

2015-09-09

# Manipulating State Failure: Al-Shabaab's Consolidation of Power in Somalia

Barkley, Blake

---

Barkley, B. (2015). Manipulating State Failure: Al-Shabaab's Consolidation of Power in Somalia (Master's thesis, University of Calgary, Calgary, Canada). Retrieved from <https://prism.ucalgary.ca>. doi:10.11575/PRISM/26825  
<http://hdl.handle.net/11023/2441>

*Downloaded from PRISM Repository, University of Calgary*

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Manipulating State Failure:  
Al-Shabaab's Consolidation of Power in Somalia

by

Blake Edward Barkley

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
DEGREE OF MASTER OF STRATEGIC STUDIES  
  
GRADUATE PROGRAM IN MILITARY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

CALGARY, ALBERTA

SEPTEMBER, 2015

© BLAKE EDWARD BARKLEY 2015

### **Abstract**

This thesis addresses the question: *How has Al-Shabaab's position of power across large swaths of Somalia challenged assumptions about the organizational capacities of terrorist organizations within the context of state failure?* At its core, this question is composed of four parts: an assessment of the power maintained by Al-Shabaab; an evaluation of the assumptions made about the operational abilities of such groups; an understanding how organizational capacity can be measured; and an assessment of state failure's relationship to informal institutions and non-state actors. This research noted a significant shift in the capabilities of non-state actors attempting to consolidate power in Somalia as social and political contexts evolved over time. Such dramatic shifts exposed the specific circumstances necessary for the development of conditions that allowed for organizations, such as Al-Shabaab, to accumulate domestic power and authority, while extending their reach regionally.

## **Acknowledgements**

I am incredibly grateful for the financial support provided to me throughout my time at the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies (CMSS). This project would not have come to fruition without the contributions made by CMSS, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), and the Government of Alberta. I am particularly thankful to Dr. Gavin Cameron for his unwavering support, diligent supervision, and guidance over the last two years. I am also forever indebted to the CMSS administrative staff for their support and their uncanny abilities to answer my many, many questions. Donna, Jamie, Shelley, Nancy, and Patrick you have my gratitude.

To my fellow CMSS students, you have made the last two years worthwhile. Danny and Mathew, I would like to thank you both for your encouragement and many *creative* suggestions for the title of this thesis. Steffen, thank you for being there to share in the panic, frustration, and (eventual) joy of writing; without the competition I may have never met my many deadlines.

To my long-distance editors: Kelsey & Melinda, your skills at deciphering my occasionally convoluted thought process are always much appreciated. Without your insights and many track-changes this thesis would look entirely different.

To my family, your steadfast support and encouragement are behind everything I do, without it I would never have made it this far. To my mother, Sandra, your ability to talk me out of a stress-induced panic has never been more useful than throughout writing this thesis. To my Stepfather, Marc, your blind faith in my abilities, while at times aggravating, appears to have given me the motivation I needed – thank you. To my Father, Ken, and Stepmother, Cindy, your kind words of encouragement and support never go unnoticed or unappreciated. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Finally, David, thank you for being my number one supporter throughout this entire process. I could not have done it without you.

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Table of Contents .....	iv
List of Figures and Illustrations.....	v
List of Abbreviations .....	vi
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background .....	1
1.3 Methodology .....	3
1.4 Theoretical Framework.....	9
1.5 Literature Review .....	23
1.6 Conclusion .....	36
<b>Chapter 2: Formal and Informal Institutions in Somalia.....</b>	<b>37</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	37
2.2 The Retreat of the State.....	37
2.3 Clan Dynamics .....	46
2.4 Islam as an Institution .....	54
2.5 Economy .....	61
2.6 Conclusion .....	69
<b>Chapter 3: Organizing Al-Shabaab .....</b>	<b>72</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	72
3.2 The Emergence of Al-Shabaab .....	72
3.3 Al-Shabaab and its Competitors.....	78
3.4 Tenuous Relationships: Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaeda.....	84
3.5 Tailored Tactics .....	89
3.6 Target: Legitimacy .....	99
3.7 Conclusion .....	104
<b>Chapter 4: Conclusion.....</b>	<b>106</b>
Bibliography.....	114

## **List of Figures and Illustrations**

Figure 2.1 Basic Clan Hierarchies .....	48
Figure 3.1 Target Type – Regional (2010-2014).....	92
Figure 3.2 Target Type – Somalia (2010-2014) .....	92
Figure 3.3 Target Type – Outside Somalia (2010-2014) .....	93
Figure 3.4 Casualties of Civilian Targeted Attacks Outside Somalia (2010-2014) .....	94
Figure 3.5 Casualties of Civilian Targeted Attacks Within Somalia (2010-2014).....	94

