155] In al-Hudaybi's view, man could not

judge the depth or sincerity of another man's faith; that is left up to God alone.

Nevertheless, Qutb's ideas were influential among the Brothers at the time.

Modern Islamism has its roots in al-Banna and is further developed by Qutb. It is

important to note that neither of these men had a formal Islamic education. This could

account for the difference in tone in Islamism and other Islamic reform movements. The

focus was more on politics and government rather than theological matters.

The time of the prophet and his companions was an ideal time according to Qutb.

They struggled to pull the world out of a state of ignorance (*jahiliyyah*) and turned

people's attention toward God. Qutb argued that once again the world had fallen into a

state of ignorance, and it was the obligation of Muslims to again turn the world toward

God.

Just to further complicate matters, we have the term *salafism* to contend with.

Salafism also rejects modernity and looks back to a time of ideal Islam (*salaf* means

"predecessors," referring to Muhammad and his companions), but it differs from

Islamism in a number of ways. First, salafis are apolitical rather than focused on politics.

Rather than try to change the existing government system, as Islamists try to do, salafis

are content to ignore it. They turn inward and usually exist in communities of like-

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[155] Robert S. Leiken and Steven Brooke. "The Moderate Muslim Brotherhood." Foreign Affairs
March/April 2007.

minded individuals rather than attempt a total restructuring of government. Political parties, even Islamic ones, are dangerous, as they divide and fragment Muslims. Political parties also have the potential for veneration of a leader, which places too much emphasis on an individual and not on Islam itself.[156] Second, salafis see jihad as strictly a defensive war defending Muslims against non-Muslims. Attacking other Muslims, even if they are oppressing Muslims, is not jihad. Jihad and revolution are not synonymous. This differs from Islamists who see oppressive Muslim leaders as legitimate targets of jihad.

Salafism emerged in the nineteenth century as a reaction to the growing strength of Western powers. Islamic reformers Muhammad Abduh (d. 1905) and his successors Rashid Rida (d. 1935) and Ali Abd al-Raziq (d. 1966) argued that Islam had become stagnant and was susceptible to influence from the West. They sought to purify Islam of Western influence while making Islam compatible with modernity. Abduh saw no conflict between Islam and modernity and believed Islam could be a foundation on which life in the modern world could be built.[157] Abd al-Raziq went further than Abduh in calling for a complete separation of Islam and state. He rejected the traditional view that Islam has both religious and political elements that work in concert. Abd al-Raziq argued that the prophet Muhammad never called for an Islamic government nor acted as a head of state and that not enough material exists in religious scripture to accurately construct any form of Islamic government.[158] This is in contrast with the view of Hasan al-Banna, who believed Islam was a comprehensive system including both religion and governance.

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[156] Ahmad Moussalli. "Wahhabism, Salafism and Islamism: Who is the Enemy?" A Conflict Forum Monograph. January, 2009.p 11-16.
[157] Souad T. Ali. A Religion Not a State: Ali Abd al-Raziq's Islamic Justification of Political Secularism. (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2009). P. 58.
[158] Ibid. 70-71.

In this tradition then, salafis are less political and focus on their religious *da'wa* (call to understand Allah and live by His will).[159] Calls for an Islamic state are irrelevant as that is a political goal and therefore a distraction from focus of God. Salafis also believe that "any practice (such as Sufi rituals), belief (such as in saints), or behavior (for example, those anchored in customary law) not directly supported by the Quran, or for which there was no precedent in Muhammad's acts and sayings," should be rejected.[160]

There is also a movement within Salafism called Wahhabism. Begun by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab in eighteenth century Arabia, Wahhabism focuses on the oneness of God (*tawhid* or monotheism), strict interpretation of the Qur'an, and fighting against *shirk* (polytheism).[161] Wahhab allied himself with Muhammad ibn Saud, who would go on to conquer much of Arabia and whose family would found Saudi Arabia. Through the institutional support of the nation of Saudi Arabia, Wahhabis have opened mosques and charities in nations outside of Saudi Arabia, which has increased its notoriety. One of Muhammad Abduh's most important followers, Rashid Rida, initially had ideas similar to that of Abduh. He felt that much of the backwardness of many Muslim countries was caused by their straying from "true" Islam. Over time he came to embrace the Wahhabi movement because he felt "Wahhabi doctrine was that of original Muslims."[162]

Modernity seems to be the tipping point when it comes to Islamism. It is the modern world that is ignorant, while the world during Muhammad's time was the ideal,

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[159] Ibid. 14.
[160] Guilain Denoeux. "The Forgotten Swamp: Navigating Political Islam." Middle East Policy, Vol IX, No. 2, June 2002. Pp. 59-60.
[161] Moussalli. P. 4
[162] Ali. P. 59.

to be replicated through political means. The question then is not, "Is Islam inherently political or all-encompassing?" It is, "Is Islam compatible with modernity?" Do Muslims need to reject modernity, as salafis would argue? Do Muslims need to force modernity to comply with Islam, as many conservative Islamists would argue? Or does Islam need to adapt to the modern world, as many progressive Muslims would argue? This is the battle that is being waged within Islam right now.

The total fallout of the Arab Spring is yet to be known, but one potential effect is the rise of Islamist governments in Egypt, Tunisia, and elsewhere. This is not something to be feared. If Islamists gain power, they will do so under democratic means. If they want to maintain power--and all politicians want to maintain power--then they will need to uphold democratic principles lest another uprising take place. Islam and democracy are very much compatible. Or to put it more broadly, God and democracy are compatible. Western leaders talk about God all the time. Presidents, prime ministers, governors, senators, and mayors frequently mention God in speeches. There is little difference in a man in a tie referencing God and a man in a *kufi* referencing Allah.

**The Islamism Movement Comes to Somalia**

Pinpointing the beginnings and development of Somali Islamism can be confusing. There has been a variety of groups, and many of them have gone through name changes and have created offshoots with other names and on and on. The diversity of Islamic groups is further complicated by the situation on the ground. The chaotic Somali environment over the last twenty years has meant that there has been relatively little scholarship in the area, and the journalistic endeavors have been spotty at best. The

rest of this chapter will attempt to bring a little clarity to the development of Somali Islamism.

The Somali Islamic League is thought to be the first group with an Islamist orientation in Somalia.[163] As was pointed out in an earlier chapter, initial colonial efforts in Somalia were not supported by Christian missionary activities due to disagreements between the Italian government and the Catholic Church. However, by the time of the Italian trusteeship, these differences were long resolved, and there was a missionary effort during this time. The Somali Islamic League was formed in 1952 as a direct response to these missionary efforts.

The Somali Islamic League was less focused on issues of governance and more focused on preserving Islamic culture and religious practices. The League had support from the Somali Youth League (SYL), the first and largest political party in Somalia, at the time. Together they opened Arabic schools to compete with the Italian-run education system.[164] These schools were funded, at least partially, by Egypt and were intended to link Somalia to the wider Arabic world. By the time of independence in 1960, a number of students who had either been educated in these Arabic schools in Somalia or had received an education at Arab universities elsewhere. These students had been exposed to the teachings of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and brought these ideas back to Somalia.

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[163] Abdurahman M. Abdullahi, "The Islah Movement: Islamic Moderation in War-torn Somalia." 2008. P.5.
[164] Ibid, 5-6.

Afyare Abdi Elmi says there are multiple accounts for the introduction of Islamism into Somalia.[165] Besides the role of the Muslim Brotherhood, Elmi argues that Sheikh Nur Ali Olow, upon return from a stay in Saudi Arabia in the 1950s, brought back a Wahhabi-oriented school of thought (Wahhabis consider themselves to be salafis, as they see themselves as maintaining the tradition of the prophet; however, they differ from other salafis on the issue of jihad. Wahhabis see waging jihad against other Muslims they consider to be apostates as not only appropriate but a duty).[166] The Somali religious establishment reacted harshly towards Olow because his Wahhabi beliefs were not a popular ideology in Somalia at the time.

The Islamists in Somalia during the late 1960s and early 1970s were non-violent and focused on promoting Islamic culture, very much in keeping with the Muslim Brotherhood ideals of the 1970s as opposed to the Brotherhood's more violent beginnings. After Siad Barre took control of Somalia in 1969, he began to oppress any opposition groups, be they politically or religiously based. In 1975, there was a crackdown on the Islamists, and many were arrested or killed. This had the desired effect for the regime and led to an exodus of Islamists from Somalia. These Islamists went to other countries in the region (Egypt, Sudan, Saudi Arabia) and encountered a wider variety of Muslim scholars. This generation of Somalia Islamists in diaspora were exposed to the peaceful ideas of the Muslim Brotherhood but also to more aggressive ideas from salafist groups and Wahhabi teachings. Many of these exiles, upon their

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[165] Afyare Abdi Elmi, *Understanding the Somali Conflagration* (New York: Pluto Press. 2010). P. 56
[166] Moussalli, pg 7.

return, were far more accepting to the Wahhabi ideology that Olow had been preaching for close to twenty years.

Abdurahman Abdullahi states that these "Somali Islamic movements could be characterized in the 1970s as having immature and emotional attachment to the Islamic revivalist ideology, very low organizational capacity, meager economic resources, and a romantic approach to social and political realities."[167] They were eager for a chance to develop their ideas in Somalia but were denied that opportunity and exposed to other more radical views of Islamism.

Interestingly enough, while many who would eventually become Islamists were fleeing Somalia, Sheikh Mohamed Moallim Hassan was returning to Somalia. Hassan had received his undergraduate and Master's degrees in philosophy from al-Azhar University in Egypt and was working on a doctorate at Ain Shams University. He returned to Somalia prior to finishing his studies and began teaching Qur'anic interpretation (*tafsir*) at a Mogadishu mosque.[168] Hassan quickly became a well-respected member of the Somali religious community. He was subsequently imprisoned for twelve years under the Siad Barre regime, only adding to his credibility. Hassan was known to be an authority on Qur'anic interpretation and believed that Sayyid Qutb's *Fi Zilal al-Qur'an (In the Shade of the Qur'an)* was an authoritative tafsir.[169] This was an unusual stance, as Qutb did not have a formal Islamic education and was not considered a part of

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[167] Abdullahi, P. 8.
[168] Elmi, P. 57.
[169] Fi Zilal al-Qur'an is one of Qutb's most influential works. Written while he was in prison for his role in the attempted assassination of Gamal Abdel Nasser, the book interprets the Qur'an in such a way as to justify his version of the ideal Islamic society. It stresses the role of Islamic law and is unrelenting in its dislike of the Jews.

the *ulama* (Islamic scholars). While Hassan was in prison, the group *Takfir wal-Hijra*

(Excommunication and Emigration) emerged and was influenced by Hassan's teachings.

Takfir wal-Hijra was originally an Egyptian group, emerging in the 1960s and following

Qutb's ideas about an Islamic state. This is yet another example of Egyptian Islamism

flowing to Somalia. The Somali wing of Takfir believed that those who do not rule in

accordance with Islam are infidels (*kafirs*) and those who follow infidels and do nothing

to stop them are themselves infidels.[170] As the Siad Barre regime was a socialist regime,

members of the government and those regular Somalis who did nothing to oppose them

were all considered infidels.

It is clear that Islamism entered Somalia in a number of different ways during the

1950s and 1960s. As Somali Islamism developed into the 1970s, it spawned a number of

groups and movements. Some have been more successful than others at getting their

message across. Some have turned to violence, while others have been adamantly

opposed to it. Next, we will examine the different types of Islamist groups that have

appeared in Somalia.

**Three Forms of Somali Islamism**

As we saw at the beginning of the chapter, Islamism is not a monolithic

movement. There are different types of Islamist thinkers and groups, and, while those

who advocate violence get the brunt of the attention, not all Islamist groups have violent

tendencies or violent agendas. While the influence of foreign Islamists on Somalis in

exile was profound, it did not radicalize everyone.

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[170] Ibid. P. 58.

In Somalia, Islamist groups can be divided into three camps: political Islamists (those who take a political approach), missionary Islamists (those who are focused on religious matters but want to influence political affairs), and Jihadis (those for whom violence is a legitimate means to an end).[171] Because Somali Islamism, just like Islamism in general, is not monolithic, it is worth exploring some of the Islamist groups other than the Islamic Courts Union or al-Shabaab to get a sense of the variety that exists within the country.

*Harakat al-Islah* (the Reform Movement) falls into the category of political Islamism. It is a peaceful Islamist group started in the 1970s. Formed as a peaceful resistance movement to the Siad Barre regime, its members try to reconcile Islamic beliefs with the basic tenets of a democratic society and focus on the humanitarian needs of the Somali people They were a driving force behind the formation of Mogadishu University, as education is seen as a tool to improve Somalia's future.[172] Al-Islah's own organization is based on democratic principles. Its leadership council is elected by members, and council members can serve only two five-year terms.

Al-Islah has its problems as well. It has not caught on with the wider Somali society. It is seen as mainly highly educated intellectuals who are unable to attract the working class and rural Somalis. Al-Islah also seems to have decent relations with Ethiopia, Somalia's long-time traditional enemy, which does not endear the group to many Somalis. It is also criticized as being a too Western in its orientation, yet,

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[171] These distinctions are addressed in the International Crisis Group report, *Somalia's Islamists* (Brussels, December 2005).

[172] Anouar Boukhars, "Understanding Somali Islamism," *Terrorism Monitor*, vol.4 issue 10 (May 18, 2006).

paradoxically, it is not completely trusted by the West due to its early connection with the Muslim Brotherhood in the late 1970s. Nevertheless, it is considered a moderate Islamist group and one that has ties to various aid and charitable organizations.[173]

*Majma' 'Ulimadda Islaamka ee Soomaaliya* (Assembly of Islamic Scholars) is also a peaceful group dedicated to the promotion of Islam. This group typically limits itself to conducting marriage ceremonies and Islamic education.[174] While Majma' itself is peaceful, it briefly supported Mohamed Farrah Aidid (d. 1996), one of Somalia's most prominent warlords. Aidid was opposed to the militantly religious point of view of the jihadi group Al-Itihaad al-Islaami (see below), and he believed that allying himself with a religious group would create a counter-weight to al-Itihaad.[175]

The decision to support Aidid caused a rift within Majma' and led to the forming of a splinter group, *Ahlu Sunna wal Jama'a* (Followers of the Sunna and the Community). Majma' felt that supporting Aidid was a political tactic that would not serve the cause of promoting Islam and therefore not the right thing to do. Those that broke off formed Ahlu Sunna wal Jama'a (ASWJ) and joined forces with Aidid. While Majma is considered a missionary Islamist group, ASWJ is a political Islamist group.

Aidid's death did not lead to ASWJ's demise, although it remained a fairly inconsequential group until 2008 when it began to actively fight al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab began to destroy Sufi shrines and attempted to ban Sufi practices.[176] ASWJ members are

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[173] Andre Le Sage, "Prospects for al-Itihad and Islamist Radicalism in Somalia," *Review of African Political Economy*, vol.27 number 89 (September, 2001).
[174] Crisis Group report, *Somalia's Islamists* (Brussels, December 2005) p.16.
[175] United Nations Security Council Report, Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1853 (2008). 10 March 2010, P.12.
[176] Ibid. P. 12.

Sufis who see themselves as defenders of traditional Islam, and they rose up against al-Shabaab. They have subsequently allied themselves with the Transitional Federal Government and have received military support from Ethiopia. Ahlu Sunna wal Jama'a has scored a number of victories against al-Shabaab forces and has become the most effective military force opposing it.

There are two prominent missionary Islamist groups in Somalia. The Wahhabi-influenced *Al-Ansar as-Sunna* (Supporters of the teachings of the Prophet) did not have a political wing, nor did it want to achieve political power. It did, however, seek to influence Somali culture. It advocated a more traditional Islamic dress, such as veiling of women, a practice not common in Somalia. By the mid-1990s al-Ansar was disbanded, and many members joined other groups.

The more prominent missionary Islamist group in Somalia is *Jama'at al-Tabligh.* Tabligh is a worldwide movement that began in India in the 1920s.[177] Somalis came into contact with members of Tabligh during the exile in the 1970s. Intelligence agencies fear that Tabligh is used as a recruiting group for more militant Jihadis. They point to Tabligh offices in Azerbaijan that have sent people to fight in Chechnya and claim John Walker Lindh, the so called American Taliban, was recruited by Tabligh before going to Afghanistan. While these incidents did not affect Somalia directly, the fear is that global Tabligh offices could recruit people to fight in Somalia. Known Tabligh members are actively recruiting in the more stable areas of Somalia, Somaliland and Puntland, and could be recruiting people to fight in the south.

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[177] Gilles Kepel, *The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West*. (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2004). P. 260.

*Al-Itihaad al-Islaami* (the Islamic Union) is arguably the most important jihadi Islamist group to appear in Somalia. Al-Itihaad appeared in 1984 as an opposition group to the Siad Barre regime. Al-Itihaad was the product of a merger between *al-Jamma al-Islaami* (Islamic Association), a group opposed to cultural influences from the West, and *Wahdat al-Shabab al-Islaami* (the Unity of Islamic Youth), a group that also opposed Western values and targeted Muslim youth for recruitment.[178]

Al-Itihaad advocated political Islam and opposed both Barre and the clan system. Like many Islamist groups, Al-Itihaad was initially non-violent. However, a faction of Al-Itihaad members armed themselves and, as the Barre regime was crumbling, encountered General Aidid as he was fighting his way to the capital. Aidid sent a deputy, former Colonel Hassan Dahir Aweys, to strike a deal for the Al-Itihaad fighters to remain in their camp and not oppose his march to Mogadishu in return for his protection. Al-Itihaad refused and, in an interesting turn of events, convinced Aweys to leave Aidid and join Al-Itihaad. This was a major coup for the militant faction of the group.[179]

The outcome of the battle was never in question as Aidid's forces crushed al-Itihaad. The military loss, however, signaled an ideological shift within Al-Itihaad. More than ever, members felt that if they were to be successful in spreading their religious ideology, they needed a strong militia of their own. This meant they must either ally themselves with an existing militia and, therefore, its clan, or develop a militia of their own. Al-Itihaad opted to create its own militia. After failed attempts at taking over the

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[178] Sunguta West, "Somalia's ICU and its Roots in al-Ittihad al-Islamiya," *Terrorism Monitor*, vol. 4 issue 15 (2006) Online at http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2370083&printthis=1
[179] International Crisis Group, "Somalia's Islamists" (Brussels, December 2005) http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3830

major port cities of Bosaso and Merca, al-Itihaad retreated to Gedo, along the Ethiopian border. It was here that al-Itihaad had success,establishing a "non-clan based administration" in the district of Luuq.[180]

From *Al-Itihaad's* perspective, Luuq was a tremendous success. Kenneth Menkhaus describes the situation in Luuq as follows:

> The administration of Luuq under the Islamists was strict. An "Islamic Association" exercised overall authority, beneath which a district council, appointed by the Islamic Association, handled day-to-day management. A Shari'a court administered justice based on Islamic law rather than customary clan law or xeer; this meant that punishments included amputation, which is not at all customary in Somalia, though some other Somali Shari'a courts have imposed it, notably in north Mogadishu. The police force was composed of Islamic militia but kept separate from security forces. Consumption of the mild narcotic qaat, a popular habit, was forbidden, as was cultivation of tobacco. Veiling was enforced on women. Free education was provided in schools, but courses were taught in Arabic and the curriculum was Islamic, not secular, in orientation.[181]

Despite the increase in security, the banning of qaat, and implementation of some of the harsher aspects of Shari'a were unpopular among the people of Luuq. Al-Itihaad was in keeping with Mohammad Hassan's teachings of decades earlier. Like Hassan, Al-Itihaad banned qaat and was much stricter about maintaining Islamic practices. Although many other Islamist groups adhered to the spirit of Hassan's teachings by emphasizing Islam and resisting non-Islamic threats, Al-Itihaad was the best exemplar of Hassan's version of Islamism in Somalia.

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[180] Alex de Waal, "Class and Power in a Stateless Somalia" Social Science Research Council, February 2007. Online at http://hornofafrica.ssrc.org/dewaal/printable.html
[181] Ken Menkhaus, "Somalia: State Collapse and the Threat of Terrorism", IISS Adelphi Paper 364, 56.