### **List of Abbreviations**

- AIAI** – Al-Ittihad Al-Islamiya
- AMISOM** – African Union Mission in Somalia
- ARS** – Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia
- ARS-A** – Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia - Asmara
- ARS-D** – Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia - Djibouti
- FIFA** – *Fédération Internationale de Football Association*
- GTD** – Global Terrorism Database
- ICU** – Islamic Courts Union
- IJA** – Interim Juba Administration
- IMF** – International Monetary Fund
- KDF** – Kenya Defence Forces
- MOD** – Marehan/Ogaden/Dulbahante Clan Alliance
- SFG** – Somali Federal Government
- SNA** – Somali National Army
- SRC** – Supreme Revolutionary Council
- SSDF** – Somali Salvation Democratic Front
- TFG** – Transitional Federal Government
- UNGA** – United Nations General Assembly
- USAID** – U.S. Agency for International Development
- WSLF** – Western Somali Liberation Front

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter will provide a brief overview of how Al-Shabaab formed, and the groups' organizational development dating back to their first appearance in 2002. I outline how this organization does not fit well with the existing literature's view on the development of terrorist organizations within failed or collapsed states. This chapter also provides the methodological and theoretical foundations for this project, couched in a detailed synopsis of two competing approaches to the relationships terrorist organizations have with failed states in the literature review.

### **1.2 Background**

Somalia's protracted civil war in the 1980s and the eventual descent into state failure and collapse through the rise of warlord domination in the early 1990s have garnered substantial international attention from both international media outlets and academia. However, the most recent experiences with internal insurgent groups and international terrorist networks, particularly those with Al-Shabaab, are of central importance to this analysis. This thesis intends to examine the ways in which Al-Shabaab has been able to maintain its autonomy and organizational capacity under the internal anarchical conditions of state collapse despite the ongoing intervention of the Somali National Army (SNA) and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The group exposes ambitions within Somalia to be considered the only legitimate governing authority, or at least the 'government in waiting.'<sup>1</sup> By taking advantage of a weak and at times non-existent central

---

<sup>1</sup> Ashley Jackson and Abdi Aynte, "Al-Shabaab Engagement With Aid Agencies," *Humanitarian Policy*



government, Al-Shabaab has been able to argue that they are the best option for Somalia's future.

Al-Shabaab possesses a long list of national grievances and ambitions. As such, it may be surprising that the organization would officially align itself with international terror networks such as Al-Qaeda; however this affiliation remains loose and centered on a shared ideology, potential access to financial resources, and training.<sup>2</sup> This affiliation has not restrained their autonomous decision making capabilities. The preeminence of Somali identity allows for interests within the organization to remain unscathed by such international relationships.<sup>3</sup>

A sophisticated level of organizational prowess must be maintained in order to support the group's authority within the territory they claim. Al-Shabaab's development within a context of state failure suggests that such an achievement is difficult to attain. While official state institutions had long since dissolved throughout much of south-central Somalia, residual informal institutions remained which aided in ordering Somali society in a way that favoured the ambitions of Al-Shabaab. Amidst the chaos of internal anarchy and warlord dominated political atmosphere, the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) provided law and order where it had otherwise been non-existent. It is from this group that Al-Shabaab emerged as a militant, yet minor wing in 2002. The Ethiopian invasion in 2006 allowed for the group to seize the helm and grasp on to the dimensions of order that had been, albeit briefly, installed in the region. Additionally, Somalia's pervasive clan structure

---

<sup>2</sup> Matthew J. Thomas, "Exposing and Exploiting Weaknesses in the Merger of Al-Qaeda and Al-Shabaab," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 24 no.3 (2013): 414.

<sup>3</sup> International Crisis Group, *Somalia: Al-Shabaab – It Will Be a Long War: Policy Briefing: Africa Briefing No. 99* (Nairobi/Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2014): 5.

remains an integral social ordering tool, which in conjunction with strong ethno-nationalist sentiments among the population has permitted Al-Shabaab to thrive in an environment that has been essentially void of any formal (and internationally recognized) state structure.

This thesis is therefore presented as an attempt to address the question: *How has Al-Shabaab's position of power across large swaths of Somalia challenged assumptions about the organizational capacities of terrorist organizations within the context of state failure?* To further understand and analyze this question – it is first necessary to clarify the various building blocks and components included therein. At its core, this question is composed of four parts: an assessment of the power maintained by Al-Shabaab; the assumptions made about the operational abilities of such groups; establishing an understanding of how organizational capacity can be measured; and finally an assessment of state failure, focusing on how it is generally conceptualized by political scientists and how this might overlook key dimensions relating to sub-state organizations, such as Al-Shabaab.

### **1.3 Methodology**

I intend to employ a single-case study analysis to examine how terrorist organizations can maintain organizational capacities under conditions of state failure or collapse. This is the most appropriate approach for this project due to the length restrictions placed upon a Master of Strategic Studies thesis. The allotted space is insufficient to adequately explore the nuances and fully compare multiple cases examining the relationships between state failure and terrorist organizations. I acknowledge that this research program will overlook the ways in which the case

of Al-Shabaab in Somalia relate to other cases where sociocultural factors are similarly influential in determining the emerging political realities in a post-state failure environment.

The use of this case study will allow for this analysis to conduct thorough process tracing in order to determine how assumptions regarding conditions of state failure inadequately account for the maintenance of terrorist organizations. These assumptions include, but are not limited to: the focus on formal and internationally recognized institutions (such as those regulating the economic, political, and security spheres) as the pillars of effective state-building;<sup>4</sup> the emphasis on service provision as a key marker of state success;<sup>5</sup> and the focus on the maintenance of territorial integrity based on the preservation of the monopoly on the legitimate use of violence as well as the ability to ensure that the authority of the central state is not effectively challenged by another internal party.<sup>6</sup>

Furthermore, there exists a lively academic debate on the efficacy of failed versus fragile states as incubators of terrorist activity. International media outlets and public statements on behalf of western governments (the United States has been particularly vocal on this issue) maintain a belief that there exists a direct

---

<sup>4</sup> Sarah Phillips, "Political Settlements and Peace in Post-Colonial Contexts: The Case of Somaliland," (Paper Presented at the 56<sup>th</sup> Annual International Studies Association, New Orleans, LA, February 2015); and Stewart Patrick, *Weak Links: Fragile States, Global Threats, and International Security* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

<sup>5</sup> Robert Rotberg ed., "The Failure and Collapse of Nation-States: Breakdown, Prevention and Repair," in *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 1-50; and William Zartman ed., "Introduction: Posing the Problem of State Collapse," in *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995), 1-14.

<sup>6</sup> Stephen Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 11-12, 44-45; Robert Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

For an excellent analysis on these dynamics of statehood and traditional evaluations thereof, see: Stein Sundstøl Eriksen, "State Failure' in Theory and Practice: The Ideal of the State and the Contradictions of State Formation," *Review of International Studies* 37(2011):229-247.

correlation between failed states and the proliferation of terrorist organizations.<sup>7</sup> However, there exists a strong counter argument that “weak but functioning” states are more ideal for the maintained operational capacity of these organizations, as they are able to provide reliable and continuous access to the international economy through global financial, logistical, communications and transportation infrastructures.<sup>8</sup> There seems to be a large discrepancy between these two prominent perspectives, one primarily constructed on a base of both logic<sup>9</sup> and political rhetoric and the other on an understanding of the organizational needs of violent non-state actors to maintain their relevance. However, neither of these perspectives appears able to clearly account for the proliferation of power by Al-Shabaab in Somalia. It is for this reason that the employment of process tracing techniques are important to find where the case of Al-Shabaab in Somalia diverges from what has been theoretically identified as the ‘norm’ in the relationship between state failure and maintained organizational capacity.

It is important to identify the variables involved in the specific case study and the observations that can be drawn from it. King, Keohane, and Verba explain that an investigator need only look to different levels of analysis within a given case in order to identify the numerous observations relevant to the development and testing of theory. Even within a single case as different dependent variables are accounted for, the increased number of observed interactions between variables can enhance the

---

<sup>7</sup> James A. Piazza, “Incubators of Terror: Do Failed and Failing States Promote Transnational Terrorism?,” *International Studies Quarterly* 52 no. 3 (2008): 469.

<sup>8</sup> Patrick, *Weak Links*, 10.

<sup>9</sup> Tiffany Howard, *Failed States and the Origins of Violence: A Comparative Analysis of State Failure as a Root Cause of Terrorism and Political Violence* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2014), 4.

quality of a research program and allow it draw more credible conclusions within the single-case study.<sup>10</sup>

To ensure a thorough analysis, process tracing within the single-case study will be employed. Making use of this technique will highlight a number of observations that will prove to be necessary when applying the case of Somalia to theories of state failure. Furthermore, process tracing enhances one's ability to remain sensitive to the importance of historical context while remaining more intensely focused on fully developing the chosen case study within the appropriate theoretical framework.<sup>11</sup> Additional causal paths and outcomes can also be observed using this technique, thereby allowing for this thesis to follow the development of sustainable terrorist organizations using key events throughout Al-Shabaab's development that played a contributing role in the organization becoming a key strategic actor in Somalia. I will then juxtapose this process with the relevant theoretical literature hypothesizing about the need for formal state institutions to prop up such organizations.<sup>12</sup> It is important to note that the case of Somalia is perceived as an anomaly; by unpacking the circumstances surrounding it, and the key events marking Al-Shabaab's rise to power vis à vis the various manifestations of central governance in Somalia, this project intends to show that there are various intervening variables that complicate the relationship between state failure and terrorist organizational capacity.

---

<sup>10</sup> Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 208.

<sup>11</sup> Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT University Press, 2005), 223.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 224.

To test for organizational capacity, this research will take into account the reach of the organization, as evidenced by its ability to provide services (i.e. judicial, educational etc.) to the population, enforce their military/policing authority over the population and effectively preventing other groups (including the transitional and post-transitional governments) from challenging their authority in a given number of regions. These are the relevant markers of state capacity, as they persist in the relevant literature as useful means for identifying the criteria for successful statehood. Zartman and Krasner are particularly adept at outlining the main components of state functionality. Their works predominantly focus on the maintenance of territory as well as the provision of essential services and security to the general population. Therefore, to test for the organizational capacity, these criteria will be superimposed onto Al-Shabaab as a non-state actor working to fill the administrative gaps left in these areas. Despite their inability to receive any form of official external legitimization, their ability to informally seek legitimacy from the broad population through such traditionally recognized channels, makes them an appropriate tool of analysis for this project. Al-Shabaab, in south-central Somalia, has in many cases proven to be capable of bridging social and clan based schisms by invoking informal legitimizing institutions, such as Islamism, to effectively organize and administer the territories under its control in ways that resemble an official bureaucratic body.