Al-Itihaad is not a global jihadist organization, and from the beginning its focus

has been on the internal affairs of Somalia.[182]  However, for reasons that are unclear, Al-

Itihaad became involved in the conflict with Ethiopia over the Ogaden.  Ethiopia and

Somalia have a long history of animosity over the Ogaden, and Al-Itihaad could have

invaded Ethiopia for nationalistic reasons.   Nonetheless, as it had never shown any

interest in expanding its activities beyond Somalia's borders, one possible scenario is that

it had become beholden to the wider jihadist agenda of its outside financial backers,

including al-Qaeda.

Al-Itihaad began to participate in guerrilla activities in Ethiopia as early as 1992,

and in 1995 launched larger-scale attacks against civilians in Ethiopia, including a hotel

bombing in Addis Ababa. In 1996, after an assassination attempt on the Ethiopian

Minister of Transportation and Communication, Ethiopia decided to eliminate Al-Itihaad.

The Ethiopian military engaged in cross-border attacks against Al-Itihaad and by early

1997 had effectively destroyed the militant wing of the organization.  Al-Itihaad provided

a blueprint for Islamist success in Somalia but also exemplified why Islamist groups fail

in Somalia. It successfully exerted Islamist rule over a local area and was welcomed by

the community, but ultimately it overreached and attempted to spread its ideology beyond

Somalia.

**A Means of Resistance**

All of these Islamist groups in Somalia existed in opposition to the state. While

Hassan was resisting the British and Italian colonial powers, more recent groups such as

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[182] United States Institute of Peace Special Report No. 113: Terrorism in the Horn of Africa, January 2004.
Accessed online at http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr113.pdf

al-Islah resisted the dictatorship of Siad Barre. Once the Barre regime fell, other Islamist groups looked to fill the vacuum left by a lack of government. While this may not be resistance against an agreed-upon authority, it meant these groups had visions for a Somalia guided by Islamic teachings, and they were willing to fight to make those visions reality.

The Islamists all had visions for Somalia--not the world, but Somalia. Islamism in Somalia is tied to nationalism. Much has been made of al-Shabaab's links to al-Qaeda and its vision of global jihad, but later chapters will demonstrate that connection is not as strong as initially reported and has caused turmoil within al-Shabaab itself. The point is that Somali Islamism is not just a means of expressing Islam but is a powerful expression of Somali nationalism and Somali pride.

When Abdullahi Yusuf became president in 2004, the Islamist movement within Somalia was again galvanized. Somalia had weak leadership and a government in name only without any real power. This gave the Islamic Courts the opening they needed, and in 2006 they made their move.

Chapter 5

THE UNORTHODOX STATE

The Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and its Western backers engaged in state-building in Somalia by attempting to establish the institutions necessary for a national government. This is distinct from nation-building that involves the creation of a national identity and may include creation of a national language or national customs.[183] The goal for the TFG and its backers was to take a failed state and transform it into a democratic country. There are two fundamental problems with this idea--one the concept of failed state is an inherently flawed one, and, two, democracy will not work in Somalia without some significant changes to both Somali infrastructure and culture. Instead, the West should develop the unorthodox state first and work within the boundaries of Somali society to strengthen the country. Only then can the groundwork be laid for a democratic country.

**Failed States Defined**

Failed states as a category are problematic and throughout this chapter the very concept of the failed state will be challenged. Before that can be done, however, there needs to be an understanding of how failed states are typically defined.

Max Weber defined state as an entity that has the "legitimate use of violence."[184] At its most basic and simplistic level, that is true A state's primary responsibility is to

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[183] Nation-building and state-building are often used interchangeably albeit erroneously in popular discourse. See "The Beginner's Guide to Nation-Building" by James Dobbins, Seth G. Jones, Keith Crane, and Beth Cole DeGrasse. Rand, 2007. http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2007/RAND_MG557.pdf
[184] Max Weber, *Politics as a Vocation* (1919) http://www.ne.jp/asahi/moriyuki/abukuma/weber/lecture/politics_vocation.html

protect and defend its citizens from threats both foreign and domestic. But it is clear that modern states do much more than defend their citizens. States, among other things, build and maintain physical infrastructure, educate the youth, engage in trade, exercise regulatory authority (for safety purposes or to safeguard financial assets) and collect taxes (necessary in order to provide all of these services). The degree to which a state can effectively and safely deliver services to its citizens determines the state's strength.

Failed states are unable to provide much, if any, of the above with any reliability. State authority is weak, and other non-state actors, such as gangs, warlords, or pirates, are able to engage in criminal activity with relative impunity. According to Robert Rotberg, failed states have decaying and neglected infrastructures, significant levels of political corruption, the privatization of state services such as education and health care (not necessarily for ideological reasons but because the state can no longer afford to fund schools and hospitals), lack of control over its borders, and a significant level of ongoing violence.[185]

There is a sub-category of a failed state, according to Rotberg, that of a collapsed state. In a collapsed state, there is no authority whatsoever. Rule of the strong is the law of the land, and any sense of governmental authority has disappeared into a vacuum. According to Rotberg, there was only one collapsed state in the first decade of the twenty-first century: Somalia.[186] But is Somalia a failed state, a collapsed state, or is it something else? It is hard not to see something from one's own point of view and that is what is often done with states. The West tends to see the nation-state model as the

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[185] Robert I. Rotberg. *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror*. (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2003). Pgs. 5-9.
[186] Ibid. P. 10.

exemplar of statehood and those that do not fall into the nation-state model are considered to be failed. If we look beyond the strong-to-failed state paradigm, we will see that Somalia exists not as a failed state but as an unorthodox state. Somalia does not fit Western definition of a democratic state to be sure, nor is it a federated state. And, as no government body maintains control over its borders, it is not a sovereign state. Despite this, there is still a certain level of functionality within Somalia. The argument is not that the current state of things in Somalia is ideal or even good, just that to label a state as failed places the state in the negative. It also helps to further the hegemonic mindset-- Somalia and Somalis need Western help to become more like us, because "us" is the ideal.

It should be noted that areas of Somalia do conform to traditional ideas about state. Somaliland in the north, for example, is a democratic republic with its own constitution, president, and legislative bodies. Puntland also has its own president and government, although it is not as strong or as stable as Somaliland. Puntland has a great deal of piracy, and the pirate-lords often operate with impunity and dispense justice as they see fit.[187] It is the southern half of Somalia that typically gets the failed state designation.

If the idea of the modern nation-state (state being a government and nation being people within a given territory) came into being due to the decline of the feudal system, as historian Paul Kennedy suggests, then the precedent has been set: states evolve.[188] If the feudal-state begat the nation-state, so, too, can the nation-state beget the unorthodox

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[187] For more information see Laura Seay, Conference presentation. "Piracy as State-Building: Towards a Theory of Protective Control." African Studies Association (2009)
[188] Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers*. (New York: Random House, 1987).

state. There are two coexisting strands of thought at play here when it comes to Somalia. First, Somalia is not a failed state as it has not "failed" in the sense that there is still functionality within it. That functionality does not exist, however, in the typical nation-state form. Which leads to the second strand of thought: Somalia represents an alternative to the nation-state. It is a functioning country in which a variety of non-state actors allow for the continued existence and functioning of the state. In Rotberg's description of a collapsed state, the inhabitants are no longer citizens. Most Somalis, however, consider themselves exactly that: Somalis.

The idea of Somalia not being a failed state is important for two reasons. First, the word "failed" is a loaded term. It automatically evokes negative images and ideas, such as malnourishment and violence. I do not intend to sugarcoat Somalia's issues, of which there are many, but rather to put them in their proper context rather than that of a failed state. Second, if Somalia, the poster-child for failed states for the past twenty years, is indeed *not* a failed state, then it calls into question failed-state theory, at least to some extent. Failed states are generally defined by what they are not or by what they cannot do. By describing what Somalia is and what Somalia can do, I will challenge current failed-state thinking.

**Challenges to State Theory**

The nation-state model has become the norm and is, therefore, seen as the ideal. Other governing systems and entities, such as the feudal system, tribalism (in most of the world), the city-state, and the empire have all gone by the wayside. There is an assumption that the state is the pinnacle of the governing system. This is a false

assumption, however. If governing systems are capable of change, there is no reason to assume that the nation-state will not evolve or even devolve into something else. Auguste Comte viewed societies as evolving from religiously oriented to philosophically oriented to scientifically oriented. He believed that societies began by focusing on the religious. Societies were first animist, then polytheist, then monotheist. Then, as they further developed, humans began to see God as an abstract entity and then to essentially abandon God in favor of science. There are clear biases at work here. Scientific communities are more valued that religious ones; monotheists are more evolved than polytheists, and polytheists supersede animists. Comte acknowledged that elements of more than one of these could exist simultaneously in one society. Details aside, Comte's broad argument is that societies evolve much like biological entities and that they do so in a logical manner.

Comte's ideas are not unlike those of Karl Marx, who also shared the belief that societies evolve naturally. For Marx, society begins with hunter-gathers for whom there is no ownership, and people work together for survival. This is followed by the slave society in which class begins to appear. Here, there is an owner class and a slave class. This evolves in to feudalism, in which the class system expands, and we see the development of the elite class (kings and queens), a mid-level aristocracy (lords), and a peasant class (serfs). Eventually, the peasant class demands more, which leads to revolution (seen as a positive by Marx). The result of the revolution is capitalist society. The problem with capitalism is that the working class is an outgrowth of the peasant class, which was itself an outgrowth of the slave class. There is, therefore, still a group that is being abused by the elites. Capitalism then evolves into the penultimate phase--

socialism, a system in which workers control the means of production, and control is communal. Once socialism has taken hold and no one is able to exploit anyone else, the socialist society becomes the communist society, a society in which there is no state, no class, and no property.

Political theorist Jens Bartelson, in summing up generally accepted theories about state, says that the origin of the state as we know it is the family. The family evolves to the tribe, then to the city-state, and eventually the nation-state.[189] If this is, indeed, the case, then it is clear that evolution in terms of society and government is an accepted and understood phenomenon. For Bartelson, however, the state is not the end of the evolution. He sees the nation-state model as evolving into something else, where some new source of political authority will dominate.

There are obvious issues with both Comte and Marx. Comte, as mentioned, has a completely subjective hierarchy; one in which science trumps religion. While he lays out his argument in a logical manner, he requires us to accept that some types of religion are better than others, or that science is better than religion. As for Marx, the critiques are numerous. That communist systems have slow economic growth, can lead to restrictions of individual rights, and to human right abuses are just a few of the criticisms. But what is important here is not whether Comte or Marx is right in the details but that there is a precedent for societal evolution. The idea that societies evolve in a naturally occurring way is not unheard of. As societies evolve, and the needs and desires of the society change, it is logical to assume there will be an evolution of governmental systems as

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[189] Jens Bartelson. *The Critique of the State*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). Pg. 50.

well. Bartelson, while not specific in what he thinks will follow the nation-state, does

continue in the vein of Marx and Comte in that he believes in an evolving societal model.

Systems of governance are often linked to worldwide movements. For example,

colonialism is tied to imperialism. With the collapse of empires, colonialism (at least in

its traditional form) also disappeared. Certainly an argument can be made that a new form

of imperialism exists, one in which dominant countries such as the U.S. and other G8

nations as well as major corporations are well-off and able create and define laws that

benefit them and oppress opponents.[190] That marks opponents as not just ideologically in

opposition to the powers that be but legally criminals, who therefore, lose legitimacy. But

this non-traditional, new version of empire differs from the direct rule of the nation-state

during the colonial period. Traditional colonialism is linked to traditional imperialism,

and when that form of imperialism disappeared, colonialism followed. Bartelson argues

that "the corrosive effects of globalism" will lead to the end of the nation-state as we

know it.[191] Whether Bartelson is correct, no one can say with authority, but it is logical to

argue that a global system that stretches the limits of a home government (like

colonialism did to empire) will eventually lead to the weakening or collapse of said home

government.

Additionally, the rise of what Michael Crawford and Jami Miscik call mezzanine

actors further complicates matters.[192] These are substate actors who interject themselves

at the mezzanine level, in-between the government and the people. Mezzanine actors

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[190] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri. *Empire*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000).
[191] Ibid, P. 1.
[192] Michael Crawford and Jami Miscik. "The Rise of Mezzanine Rulers," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 89 No. 6, Nov./Dec. 2010.

neither grow to achieve statehood nor do they lead to the dissolution of states. They arise in times of weakened state authority and achieve a certain level of power. The official state is typically too weak to eliminate the mezzanine actor, and the people usually get some benefit from their existence. Mezzanine actors receive no help or financing from the state and often provide some service to the people that is typically the purview of the state, such as medical aid or schooling. Often they represent some specific segment of the populace based on ethnicity, religion, or some ideological category. Mezzanine actors are not necessarily terrorists or criminals. The Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq and the Somaliland Government in northern Somalia are examples of this. However, more commonly mezzanine actors are groups such as the Somali pirates and warlords or groups like Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Susan Strange argues that there are two types of non-state actors- those that support the state and those that challenge it.[193] Strange is comparing multi-national corporations that provide some benefit to a state and groups like the mafia or drug cartels that seek to undermine the state. Pirates, warlords, and Islamists would seem to fall in the latter category in Somalia but with one important distinction--there is no state to undermine. Drug cartels, such as those in Columbia and Mexico, and mafia organizations like those in Russia, Italy, or the U.S. all seek to circumvent the state in order to see their goals achieved. In Somalia, there is no state to circumvent; instead these groups are trying to replace the state.

These mezzanine and non-state groups are becoming more and more common and powerful in parts of Africa and the Middle East. The West has had the tendency to

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[193] Susan Strange. *The Retreat of the State*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). P. 92.

see them as enemy forces, and, to an extent, that is logical. The mentality of Western governments is based on the Westphalian nation-state model. This means that Western states want to deal with other states, not non-state groups or mezzanine actors.

**The End of the Westphalian Model**

The Westphalian model of sovereignty has its origins in the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. The peace accord ended the Thirty Years' War. The most significant result pertains to the view of the nation-state. The idea that all states have defined borders and should be free of all influence from forces outside of those borders begins here. All participants in the war, and therefore the peace, were European, meaning this model has had from the very beginning a European flare to it.

In fact the larger view of the history of state is based entirely in Europe. The modern state's development begins with Rome.[194] Rome had a representative government and civil law. Germanic kingdoms had a feudal system where people pledged loyalty to nobles in exchange for use of land. Both of these were dependent upon their militaries. For Rome, the constantly growing military class meant the need to acquire more and more land. For the Germanic kingdoms, the peasants depended on the nobles for security, and, therefore, strong military forces were required. This need for military might and expansion eventually led Europe to the Peace of Westphalia. The current nation-state model then is not simply European in nature, it is also born of violence.

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[194] For a good, brief history of the development of statehood see Georg Sorensen. *Changes in Statehood: The Transformation of International Relations.* (New York: Palgrave, 2001). P72-77.

Stephen Krasner defines Westphalian sovereignty as "political organization based on the exclusion of external actors from authority structures within a given territory."[195] Each state then is free from outside influences or pressure. But while this theoretically is the model for statehood, it has not been the case in the real world for some time. The colonial era saw the creation of subordinate states; the Cold War saw the existence of client states; and the globalization era has created a system in which states are financially dependent upon each other. In each of these systems, states are either dependent upon a stronger state or support a weaker state. Additionally we have the rise of international bodies that exert some measure of influence over multiple states, such as the European Union, the African Union, and the International Criminal Court. We have an inherent contradiction here. On one hand, we desire complete sovereignty; on the other hand we have a system that is dependent upon other states. In fact, Krasner argues that very few states have ever had true Westphalian sovereignty,[196] and yet this is the system that is commonly used to describe the nation-state model today.[197]

Rather than the nation-state model, a better means of analysis may be the world-systems theory. Here the idea of the state as the primary unit of analysis is dismissed. World-systems theory also suggests that there is not one developmental path for countries or peoples. So, while Comte, Marx, and Bartelson all suggest an evolutionary development for countries, that development may not always manifest itself in the exact same manner. This theory also suggests that the world is divided into core countries

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[195] Stephen Krasner. *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton, Princeton University Press) 1999. P. 4
[196] Ibid. 8.
[197] Andreas Osiander, "Sovereignty, International Relations and the Westphalian Myth." International Organization 55, 2, Spring 2001, P. 251.

(economically stable countries) and periphery countries (those dependent upon and potentially exploited by core countries). This seems to more accurately describe the world we live in than the outdated Westphalian model.

The end of the colonial period and the beginning of the Cold War marked significant changes in the Westphalian model. After World War II the colonial powers were unable to hold on to their respective colonies and needed to become free of them. Colonial powers tried to create semi-sovereign states in the former colonies, and this worked to varying degrees of success. The powers were no longer able to justify or afford direct colonial rule, yet they wanted governments in place in the former colonies that would be sympathetic to their needs. These powers wanted their former colonies to have the illusion of independence but still be under the influence of their former colonizers. This was the dependency theory mentioned in chapter two. The poorer, underdeveloped former colonies provided an abundant source of resources to the wealthier, developed former colonial powers.

At the same time the Soviet Union and the United States were competing for influence across the globe. Given the relative inexperience of the newly independent governments in Africa, both sides of the Cold War believed they could sway African nations to their side. President John F. Kennedy said, "we see Africa as probably the greatest open field of manoeuvre in the worldwide competition between the [communist] bloc and the non-communist."[198] With both sides vying for influence in Africa, it became clear that while the colonial state had disappeared, the client state was on the rise.

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[198] Martin Meredith. *The Fate of Africa: A History of Fifty Years of Independence* (New York: Public Affairs, 2005). P. 143.

One element of the Westphalian model is the non-intervention of one state in another state's internal affairs. Granted this has been violated from time to time, especially during times of potential humanitarian crises such as NATO's involvement in the former Yugoslavia in the 1999 or in Libya in 2011. Additionally, in so-called failed states it could be argued that the obvious lack of a sovereign state allows for international intervention. This is the case with both Afghanistan and Somalia. Neither of these states had a sovereign leader to object to intervention on an international level.

What the colonial period, the Cold War, NATO intervention, globalization, transnational corporations, etc. all show is that there is a fundamental problem of how to deal with international practices within the Westphalian model. There is a disconnect between the theory and the practice.[199]

**A Critique of the Failed State and the Case Against Democratization**

There are issues with the idea of a failed state. First, this is not universally accepted theory. Rotberg admits that the criteria are not set in stone and there are variables, but the criteria listed above (neglected infrastructures, political corruption, privatization of services, ongoing violence) are the generally accepted means of determining failed-state status. One reason for the discrepancies is that not all failed states have the same issues. One reason Zimbabwe is considered a failed state is the prevalence of AIDS. AIDS, however, is not a factor in other failed states such as Afghanistan or Bosnia.

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[199] A. Claire Cutler. "Critical Reflections on the Westphalian assumptions of international law and organization: a crisis of legitimacy." *Review of International Studies* Vol. 27 Issue 2, 2001. P 133-150.

Second, there is an issue of name.  The word "failed" implies an ending.  If someone or something fails, it no longer works or has not accomplished the goal.  The idea of a failed state promotes an idea of hopelessness, both to those in the state and those on the outside.  This collective feeling of failure can make the country seem like a lost cause.  After the U.N. pulled out of Somalia in 1995, the country was essentially forgotten until the rise of the Islamic Courts in 2006 and the increase in attention brought on by the piracy problem.  The same happened in Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989.  Media and governments have been able to forget countries that are not of immediate concern and simply dismiss them by labeling them 'failed.'

There are also unusual cases such as the Soviet Union.  The Soviet Union collapsed. It failed, to be sure, but it never devolved into the chaotic environment that Somalia or Afghanistan did.  Uncertainty was created by the collapse, but the government was replaced by another government, one that maintained a reasonable level of security and authority. The Soviet Union as a government entity went from superpower to non-existent, yet it never occupied that conceptual space we think of as 'failed.'

Third, these states still manage to function, albeit in an unorthodox manner.  Non-state actors have managed to create an environment in which people can function. Islamist groups, such as al-Itihaad al-Islaami and the Islamic Courts Union, in southern Somalia have long been able to set up judicial systems, enforce laws, ban drug use, and increase stability.  True, these courts are often oppressive, and not everyone wants to live in a land governed by ultra-conservative religious extremists, but that is hardly the point.  Every country has citizens who object to the governmental system in which they live.