If Al-Shabaab is able to establish similar levels of control and organization within the territory they control, it may then have ramifications on the claims to legitimacy made by both the transitional and post-transitional governments in

Somalia. Perceived legitimacy is a highly subjective issue, and differs depending on the level of analysis at which it is observed. At the international level, legitimacy is contingent on the consensus of other states that an organization's claims are valid. Meanwhile, at the local level, social norms and values in conjunction with a group's ability to perform the requisite duties to establish legitimacy in the view of local populations are much more relevant to the internal perception of legitimate rule.<sup>13</sup>

I will utilize data from the University of Maryland's Global Terrorism Database (GTD), which will allow for an understanding of the general trends in Al-Shabaab's targeting practices and general abilities to execute sophisticated, and high profile attacks. I will draw further descriptive information of such operations from reports by international media, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations that have conducted extensive field work in the region. Furthermore, assessing the growth or retreat of territory under Al-Shabaab's control through such reports will also aid in informing this research as to the general level of control that the group has over people's daily lives. When writing of such dimensions of control, this analysis seeks to explore the influence that Al-Shabaab is able to exert, relative to the transitional and post-transitional federal governments, onto local governance and justice systems, including but not limited to working within existing clan hierarchies to gain legitimacy, as well as imposing their own militias as a tool to promote their own brand of justice. Furthermore, I will use reports of their military encounters with the SNA, as well as forces operating under the mandate of AMISOM

---

<sup>13</sup> Claire Mcloughlin, *State Legitimacy: Developmental Leadership Program Concept Brief 2* (Birmingham, UK: The Developmental Leadership Program, 2014), 1.

and compare them to changes in territorial control to observe shifting trends in their operational capabilities.

The nature of this study, and the inability to conduct fieldwork within Somalia due to security concerns means that the aforementioned data sources provide as close of a glimpse as possible into the operational and political changes occurring within this case. The implications of such restrictions, and the inaccessible nature of primary data, means that this analysis relies on some sources that may have been influenced by key stakeholders with a vested interest in the outcome of the conflict. Therefore every attempt will be made to juxtapose these sources with counter arguments in order to mitigate the problems posed by the inherent bias within such sources. The use of peer-reviewed academic literature into the nature of the conflict and the history of Al-Shabaab will ensure that the primary data and operational reports put out by media, the SNA, and AMISOM are tempered by the measured analysis presented by the secondary literature. Using such data sources, I argue that in this case, a positive correlation exists between Al-Shabaab's ability to organize and the dissolution of formal state institutions in Somalia. Therefore, this analysis aims to account for intervening variables that make such phenomena possible.

#### **1.4 Theoretical Framework**

To respond to the question laid out at the outset of this chapter, it is necessary to firmly root this study in its conceptual and theoretical positions. This thesis challenges traditional conceptualizations of the state failure literature;



instead, favouring a more progressive approach, and relies on pillars of statehood rooted in informal elements of social and political organization.

Before broadening the discussion, it is first important to understand the traditionally accepted criteria for effective expressions of statehood.<sup>14</sup> Such understandings have been explicitly integrated into international treatises. If one examines the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States, it lays out the criteria for successful statehood in a particularly direct fashion. Although this is not a direct reflection of contemporary African states, it serves to reinforce international legal precedents from which a general understanding of successful statehood can be inferred. Article 1 affirms that, “the state as a person of international law should possess the following qualifications: a) a permanent population; b) a defined territory; c) government; d) capacity to enter into relations with the other states.”<sup>15</sup> The successful maintenance of these conditions can be considered a minimum threshold for successful statehood. Although state functionality has become contingent on a wider array of factors – it is important to acknowledge these pillars as existing at the center of increasingly complex functions of statehood. Therefore, the scope of the discussion must move beyond the traditionally linear understanding of the relationship between the formal institutions of statehood and the preservation peace and stability.

The aforementioned linear relationship is reductionist in nature, as it claims that formal institutions are the only barrier to an inevitable descent into war and

---

<sup>14</sup> Gerard Kreijen, *State Failure, Sovereignty and Effectiveness: Legal Lessons from the Decolonization of Sub-Saharan Africa* (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2004), 18.

<sup>15</sup> “Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States,” 26 December 1933, *Department of International Law: Organization of American States*, art. 1, accessed: 13 November 2014, <http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/treaties/a-40.html>.

chaos.<sup>16</sup> This understanding can be overcome by emphasizing the creation of successful governance structures that serve to prioritize the maintenance of internal sovereignty over formal institutions, which has tended to be a central tenet of international state-building projects.<sup>17</sup> The international community often devises their plans under the presupposition that there is an effective government structure to receive and distribute aid, or to coordinate institution building.<sup>18</sup> From its earliest references,<sup>19</sup> solutions to the state failure crisis have focused on a direct and systematic approach that relies on external intervention committed to bolstering domestic governance structures. The prescribed solutions have been tested numerous times, and have generally proven inadequate to comprehensively address the chaotic environments that persist within failed or collapsed states.<sup>20</sup> The notion that alternative, informal, and long-standing structures are able to act as an ordering mechanism to attain increased levels of cooperation and coordination between non-state actors within conditions of state collapse stands at the heart of this analysis' theoretical assumptions.

To address the above concerns, this research aims to explain the process by which state fragility opens up the playing field for sub-state actors to acquire legitimacy and organize without possessing international legal sovereignty. The basic rule for international legal sovereignty is "that recognition is extended to

---

<sup>16</sup> Phillips, "Political Settlements and Peace," 3.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Joseph MacKay, "State Failure, Actor-Network Theory, and the Theorisation of Sovereignty," *Brussels Journal of International Studies* 3(2006): 65.

<sup>19</sup> The first use of the term can be found in: Gerald B Helman and Stephen R Ratner, "Saving Failed States," *Foreign Policy* 89(1992): 3-20.

<sup>20</sup> MacKay, "State Failure, Actor-Network Theory," 65

states with territory and formal juridical autonomy.”<sup>21</sup> Therefore, international legal sovereignty is built upon broad international recognition for the outright existence of the state, the defined geographic boundaries, and its existing government.

At its core, this framework links three different bodies of literature, including those addressing the issues of state fragility, legitimate sovereignty, and the organizational capabilities of sub-state actors. This project perceives each of these themes as primarily concerned with different levels of analysis. State fragility is often taken as a relational condition at the international level, which juxtaposes state capabilities against one another. The most successful states reserve the right to collectively acknowledge the sovereignty of a given state at the international level, through the process of granting international legal sovereignty to one another through a general consensus of a state’s status as a perceived equal.<sup>22</sup> However, expressions of legitimacy and internal sovereignty begin at the national level, as an “effort to create and sustain the state that defines the state government.”<sup>23</sup> Local dynamics often shape which groups within a state are able to project their claims to the international community. It helps to consider sovereignty not as a given, but as a “limited, temporal, [and] fluid process.”<sup>24</sup> Sovereignty can therefore be considered to be something that the state actively does at both the national and international levels.

Finally, to address organizational capacities, one must look at the local and sub-state level, focusing on the actions and capabilities of specific groups within the

---

<sup>21</sup> Eriksen, “‘State Failure’ in Theory,” 9

<sup>22</sup> MacKay, “State Failure, Actor-Network Theory,” 88.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

‘nation-state.’ It is the process of how these levels interact that will shape this project’s analysis of Al-Shabaab. This interactive process begins at the sub-state level, where groups compete to attain local legitimacy and then become increasingly able to consolidate their power-base and achieve organizational prowess. This is evidenced through the acquiescence of local elites and the general population to the group’s authority. Such loyalties can be won through the provision of services, such as education and law enforcement to the community.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, a group’s ability to project their authority via military and policing power as a method of preventing their opponents from challenging their hegemonic control over their declared territory increases their ability to consolidate power, and inspire the loyalty of local populations through the provision of security.

For an organization vying for territorial control and authority, the establishment of legitimate internal and external sovereignty is of paramount concern. While, international legal sovereignty is contingent on the wider acceptance of the international community (usually through bureaucratic means such as the United Nations General Assembly [UNGA]), internal sovereignty hinges on the ability of a group to maintain its established territory and prevent external intervention therein, while simultaneously preserving their monopoly on the legitimate use of power.<sup>26</sup>

States are granted the same overarching legal capabilities internationally and are expected to fulfill the same basic functions to preserve their sovereignty while

---

<sup>25</sup> Oscar Gakuo Mwangi, “State Collapse, Al-Shabaab, Islamism, and Legitimacy in Somalia,” *Politics, Religion & Ideology* 13, no. 3 (2012): 520.

<sup>26</sup> Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*, 21.

respecting the sovereignty of others. The vast power differentials between states allows for substantial discrepancies to arise in their respective abilities to project power internationally and to keep their own house in order.<sup>27</sup> These power differentials may also lead to an increase in the frequency with which international legal sovereignty is violated. This reality suggests that sovereignty alone, as both a norm and pillar of international law, is insufficient to ensure the maintenance of state integrity.<sup>28</sup> Failed and failing states can be considered to be more vulnerable to external intervention because the limited ability of groups to claim their right to domestic sovereignty weaken the generally accepted international norms surrounding non-intervention.<sup>29</sup> However, it is important to stress that these norms still exist, and the unchanging nature of international borderlands reinforces their existence.

There is also a substantial risk posed by internal sub-state actors with the potential to de-legitimize the official government. Such processes of de-legitimization occur when the supporting principles of domestic legitimacy are eroded, causing a divergence between the desires of society and the abilities of government.<sup>30</sup> When such processes occur at a substantial level, David Beetham forecasts the development of several phenomena, “such as [a] coup d’état, loss of political authority, [or a] revolutionary mobilisation [*sic*].”<sup>31</sup> Each of these scenarios

---

<sup>27</sup> Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*, 45.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 228.

<sup>29</sup> Piazza, “Incubators of Terror,” 472.