Claiming that an Islamist regime is extreme does not really negate that regime's effectiveness.

Additionally, in the Puntland region of Somalia, where the majority of the piracy takes place, the pirates have set up courts to resolve disagreements, set up profit sharing plans, created a code of conduct, and engage with local businesses.[200] Piracy in Puntland is highly organized. Those who board a ship that is being seized get a larger slice of the ransom than those who stay on the pirate vessel. Once the ransom is received, payouts must be made to those who supplied the weapons, boats, food, shelter for the hostages, etc. The rest of the ransom is then split among those who participated in the operation based on their level of involvement. Pirates are providing goods, in this case hostages or seized shipments, for money. Like all businesses, they need to pay their suppliers and employees before recognizing a profit. That profit is then spent in the local community on food, healthcare, clothing and so on. Much like factory towns, college towns, or military towns, there are communities in Somalia that are dependent on piracy. While illegal, piracy is a business that functions relatively unimpeded.

In both the case of the pirates and the Islamists, these groups manage to support and protect the citizenry.  If Max Weber is right, and a state is defined by the legitimate use of violence, these groups create little states within Somalia's borders. Often these groups have physical control over an area, dispense justice and resolve disputes, and provide some goods, services, or employment for citizens within their areas of control. The obvious rebuttal to Weber is to ask who the authoritative body that determines the

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[200] Laura Seay, Conference presentation. "Piracy as State-Building: Towards a Theory of Protective Control." African Studies Association (2009)

"legitimacy" of the violence is?[201] In earlier times, a state's authority came from God. This is the mandate of Heaven or the divine right of kings; the ruling individual rules because God has willed that it is so. Once the separation of religion and state became a popular notion, that authority shifted from God to the people. The people choose a leader and can un-choose him as well.

The problem the pirates run into is the lack of legitimacy. The people who depend on it may be comfortable with piracy as an institution, but the broader international community, who are the victims of piracy and thus at risk both physically and monetarily, do not recognize the authority of the pirates.

Islamists run into a different issue. They want a religious government. This is not exactly a mandate of Heaven, but it is a system of rule based on divine principles and divine law. The individuals who would run such a government would be, at least theoretically, interpreters of said law. That, then, gives them authority and legitimacy. However, the people are not generally willing to accept such rule, as we will see in later chapters. This creates obvious tension between those who claim some type of divine authority and the authority of the people.

Islamists in Somalia govern by violence. Here the Islamists represent a negative reflection of Weber. For Weber, an entity must have legitimacy before it can use violence. There are assumed restrictions in place in the Weber model. A state will, theoretically, only use violence under given circumstances such as the violation of law.

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[201] Another rebuttal to Weber comes from Hannah Arendt; "This may prompt us to ask whether the end of warfare, then, would mean the end of states? Would the disappearance of violence in relationships between states spell the end of power?" *On Violence*. (New York: Harcourt Inc., 1970) p. 36. At bare minimum Arendt shows the limitations of Weber. Weber is equating power and violence whereas Arendt seems to suggest that violence is a tool that can be used by those in power.

The rules for the use of violence are what give the entity legitimacy. Once, for example, Bashar al-Assad of Syria started using violence against initially peaceful protesters, he violated the rules for violence and therefore lost his legitimacy. Islamists in Somalia have taken the opposite approach. Violence comes first. It is through their use of violence that they seek to gain legitimacy. They assume authority that the people have not given them.

The goal for Somalia, at least from the American and European perspective, is a stable democratic state. But why? Former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill (d. 1965) famously said in a speech to the British House of Commons in 1947 that

> "many forms of Government have been tried and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time."

While Churchill may acknowledge that democracy is not perfect, this is nonetheless an idealization of democracy. Democracy is the best form of government, so why would we not want to see it spread to other nations? This idealization has even become public policy in the U.S. One element of the Bush Doctrine was democratization of governments around the world. There is a fetishization of democracy in the West. Do not think that I am not echoing Coriolanus' protests of democracy in the Roman street.[202] But people kneel at the altar of democracy so quickly that they fail to see that democracy is but one step on a political-evolutionary scale. Democracy works best when it comes

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[202] William Shakespeare. Coriolanus, Act 2 Scene 3.

from the people who are to live in said democratic society, not when it is foisted upon them by a foreign power.

There is a homogeneous assumption to this type of thinking. States are "units," and all are more or less the same. Therefore, they should function in more or less a similar manner.[203] The homogeneous argument is that weak states will model themselves after more successful states. If Europe after Westphalia and the subsequent rise of other Western powers such as the U.S. are models of success, then unsuccessful states, such as Somalia or Afghanistan should try to emulate Western states' behavior and policies. This is the basis of modernization theory. If a country is in a difficult position, a Western state can intervene and make the case that the answer is to 'be more like us.' Successful democracies attempt to establish successful democracies elsewhere.

In "The End of History," Francis Fukuyama argues that liberal democracy is in essence the peak of governmental systems and therefore marks the end of political-evolution. Democracy has "conquered rival ideologies like hereditary monarchy, fascism, and most recently communism."[204] Many scholars, such as Jacques Derrida and Benjamin Barber, have criticized Fukuyama's work for being hegemonic and stressing Western superiority while dismissing or ignoring any flaws or sins Western societies may have.[205] However, it should be pointed out that while democracy might be the prevalent form of government at the moment, it has not always been so, and there is no reason to

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[203] Georg Sorensen. *Changes in Statehood: The Transformation of International Relations*. (New York: Palgrave, 2001). P. 25.
[204] Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the last Man*. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992). P.1
[205] See Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of Debt, the Work of Mourning & and the New International*. Peggy Kamuf trans. (New York: Routledge, 1994) and Benjamin R. Barber. *Jihad Vs. McWorld: Terrorism's Challenge to Democracy*. (New York: Ballantine Books, 1996).

expect it to remain so. Additionally, this theory presupposes that societies are only going to move in one direction. Somalia was a tribal society that eventually became a colonial society. One can argue about whether this was a move up, down, or laterally on the political-evolutionary scale, but nevertheless it was a shift from one type of society to another. It then entered a post-colonial transition period and then became an independent democracy. If, indeed, this were the pinnacle of governance for Somalia, then the government would not have faltered so quickly and eventually collapsed, keeping in mind that the collapse was precipitated by largely internal circumstances not external ones.

It is at the end of this democratic period that Somalia moved into a socialist model. Siad Barre created the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party in 1976 to replace the Supreme Revolutionary Council, both of which Barre led as General-Secretary and Chairman respectively. Theoretically, the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party was to incorporate socialist ideology with Islam and was to supersede clan loyalties. Collective farms were set up and banks were nationalized.[206] The economic situation in Somalia prevented the full implementation of Barre's socialist ideas. He was forced by the International Monetary Fund to de-nationalize many state run businesses in order to receive a much-needed loan. A military coup was attempted because of the mishandling of the Ogaden War and deep budget cuts to the military. From this point on, Barre was less concerned with socialism and more concerned with maintaining power. While the

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[206] Library of Congress Country Studies. "Somalia: Supreme Revolutionary Council." http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query2/r?frd/cstdy:@field%28DOCID+so0033%29 Last accessed 2/14/13.

Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party remained in power throughout Barre's reign, the socialist ideals slowly slipped away.

Fukuyama's views on democracy echo Marx's views that communism is the final form of government. But if Marx can be wrong, and he is, then so can Fukuyama. Eventually, socialist Somalia collapsed, and the "failed state" period arose. In the course of a century, Somalia evolved from tribal to colonial to post-colonial to democratic to socialist to collapsed. Regardless of which of these is deemed the best, it is clear that Somalia's statehood is in flux. The nation-state model did not work in the past, and yet that is the model that the Transitional Federal Government and its Western backed supporters are pushing. They are trying to fit square pegs into round holes. Somalia's current status needs to be rethought to properly assess where it should go from here.

Democratization theory asserts that countries need the proper structural, institutional, and cultural foundations before they can successfully transition to democracy. In most cases, the country in question is transitioning from some form of authoritarian government to a democratic one. The idea is that once an authoritarian regime has improved the infrastructure and economy of a country to a sufficient point, the citizenry will want to exert more control over their government, leading to a transition to democracy. In some cases this transition is peaceful, in other cases not.

The Transitional Federal Government and its Western backers are attempting to force democratization on Somalia, but Somalia lacks the necessary structural, cultural, and, institutional foundation to support a strong democracy at this time. Structurally, Somalia has no railway system and only 2600 kilometers (1615 miles) of paved roads in

a country just slightly smaller than Texas. Internet penetration is under two percent, although it is growing. Democracy has a poor track record in Somali culture. Somalia's one attempt at democracy in the 1960s was brief, weak, and ended in a coup. Institutionally, the education system is in a shambles; the healthcare system is severely under-resourced; and the legal system is clan based (*xeer*), shari'a based, or run by mezzanine groups, depending where in the country one happens to be.

*Xeer* is the traditional, clan-based legal system. Like all legal systems, xeer is subject to interpretation, but there are a few fundamental components to the system. Xeer is compensation-based rather than punishment-based. For crimes such as murder or theft, payment is made to the victim or his family. There is no official court system, and each case is heard at the lowest level. This could mean the case is kept with a family, extended family, sub-clan, or clan. Xeer is an old system and has not modernized. As such, it runs afoul of modern human rights standards, especially with concerns toward women. If a woman's husband dies, she is often forced to marry a male relative of her spouse. If a wife dies, her sister is often forced to marry the widower. Rape victims are often made to marry their attackers. Girls are often forced to marry someone as payment.[207]

Samuel Huntington famously wrote of the three waves of democracy (the early nineteenth century to 1920s rise of fascism, post-World War II to 1962, and 1974 with the overthrow of Portugal's dictatorship).[208] In each of these cases the move from a non-democratic society to a democratic one came from the inside. The people sought a

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[207]Andre Le Sage. "Stateless Justice in Somalia: Formal and Informal Rule of Law Initiatives." Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue Report, July 2005. 32-38.
[208] Samuel P. Huntington. "After Twenty Years: The Future of the Third Wave." Journal of Democracy 8.4 (1997) Pgs. 3-12.

democratic government but it was not imposed on them. Democratization was allowed to develop naturally. That is not being allowed to happen in Somalia.

Sorensen's theory of the post-modern state looks broadly at the world and how all states may evolve, but his theory works, at least partially, for failed states as well. Sorensen views the post-modern state as the logical successor to the modern nation-state. As economies spread across borders and as interaction between cultures becomes more frequent, the post-modern state arises. The existence of the post-modern state requires that there be a nation-state first. But what if the nation-state does not exist? If the strong federal government that is most common throughout the world does not exist in failed states, people of those states adapt. Religious groups, warlords, pirates, small political groups, clans, businesses, foreign aid and non-governmental organizations all serve to fill the vacuum left by a lack of federal government. They provide food, water, power, education and medical treatment. Cell phone towers are being erected all over Somalia.[209] Private businessmen operate electric grids, water and plumbing services, air and seaports, and open private schools.[210] Rather than expanding the cross-cultural engagement that Sorensen requires for the post-modern state, the failed states turn inward and project a sense of self and cultural uniqueness, while the powers within the failed state provide security and financial opportunities.

By no means is this perfect. Weber and Rotberg are correct in that violence seems to be tied to the success or failure of a state, and in these more chaotic

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[209] Joseph Winter. "Telecoms Thriving in Lawless Somalia." 19 Nov. 2004 BBC News. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4020259.stm Last accessed 9/6/11.
[210] Ken Menkhaus. "Somalia's 20-year Experiment in Hybrid Governance." Al-Shahid Network Aug. 12, 2012. http://english.alshahid.net/archives/30841 Last accessed 11/2/12.

environments violence is commonplace. But by labeling these states as failed, we are

dismissing all that is happening within them. Certainly citizens of failed states need

assistance, and it would be better if there were a government that was seen as legitimate

by the international community so legal trade (not just drugs and weapons) could resume.

That would benefit the people greatly. But in the meantime, it needs to be understood

that these countries, troubled and unorthodox as they may be, have not yet failed.

Francis Fukayama offers a rather simplistic explanation for state failure. He

simply blames the end of the Cold War. According to Fukayama, the end of the Cold

War left a number of weak states in Europe (the Balkans) the Middle East and Central

Asia.[211]

It is true that with the collapse of the Soviet Union, many of its client states were

left without a superpower backer. It is also true that many states broke off from the

former USSR and were in a weaker position thn they were during the Cold War, but that

alone cannot account for failed states around the world. Fukayama acknowledges failed

states in Africa but does not link them to the end of the Cold War, undermining his own

argument.

Furthermore, Fukayama argues that as these states were transitioning from

authoritarian governments to other forms of government, they did not receive institutional

support from more stable countries. This lack of support negatively affected the

development of the new states. Fukayama's theories are appropriate in some cases,

Bosnia and Serbia, for example, but not as a general failed-state theory. Not all failed or

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[211] Francis Fukayama. *State-building: Governance and World Order in the 21$^{st}$ Century*. (New York: Cornell University Press, 2004). P. x

failing states can simply be linked to the Cold War. And what would be made of any future states that failed, as the Cold War ended twenty year ago.

Chester Crocker, former Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, has a more complex and multi-faceted view of state failure. One possible reason for state failure is the corruption of leaders (Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe, for example).[212] It is also possible that the elite within a state become involved in criminal enterprises (Jean Francois Bayart has a similar view of the relationship between elites and criminals and its effects on a nation-state).[213] Crocker agrees with Fukayama on one point, that a transition from an authoritarian government can lead to state failure. Crocker also points out that states that lack foreign support often fail. Does this mean there is a moral/economic/security responsibility for strong states to support weak states? Crocker believes there is. He argues that the "War on Terror" is misleading and will not be successful unless failed states are addressed. Non-state terror organizations can move from one failed state to another. Until they have no place to go, no amount of drone attacks will lead to their defeat.

Crocker's ideas are a bit more comprehensive than Fukayama's. Corruption can certainly lead to state failure, be it a corrupt leader or a corrupt elite or both. Exploiting natural resources for personal gain rather than for the benefit of the people, or turning a blind eye to corruption or criminal operations because criminals are paying off government officials are all possible sources for the weakening and failure of a state.

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[212] Chester Crocker. "Engaging Failing States." *Foreign Affairs* Sept./Oct. 2003. Vol. 82 Issue 5.
[213] See Jean-Francois Bayart. *The Criminalization of the State in Africa*. (International African Institute, 1999).

There is a place where Fukayama, Crocker and Bayart collide. All agree that a state's history can dramatically affect its present. Fukayama sees the authoritarian rule during the Cold War and its eventual ending as a root cause of state instability and failure. Bayart, looking at Africa, sees the colonial period as one that greatly affected the modern day African nation state. Bayart's argument is that African states have deep and significant ties to criminal organizations that deal in drug smuggling, money laundering and any number of other illicit activities. He argues that the elites that make up the governments in many African nations have a deep desire to hold onto power.

Crocker agrees with Bayart that criminal activity and corruption of government officials are significant, but he downplays the connection to crime and colonialism. Instead, he argues that the transition from colonial rule to that of independence created an environment in which corruption could exist. The colonial period is, therefore, significant for the modern failed state but not in the way Bayart argues.

Susan Woodward has correctly pointed out that what really matters when it comes to state failure are the consequences.[214] Beyond potentially providing a safe haven for terrorist groups or drug cartels, failed states lead to massive numbers of refugees, potential food shortages, and any number of humanitarian crises. It is in the best interest of everyone to avoid state failure in the first place, but that is not what happens. Foreign nations only get involved when a state has failed or is close to failing. As a consequence, the aid that foreign nations provide is humanitarian in nature and not political. The

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[214] Susan L. Woodward. "Fragile States." Paper presented to the "States and Security" Learning Group at the Peace and Social Justice meeting of the Ford Foundation, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, November 29, 2004

concern is limited to dealing with the immediate crisis and not fixing any long-term problems.

There also needs to be a way to return political legitimacy to a governing body in a state in which government institutions do not exist. To take Somalia as an example, as of this writing the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), which is backed by the U.S., U.N. and other nations and organizations, has control of a few blocks of Mogadishu and nothing else. Warlords, Islamist groups and pirates have assumed authority and control over large sections. They establish laws, set up businesses, schools, medical facilities, and so on. While not viewed as legitimate by the international community, they do have authority over the land and inhabitants, while the TFG is seen as legitimate by the international community yet has no practical authority whatsoever.

Another critical question is what is to be done about unorthodox states? Despite the disagreements over the label given to these states, there is agreement that there are states with existing humanitarian crises, excesses of violence, and lack the internal governmental support to address these issues. In the past, isolating these states could be a tool to induce change within the borders, but that seems less and less effective today. If stable states opt not to do business with unorthodox states, then non-governmental actors will. Action Africa Help International has been working in Somalia to provide healthcare; Adventist Development and Relief Agency provides water, sanitation, and food; the International Committee for the Development of Peoples provides primary and vocational education, and so on. These aid groups fulfill healthcare and educational needs that are normally the purview of a government. Additionally, even if stable states do

engage with unorthodox states, NGOs and aid groups still do as well.  In other words, an unorthodox state can still survive with or without the assistance of more stable nations.  It is true that NGOs will pull out if a situation gets exceedingly dangerous, but they are often the last to leave a chaotic country and among the first to re-enter a chaotic country. That said, the more stable nations cannot afford to let the unorthodox states engage with non-states actors (terrorist groups) as they might prove a threat to their own national security.

**A Radical Rethinking**

The Western powers that have long dominated the globe have all had the opportunity to flourish, grow, succeed, or fail with relatively little interference. Even Russia, long the West's enemy, was given that opportunity. An evolutionary process was allowed to happen. This has not been the case with unorthodox states. Somalia did not evolve naturally from a tribal society to a nation-state; it was dragged there. How, then, can it be expected to sustain a nation-state existence? Given the manner in which Somalia came into being, it is understandable that democracy did not take root. During the end of the Siad Barre regime and through the warlord period, we see numerous little fiefdoms throughout Somalia. If left alone and given time, who knows what would have happened in Somalia. But the West, whether for legitimate humanitarian reasons or due to modern-day colonial motivations, has not given Somalia the opportunity to develop naturally. This has hindered Somalia's progress, not helped it.

The line between abandoning a state to failure and impeding its natural development is a fine one.  Moyo advocates cutting off most aid to African nations to

allow them to develop stable economies on their own. This may be over-correcting and would cause its own set of issues. The same challenges are seen in the overall development of states: On one hand the state needs to be allowed to develop on its own and evolve in a natural way, yet it is difficult from a humanitarian perspective to allow a state to sink into chaos.

The state of nature is the hypothetical space that exists prior to the formation of a state. As described by Thomas Aquinas or Thomas Hobbes, the state of nature is a primal place largely based on war and chaos. Any type of government (state of society) would therefore be preferable to the state of nature. Hobbes, writing after the end of the English Civil War, concluded that democracy, monarchy, or any form of government, is preferable to "the miseries, and horrible calamities, that accompany" war.[215] An argument can be made that an unorthodox state exists in a state of nature. This is not to suggest that those living within the unorthodox state are somehow primal, just that on a societal level the unorthodox state exists at a particular point along the developmental scale. Hobbes' theory would suggest that democracy is not necessarily required to move Somalia out of its current status. Rather any form of government could do so. This would include a religiously based Islamic government.

The problem with developing a list of 'answers' to the so-called failed-state problem is one of implementation. Obviously, reestablishing some type of law and improving economic matters are necessary for stabilizing states such as these. But short of overwhelming force, how does one establish the rule of law? To use the Somalia example again, until recently the country has a parliament made up of members of

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[215] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*. (Wilder Publications, 1651). p. 109.

various tribes, most of whom live outside the country that they represent. How can they claim to be an authoritative body if they cannot step foot inside the country they claim to govern? If the goal is stability within a given country, western powers may have to do that which is politically unsavory--deal with Islamists. The two groups that have had the best track record of establishing some semblance of stability in Somalia are the Islamist groups in the south and the pirate clans in Puntland. It may be in the best interest of the U.S. and other Western states to deal with these groups directly, much like what is taking place between the U.S. and some of the more moderate members of the Taliban in Afghanistan. Obviously, many conditions will have to be established, such as transparence regarding the disbursement of funds, assistance with apprehending known terrorists in a given region, and so on. But some type of working relationship between non-state actors like Ahlu Sunna, a religiously moderate militia group, for example, and stable governments could lead to a stabilization of a currently failing state. This is by no means a perfect solution, and it will be fraught with issues, but the alternative is to continue with the status quo, and it is clear that is not working.

Andre Le Sage has argued that there should be a harmonization of legal systems in Somalia.[216] There is no single authority when it comes to justice in Somalia. The TFG, while able to create a transition government, was unable to craft a strong justice system that superseded the other various court systems. Creating a justice system that is understandable and applied all across Somalia is clearly needed to stabilize the country. That legal system does not need to be based on a Western model, however. It should be accessible and familiar to Somalis. A legal system based in xeer, shari'a and mezzanine

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[216] Le Sage, 53-58.

law codes would be uniquely Somali. It could also prevent groups who have a vested interest in a particular legal system from rebelling. In other words, if a system were established that ignored xeer, proponents of the clan-based system might simply ignore it. If, however, xeer is a part of a national justice system, then its proponents have a vested interest in seeing it succeed.

A harmonization of Somalia's various legal systems would not solve all its problems by any means, but it would be a good step in creating a less chaotic environment. It would bring together groups that do not necessarily see eye-to-eye at the moment and possibly create an environment in which they can work together. Ideally, other cooperative efforts such as repairing the infrastructure, economy, and education system, will follow suit.

The failed-state model sees the Western idea of state as correct and other ideas as faulty. As was mentioned in chapter two, Basil Davidson has argued that one of the impacts of colonialism was that it halted naturally evolving political systems in Africa and superimposed ideas of state that came from elsewhere, not African cultures and histories. In this chapter, I have shown that the idea of state's evolving is not new; it is what led to the Westphalian model of the nation-state, after all. But that evolution was stunted in much of Africa, including Somalia. Instead, a system developed in a tribe-less, clan-less, largely Christian continent was forced on a continent that has tribes, clans, and a variety of religions, including Islam. It did not work. The result has often been the emergence of strongmen and corruption. What followed in Somalia was dictatorship, warlords, and the development of an extremist version of Islam.

Chapter 6

DICTATORSHIP, WARLORDISM, AND THE RISE OF THE ISLAMISTS

It has now been established that Islamism is a form of political resistance in Somalia. Mohammed Hassan's Islam resistance of the colonial powers; the Somali Islamic League's resistance to the missionary efforts during the trusteeship; Sheikh Mohamed Moallim Hassan's resistance to the Siad Barre regime all are examples of Islamism as a tool of resistance to the dominant political power.

It is also true that since the fall of the Siad Barre regime, political power has been inconsistent and dispersed among a multitude of players. The Islamist groups since Barre's fall have been concerned not just with resistance but with governance. They are no longer objecting to the status quo but are seeking to amass power themselves. This chapter will describe the environment in which these Islamist groups rise. First, I will explore Siad Barre's rise to power and his subsequent fall. This will lead into the warlord period and the international intervention that followed. Finally, the short but significant reign of the Islamic Courts Union, the first truly powerful Islamist group in Somalia, will be described.

**Coup d'état to Revolution**

The independent Somali Republic lasted nine years. Somalia was granted independence in 1960, at the end of the Italian trusteeship. Aden Abdullah Osman Daar, a popular politician and high-ranking member of the Somali Youth League, was elected the first president. Daar lost re-election in 1967 and graciously handed over power to his

opponent Abdirashid Ali Shermarke, marking the first time an African leader willingly gave up power after an election.

Shermarke's tenure as president would not last long, however. On October 15, 1969 Shermarke was shot dead by one of his bodyguards. One week later, on October 21, the Somali Army, under the leadership of Siad Barre, staged a bloodless coup and took power. The motivation for Shermarke's assassination is not clear and may not have been related to the subsequent coup. Barre and the Supreme Revolutionary Council seized control, banned all political parties, and suspended the constitution.[217] They renamed the country the Somali Democratic Republic.

Barre had been a member of the colonial police and later the Somali Army once the country gained independence. In the 1960s, Barre participated in a variety of training operations with the Soviet Army and was greatly influenced by the experience. He became a proponent of a socialist governmental system. Barre developed a cult of personality similar to the type that existed in the early days of the Soviet Union. Large posters of him were placed around the country, and he was referred to as the "Victorious Leader."[218] On the one-year anniversary of the coup, then-President Barre declared Somalia a nation based on scientific socialism; this socialism was not based on class struggle but on the elimination of tribal differences.[219]  Barre envisioned a nation built on three principals: the development of the community, socialism, and Islam.  One of the goals of scientific socialism was the exclusion of the clan as a significant force in

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[217] Helen Chapin Metz, ed. *Somalia: A Country Study*. Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1992. "Coup d'Etat" http://countrystudies.us/somalia/20.htm Last accessed 7/17/12.
[218] Ibid, "Siad Barre and Scientific Socialism."
[219] The Library of Congress: Country Studies: A Country Study- Somalia (Said Barre and Scientific Socialism).  http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs.sotoc.html#so0071.

government.  Barre made no effort to include members of all clans in his cabinet, and, in

fact, tended to favor his own clan, the Darood, even while he waged a massive anti-

tribalism campaign designed to eliminate clan rivalry.  Images representing tribalism

were burned; fines were placed on traditional tribal customs, and the word "comrade"

was introduced into the vernacular as a replacement for the tribal term "cousin."[220]

Barre was by no means an Islamist, but he knew that to completely dismiss Islam

in a country that was almost entirely Muslim would be political suicide.  Islam was a core

element of Somali life and culture, so Barre had to project the façade that Islam should be

central to the government as well.  He also made it clear that he saw no contradiction

between the ideology of socialism and Islam. He saw Islam as "continually evolving" and

believed it "cannot be interpreted in a static sense, but rather as a dynamic source of

inspiration for continuous advancement."[221]  In this way his views on Islam were

somewhat progressive. He felt that the government "must go beyond the concept of

charity…to attain the highest possible rate of general welfare for all."[222]

The Barre government used radio, the most popular medium for dispensing

information and propaganda, to reinforce the concept that Islam and socialism could

work together. A typical broadcast would include readings from the Qur'an, followed by

commentary, encouraging proverbs, and, last, excerpts from political speeches. It was

done "in such a way that all coalesced in a seamless continuum. In this fashion, ends and

beginnings were constantly juxtaposed, and scientific socialism was made to appear the

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[220] I.M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali: Fourth Edition* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2002), 209-11.
[221] Ibid., 219.
[222] Ibid.

cornerstone of Somali traditional culture."[223]  Abdurahman M. Abdullahi argues that "the

Somali state was, on the one hand, trying to show its firm commitment to Islamic

symbolism by exploiting it to fit into the state objectives and, on the other hand, taking a

quasi-secular approach in all practical actions."[224]

Barre's rule was never absolute and was met with a number of challenges. The

devastating Ogaden War was a significant tactical mistake that severely weakened his

grip on power. The Ogaden is a large region of eastern Ethiopia that principally is

ethnically Somali. Somalia has long claimed it as its own, a major point of conflict

between Somalia and Ethiopia.


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In the 1970s Somalia's military was growing with support from the Soviet Union.

The Soviets supplied the Somalis with arms and a few thousand military advisors.[226]

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[223] I.M. Lewis, *Blood and Bone: The Call of Kinship in Somali Society* (Trenton: The Red Sea Press, 1994), 156.

[224] Abdurahman M Abdullahi, "Recovering the Somali State: The Islamic Factor," in *Somalia: Diaspora and State Reconstruction in the Horn of Africa,* ed. A. Osman Farah, Mammo Muchie and Joakim Gundel (London: Adonis & Abbey, 2007), 208.

[225] "Ethiopia: A Hidden Genocide." The Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation. http://aipr.wordpress.com/2011/07/13/genprev-in-the-news-13-july-2011/

While Somalia's military strength was improving, Ethiopia was going through a period of turmoil. Ethiopia was experiencing a famine, and the government's effort to cover up the extent of the devastation was exposed. This plus the growing popularity of Marxist-Leninist ideology led to the fall of Emperor Haile Selassie's government. Selassie was removed from power by the Derg in 1974 and placed under house arrest. He died a year later, officially due to complications from prostate surgery although there is a widespread belief that he was murdered. The Derg ("committee") was originally established as a group within the Ethiopian military charged with maintaining order and preventing desertions. It quickly gained power, and upon toppling Selassie it became a military, socialist government, also backed by the Soviet Union and Cuba.

The Derg's transition to power was not a smooth one. Numerous groups emerged and opposed the Marxist government. This led to Mengistu Haile Mariam, the chairman of the Derg and Ethiopian head of state, to initiate the Red Terror in which up to 500,000 political opponents were killed. One of the protest groups that emerged upon the Derg's ascension was the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF), an ethnically Somali group in the Ogaden that seeks a return of the region to Somalia.[227] Barre was supplying them with weapons starting in 1975.

All of this chaos next door told Barre that the time was right to take back the Ogaden and realize his dream of a Greater Somalia. He had newer and more tanks than

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[226] Donna R. Jackson. *Jimmy Carter and the Horn of Africa: Cold War Policy in Ethiopia and Somalia* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2007). Pg. 8.

[227] Gebru Tareke The Ethiopian Revolution: War in the Horn of Africa (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009) Pg. 187.

Ethiopia, as well as more ground-to-air missile capabilities and better artillery.[228] In 1977 Somalia invaded the Ogaden.

The war's outcome, however, hinged not on the military capabilities of either the Ethiopians or the Somalis but on the Soviet Union. As the U.S.S.R was backing both sides of the conflict, it was in its interest to see the war end quickly. As it became apparent that a ceasefire was not going to happen, the Soviets decided to abandon the Somalis and throw their support behind Ethiopia. All military aid to Somalia ended. Ethiopia now had the full support of the Soviet Union, and Somalia had no superpower backer. Barre knew there was no way he could take on a Soviet-backed Ethiopia and win, so he began to make overtures toward the United States. First, Somalia kicked all Soviet and Cuban diplomats and citizens out of the country. It was a very public showing that Somalia was breaking ties with the Soviets. In December 1977 Somali Minister of Mineral and Water Resources Hussein Abdulkador Kassim went to Washington, D.C. and asked the U.S. government for military assistance in the Ogaden War.[229] The U.S. was unwilling to support the Somalis' war in the Ogaden but did want to reward them for breaking with the Soviets. The U.S. pledged six million dollars in aid for refugees and drought victims. This was not going to help Somalia win the war, but it was the beginning of a new relationship with a new superpower backer. Without military support, however, the war was lost, and by March 1978 Somalia had fully pulled out of the Ogaden.

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[228] Ibid Pg. 183
[229] Jackson, pg. 82-83.

The effects of the war were devastating for Barre politically. His once powerful

military had been decimated, and he lost his major backer and supplier of aid. Granted he

now had the support of the U.S., but that relationship was just beginning. Some members

of the military were so upset about the handling of the war that they plotted a coup

attempt against Barre. The coup failed, and the plotters were arrested and killed. One of

the plotters, Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, managed to flee to Ethiopia where he formed the

Somali Salvation Democratic Front in opposition to Barre's leadership. The vast majority

of the plotters were of the Majeerteen clan. Barre took out his wrath on the clan by

denying them access to water reservoirs. Clan members and thousands of herd animals

died as a result. Barre's troops also participated in the mass raping of Majeerteen women.

Clan resistance continued to be a problem for Barre. In 1981 members of the

Isaaq clan formed the Somali National Movement (SNM) with the goal of removing

Barre from power. He once again responded by denying the clan areas water. Again the

result was the death of people, animals, and grazing land, and mass rape was reported.

The SNM was not the only threat to Barre's leadership. Formed in 1989, the

United Somali Congress (USC) was made up exiled Somalis.[230] Mohammed Farah Aidid

was the commander of the military wing of the USC and a longtime rival of Barre. Both

Barre and Aidid were military officers who hoped to one day lead Somalia's military.

Barre was the senior man and eventually got the job. As president, Barre probably viewed

Aidid as a threat and had him arrested and, eventually, banished from the country.

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[230] Isabelle Duyvesteyn. *Clausewitz and African War: Politics and strategy in Liberia and Somalia*. (New York: Frank Cass, 2005). p41.

The USC under Aidid's leadership was a loyal and potent fighting force. His successes in fighting the government troops eventually led to Aidid's being named USC chairman. The USC was largely made up of members of the Hawiye clan who had become disillusioned with Barre's leadership and had begun to resist. The Hawiye occupy Mogadishu and the surrounding areas and held some prominent political positions. When they began to protest, Barre attacked Hawiye areas. But he was unable to break the Hawiye as he had other clans.

By 1990 Barre was losing control over more and more areas of the country and in January 1991 fled the country. He lived briefly in Nairobi, Kenya, but his stay there was met by protests. He eventually moved to Nigeria where he would die of heart failure four years later.

All of these separate forces had accomplished their goal--the removal of Siad Barre. But his absence created a vacuum that no single person or group was able to fill. The dictatorship of Siad Barre may have ended, but the Somali Civil War had begun.

**Civil War and the Rise of the Warlords**

After the United Somali Congress forced Barre to flee the country, Ali Mahdi Mohammed, one of its wealthy and prominent members, was named interim president of Somalia. Mohammed was president in name only, however. Military strength rested with Aidid, members of the Somali National Movement, and other rising militia leaders. A conference was held in Djibouti in July 1991. The conference confirmed the notion that Ali Mahdi was to be president, but Aidid rejected this outcome. Ali Mahdi refused to recognize the role that Aidid played in defeating Barre, upsetting Aidid and his followers.

Aidid in turn refused to recognize Ali Mahdi's leadership. Furthermore, there was an expectation that the fighters who defeated Barre would form a new Somali army. Ali Mahdi instead asked that they turn in their weapons and offered them no guarantee of future employment.[231] Ali Mahdi's feckless leadership cost him. His presidency lasted only a few months, and by the end he was really only in control of part of Mogadishu. That was key, however. Mogadishu has always been the prize in Somalia, and Ali Madhi still had control over parts of it. That meant Aidid did not control the entire city, and no one controlled the country.

By 1992 the fighting between Ali Mahdi and Aidid was so destructive that the U.N. felt compelled to get involved. It negotiated a ceasefire between the two warlords and began a humanitarian mission in Somalia--United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I). UNOSOM's mission was to monitor the ceasefire and bring aid the refugees created by the war. UNOSOM I was more or less a failure. The ceasefire did not last, food meant for refugees was stolen by the militias, and Aidid changed his mind about the presence of U.N. personnel and demanded they leave.[232]

In response to the violence still occurring in Somalia, the United States began Operation Restore Hope, also known as United Task Force (UNITAF). The mission was to use military force to create an environment in which humanitarian aid could be conducted safely. UNITAF lasted from December 1992 to March 1993 and was considered a moderate success. The port and airport were secured, allowing for the improved flow of aid. In March 1993, the mission transitioned again, this time to

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[231] Ibid. 42-43
[232] United Nations Operation in Somalia 1
http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/unosom1backgr2.html Last accessed 8/12/12.

UNOSOM II. The most well-known event during the two years of UNOSOM II was the Battle of Mogadishu, also known as the Black Hawk Down incident. The result of the Battle of Mogadishu was the death of 18 U.S. soldiers and one Malaysian soldier and approximately 1,000 Somali fighters. As a result, all U.S. troops were pulled from Somalia by March 1994.

**The Islamic Courts Union**

It was during this period that we see an increase in Islamist activity and influence. As we saw in the previous chapter, al-Itihaad al-Islaami was having some marginal success in establishing Islamist rule outside of Mogadishu. Islamist forces begin to exert themselves in Mogadishu as well. By 1992 Mogadishu was essentially divided into two parts. Ali Mahdi Muhammad and Ali Dhere controlled the north, and Aidid ran the south. The majority population in the north was of the Abgaal clan, whereas the south had multiple clans, none of which was dominant. Crime was rampant in north Mogadishu, so in 1994 Ali Mahdi and Ali Dhere allowed the establishment of Islamic courts. Originally supported by the business community, the shari'a-based courts brought some order to the rampant chaos that existed in Somalia. Each court was led by a scholar or judge, and each was given significant freedom in interpreting law. No single school of Islamic law was mandated for all courts to use. Of the eleven courts that would eventually form the Islamic Courts Union, only two were considered extremely conservative.[233] The motivation for the business leaders varied. Some insisted that the purpose of the courts

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[233] "Islamic Clerics Combat Lawlessness in Somalia," The Christian Science Monitor 13 July 1999. Accessed online at http://www.csmonitor.com/1999/0713/p1s2.html.

was to provide stability to the state; however, others feared they were the first step in establishing an Islamist regime in Somalia.

The courts were initially reluctant to get involved in political matters. Most of their civil duties dealt with "sanctifying marriages and divorces, determining inheritance rights, and settling business disputes."[234]

The courts were welcomed by the general populace. Much as was the case under the rule of al-Itihaad a few years earlier, when shari'a was implemented qaat use by the militias declined, as did abuse of civilians by the militias. In extreme cases, *hudud* punishments were meted out. Security increased dramatically, and life returned to a semi-normal state.[235] Food prices dropped by up to twenty percent, and the high taxes that had to be paid to warlords were abolished.[236] This is an example of the initial success that Islamist groups have in Somalia. While there was some criticism of the hudud punishments, it was not enough to cause pushback against the Courts. However, critics of the courts accused them of favoring their own sub-clan, and non-Abgaal clan members were treated harsher than the Abgaal. The courts also established a tax system that upset many members of the business community, especially traders.[237] In the case of the North Mogadishu Courts, it was not the infringement upon individual rights but the clear clan bias that led to the Court's downfall.

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[234] Andre Le Sage. "Stateless Justice in Somalia: Formal and Informal Rule of Law Initiatives." Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue Report, July 2005.

[235] Roland Marchal, "Islamic Political Dynamics in the Somali Civil War: Before and After September 11" *Islamism and its Enemies in the Horn of Africa*, ed. Alex de Waal (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 133.

[236] Shaul Shay. *Somalia between Jihad and Restoration*. (London: Transaction Publishers, 2008). p95.

[237] It would be a mistake to think that Somalia's status as a failed state means there is not a surprisingly strong business community. While there is very little industry, the import-export business is quite substantial. See U.S. State Department, "Somalia: Country Reports on Human Rights Practices" February, 2001. Online at http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2000/af/780.htm and Menkhaus, p. 27.

The North Mogadishu Court was hampered by in-fighting between Ali Mahdi and Ali Dhere. Ali Mahdi sought to establish security in Mogadishu, whereas Ali Dhere saw the court as a means to establish an Islamic state.[238] In addition to the division between the court's leaders, the political leaders of the Abgaal decided to curb the power of the courts. They divided them along sub-clan lines, causing a split within them and their eventual dissolution. Once the courts were gone, north Mogadishu returned to chaos. Criminal activity in the north equaled that of the southern half of the city.

Once again, Islamists had succeeded in temporarily establishing security and the rule of law. Just like Al-Itihaad, however, they collapsed after a few years, this time not from an outside influence but from the most influential force within Somalia, the clan. This did not signal the end of the shari'a-based courts, however. General Aidid opposed the establishment of Islamic courts in south Mogadishu because he saw them as a threat to his authority. But Aidid's death in 1996 opened the door to the courts. Some religious leaders and businessmen, under the leadership of Hassan Dahir Aweys, decided to establish Islamic courts in south Mogadishu, taking into account lessons learned from the experience in the Northern part of the city. As mentioned earlier, it was inter-clan rivalry that caused the downfall of the courts in the North. Since South Mogadishu did not have a dominant clan, the Southern courts were established along clan lines, so a particular court only had authority over its own clan.[239]

The South Mogadishu courts had their difficulties as well. Given the size of Mogadishu and that each court only had jurisdiction over its own clan members, it

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[238] Le Sage. P. 42.
[239] Marchal, 135.

became clear that some form of inter-court cooperation was needed. To that end, the Shari'a Implementation Council was established with Hassan Dahir Aweys as Secretary-General and Sheikh Ali Dheere, former leader of the Islamic courts in North Mogadishu, as Chairman.[240] The purpose of the council was to resolve any inter-court issues and make sure there was consistency among the courts.