<sup>30</sup> David Beetham, “Max Weber and the Legitimacy of the Modern State,” *Analyse & Kritik* 13 (1991): 43.

<sup>31</sup> Beetham, “Max Weber and the Legitimacy of the Modern State,” 44.

has come to fruition in Somalia at one time or another as the state infrastructure began to decay.

General Siad Barre overthrew the initial post-independence government in Somalia in a military coup in 1969. This upheaval led to the imposition of an authoritarian regime that eventually distanced itself from large sections of society by polarizing relations between the state and various clan groupings.<sup>32</sup> The rocky footing on which the government stood began to crumble after the failed invasion into the Ogaden region of Ethiopia.<sup>33</sup> The credibility of Siad Barre's regime wavered and open hostilities ensued. Various clan groupings that had faced increased persecution by the regime eventually staged a second coup that deposed the government. Yet, none of the former factions were able to garner enough political credibility to claim legitimate power and make an effective claim for internal sovereignty.<sup>34</sup>

Both the first Somali government and that of Siad Barre lost political credibility and were removed from power in the form of a *coup d'état*. However, it was the latter experience that saw the mobilization of disenfranchised clan groupings against the state. The progression of state decay in Somalia and the inability of any group to effectively consolidate power in the early 1990's is what drives this study's contemporary analysis of Al-Shabaab and their abilities to carve out some degree of legitimacy and power within a political power vacuum.

---

<sup>32</sup> Terrence Lyons and Ahmed I. Samatar, *Somalia: State Collapse, Multilateral Intervention, and Strategies for Political Reconstruction* (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institute, 1995), 8.

<sup>33</sup> Jeffrey A. Lefebvre, *Arms For The Horn: U.S. Security Policy in Ethiopia and Somalia 1953-1991* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991), 177.

<sup>34</sup> Lyons and Samatar, *Strategies for Political Reconstruction*, 7.

The process of state decay can be conceptually rooted in three core areas: the political, economic, and social dimensions of the state.<sup>35</sup> In the political context this is often evidenced by the appropriation of power by authoritarian regimes, which decreases the likelihood for a peaceful change of government, thereby compromising the perceived legitimacy of the regime.<sup>36</sup> In the economic sphere, bankruptcy, mismanagement, and the corruption of state finances serve as a clear indicator of progressive institutional decay as its adverse effects cause the economy to shrink.<sup>37</sup> Socially, decay is demonstrated through the state's limited capacity to deliver basic services to its population, thereby lowering the overall standard of living. A low standard of living becomes especially problematic when coupled with the increased unemployment rates that result from a shrinking economy.<sup>38</sup>

Zartman expands on the above process of decay, particularly referencing the disintegration of political institutions, and subsequently identifies the process as including five circumstances that signals decline towards an eventual situation of state collapse. He introduces these with the caveat that they do not occur in any particular prescribed order, citing the uniqueness of each scenario.<sup>39</sup> The first notes the devolution of power away from the core of the state, namely the capital and the officially recognized government, into the state's periphery. This is generally a result

---

<sup>35</sup> Patrick, *Weak Links*, 29-30.

<sup>36</sup> Abu Bakarr Bah, "State Decay: A Conceptual Frame of Failing and Failed States in West Africa," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 25, no. 1 (2012): 74.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Zartman, "Posing the Problem of State Collapse," 9-10.

of infighting amongst the central elite, culminating in contested local authority and competition amongst factions.<sup>40</sup>

Following the devolution of power, the second identifiable signpost is the loss of support by the central government's 'power base' – and the resulting abandonment of broader social demands of the population and a retreat into the confines of the closest circles of the government (such as religious or ethnic groupings).<sup>41</sup> The situation becomes critical when the agents of state authority begin to work against the state in favour of their own interests and material benefit. Groups that formerly represented the central state's security apparatus, such as the police and military, effectively assume the characteristics of roving gangs extracting wealth from the general citizenry.<sup>42</sup> The last two markers of decline laid out by Zartman involve the choices of the central state. The government consistently avoids and delays decision-making on key pieces of legislation and orders of government, eventually culminating in a crisis of governance where little to no productive activity occurs, bringing the business of government to a halt. Finally, the incumbent politicians of the imploding central government will approach governance in a solely defensive manner. Meaning that, the overwhelming majority of their policies are geared towards eliminating the threat posed by political opposition forces. This is accomplished either through the appeasement or outright repression of such

---

<sup>40</sup> Zartman, "Posing the Problem of State Collapse," 9-10.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.



opponents, which negates any of the previous democratic qualities of the state and limiting any formal form of political participation.<sup>43</sup>

The development of an internal power vacuum is particularly relevant due to the normative and legal reinforcement of independence-era international borders on the African continent. The external preservation of borderlands occurs independently of internal governance mechanisms. Therefore, their continued integrity reflects very little of the state within.<sup>44</sup> The prolonged state of anarchy that has persisted within Somalia, and the unwavering international acknowledgment of the state's existence displays how pervasive concepts of sovereignty can be when regulating international environments. Somali society has proven to be incredibly adaptive to the circumstances of state collapse, as expressions of local sovereignty allowed for communities to promote pockets of successful local administration, even though no formal centralized governance structures existed.<sup>45</sup> When states fail to preserve the internal and external dynamics of sovereignty, they become increasingly fragile – some to the point of collapse.