By the time the Transitional National Government (TNG), formed at the Arta Conference in Djibouti, returned to Somalia in 2000, the Islamic courts in Mogadishu were firmly established. The TNG rightfully saw the courts as a threat to its authority and attempted to damage them. It hired some of the shari'a courts' judges and militia members, but not all of them.[241] The goal was to weaken the courts and divide the loyalties of its members. Even Aweys briefly worked for the TNG court system.

As a political organization, the Transitional National Government was doomed from the start. While it claimed authority, the reality on the ground was that the courts controlled Mogadishu. They brought security to the city and controlled the militias. Some leaders of the courts, such as Aweys, had political ambitions and could not come to any agreement with the TNG. Ethiopia opposed the TNG and did nothing to support its gaining control of the country. By 2003, the TNG mandate had ended, never having established any real control or authority over the country.

While the Transitional National Government did briefly weaken the courts, it was never able to fully eliminate them. When the TNG mandate ended, the courts came back stronger than ever. In 2004 the Shari'a Implementation Council became the Supreme

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[240] International Crisis Group, "Somalia's Islamists" (Brussels, December 2005)
http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3830
[241] Le Sage, 46.

Council of Islamic Courts of Somalia.[242]  This new council dramatically expanded the courts and their militias. Additionally, Aweys attempted to expand the authority of the courts beyond policing into the enforcement of morality,[243] such as breaking up mixed-gender parties and closing down movie theaters showing films deemed inappropriate.[244] These moves were unpopular with the general public and the business establishment, which began to feel the courts were going too far. If left alone, it is possible that, due to these tensions, within a few years the courts would have fallen apart.  However the creation of yet another government, the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), at the end of 2004 reinvigorated them.[245]

The TFG's president, former warlord Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, was widely known as an anti-Islamist with close ties to the Ethiopian government. In a country that views Ethiopia as its sworn enemy, this made Ahmed an easy target. The courts used the people's hatred of Ethiopia as a way to attack Ahmed.  Many people who were against the courts sided with them anyway, in strong opposition to Ahmed and the TFG.  Despite the opposition, Ahmed remained TFG President and was the officially recognized President of Somalia from 2004 to 2008.[246]

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[242] International Crisis Group, "Somalia's Islamists" (Brussels, December 2005) http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3830

[243] Menkhaus, Kenneth J. "Somalia and Somaliland: Terrorism, Political Islam and State Collapse" *Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa*, ed. Robert I. Rothberg (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2005), 37.

[244] International Crisis Group, "Can the Somali Crisis Be Contained?" (Brussels, August 2006) http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4333

[245] International Crisis Group, "Somalia's Islamists" (Brussels, December 2005) http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3830

[246] It could be argued that Yusuf's continued presence as the leader of Somalia and personal quest for power hurt the country more than it helped.  He was seen as being in bed with Ethiopia and his political in-fighting was a distraction from the real work that had to be done.

The United States has long feared that Somalia would become a hot bed of global terrorist activity.[247] These fears are based on a number of factors. First, Somalia is viewed as a failed state in which terrorist organizations could operate unhindered. Second, Somalia has a long coastline and relatively open borders that allow for the easy movement of personnel, money, and materiel. Third, the Islamist movements within the country could be seen as assisting, or at least not impeding, certain terrorist groups' activities. Lastly, the lack of security in the country has severely limited Western intelligence activities.[248]

Despite all of this, Somalia has not been the terrorist safe-haven many had feared. Somalia has, at most, been a transit point for global jihadists but not a permanent home. For example, Somalia has harbored (and may still be harboring) some of those suspected in the 1998 U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. Yet al-Qaeda does not have a significant presence in the country, nor has Somalia proven to be a major source of recruitment for al-Qaeda.[249] It is true that recently al-Shabaab announced that it was becoming a part of al-Qaeda, but there is good reason to doubt that relationship,.[250] which will be addressed in a later chapter. Osama bin Laden has claimed that al-Qaeda members were involved in the shooting down of the two Black Hawk helicopters in 1993. However, Fawaz A. Gerges contends that bin Laden has exaggerated al-Qaeda's

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[247] Sophia Tesfamariam, "Ethiopian Airstikes in Somalia: Violation of Geneva Conventions," *American Chronicle* 10 January 2007. http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/18949

[248] United States Institute of Peace Special Report No. 113: Terrorism in the Horn of Africa, January 2004. Accessed online at http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr113.pdf

[249] Menkhaus, 24

[250] Al-Jazeera "Al-Shabab join ranks with al-Qaeda" 2 February 2012. http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2012/02/201221054649118317.html Last accessed 8/12/12.

involvement in this incident for propaganda and recruitment purposes.[251] He argues that

bin Laden made contradictory statements regarding involvement in other terrorist attacks,

such as the 1995 Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia, and that by linking himself

with the successful defeat of the U.S. military in Somalia, he enhanced his anti-American

image. In a 1997 interview with Peter Arnett, bin Laden said that mujahidin trained in

Afghanistan fought in Somalia against the Americans, but he does not claim any personal

role in training or planning the operation nor does he give credit to al-Qaeda

specifically.[252]

Kenneth Menkhaus argues that terrorist organizations "prefer working within

weak, quasi-states rather than collapsed ones."[253]  Somalia might not actually be as safe

for foreign terrorist groups as it first appears. They run the risk of being betrayed and/or

extorted by local groups; this means most foreign terrorist activity tends to be short term.

Nevertheless, the U.S. continues to see Somalia as a potential threat. The U.S. has

been working with the local government in Somaliland, as well as clan leaders, militias,

the business establishment and other factions throughout Somalia to supply information

and/or facilitate the capture of suspected terrorists in Somalia.[254]  To do this, the U.S. has

had to work with groups that oppose each other and oppose the Transitional Federal

Government, which the U.S. officially supports.

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[251] Fawaz A. Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 53-55.
[252] Bruce Lawrence. *Messages to the World: The Statements of Osama bin Laden*. (New York: Verso, 2005) pp. 54-55.
[253] Menkhaus, 25
[254] International Crisis Group, "Can the Somali Crisis Be Contained?" (Brussels, August 2006) http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4333

By 2006, the Islamic courts had grown in strength and had started to distance themselves from their clans. In February 2006, a group of business leaders and warlords formed the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT). It is unclear whether ARPCT was founded at the prompting of the United States, but it is widely believed that the Central Intelligence Agency provided significant funding to it.[255]

The creation of the ARPCT was seen as a threat to the Islamic Courts Union. In February 2006, a series of street battles and assassinations began in Mogadishu. Though outmanned and outgunned, the militias of the ICU dominated the fighting, and by June had taken over the city. The courts managed to pit members of the same clan against each other in an effort to split clan allegiance to any one militia leader. Clans not involved in the initial fighting began to side with the ICU once they saw that the courts were winning. The members of the Islamic Courts Union militias were more dedicated to the cause than the street-level fighters of the Alliance, and some members of ARPCT abandoned the Alliance and joined the ICU, demonstrating that practicality mattered more than ideology.[256]

The speed of the Islamic Court Union's success in capturing Mogadishu came as a surprise to ARPCT and to the courts themselves, which had been established strictly as a judicial system, not as a governmental bureaucracy. Somali Islamism is not monolithic, and disagreements occurred among the courts concerning the exercise of their newly won authority. Many of the courts had a radical fundamentalist ideology influenced by the

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[255] NewsHour with Jim Lehrer "Islamist Control of Mogadishu Raises Concern of Extremist Future for Somalia" June 8, 2006. Online at http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/africa/jan-june06/somalia_06-08.html
[256] International Crisis Group, "Can the Somali Crisis Be Contained?" (Brussels, August 2006) http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4333

Wahhabi school of thought, whereas others were much more progressive in their thinking. The more progressive-minded courts supported democracy and viewed their role largely as one of a stabilizing force that would give Somalis a chance to form a government influenced by Islamic ideals and principals. The hardliners, on the other hand, envisioned the courts as the dominant social and political force in the country. Many have feared that Somalia under the ICU would have a look similar to Afghanistan under the Taliban, but because of the variety of viewpoints within the ICU a completely fundamentalist Islamic state seems unlikely.[257]

After winning in Mogadishu, the Islamic Courts Union began to contact Islamic courts in other cities in an effort to consolidate power. One week after its victory in Mogadishu, the ICU attacked and captured the city of Jowhar.[258] The ICU began talks with the Transitional Federal Government but never ceased its drive to consolidate power militarily. In an effort to protect the fledgling government, Ethiopia sent troops to Baidoa, the city in which the TFG was operating.[259] The ICU believed the capture of Baidoa and the elimination, or at least retreat, of the TFG would be its final step to controlling all of Somalia. By August 9, 2006, the ICU had captured the town of Beletuein along the Somali-Ethiopian border.[260] It captured the port city of Kismaayo in September in order to prevent the landing of an African Union peacekeeping force. By December, the Islamic Courts Union had captured approximately half the country.

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[257] CBS News "Somali Taliban-style Rebels Settle In" 25 August 2006. Online at http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/08/25/world/main1936698.shtml
[258] BBC News "Somali Islamist Capture Key Town" 14 June 2006 http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5078534.stm
[259] BBC News "Ethiopian Troops on Somali Soil" 20 July 2006 http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5198338.stm
[260] BBC News "Somali Islamists Take Key Town" 9 August 2006 http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4775753.stm

On December 20, the Islamic Courts Union attacked Baidoa. Ethiopia responded not only by sending reinforcements to the city but also by launching a full-scale invasion of Somalia. The ICU, while effective against warlords, proved no match for the professional Ethiopian army and retreated to Mogadishu. On December 25, Ethiopian planes bombed Mogadishu's airport, and by the 27th the Ethiopians had captured the city of Jowhar, just fifty miles outside Mogadishu. Knowing their defeat was imminent, the ICU forces withdrew from Mogadishu, and by December 28, Ethiopian troops and the Transitional Federal Government had retaken the city. With defeat inevitable, the ICU leadership, including Hassan Dahir Aweys, resigned.[261] The Islamic Courts Union as an organization and as a government was done, but the members splintered and formed other groups and began an Islamist insurgency directed against the TFG and the Ethiopian army, neither of which has much popular support.[262] New groups such as Hizbul Islam and the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia were formed but were quickly overshadowed by the former military wing of the ICU, al-Shabaab.

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[261] "Somalia: ICU Leaders Resign as Ethiopian Army Nears Capital" Somalinet.com 27 December 2006
[262] NewsHour with Jim Lehrer "Tensions Among Troops, Insurgents Fuel Further Violence in Somalia" 15 October, 2007 http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/africa/july-dec07/somalia_10-15.html.

Chapter 7

ISLAMIST GROUPS IN THE SOMALI CIVIL WAR

In the previous chapter we saw that the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) needed to use militias to enforce the rule of law. If the ICU were the government, the militias were the police and military. One of the more powerful of those militias was *Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen* (Movement of the Struggling Youth) or al-Shabaab. This chapter will look at al-Shabaab's rise to power and how it managed to become the main Islamist group in Somalia after the fall of the ICU. It is safe to say that the ICU's greatest achievement was its successful takeover and six-month rule of southern Somalia. But the Islamic Courts' second most significant contribution was the unleashing of al-Shabaab.

**Early al-Shabaab**

Arguably the most central figure in modern Somali Islamism is Hassan Dahir Aweys. Others may be more high profile, but Aweys has been a constant force in Somali Islamism since the 1990s. Aweys began his involvement with Islamism when he joined *al-Itihaad al-Islaami* (AIAI), as mentioned in a previous chapter. Aweys quickly became one of the leaders of that group and instrumental in AIAI's success in Luuq. AIAI's collapse was not the end of Aweys, and he eventually established and became chairman of the Islamic Courts Union. It was in his role as ICU leader that he helped establish the militia group al-Shabaab and turned leadership of al-Shabaab over to Aden Hashi Farah Ayro.

Ayro had trained in Afghanistan prior to 2001 and was the young leader of al-Shabaab.[263] While it appears that Ayro had little in the way of formal education (religious or secular), he did make an early impression on Hassan Dahir Aweys, and it was at Aweys' suggestion that Ayro went to train in Afghanistan.[264] While Aweys was a former Army officer and, therefore, had a military background, at this stage of his life he was more focused on his religion and what he saw as the proper implementation of Islamist principles on the greater Somali society. His younger protégé Ayro was the enforcer.

In 2005, shortly before the ICU managed its successful takeover of southern Somalia, Ayro emerged from under Aweys' shadow and undertook a controversial mission on his own. Ayro and his al-Shabaab militia seized a colonial-era Italian cemetery in Mogadishu and desecrated the graves. Leaders of the Islamic Courts Union were not pleased with Ayro's actions, but he argued that it was in keeping with Islamic teaching. However, when confronted by Islamic scholars about his actions, he was unable to justify them.[265] Regardless how the leadership felt, Ayro had made a name for himself and al-Shabaab.

Once the ICU fell, it fractured. Some of the less militant members formed a group called the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia and established a working relationship with the Transitional Federal Government. While still ostensibly an Islamist groups, its primary goal was the removal of Ethiopian forces and influence from Somalia. The members of al-Shabaab, however, were not inclined to ally themselves with the TFG

[263] Marc Englehart. "The Hour of the Islamists." Qantara March 16, 2006. http://en.qantara.de/The-Hour-of-the-Islamists/6252c6321i1p459/ Last accessed 8/29/12.
[264] International Crisis Group Report. "Counter-Terrorism in Somalia: Losing Hearts and Minds?" Africa Report No 95 11 July 2005. Pg. 6.
[265] Ibid. Pg. 6.

nor to give up their militant ways. As it turned out, they didn't need to. Al-Shabaab

became the most successful post-ICU group, capturing and holding more areas than

anyone else, including the TFG.

Al-Shabaab became the de facto government in the areas it held. First and

foremost, al-Shabaab sought to establish security and stability. This was a logical and

tactically smart move on its part. Any government, be it a democracy or a dictatorship, a

socialist state or a monarchy, has as its first priority the security of its people. If the

people do not feel they are relatively safe, there is a strong possibility they will rise up

against the government unable to provide that security. In the specific case of Somalia,

the issue of security is critically important because it has lacked it for decades. If a group

can stabilize a region, it is likely to get much of the support of the citizens of that region.

Al-Itihaad al-Islaami did it in Luuq, and the ICU did it in a good portion of Somalia. In

both of these cases, the Islamist group in question was met positively due to its ability to

stabilize the region and protect the citizenry. It was overreaching into people's private

lives that caused the eventual backlash. Al-Shabaab banned the use of *qaat,* which was

the source of a good deal of violence; it stopped the practice of bribery; and it

dramatically cut down the number of robberies.[266]

Much like its Islamist predecessors, al-Shabaab ran into problems when it, too,

intruded into people's personal lives. Al-Shabaab has banned men from shaving their

beards or wearing western-style haircuts, and in some cases they have forcibly cut a

man's hair with jagged implements such as broken bottles if his hairstyle is deemed

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[266] Human Rights Report "Harsh War Harsh Peace: Abuses by al-Shabaab, the Transitional Federal
Government, and AMISOM in Somalia." 2010. Pg. 22.

inappropriate.[267] Al-Shabaab banned western music and dancing. Daily prayer is mandatory. Women are required to wear a head covering. In some areas of the country the covering must be an *abaya*, a loose article of clothing that covers the entire body except for the face, hands, and feet, therefore eliminating any suggestion of what a woman's figure looks like. Women may also not be in situations where they could come into contact with men. This means that most women cannot work, as working in a business would most likely mean some contact with men.[268] Traditionally, Somali women operated small businesses like tea shops or fruit carts that naturally led to male contact. Many of these are now no longer operating. These are the same overreaching steps taken by previous Islamist groups. While many people acknowledge al-Shabaab's effectiveness at improving security and are thankful for it, the egregious intrusion into people's personal lives has caused many people to flee al-Shabaab-controlled areas.

One of al-Shabaab's most egregious activities has been the use of child soldiers. It is not uncommon for teenage boys to work for al-Shabaab either in exchange for payment or due to threats and/or peer pressure.[269] Those who resist the offers to join al-Shabaab are often killed themselves.[270] This sends a deeper message to other potential recruits--if you do not join al-Shabaab, your life may be in danger.

In addition to child soldiers, al-Shabaab has recruited Somali refugees and gotten them to return to Somalia to fight. The Dadaab refugee camp in Northern Kenya is home to a few hundred thousand Somalis, making it the largest refugee camp in the world. Al-

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[267] Ibid. Pg. 24.
[268] Ibid. Pgs. 23-28.
[269] Human Rights Report "So Much to Fear: War Crimes and Devastation in Somalia." 2008. Pg. 67.
[270] Ibid. Pgs. 68-69.

Shabaab has been known to recruit from within the camp. The exact nature of this recruitment is unclear, however, it is probably along the lines of the child recruitment, the use of promises of payment and/or threats to physical safety. The next chapter will address al-Shabaab's use of online recruiting of foreign fighters. .

Furthermore, legitimate threats to civilian populations are designed by al-Shabaab strictly for propaganda purposes.[271] Al-Shabaab fighters will go into densely populated areas, typically in Mogadishu, and launch a few mortars or artillery shells at African Union or Transitional Federal Government forces. They will then pack up quickly and leave the area. The AU or TFG forces, however, will launch retaliatory fire, resulting in the deaths or injury of large numbers of civilians. Al-Shabaab can in turn use these attacks on civilians for propaganda purposes, claiming that the AU and TFG are responsible for the deaths of innocent non-combatants.

Al-Shabaab attacked the Sufi practice of visiting the tombs of Sufi saints. Al-Shabaab sees this practice as idolatry and has desecrated a number of these tombs.[272]

The most notable characteristic of al-Shabaab, though, is its use of the *hudud* punishments. These punishments are the most severe under shari'a. They consist of floggings, amputations, and executions. Punishments are often meted out in public. Al-Shabaab members will gather up locals and take them to the site where the punishment is to take place. Some type of speech is given justifying the punishment. In the case of amputations, the severed hand or foot is often hung up in a public area.[273] It is clear that

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[271] Report of the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia, S/2012/91, March 10, 2010. Pg. 16.
[272] Human Rights Report "Harsh War Harsh Peace: Abuses by al-Shabaab, the Transitional Federal Government, and AMISOM in Somalia." 2010. Pg. 26.
[273] Ibid. Pg. 34.

this is not a tactic used simply to punish the criminal, but is intended as a deterrent to everyone who might consider opposing al-Shabaab.

One of the most egregious instances of capital punishment is the case of Aisha Ibrahim Duhulow, a 13-year-old girl who had been gang raped by three men. For her "sexual misconduct," she was arrested and sentenced to death. Her execution took place on October 27, 2008. She was taken to a stadium and buried up to her head in the sand. Official reports from al-Shabaab claimed that Duhulow was "happy with the punishment under Islamic law," but witnesses say she struggled and had to be forced into the hole in the ground.[274] A group of about fifty men then stoned her to death. At one point it was unclear whether she had died. She was dug up and checked by nurses. It was determined she was still alive, and she was reburied, and the stoning continued.

The stoning, amputations, or even the forced hair cutting are all public so as to demonstrate the power of al-Shabaab. These punishments are warnings to everyone else of what can happen if they violate al-Shabaab's interpretation of law or challenge its authority. Al-Shabaab has created an environment in which it rules by fear. The claim, of course, is that al-Shabaab members are implementing God's law and rule in a manner in keeping with a proper Islamic society. But interpretation of law, secular law and certainly religious law, is open to a wide variety of interpretation. Al-Shabaab wants no challenge to its interpretation of law and to ensure that, rules by fear.

It should be noted that al-Shabaab limited its role in governance to that of law enforcement. The day-to-day running of the cities and towns was left to local administrators. These could be clan elders or public works professionals or businessmen.

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[274] Amnesty International report. "Somalia: Girl stoned was child of 13." 10/31/08.

It was these people who kept power, water, sanitation, and telecommunication going. Al-Shabaab ruled, but it did not govern.

**Hizbul Islam**

Al-Shabaab was not the only Islamist group to rise from the ashes of the Islamic Courts Union. In 2009 four smaller Islamist groups, including *Jabhatul Islamiya* (the Islamic Front), the Asmara wing of the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia run by Hassan Dahir Aweys; the Ras Kamboni Brigade run led by another ICU official, Hassan Abdullah Hersi al-Turki; and the al-Furqaan Forces merged to form *Hizbul Islam* (The Islamic Party). [275]  Al-Shabaab was clearly the dominant Islamist group in Somalia at the time, and it is significant that these smaller groups chose to form a new Islamist rival rather than be absorbed by al-Shabaab. Ostensibly, Hizbul Islam was created to fight the TFG and the Ethiopians and was allied with al-Shabaab.

Al-Turki and Aweys had issues with al-Shabaab over the influx of foreign fighters. Al-Qaeda has had links to Somalia going back to the 1990s, but since 2006 and the rise of the ICU those connections have been much more concrete. Al-Qaeda has been more vocal in its support of jihad in Somalia and the formation of an Islamic state. Prior to 2006, the actual involvement of al-Qaeda in Somalia is speculative at best. In 2008 and 2009, al-Qaeda mentions al-Shabaab specifically in various statements. In fact, Osama bin Laden only released five statements in 2009 but dedicated one to jihad in Somalia.[276]

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[275] UN Security Council report S/201091. Pg. 16.
[276] David Shinn. "Al-Shabaab Tries to Take Control of Somalia." Foreign Policy Research Institute. Nov. 2010. http://www.fpri.org/enotes/201011.shinn.somalia.html#ref2 Last accessed 10/5/12.

[277] This growing attachment and support by al-Qaeda to Somalia Islamists led to an increase in foreign fighters entering Somalia and joining al-Shabaab.[278]

Tension between the two groups came to a head in late 2009 over who would control the city of Kismayo. A power sharing agreement had existed in which each group would run the city for six months. Al-Shabaab apparently refused to give up control, and fighting ensued.[279] Parts of Hizbul Islam sided with al-Shabaab, and others did not. Hizbul Islam claimed they captured foreign fighters during the course of the battle with al-Shabaab, exacerbating the tension between the two.[280] The fighting was fairly one-sided, however, with al-Shabaab wining a decisive victory. Fighting continued in other Hizbul Islam-controlled areas, and by December 2010 Aweys announced that Hizbul Islam was being fully absorbed by al-Shabaab.[281]

**Foreign Involvement**

As has been stated previously, Ethiopia and Somalia have a long running animosity. The Ethiopia military was largely responsible for the defeat of the Islamic Courts Union and has remained a presence in Somalia ever since. On one hand, the military is attempting to stabilize the region and secure the border. However, the very presence of Ethiopian troops on Somali soil serves as a rallying cry for Somali Islamists.

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[277] Osama bin Laden. "Fight on O Champions of Somalia." Archive.org. March 2009. http://archive.org/details/Fight-On-Champions-Of-Somalia Last accessed 10/5/12.
[278] Ghaith Abdul-Ahad. "How Somalia's Civil War Became new front in battle against al-Qaida." The Guardian. June 7, 2010. http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jun/07/somalia-civil-war-al-qaida Last accessed 10/5/12.
[279] "Somali factions battle in Kismayo." Al-Jazeera. October 1, 2009. http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2009/10/200910185652850176.html Last accessed 10/5/12.
[280] "Somalia: Hizbul Islam claims to capture "foreign fighters." Garowe Online. http://www.garoweonline.com/artman2/publish/Somalia_27/Somalia_Hizbul_Islam_claims_to_capture_foreign_fighters.shtml Last accessed 10/5/12.
[281] "Somali Islamic party joins more hard-line group." CNN. Dec. 20, 2010. http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/africa/12/20/somalia.party/ Last accessed 10/5/12.

In late 2007/early 2008, the African Union sent troops, primarily from Uganda and Burundi, into Somalia on a peacekeeping mission.[282] In July 2010, al-Shabaab launched one of its few attacks outside of Somalia. The bombing of a World Cup viewing party in Kampala, Uganda caused the mission of the AU in Somalia to shift from peacekeeping to battling al-Shabaab.[283]

In 2011 this African Union force of 9,000 troops made a push into Mogadishu. After intense fighting, al-Shabaab was forced to give up most of the city. This was a huge defeat and emboldened the African Union and the Transitional Federal Government.

Also in July of 2012, there was a skirmish between al-Shabaab and Kenyan border security forces. While a relatively minor incident, especially when compared to the Kampala bombing, it nevertheless caused Kenya to amass a large number of troops along the border. The Kenyan Defense Forces were content to stay in Kenya and protect the border, but al-Shabaab continued to provoke the Kenyan government. Al-Shabaab forces ventured into Kenya and committed a series of kidnappings mainly of foreign tourists or aid workers.[284] Operation Linda Nchi (Protect the Country in Swahili) was launched in October 2011 by Kenya. Since the beginning of that operation al-Shabaab has been on the run. The combination of forces from the TFG, Ethiopia, African Union, and Kenya has proven difficult for al-Shabaab to handle. It has lost ground almost every month since the Kenyan invasion and that has emboldened the other anti-al-Shabaab

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[282] "Status of Mission Agreement between the Transitional Federal Government of the Somali Republic and the African Union on the African Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)." African Union. March 6, 2007.
[283] "Somalia: AU Ministers Agree to 'Take on' al-Shabaab." AllAfrica. July 26, 2010. http://allafrica.com/stories/201007250021.html Last accessed 10/5/12.
[284] "Kenya sends troops to attack al-Shabab." Al-Jazeera October 24, 2011. http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/10/20111016115410991692.html Last accessed 10/5/12.

forces. By September 2012, Kenyan and AU forces and the Somali National Army launched an attack on Kismayo, the last al-Shabaab stronghold.[285] Al-Shabaab forces lost the battle, and as of September 2012 no longer hold significant Somali land.

These series of defeats have caused al-Shabaab to fall back on traditional clan bonds. Al-Shabaab has always avoided becoming involved in clan disputes by accepting members of all clans. Although its leadership is made up of members of different clans, with mounting losses al-Shabaab has tried to strengthen its bonds to various clan leaders in an effort to attract more fighters. But this effort has not been particularly successful thus far.[286]

The next major defeat for al-Shabaab came not from Ethiopia or Kenya or the TFG but from nature. A devastating famine hit Somalia in 2011. Al-Shabaab attempted to use the famine to demonstrate that it is more than just a fighting militia and can act as a government that takes care of its people. Al-Shabaab banned all non-Muslim charities from assisting in al-Shabaab controlled areas and attempted to handle the aid distribution with its own members. It very publicly coordinated the delivery of food and medical aid. It attempted to capitalize on the famine and craft a media effort to shape its public image. This was not as successful as al-Shabaab had hoped. Rather than receiving praise for its efforts to distribute aid, al-Shabaab received criticism for the banning of aid agencies such as the Red Cross.[287]

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[285] "Al-Shabab rebels pull out of key Somali town." Al-Jazeera. Sept. 29, 2012. Last accessed 10/5/12.
[286] Christopher Anzalone. "Al-Shabaab's Setbacks in Somalia." CTC Sentinel. October 31, 2011.
[287] "Al-Shabab bans Red Cross from Somalia." Al-Jazeera. Jan. 30, 2012.
http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2012/01/2012130175612623648.html

As for Hizbul Islam, from December 2010 to September 2012 it was essentially

non-existent. However, in the wake of al-Shabaab's setbacks, Hizbul Islam forces

abandoned al-Shabaab and reestablished Hizbul Islam.[288]


**Ahlu Sunna Waljama'a and the Ras Kamboni Movement**

Al-Shabaab and Hizbul Islam are not the only groups to emerge during the Somali

Civil War. Ahlu Sunna wal Jama'a (ASWJ) had been around in one form or another since

the 1990s. It briefly supported Mohamed Farah Aidid, but after his death in 1996 ASWJ

lost prominence. In 2002, though, it emerged as a peacemaking party.[289] Ahlu Sunna

seemed to want to bring together disparate forces in Somalia, but it also made

delegitimizing strict Islamist policies a priority. This disregard for a strict Islamist

interpretation ended up hurting its credibility. ASWJ wanted to bring everyone to the

table, but at the same time  disavowed anyone whose beliefs were not compatible with its

own.

It is not until 2008, when it begins to actively fight al-Shabaab that ASWJ

becomes a significant player in Somalia. In fact, ASWJ was the first group to really have

significant military success against al-Shabaab, making significant gains especially in the

Galguduud and Hiran regions. These successes prompted Ethiopia to assist ASWJ. In

2010 Ethiopia began to train some Ahlu Sunna fighters and supply them with weapons

and materials.[290] During this period, the TFG was at one of its weakest points, controlling

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[288] "Kenyan Amisom solider kills six Somali civilians." BBC News. Sept. 24, 2012.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-19698348 Last accessed 10/5/12.
[289] "Somalia's Islamists." International Crisis Group Report No. 100. Dec. 12, 2005.
[290] Harsh War Harsh Peace. Pg. 16.

only small portions of Mogadishu. Ahlu Sunna joined with the TFG, and its victories became TFG victories. In exchange, ASWJ members were given appointments in the Transitional Federal Government.

The Ras Kamboni Movement is a prime example of the ever-shifting loyalties of many Somalia militia leaders. The Ras Kamboni Brigades was one of the four Islamist groups that merged to form Hizbul Islam. When Hizbul Islam was absorbed by al-Shabaab, in the aftermath of the 2009 Battle of Kismayo, a Hizbul Islam commander, Sheikh Ahmed Mohamed Islam, refused to join and formed his own group, the Ras Kamboni Movement. In 2010 the Ras Kamboni movement allied itself with Ahlu Sunna wal Jama'a and the TFG in opposition to al-Shabaab.

There is something unique in Somalia in that these loyalties are in constant flux. Hassan Dahir Aweys was imprisoned by Siad Barre then later worked in the Barre administration. Mohamed Farah Aidid worked with Barre then helped topple his government. Aweys and Aidid worked together but eventually split. Aden Hashi Farah Ayro worked for Aweys until they, too, split. Ahmed Mohamed Islam worked with Aweys and Hassan Abdullah Hersi al-Turki and later fought them both. Sharif Sheikh Ahmed was an ICU commander and later President of the Transitional Federal Government where he fought many of his former ICU colleagues. All these men thought they could unite and lead Somalia. They all attracted enough fighters to wage an extended war. Given the frequency and relative ease with which they seem to shift alliance, one could make the case that there is no loyalty at all among them—that they are power hungry and are use each other as a means to an end. However, that assumes the

motivation behind these men's actions is the acquisition of power. With the exception of Barre and Aidid, all of them are Islamists. The various groups that they have run and been a part are Islamist groups. Even those that oppose the strict interpretation of Islam, such as Ahlu Sunna wal Jama'a, are Islamist. So the loyalty appears to be to their faith and to the Somali people.

Mohammed Hassan established the parameters for Somali Islamism in the nineteenth century, and these men and follow in that tradition. They are all pro-Islam and see Islam as intrinsically linked to Somalia. They are all Somali nationalists and reject the influence of outsiders on Somalia. Even al-Shabaab experienced a split because foreign fighters were becoming too involved in al-Shabaab hierarchy. This is by no means a justification of their actions. These men have continued a bloody war that has cost thousands of lives and displaced thousands more. In some cases, they have terrorized the very people they hope to lead. But their motivation for doing so was not as simplistic as a quest for power. They are quite literally struggling for God and country.

Chapter 8

AL-SHABAAB'S ONLINE MEDIA PRESENCE AND RECRUITMENT

Being an unorthodox state does not mean that Somalia is without contact with the rest of the world or that new technologies have passed it by. Somali expatriates commonly send cell phones, computing equipment, money and other goods to Somalis still in the country. Given the relative lack of public media, these items are critical to Somalis' ability to obtain news and to communicate. Recently, al-Shabaab has taken to Twitter in an attempt to use new media to craft a public image and engage with people around the world.

Al-Shabaab uses new media outlets for two very specific and strategic purposes. First, it helps create the public image of al-Shabaab not as a violent terrorist group, as the U.S. has designated it, but as the righteous defenders of Islam against the wicked foreign invaders. Second, it aids in recruitment, specifically, the recruitment of those not in Somalia.

**Early Uses of Media**

Extremists use the Internet for a wide variety of purposes: communication, propaganda, and fund-raising, to name a few. This is not cyberterrorism or cyberwarfare, as the intention is not to disrupt anyone else's computer systems. Instead, they use the Internet largely for message control. Gabriel Weimann points out that most extremist websites focus on issues such as "freedom of expression and political prisoners" and not on the group's own acts of violence[291]. They tend to point out the undemocratic or

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[291] Gabriel Weimann. *Terror on the Internet: The New Arena, the New Challenges*. (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2006). P54-56.

immoral means by which their enemies attempt to oppress them. In other words, they make the case that they are the weaker, disenfranchised underdog fighting against an oppressive government. They cast themselves in the role of the hero struggling against overwhelming powers, not as the oppressive terrorist. Once this argument is made, the extremists can then justify their acts of violence.

As De Koster and Houtman point out, one reason to visit online sites is for a sense of community.[292] The people who go to chat rooms or discussion boards have some interest in the subject matter of that site but may not be surrounded by others in their offline world who share those interests. A virtual community is then created in which one can share thoughts on, in this case, extreme interpretation of Islam.

One of the key elements is how extremists cast their opponents. In many of the jihadi websites, Americans and Europeans are often referred to as 'Crusaders,' invoking what Halverson et al call the Infidel Invader master narrative.[293] Here Muslim lands are being invaded by non-Muslim intruders who kill many innocent Muslims. A Muslim champion emerges, defeats the invaders, and saves Islam. By casting their enemies in this way, they have dehumanized them. The enemy are immoral, aggressive infidels and, therefore, much easier to attack.

In practice these websites provide sermons, photos and videos of attacks, chat rooms, discussion boards, and in some cases manuals on tactics or bomb building. These

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[292] Willem De Koster and Dick Houtman. "Stormfront is like a second home to me: On virtual community formation by right-wing extremists". Information, Communication and Society vol 11, no 6 December 2008 p. 1155-1176.
[293] Jeffry R. Halverson, H.L. Goodall Jr., and Steven R. Corman. *Master Narratives of Islamic Extremism.* (New York: Palgrave MacMillian, 2011).

websites get shut down frequently but usually are up again within days under a new web address.

Members of al-Shabaab post on message boards and chat rooms that are frequented by Islamic extremists. This is not unique to al-Shabaab but a typical example of extremists' outreach.

Al-Shabaab maintained a website, alkataiib.net, which has subsequently been shut down, on which messages and videos in Somali, Arabic, and English were posted.[294] As approximately less than two percent of the population of Somalia has Internet access, it is safe to conclude that the website and chat room participation is intended to reach an audience outside of Somalia.[295] Both al-Shabaab and Hizbul Islam have taken over radio stations within Somalia and used them to broadcast reports of their victories.[296] Al Shabaab has used all of these media outlets to support the narrative that it is on the side of Islam and the forces rallied against them (the U.S., Ethiopia, the TFG, etc.) are the true enemies of the Somali people.

Michael Taarnby and Lars Hallunbaek rightly point out that as al-Shabaab has moved closer to al-Qaeda in ideology, it has improved in its use of propaganda.[297] Since alkataiib.net has been taken down, Al-Shabaab-related material gets dispersed through the Global Islamic Media Front (GIMF), a popular outlet for Islamist statements. Al-

[294] Ploch, Lauren. *Counterterrorism in East Africa: The U.S. Response*. Congressional Research Service Report P.13. November 3, 2010.

[295] CIA World Fact Book. Retrieved from https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/so.html Last accessed 1/23/12.

[296] Ibrahim, Mohammed. (2010, April 18). Radio Stations with No Music May Be Shut in Somalia, *New York Times* http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/19/world/africa/19somalia.html Last accessed 1/23/12.

[297] Taarnby, Michael and Lars Hallunbaek. (Feb. 2010). Al Shabaab: The Internationalization of Militant Islamism in Somalia and the Implications for Radicalization Processes in Europe. Danish Ministry of Justice Report. pg. 13-14.

Shabaab also gets its message out through alqimmah.net, a Swedish based website that supports jihadi causes. Alqimmah.net has hosted online chat sessions with members of al-Shabaab. The quality of al-Shabaab's video production has also developed a sleeker look with higher production values.

Given that al-Shabaab is operating in a so-called failed state, it is tempting to presuppose limited access to new media technology. That is clearly not the case, however. Its members are adept at the use of the Internet, and their video production has seen a notable rise in quality with a noticeable increase in the use of graphics, music, and subtitles. Simply being a presence on the Internet demonstrates that they are not backwards or anti-modern but rather very much a part of the twenty-first century. It makes sense then, that they would move into the newest medium of new media; social networking.

**The Twitter Example**

"In the name of God the Merciful." That was the initial tweet of HSMPress on December 7, 2011. The December 7th tweet was in Arabic, but subsequently al-Shabaab has tweeted in English only on this account. On December 9th it opened @HSMPress_arabic and on December 29 opened @HSMPress_Somali, and it has used those for Arabic and Somali language tweets respectively. The English language site is by far the most active.

In 2006, Charles Hirschkind published *The Ethical Soundscape,* which looks at the role that cassette sermons have played in shaping political discourse across the

Middle East.[298] Cassette sermons were used by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini during his years in exile. Khomeini's sermons would be sent back to Iran and played for his followers. The value of the cassette sermon is multifold. First, it allows for people who otherwise could not be heard to preach and influence others. This was the case with Khomeini. Second, cassettes also get passed from person to person and can be listened to multiple times, eliminating the need to be in a certain mosque on Friday to hear the speaker. People can listen to these cassettes in their homes, cars, or anywhere else they have a tape player.

One of the key aspects of Hirschkind's argument is that listening to the cassette is an emotional and visceral act not an intellectual one. The listener is moved to action by the emotional impact of the sermon not by some logical persuasive argument. This, Hirschkind contends, is *da'wa* (call, proselytizing). Da'wa is a common practice among Muslims. It is the use of ethical speech in an attempt to get listeners to engage in proper or pious conduct. Hirschkind suggests that cassettes, which would have been new media in the 1970s, allowed for a new and expanded form of da'wa.

As new media changes, so, too, does the da'wa. Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri among others have been adept at using video tapes. It is easy for non-Muslim observers to see these video tapes as merely vehicles for information, or threats, or praise for some previous attack. But they can be viewed in a similar way as the cassette sermons. They are a means for the speaker to move the listener to what he perceives to be pious action.

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[298] Charles Hirschkind. The Ethical Soundscape: Cassette Sermons and Islamic Counterpublics. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).

With the advent of the Internet and social media, we get yet another avenue for da'wa. As with the cassette sermons, there is an ease of accessibility. One can access websites, blogs, Facebook, and Twitter from virtually anywhere at anytime. This chapter will describe a number of practical uses for HSMPress, including Twitter. But Twitter can also be seen as da'wa in 140 characters or less. Twitter followers can read a particular account and be moved to action. Will one Tweet be enough to move someone into pious action? Probably not. But a number of Tweets that demonstrate piety and ethical conduct might. Users of Twitter and other social media sites tend to be younger. Islamist groups in general and HSMPress in particular are not afraid to engage young people in da'wa in the format that is most appealing to them.

Beyond the religious act of da'wa, Al-Shabaab clearly sees Twitter as a tool to manage its image. HSMPress has four ongoing uses for Twitter. First is to make others aware of victories in battle. Second is to use dialogue with other Tweeters and retweets of news stories to shape a positive image of al-Shabaab. Third is to provide up-to-the-minute reporting on activities going on in Somalia. And fourth is to demean its opponents.

Al-Shabaab is not the only Islamist group to utilize Twitter. The Taliban has had an official Twitter account longer than al-Shabaab. However, they are far less adept at using it. The Taliban simply uses Twitter to recount what Lundry et al refer to as victorious battle stories with a link to their official website, which provides some more

detail on the attack.[299] For the Taliban, Twitter is simply a tool for disseminating information about successful battles.