If the above failures take root, alternative structures that operate independently of the formal government may aid in restructuring society along much more informal lines. This provides the opportunity for sub-state actors to consolidate their power locally and begin to fill the void left by the retreat of the state. If the specific group is successful in attaining hegemonic control over their claimed territory, they may then begin to build up an unofficial bureaucracy to

---

<sup>43</sup> Zartman, "Posing the Problem of State Collapse," 10.

<sup>44</sup> Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 105-106.

<sup>45</sup> Karin Von Hippel, "The Roots of Terrorism: Probing the Myths," *The Political Quarterly* 73, no. 25 (2002): 35.

compensate for the absence of domestic sovereign authority as evidenced by the limited reach of formal state institutions.

Core elements of the literature on this topic make assumptions of what 'successful statehood' looks like. Rotberg and Zartman focus on the idea of the state as service providers, thereby making normative assumptions about how an internationally accepted and successful state should operate in relation to its citizenry.<sup>46</sup> Such assumptions do not fully explain the situation in southern Somalia, as at various points after the collapse of its state institutions, it has relied on domestic non-state actors for the provision of services.<sup>47</sup> The reality of this situation, and the animosity that has traditionally greeted the advent of Political Islamist groups (which have generally been the most successfully organized contenders for power) within Somalia by international onlookers suggests that an increasingly broad understanding of the relationship between the citizenry and those that provide essential services is necessary. Such a broadening of the agenda requires an understanding of the needs of local populations, the nature of the 'ungoverned' territory, and the level of sophistication possessed by the group seeking to maintain an authoritative position.<sup>48</sup>

Moving beyond service provision as an ideal criterion, Stephen Krasner tends to emphasize the relationship between successful expressions of statehood (as evidenced by the presence and acceptance of internal legal sovereignty on behalf of

---

<sup>46</sup> Eriksen, "'State Failure' in Theory and Practice," 231.

<sup>47</sup> Anne Marie Baylouny, "Authority Outside the State: Non-State Actors and New Institutions in the Middle East," in *Ungoverned Spaces: Alternatives to State Authority in an Era of Softened Sovereignty*, edited by: Anne L. Clunan and Harold A. Trinkunas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 136-137.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 139.

the state) and the maintenance of two key factors: territorial integrity and the monopoly on the legitimate use of violence.<sup>49</sup> Beyond these traditional markers of successful statehood, assumptions can be made that legitimacy (either domestic or international) can only be granted to official governing bodies that can ensure most if not all of the aforementioned criteria. To understand how sub-state actors relate to maintaining organizational capabilities within the context of state failure, the assumption must be made that when the state apparatus crumbles and fades from the forefront of public life, informal institutions become vital to the continued operation of society; thereby presenting legitimacy as a much more subjective tool.

One such example is that of the post-collapse economy in Somalia. It entered an ambiguous phase where the state as an economic actor was not officially recognized by international monetary institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). This meant that they could not access official veins of development assistance to other forms of international aid provided by these institutions. However, for a time it maintained the ability to sustain exports through official multinational corporations. Rural populations were cut-off from the services provided by formal and informal groups operating in urban sectors. Therefore, such populations relied on the preservation of this precarious economic situation and the continuation of cross border transactions. By preserving this informal economy, rural populations were able to survive the tumultuous social,

---

<sup>49</sup> Eriksen, "State Failure' in Theory and Practice," 234.

political, and economic conditions that emerge without an effective central governing authority.<sup>50</sup>

As the above example displays, the process of granting and exercising legitimate authority over a population does not disappear after the retreat of the state. Incorporating and accounting for alternative sources of legitimacy hinges on the assumption that, “any given power arrangement must appeal to some underlying social norm to be accepted as legitimate.”<sup>51</sup> If this perception is accepted, it recognizes the need for a deeper understanding of the remnants of social organization after the dissolution of the formal state apparatus. In the case of Somalia, it is necessary to note that despite the absence of centralized government, the social fabric of Somali society had not sufficiently denigrated to eliminate the value of maintaining strong family and clan-based relations.<sup>52</sup> Emerging from these foundational social elements are informal institutions that have the potential to be more effective than their formal state-based counterparts.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, the establishment of group legitimacy must be understood within this social framework.

Legitimacy must be considered a continuous performance. Groups seeking to consolidate their authority within a given territory must perfect their performance in order to appeal and satisfy the requirements laid out by existing underlying social constructions. For the purposes of this thesis, I will focus specifically on elements of Somali society, including clannism, nationalism, Islamism,

---

<sup>50</sup> Peter D. Little, *Somalia: Economy Without State* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2003), 4-6.

<sup>51</sup> McLoughlin, *State Legitimacy*, 2.

<sup>52</sup> Roland Marchal, “Joining Al-Shabaab in Somalia,” in *Contextualizing Jihadi Thought*, edited by: Jeevan Deol and Zaheer Kazmi (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 266.