Al-Shabaab has been much more dynamic in its tweets While there are certainly some claims of victorious battles, its tweets go beyond that. The Taliban tweets have very little editorializing. They simply state that an attack took place and the result. For example, "6 puppet killed and wounded as convoy hits IED. KANDAHAR, Jan 25." They do use language such as "puppet" or "crusader" to describe Afghan and Coalition forces respectively, but beyond that the message is fairly straightforward. Also the English is not precise. "Puppet" instead of "puppets." "Killed and wounded" as opposed to "killed or wounded." Whoever is responsible for the Taliban tweets is likely not a native English speaker.

Al-Shabaab's take on a victorious battle story is quite different. Beyond merely stating an attack took place, it will seek to broaden the conversation. For example, from December 7th, "With the rising economic burden of operation Linda Nchi, the much-hyped #Kenyan invasion has faltered quite prematurely." Or "#KDF retreat from the towns they'd invaded, capitulating to their fate a mere 2months into the extravagant but wretched operation #LindaNchi." Operation Linda Nchi ("Protect the Country" in Swahili) is the Kenyan led military operation in southern Somalia that began October 16, 2011.

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[299] Lundry, Chris, Steven R. Corman, R. Bennett Furlow and Kirk W. Errickson. (2012, June) Cooking the Books: Strategic Inflation of Casualty Reports by Extremists in the Afghanistan Conflict. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism.*

With these tweets, Al-Shabaab is looking beyond the specific battle on the ground to the larger goal of getting Kenyan troops out of Somalia. Any long-term military engagement is going to have an economic impact. They point that out. It will be met with successes and failures. They are pointing out a series of Kenyan failures. These tweets are far more impactful than a statement claiming some troops were killed. Furthermore, the English is far superior to the Taliban tweets, indicating the writer is most likely a native English speaker.

Al-Shabaab responds to tweeters but not just anyone. Nazanine Moshiri, an al-Jazeera reporter, wrote a blog piece about al-Shabaab that it responded to via Twitter.[300] She then had a rather lengthy exchange with al-Shabaab. In this Twitter-based interview, al-Shabaab claims its treatment in the media is just propaganda, and it seeks to refute some commonly held beliefs about it. Rather than use the interview in another story about al-Shabaab, Moshiri opted to reprint the exchange in her blog, thus eliminating the possibility that she herself could turn the interview into "propaganda."[301]

By using Twitter to engage with non-Islamists and those who oppose al-Shabaab ideology, HSMPress is shifting the use of online media. While extremist groups have used websites to engage in conversation, it has typically been with those who are predisposed to support extremist views and ideology. As Twitter is public and anybody, regardless of ideology, can engage with anyone else, HSMPress is expanding beyond De

[300] Moshiri, Nazanine. (2011, December 13) Al-Shabab starts tweeting. *Al-Jazeera* http://blogs.aljazeera.net/africa/2011/12/13/al-shabab-starts-tweeting Last accessed 1/30/12.
[301] Moshiri, Nazanine. (2011, December) Somalia's Shabab fighters take to Twitter. *Al-Jazeera* http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/12/2011121316621833642.html Last accessed 1/30/12.

Koster and Houtman's description of online communities. For example, to reach the Global Islamic Media Front, one has to seek them out, which only someone interested in Islamism is likely to do. Through the use of the hashtag on Twitter, however, users may find themselves in contact with people they might not otherwise communicate with. HSMPress has not run away from this interaction with the broader public but embraced it.

Furthermore, HSMPress is not a virtual community in the same way many other websites are. HSMPress has over 11,000 followers but follows no one. It is "asymmetric microblogging" as opposed to the type of virtual community seen on other sites.[302]

Al-Shabaab has no problem using popular media to its own ends. It tweeted a link to an article published on the online news site Wales Online, which argues that al-Shabaab may be best equipped to bring stability to Somalia. If the followers of HSMPress read the article, they are exposed to a somewhat positive treatment of al-Shabaab in a Western-based, legitimate news site. They have also tweeted stories that make their opponents look bad, such as the case with a Middle East Online story that accuses the TFG of the inability to prevent rape in camps for the internally displaced (Middle East Online, 2011). This falls in line with Weimann's argument about the role that extremists cast for themselves. Here al-Shabaab is not the evil one but rather the saviors who can bring stability to a nation and protect her people.

KDF spokesman Major Emmanuel Chirchir has been tweeting about Operation Linda Nchi since it first began. Some of his tweets also follow the victorious battle story

[302] Gruzd, Anatoliy, Barry Wellman, and Yuri Takhteyev. (2011, July 25). Imagining Twitter as an Imagined Community. American Behavioral Scientist vol 55 no 10 pp. 1294-1318.

form and merely recount KDF victories. For example, from December 6th,

"#OperationLindaNchi KDF bombed 2 Al Shabaab camps south of Afmadow town,

killing several Al shabaab fighters &destroyed technical vehicles." The victorious battle

story tweet is a common one, and it is easy to see why both the KDF and al-Shabaab

utilize it. These types of tweets are quick and easy propaganda. They show success,

which can lead to increased support for the mission. People are more likely to support a

winning cause rather than a losing one, and getting news of one's victories out there

quickly and often gives the impression of winning.[303]

Al-Shabaab has taken the victorious battle story a step further by trying to prove

its claims. It is easy to claim to have killed a certain number of soldiers and make it seem

as if your side is winning. Al-Shabaab, whenever possible, photographs and publishes via

Twitter, ID cards of fallen soldiers. On December 12th it published the IDs of twelve

fallen Burundian soldiers who were part of the African Union mission and who were

killed in Mogadishu. This practice has been continued whenever the IDs of fallen soldiers

can be retrieved.

The practice of showing IDs has another purpose as well. It gives HSMPress

legitimacy. Anyone can open a Twitter account and do so under someone else's name.

Theoretically, whoever posts to HSMPress could be anywhere in the world. Having

physical access to the IDs of recently killed soldiers shows that whoever is writing these

tweets is probably on the ground in Somalia and indeed a member of al-Shabaab.

Within two days of joining Twitter, al-Shabaab engaged with Major Chirchir

directly. On December 9th, Major Chirchir had a series of tweets regarding the ultimate

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[303] Lundry

goals of the KDF mission. He said there would be an increase in troops in order to achieve the ultimate goal of a "secure, stable and prosperous Somalia, at peace with its neighbors." Al-Shabaab responded with taunts such as "Far too lofty an objective don't you think? Specially from men more accustomed to pillaging &extortion," and "50,000 Ethiopian troops couldn't pacify Somalia; you think a few disillusioned & disinclined Kenyan boys are up to the task?" And "Assets are worthless without men; your inexperienced boys flee from confrontation & flinch in the face of death." Clearly this salvo of tweets was intended to undermine and belittle the KDF. This illustrates al-Shabaab's fourth use of Twitter: ridicule. Ridicule becomes important especially for those facing a stronger, better equipped opponent.[304] Al-Shabaab is not as strong militarily as the Kenyan Defense Forces, so instead they try to defeat the KDF in the public arena. The KDF are boys not men. They are cowards. They are less capable than the Ethiopians, and even they failed at the task. Major Chirchir had a somewhat feckless response to al-Shabaab and simply asked them to surrender. It appears as if he was not prepared to deal with al-Shabaab in such a public forum.

While al-Shabaab may not be as strong militarily, it seems to be beating the KDF in the Twitter War. Major Chirchir, in a clear attempt to portray al-Shabaab negatively, posted pictures on January 11, 2012 purporting to be of a man being stoned to death by members of al-Shabaab. He claimed the man was a Kenyan who was killed for disagreeing with al-Shabaab early that week in the town of Kismayo and that two others

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[304] Goodall Jr H.L., Pauline Hope Cheong, Kristin Fleischer, and Steven R. Corman. "Rhetorical Charms: The promise and pitfalls of humor and ridicule as strategies to counter extremist narratives." *Perspective on Terrorism*. Vol. 6 Issues 1. 2012.

were likely to be killed that Friday. A few hours later, it was revealed by an independent journalist that the man in question, Mohamed Abukar Ibrahim, was Somali and was killed in 2009 by a different Islamist group, Hizbul Islam, for adultery. Hizbul Islam has subsequently merged with al-Shabaab. The photos were easy to identify as they had won second place in the World Press Photo contest in 2010.

Once the photos were revealed to have been from 2009, HSMPress jumped on Major Chirchir. "@MajorEChirchir #KDF incompetence transcends all possible limits this time & highlights amount of lies dispensed in order to hide the truth" and "They seem unsophisticated even in their propaganda campaign. A simple Google search would have saved them such an embarrassment." Al-Shabaab then posted links to two different news stories with photos verifying that the incident in question was from 2009 and did not involve al-Shabaab. They capitalized on Major Chirchir's actions by referring to his "half-witted Twitter Psyops" and calling him "Major Pinocchio."

Chirchir for his part did admit that posting the photo was a mistake (whether he know the photo was from 2009 or not is unclear) but stood by his statement that a man was executed by al-Shabaab in Kismayo earlier that week. He also maintained that the execution of two more people that Friday was still likely to occur. By January 12, HSMPress had moved on and were back to tweeting about events on the ground. Major Chirchir, however, had to do damage control via Twitter for a few days as other Twitter users were jumping on him for such a blatant use of propaganda. By the 14th he was back to tweeting about KDF successes.

This incident was fantastic for al-Shabaab. The alleged stoning that was intended to emphasize al-Shabaab's cruelty instead placed the KDF on the defensive. Major Chirchir's and the KDF's use of such transparent propaganda made them looked incompetent. While al-Shabaab could apparently not resist some name calling, its most effective strategy was to sit back and let other people do its fighting. A number of Twitter users called out Major Chirchir for attempting to deceive the public.

Al-Shabaab took a lesson from this incident: part of making yourself look good is making your enemy look bad. Staring January 15th, just a few days after the photo incident, HSMPress began to tweet about civilian causalities. They mentioned five children who were killed when a KDF shell hit their home, another incident resulting in civilians being taken to a hospital, and another concerning refugees killed in a camp. All of which were blamed on the KDF. The tweets were factual and lacked hyperbole, indicating that the best method of damaging the KDF's image is to take a more somber approach.

**Recruitment**

Recruitment by al-Shabaab occurs on two fronts. First, there is the recruitment of Somalis in Somalia. Here there is a more hands-on approach with Somalis on the ground approaching other Somalis. Second, is the recruitment of foreign fighters. This often happens through online means.

Al-Shabaab's first significant increase in recruitment came with the Ethiopian invasion of 2006. Given the animosity between the two countries, it was easy for al-Shabaab to gather recruits using an anti-Ethiopia message. Even though the ICU was an

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Islamist group, it exerted a somewhat restraining influence on its militant wing.[305] With

the invasion by Ethiopia, a military powerhouse in the region, the ICU needed a strong

fighting force to respond. With most of the ICU's military leadership defeated, Al-

Shabaab was let loose and given free rein to fight the Ethiopian military. Al-Shabaab

became a much more militant and ideologically stricter group than its ICU predecessor.

The impact the war with Ethiopia had on recruitment cannot be stressed enough.

According to Ken Menkhaus, the result of the war with Ethiopia was that "many if not

most Somalis were radically angry--that is, predisposed emotionally toward extreme

interpretations of events and extreme proposed responses--without those sentiments

necessarily be linked to a radically ideology."[306] Ethiopia and its backer the U.S. were

given the bulk of the blame for the war, not the ICU or al-Shabaab. Along with the ever

existent anti-Ethiopian sentiment, there was now a growing anti-American sentiment.

Some Somalis believed that the U.S. was using the Ethiopian invasion as a continuation

of the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. The U.S. was seen as having an inherently anti-

Islamic agenda, and Somalia was simply the next front in the larger war on Islam. What

emerged in Somalia according to Menkhaus was a combination of "nationalist, Islamist,

anti-Ethiopian, anti-American, anti-Western, anti-foreigner sentiments."[307] Al-Shabaab

was able to appeal to Somalis on a nationalistic level, a religious level, and an anti-

Imperialist level. Even Somalis who did not share al-Shabaab's Islamist disposition felt

the use of violence against Ethiopia was justified. For the Islamists, this was defensive

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[305] Islamists half-ready for holy war. The Economist Oct. 12 2006.
http://www.economist.com/node/8031141 Retrieved 2/24/12.
[306] Ken Menkhaus, "Violent Islamic Extremism: Al-Shabaab Recruitment in America," testimony before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, March 11, 2009. P.4.
[307] Ibid. P.4.

jihad; for everyone else it was a liberation movement. Either way al-Shabaab became the embodiment of both points of view.

From 2006-2008, this was al-Shabaab's primary means of recruitment. It was Somali based and first and foremost was directed against the Ethiopians. The war with the Ethiopians officially ended in January, 2009, but the Ethiopians have maintained a presence on the Somali side of the Somalia-Ethiopia border ever since. There are still ongoing battles between the two, but Ethiopia seems to be using the areas of Somalia that it controls as more of a buffer zone and is not interested in a takeover of Somalia.

With the rallying cry of an Ethiopian invasion no longer valid, al-Shabaab needed a new means of recruitment. It was at this point that it became more of a presence on the Internet and took a larger interest in foreign recruitment.

One of the first and most significant foreign recruits was Omar Hammami, also known as Abu Mansoor al-Amriki. Raised in Alabama, al-Amriki is the son of a Syrian born father and an American mother. Al-Amriki became a Muslim in high school, and by the time he got to college he held fairly conservative religious views. In 2002 he moved to Canada and married a Somali-Canadian woman. He and his wife moved to Egypt in 2005, and in 2006 he moved to Somalia and joined al-Shabaab without telling his family.[308]

Al-Amriki represents a shift in al-Shabaab's recruiting activities. It does not appear as if al-Amriki himself was actively recruited to join al-Shabaab. Rather he saw Somalia as a new front in the global jihad and chose to be a part of it. The presence of a young American, fluent in English opened the door to more direct foreign recruiting

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[308] Christof Putzel. American Jihadi. Vanguard Video 2010.

activities. Al-Amriki made videos in English and played hip-hop music over them in an obvious attempt to appeal to young Western men.

Simultaneously, al-Shabaab was also recruiting other non-Western and non-Somali personnel. Al-Shabaab made a video entitled "At Your Service, oh Osama" in which al-Shabaab pledged itself to Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. The goal was to recruit members of al-Qaeda or al-Qaeda sympathizers. It was successful to the point that 43 out of the 85-member executive council of Al-Shabaab became foreigners.[309] This has caused issues within Somalia, which will be addressed in the next chapter.

Many of these foreign fighters also made videos English, Arabic, Urdu, and Somali. This is an indication that the recruitment drive has shifted from local to global. It also illustrates a difference between al-Shabaab and the Islamic Courts Union, as the ICU would frequently turn away foreign fighters.[310]

The most well-known case of foreign recruitment comes from Minneapolis, Minnesota. Over twenty young Somali-Americans from Minnesota have travelled to Somalia and joined al-Shabaab. Some, such as 27-year-old Farah Mohamad Beledi, became suicide bombers.[311] Many of the recruits were recruited from the Abubakar As-Siddique Islamic Center in Minneapolis. A custodian, 45-year-old Mahamud Said Omar, was charged with providing material support to a terrorist organization for his role in the

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[309] David Shinn. "Al-Shabaab tries to take control in Somalia" Foreign Policy Research Institute November 2010. http://www.fpri.org/enotes/201011.shinn.somalia.html#note8 Last accessed 3/12/12.
[310] Taarnby, pg. 49.
[311] Al Shabaab's American Recruits. Anti-Defamation League. http://www.adl.org/NR/exeres/D0E7DF5A-46A1-47F9-8252-784E6AFBB52C,DB7611A2-02CD-43AF-8147-649E26813571,frameless.htm Last accessed 3/12/12.

recruitment of these young men. In total, 14 individuals have been charged in the recruitment of the Somali men.[312]

The Somali-American recruits had different motivations for going to Somalia. Some seem to have been caught between two worlds and unable to fit into American society. For others, their Somali nationalism and adventurous spirits were played up.[313] While the recruits came from the mosque, the appeal was not solely religious but based in religion and national pride. Recruits were told that their duty as Muslims was to wage jihad, but they also told they would be fighting Ethiopians who had invaded Somalia.[314] This was an appeal on two fronts--religious and nationalistic. The recruits were told not to tell their parents or mosque leaders, indicating that the leadership was not aware of the recruitment going on within the mosque. Once in Somalia, they were sent to training camps, made to listen to radical sermons, and told they would end up in prison if they returned to America. The recruits were also used in recruitment videos in which they encouraged others to join them. These videos were scripted by others, and the recruits were told what to say.[315]

This recruitment effort was less online and more direct person-to-person contact. Only later was justification for their actions couched in religious language. Additionally, these recruits managed to stay in contact with friends back home in part to facilitate recruitment based on personal relationships.

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[312] Terror Charges Unsealed in Minnesota Against Eight Defendants, Justice Department Announces. http://www.fbi.gov/minneapolis/press-releases/2009/mp112309.htm Last Accessed 3/12/12.
[313] Taarnby, 58.
[314] "Testimony in Terror Trial details how Minnesota Somalis ended up in pipeline to al-Shabab." Associated Press. Oct. 12. 2012. http://www.foxnews.com/us/2012/10/12/testimony-in-terror-trial-details-how-minnesota-somalis-ended-up-in-pipeline-to/
[315] Ibid.

**Conclusion**

It is clear that recruitment to al-Shabaab has come from a variety of sources. Early in its incarnation, al-Shabaab was focused on conflict with Ethiopia and recruited Somalis on the ground based on nationalist interests. As al-Shabaab became more linked to al-Qaeda and the idea of global jihad, it began to recruit on a global level. Recruitment occurred both in person and by use of an impressive online media campaign utilizing jihadist websites, message boards, blogs, and Twitter.

The use of social media is interesting in the Somali context. On the one hand, al-Shabaab continues the tradition of Somali Islamism being a nationalist movement focused solely on Somalia. However, the increase in foreign involvement in al-Shabaab has led to a corruption of its nationalist message. Some al-Shabaab statements of late read more like al-Qaeda statements about global jihad. In addition to the shift in messaging that has come with the foreign involvement, there also has been an increase in the sophistication of messaging techniques. Al-Qaeda has long been at the forefront of using technology for messaging (relatively high video production quality, multiple websites and chat rooms, the slick design of the English language magazine "Inspire," and so on). Al-Qaeda's savvy media arm has rubbed off on al-Shabaab as evidenced by the videos of Abu Mansoor al-Amriki and the use of Twitter.

This is also simply a product of the time in which we live. Islamism is not backwards or regressive, and al-Shabaab has embraced many aspects of modernity. If it wants to create a state based on Islam, it will have to do so in a twenty-first century world. And embracing social media and new technology is a way to facilitate that desire.

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Chapter 9

THE FUTURE OF SOMALI ISLAMISM

**"The gored state sustain"**[316]

Somalia is shifting its government yet again. The Federal Government of Somalia was established August 20th, 2012. This is the first non-transitional government in over twenty years. Over the past one hundred years, Somalia has existed as a colonial state, protectorate, independent democracy, socialist dictatorship, failed/unorthodox state. Parts of the country have been under Islamist control. And now it has become a federal parliamentary republic. Islamists have played a role, primarily as opposition, in each of these different political periods, and there is no reason to think that will not continue. Al-Shabaab, while weakened, still exists as do other Islamist militias. Whatever label one chooses to give it, Somalia has been a chaotic environment since before the fall of the dictatorship in 1991. The Transitional National Government was a failure, and the Transitional Federal Government, while more successful than the TNG, still failed to live up to its mandate. The last few years of the TFG were spent on fighting a war and not on governing, building the infrastructure, or creating unity among the disparate Somali groups. Given this recent history, it is understandable that a lack of confidence in the new government exists.

The two fundamental questions that confront Somalis today are (1) what type of state do they want to have and (2) what role will Islamists play in that Somalia? If you strip the idea of state down to its most basic level, a state is the coming together of

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[316] William Shakespeare. "King Lear. Act 5 Scene 3." Kent and Edgar are told they will reign over a wounded kingdom.

different interests for mutual benefit. What Somalia has had until recently was no sense of a national state. There was no unified military, no unified education system, no unified economic system, and large parts of the country (Somaliland and Puntland) have attempted to secede from Somalia. There has been a fundamental lack of unity among Somalis. And yet, there has not been a rejection of the Somali identity. Somali unity has been best seen in opposition to foreign interference. This is the contradiction of Somalia-- there has been a rejection of national unity among Somalis and, therefore, a rejection of a Somali state, and yet Somalis have retained a sense of national identity. There may be a theoretical desire for a Somali nation-state, but all efforts to form one for the past twenty years have been met with resistance from the outside and corruption from the inside. The forming of an outright unified national government is almost certainly doomed to fail. Past experience with the TNG and TFG in Somalia show that. If the new government is to succeed where its predecessors failed, it must marry the practical usefulness of a nation-state with the independence of smaller units of Somali society.

The new federal government must work with the smaller units of Somali society such as local and/or traditional governments. The day-to-day responsibility for governance must be local. Many watchers of Somalia are unable to see the forest for the trees. They see the failures of the various federal governments and assume that Somalia as a nation has failed. But the focus should be on the traditional and regional governments that have been, at least partially, successful even while the federal government was in a shambles.

The one thing that is in Somalia's favor is its practice of what Ken Menkhaus calls informal governance.[317] While Menkhaus does not argue that this form of governance should be the model Somalia adopts in any formal sense (instead he is just describing what has been going on informally at the local level), a case could be made to do just that. In Somalia, the practice of xeer is commonplace and often preferable to a non-customary legal code. But xeer has not been recognized by any of the formal federal governments up until the recent 2012 Federal Republic. In the 2012 constitution, there is one mention of "customary law"[318] and one mention of "traditional law."[319] The constitution states that members of the federal government and members of the various state governments must meet to discuss a variety of issues, including the "protection and development of traditional law."[320] From this it appears as if the federal government is making an effort to formalize what had been informal judicial practices. The constitution also makes eight references to sharia and recognizes that both customary law and sharia exist and should be compatible with the Constitution. How they will deal with conflicts between the Constitution and either of these informal laws remains to be seen, but the very fact the topic is being discussed upfront and that an effort is being made to incorporate them together is a positive step.

This use of informal governance is one possible path for Somalia's future. Rather than have a strong central government, the power could be vested in smaller regional or

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[317] Ken Menkhaus. "Somalia's 20 Year Experiment in Hybrid Governance." Al-Shahid Network. Aug. 12, 2012. http://english.alshahid.net/archives/30841 Last accessed Nov. 16, 2012.
[318] The Federal Republic of Somalia: Provisional Constitution. Article 40. http://www.somaliweyn.com/pages/news/Aug_12/Somalia_Constitution_English_FOR_WEB.pdf
[319] The Federal Republic of Somalia: Provisional Constitution. Article 52. http://www.somaliweyn.com/pages/news/Aug_12/Somalia_Constitution_English_FOR_WEB.pdf
[320] Ibid.

local governments. The central government could handle issues of international law and trade, for example, and the local governments could handle everything else. This would allow for varying degrees of clan control, xeer, or sharia, depending on the wishes of the local populace. Uniquely Somali characteristics such as xeer and clans can be incorporated into regional and local governments. These member-states may not look like the states of the United States or the republics of the Russian Federation, but the system would allow for a national government to conduct business with other countries on an international level while still preserving the uniqueness of Somalia on a local level.

Another potential way to move Somalia out of its current chaotic existence is what Menkhaus calls the mediated state model. This is similar to the informal governance model. In the mediated state, the central government must be cognizant of its limitations and dole out power to non-state actors such as clans, but also to NGOs, charities, aid organizations, and even some Islamist militias. The main value of this model is that it buys the central government time. It is clear that the new Federal Government is very weak. That is not surprising as it took over from a very weak Transitional Federal Government. Nevertheless, people in Somalia and in the international community expect to see progress and results from the new government. The Federal Government does not have the resources, organization, influence, or manpower to get big things done immediately. NGOs and aid groups do have the organization to complete very specific tasks. If these groups work in Somalia on specific, but critically important, tasks such as providing healthcare or improving the roads, the Federal Government could gain the time

and freedom it needs to build up the organizational capabilities that would allow it to take over these functions in the future.

This mediated state model in some ways contradicts Dambisa Moyo's view of limited aid to Africa. In this case, targeted aid, working in conjunction with the Federal Government, would allow the government to strengthen itself while simultaneously providing much-needed assistance to the Somali people. Once the government has acquired the necessary organization and legitimacy in the eyes of the Somali populace, the aid organizations could reduce their footprint, and the Federal Government could take over. In this way the Federal Government would become the primary government in Somalia in keeping with the standard, Westphalian idea of the nation-state. If you are of the view that the nation-state is the actor best suited to take care of the needs of a given people, then this is the best path forward for Somalia.

But it does not address what seems to be the preference for a locally based government among the people of Somalia. It may still be necessary for the local governments to be the dominant form of government. If this is the preferred role of government in Somalia, then not much of the above description changes. NGOs and aid organizations could still work with federal and local governments to provide immediate assistance while formal governments are organized. These governments can decide how much emphasis xeer or sharia will have on their specific regions. The constitution itself acknowledges both xeer and sharia as legitimate legal traditions in Somalia. This provides an opening for local governments to create their own system of law and seems to indicate that there will not be much in the way of Federal Government interference.

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All of this assumes that everything goes smoothly and powerful people put the needs of fellow Somalis above personal political ambition. But there is another threat to achieving a less chaotically dystopian Somalia: Islamism. Even if the Federal Government can get clan leaders and business leaders to come to an agreement on the future of Somalia, get them to agree on a unified path forward--whether it be the informal governance model, the mediated state model, or something else entirely--Islamists could still be disruptive and even pose violent opposition to such a plan. Given Somalia's recent and ongoing history with violent Islamist extremists, this fear is not beyond the realm of possibility. There is reason for hope, however. First, as has been mentioned earlier, al-Shabaab, the dominant Islamist group in the region, has been dealt some very significant blows. It has lost virtually all towns and regions that it once controlled due to the combined presence of the African Union troops and the Ethiopian and Kenyan militaries. Second, there is an enthusiasm for the new government. By the time the TFG mandate was over, it was clear that it was at best an ineffectual organization and at worse a corrupt one. The negative feelings regarding the TFG and the presidency of Sharif Sheikh Ahmed has translated into positive feelings about the Federal Government and President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud. How long those good feelings will last remains to be seen. However, if the Federal Government can get to work with NGOs and provide some immediate assistance to people while simultaneously working with the Kenyan, Ethiopian, and AU militaries to continue the push back against al-Shabaab, then it should continue to engender a positive response from the populace. If Somalis feel that the government is effective, they will support it. President Mohamud has his work cut out for

him though. When he took office, the Somali military had not been paid in five months and had not received food rations in three.[321] Government workers had not been paid in four months, and there was no money in the country's treasury.

It is encouraging that the transfer of power from Ahmed to Mohamud was, more or less, a peaceful one. Prior to the election, there were rumors of bribes being paid on Ahmed's behalf. But even if those rumors were true, they were unsuccessful bribes, and Ahmed did not contest the election results. It is also true that there was an attempted assassination against Mohamud after his election, but this was made by al-Shabaab not by Ahmed's supporters.

The possibility exists that instead of being a spoiler, Islamists could be a check on the government. With the exception of the six months of Islamic Courts Union rule, Somali Islamists have acted as a resistance force against an incumbent government, not as the government itself. Something similar could happen now. The threat of a resurgent Islamism could be enough to force the government to adopt some elements of sharia.

The role of al-Shabaab in the future of Somalia is really a critical one. Al-Shabaab has fallen victim to the same pattern that previous Islamist groups have: they had initial successes, extensive successes in al-Shabaab's case, but then overreached. Al-Shabaab pushed the non-Islamist Somalis to a point that was unacceptable, and it presented a threat to neighboring countries, drawing them into conflict. While this did not spell the end for al-Shabaab, it certainly hurt it considerably. One way al-Shabaab could reestablish some semblance of influence is to work with the new Federal Government in

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[321] Malkhadir M. Muhumed "Why President believes he can pull Somalia back on track." Standard Digital News Dec. 28, 2012. http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/?articleID=2000073819&story_title=Kenya-Why-President-believes-he-can-pull-Somalia-back-on-track Last accessed 1/4/13.

trying to get some of its ideology in place as official law. That seems unlikely, however. The foreign members of al-Shabaab have a top-down view of Islamism, one in which the goal is to take over a country and enforce Islamist rule on the citizenry. Working with a non-Islamist government to gradually influence the larger society is not the preferred method. Nevertheless, if the Somalia leaders of al-Shabaab can distance themselves from the foreign influence, this remains at least a possibility. Otherwise, al-Shabaab will continue to find itself at odds with the Federal Government and its more powerful allies.

One complication is trying to determine who remains a committed Islamist and who does not. As has been mentioned in previous chapters, many of the regular al-Shabaab fighters are hired guns or people who see al-Shabaab as a means to an end but who are not hardline believers. Once defeated, these individuals typically leave al-Shabaab and join another militia or attempt to resume a normal life. A few of members have traveled north to Puntland and attempted to take over towns, but those efforts have more often than not met with defeat.[322] Local militias and counter-insurgency forces have been effective at preventing the spread of al-Shabaab into Puntland. As al-Shabaab continues to lose battles, most of its less-committed members drift away. This leaves only the most committed members of al-Shabaab intact. It is also true that many of the upper echelon of al-Shabaab members are not Somali but foreigners who have travelled to Somalia to fight. It is this element of al-Shabaab that may prove the most difficult to defeat. They have no other reason to be in Somalia other than to fight, and, unless they

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[322] Strategy Page. "What to do with unemployed terrorists." Nov. 27, 2012.
http://www.strategypage.com/qnd/somalia/articles/20121127.aspx

are prepared to give up and return to wherever they came from, it is unlikely they will cease hostilities.

**Post-Islamist Somalia**

A post-Islamist society is not necessarily a secular society. Olivier Roy describes post-Islamist societies as those in which religion and politics exist autonomously and there is a "precedence of politics over religion."[323] Asef Bayat gives a similar definition. "Post-Islamism is not anti-Islamic or secular; a post-Islamist movement dearly upholds religion but also highlights citizens' rights. It aspires to a pious society within a democratic state."[324] It appears as if the new Somali government is attempting to move the country in that direction. By not attempting to establish a secular state and by incorporating elements of Islam into the constitution the new government is enshrining Islam into Somali political life. This is a version of Jose Casanova's deprivatization theory. Somalia is not going to be a nation built on equality of religions; Islam is prominent and dominant. But it is not going to be an Islamic state along the lines of Iran or Saudi Arabia either. The political realm is a secular one, but one that respects and reveres Islam and has a duty to protect and defend the faith.

There are examples of post-Islamist political parties who have won elections in other countries and in some cases become the party in power. Egypt's *Hizb al-Wasat*, or Center Party, and Morocco's *Parti de la justice et du developpement* (PJD), or Justice and Development Party, are both Islamist parties that have won representation in their

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[323] Olivier Roy. *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004). P. 4.
[324] Asef Bayat. "The Post-Islamist Revolutions: What the Revolts in the Arab World Mean." Foreign Affairs Online. April 26, 2011. http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67812/asef-bayat/the-post-islamist-revolutions?page=show#

respective governments. Turkey's *Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi* (JDP), or Justice and

Development Party, has been the ruling party in that country since 2002. All these are

Islamist parties that seek to work within the democratic system. In Somalia, the situation

is more complex. Each of the above parties came into government in much more stable

environments (Hizb al-Wasat entered parliament in the wake of the Arab Spring, but

post-revolutionary Egypt was still a more stable situation than Somalia.). Democratic

elections were not unusual in these countries (Egypt had only the illusion of democracy

during Hosni Mubarak's rule, but theoretically Egypt has a history of elections) whereas

a legitimate democratic election in Somalia had not occurred since the 1960s. The

presidential election in Somalia was an indirect election by the members of parliament

who themselves were sent to parliament by clan elders and had to be approved by

technical selection committee. New members of parliament had to "have a high school

diploma and be free of ties to warlords or links to atrocities committed during the

country's civil war."[325] So while the election was seen as a positive step for Somalia, the

government can still not claim to be legitimately elected by the people, something these

other Islamist parties can claim.

Additionally, the Islamist parties in power in Egypt, Morocco, Turkey, as well as

the Ennadha Party (Resistance Party) in Tunisia are all considered moderate Islamist

parties. Neither Al-Shabaab nor Hizbul Islam, both of which are militant, not moderate,

has shown any interest in engaging in the democratic process in Somalia. That leaves the

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[325] "Somali swears in historic new parliament." Al-Jazeera Aug. 23, 2012
http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2012/08/2012818183718864689.html

Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia, the political party of former TFG President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, as the most significant Islamist political party in the country.

The ideal situation for the government is as follows: First, continue to weaken al-Shabaab. It has lost all of its strongholds but still exists as a fighting force. It would be a mistake to get too overconfident about al-Shabaab's defeat. The Islamic Courts Union was dominant and then collapsed, leading to the dominance of al-Shabaab. There is no reason to assume that a successor to al-Shabaab, some al-Shabaab 2.0, could not emerge and wreak havoc just as the new government is gaining traction. The government seems to be taking steps to prevent a resurgent al-Shabaab by offering Shabaab fighters amnesty.[326] This should be especially effective in getting the low-level al-Shabaab fighter to abandon it. It will not matter that this will have limited effect on the leadership if it has fewer and fewer fighters. Second, the government must strengthen itself and gain legitimacy among the people. The current president, Hassan Sheik Mohamud, has ties to al-Islah Movement. A group profiled earlier in this work, al-Islah, is often seen as elitist and not representative of the common Somali. That reputation coupled with the relative weakness of the government means they have their work cut out for themselves. They need to take as much help as they can from NGOs and other governments. This will enable the Somali government to begin the process of rebuilding infrastructure and the bureaucracy necessary to run a country. Some Islamists may also have to be given a seat at the table. Ideally this could appease some Islamists in Somalia. Lastly, the government leaders must begin to plan for a general election. An election could be twelve, eighteen,

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[326] Somalia Grants al-Shabaab Amnesty. Press TV. Dec. 30, 2012. http://presstv.com/detail/2012/12/30/280800/somalia-grants-alshabaab-amnesty/ last accessed 1/10/13.

or even twenty-four months down the line, but the promise of a general election needs to be made a reality. The government can establish election procedures and begin to educate the populace on how their specific election process would work. Rather than start with a nationwide election, the first elections should be local--starting at the city level. This would allow for election officials to see what potential problems and issues may arise and deal with them on a much smaller level.

Interestingly, one of the opponents of this new Somalia could be the business community. Since the fall of the Barre regime, the business community has had very little oversight. There has been no regulation or taxation of business to speak of. Presumably, that is all going to change. Businesses are going to have to pay taxes, deal with regulations and safety laws and so on. From a free market standpoint, this might upset the business class. But taxes and regulations are the price of a safer and democratic society. It would behoove the government to begin to work with the business leaders and incorporate their needs and wants into the government. In the past, business leaders have worked with and helped to finance warlords, clan leaders, Islamist groups, and pirates. There is a very real possibility they could finance these groups in the future, thus making life difficult for the new government. The government needs to convince the business community that betting on it is the better investment.

**Beyond al-Shabaab**

One of the most notorious acts of Islamist-based terrorism was the twin embassy attacks in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in 1998. Kenya, however, has a relatively small Muslim population, only about 11%. The vast majority of the country,

83%, is some form of Christian (predominantly Protestant but with a significant number of Catholics and Orthodox Christians as well).[327] Despite the notoriety and success of the Nairobi attack, Kenya has been relatively free of Islamist activity. The most direct impact of Islamism on Kenya has been the recruitment of Somali refugees from camps in Kenya. In 2012 a number of grenade attacks in Nairobi killed seven people and injured scores more.[328] These attacks have been blamed on al-Shabaab, although al-Shabaab has not claimed credit. This seems to be the extent of al-Shabaab activity in Kenya. However, that could be changing. It is alleged that these attacks were made by Somalis living in Kenya, not by native Kenyans. But there is a fear in the Kenyan government that homegrown Islamists, who may be allied with al-Shabaab, are beginning operations in the country.

The Muslim Youth Center (MYC), started in 2008 but was not particularly active until 2012, is led by Ahmad Imam Ali, a Kenyan who had fought in Somalia alongside al-Shabaab. Initially, the primary role of the MYC was recruitment and gathering financial support for al-Shabaab. Recently, however, the MYC has begun to create religious tension between Kenya's Muslim and Christian populations. It utilizes Twitter and a print magazine, *al-Misbah* (the lamp), which describes how innocent Muslims are

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[327] 2009 Population and Housing Census Results. Compiled by the Minister for State Planning, National Development and Vision 2030. Aug. 31, 2010. http://www.knbs.or.ke/docs/PresentationbyMinisterforPlanningrevised.pdf Last accessed 1/10/13.
[328] BBC. "Kenya blames al-Shabab for deadly Nairobi grenade attack." 11 Mar. 2012. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-17326086 Lasted accessed 1/18/13.

being targeted by drone strikes and how the Kenyan military are infidels.[329] This is done to gain support among the wider Kenyan Muslim population.

The Muslim Youth Center seems to have been influenced by Sheikh Aboud Rogo, a Mombasa based cleric who had been vocal in support of al-Shabaab.[330] After the fall of the Barre regime, a significant number of salafis fled Somalia to Kenya where they set up Salafi institutions in the country. Many of these were funded by Saudi Arabia.[331] One such institution was the Kisauni Islamic Center. It was here that Rogo was trained.

Rogo was arrested in connection with the bombing of the Paradise Hotel in Mombasa in 2002 in which an explosive-laden truck drove into the lobby of the hotel and exploded, killing thirteen people. Rogo was arrested for his alleged involvement with the attack but was released in 2005 due to lack of evidence. Rogo was shot and killed on August 27, 2012 by unknown gunmen.[332] It is widely believed that he was killed by the Kenyan police. In the four months prior to his death, four other Islamist extremists were killed or disappeared in Kenya. Rogo's death sparked two days of protests in Mombasa leaving four dead and two churches looted.[333]

While it does not appear as if Rogo had an official role in the Muslim Youth Center, he was clearly a chief ideological source for the group. He would visit with MYC

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[329] Bosire Boniface. "Muslim Youth Center aims to create religious strife in Kenya, analysts say." Sabahi Online. Aug. 22, 2012. http://sabahionline.com/en_GB/articles/hoa/articles/features/2012/08/22/feature-01 Last accessed 1/17/13.

[330] United Nations "Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 1916 (2010)." Pg. 141. July 18, 2011.

[331] Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens. "Jihad comes to Kenya." Foreign Affairs Online. Jan. 10, 2013. http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/138751/alexander-meleagrou-hitchens/jihad-comes-to-kenya?page=show Last accessed 1/18/13.

[332] Tom Odula. "Aboud Rogo, Kenya Muslim Cleric, Shot Dead." AP Aug. 27, 2012.

[333] Mike Pflanz. Riots in Kenya after 'al-Shabaab backer' shot dead. The Telegraph. Aug. 27, 2012. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/kenya/9501898/Riots-in-Kenya-after-al-Shabaab-backer-shot-dead.html Last accessed 1/18/13.

members, and copies of his videos were widely dispersed among MYC members.[334] He also had taken trips to Somalia to meet with al-Shabaab members and Ahmad Imam Ali, MYC founder, was once a student of Rogo's.

It appears as if the Kenyan government is attempting to prevent a surge in Islamist extremist activities in Kenya by eliminating the perceived threats prior to massive violence taking place. Whether its approach is justified, the fear is well founded. Al-Shabaab is coming closer and closer to defeat in Somalia. It is entirely conceivable that al-Shabaab members will migrate south into Kenya to regroup. There is already a large Somali population in Kenya, and if the MYC can create a support mechanism there it will be a very attractive option for al-Shabaab members. If that does happen, it will mark a shift in al-Shabaab. They will have gone from a Somali-centric group, focused on establishing an Islamist Somalia, to a regional actor, looking to establish an Islamist East Africa. The Somali and Kenyan governments, the African Union, and all those who supported them may have been successful in defeating al-Shabaab in Somalia. But as was the case when the defeat of the Islamic Courts gave rise to a new force, so, too, the defeat of al-Shabaab could unleash a new threat to the Horn of Africa.

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[334] UN report 1916 (2010). Pg. 141.

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