<sup>53</sup> Pierre Englebert and Denis M. Tull, “Postconflict Reconstruction in Africa: Flawed Ideas about Failed States,” *International Security* 32, no. 4 (2008): 127.

and the local economy. Al-Shabaab has made use of these social factors in such a way that, for a time, allowed them to establish themselves as the closest thing to a governing authority in vast swaths of south-central Somalia. While international legitimacy eluded Al-Shabaab due to their extremist beliefs and violent disposition, their ability to provide services, social benefits, and some form of security to the populations allowed them to consolidate pockets of internal legitimacy.<sup>54</sup> Al-Shabaab's ability to maintain a nascent bureaucracy and security apparatus across a vast portion of Somalia suggests the need for a re-assessment of where legitimacy is ultimately derived from when implementing political institutions in fragile or collapsed states.

The position maintained within this research is that the link between state fragility and terrorism, specifically as represented by many governments and the mainstream media, is substantially overstated. However, Al-Shabaab has been able to maintain their operations within such a context for several reasons, including that they specify their tactical operations based on strategic objectives in different theatres of action. Internally, they have maintained an effective insurgency directed against government officials and military personnel. The group effectively reserves their terrorist operations, as evidenced by an increased focus on soft civilian targets, for cross-border attacks in neighbouring states. This has allowed them to maintain a modicum of legitimacy within areas of Somalia as they represent the strongest avenue for resistance against the government and the international coalition currently deployed in Somalia. The insurgent fighters, learning from past

---

<sup>54</sup> Englebert and Tull, "Postconflict Reconstruction in Africa," 269-270.

manifestations of Islamism in Somalia, are better able to amalgamate into the broad social fabric of Somali society, making it easier to avoid detection by government and AMISOM soldiers.<sup>55</sup> Al-Shabaab makes substantial changes to their operations when acting abroad. They make more extensive use of their transnational ties to groups such as Al-Qaeda to execute substantial mass-casualty events in an attempt to influence the actions of foreign governments. The next section draws on connections based on wider academic literatures in an attempt to better understand where the case of Al-Shabaab in Somalia fits within the relevant discourse on the topic.

### **1.5 Literature Review**

In order to effectively engage with the overarching themes in the literature, this section aims to address two core bodies of work. First, the literature that makes assumptions about state failure and terrorism. Secondly, this section will examine the literature that discusses the normative dimensions of international sovereignty, statehood, and foreign intervention, particularly emphasizing how these understandings fail to address the state of internal anarchy within conditions of state collapse.

In the first body of literature, two specific camps can be identified. There are those that perceive a strong link between state failure or collapse and the development of terrorist organizations. There are also those that are increasingly skeptical of this connection, claiming that such a connection is based on logical

---

<sup>55</sup> Ken Menkhaus, "Somalia: Next Up in the War on Terrorism?" *CSIS Africa Notes* 6, no. 1 (2002): 1.

connections as opposed empirical evidence.<sup>56</sup> Whatever relationship does exist between state fragility and the proliferation of terrorist organizations is complex and hardly homogenous. There are many possible paths from state stability to collapse, and many different types of groups that may exploit the presence of a growing political vacuum.<sup>57</sup> The scope of such complexities and the many routes from fragility to collapse inherently limits this analysis. By focusing on the literature relating to the Somali case study, this project aims to elaborate on the relevant progression towards state collapse, and the social realities within the case that have allowed Al-Shabaab to present a substantial threat to the legitimacy and security of the SFG.

The first aspect of particular note is the lack of access to the global economy and communications infrastructures as the key reasons to why operations in collapsed states are not ideal.<sup>58</sup> Additionally, the notable absence of foreigners in fully collapsed states also increases the difficulty of such operatives remaining inconspicuous. This reality is increasingly important for groups that rely heavily on foreign fighters and coordinators to operate successfully.<sup>59</sup> Within the context of state collapse, terrorist groups may find it not only difficult to maintain their anonymity, but also face the inability to clearly align themselves against a specific target or cause due to the absence of a clear centralized authority or power structure.<sup>60</sup> While terrorist organizations actively seek to exploit the vulnerabilities of the state, the collapse of Somalia presented significant obstacles to the integration

---

<sup>56</sup> Howard, *Failed States and the Origins of Violence*, 4.

<sup>57</sup> Patrick, *Weak Links*, 38.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>59</sup> Von Hippel, "Roots of Terrorism," 32.

<sup>60</sup> Piazza, "Incubators of Terror," 472.

of foreign jihadists into Somali society. These circumstances severely hindered Al-Qaeda's early efforts to rally Somalia's Islamists to their monolithic cause at this time, and simultaneously complicated their ambitions of using Somalia as a regional base of operations.

Despite the presence of significant Wahhabi influence in many parts of Somalia, the majority of Somalia's population adheres to a variety of Sufi Islam that is heavily influenced by local social norms and Somali history. This created complications for Al-Qaeda's attempted expansion as their priorities were mismatched with those of the local population.<sup>61</sup> Chapters 2 and 3 explore these issues within the context of Somalia's sociocultural make up and assesses the ways in which Al-Shabaab has worked around any impediments to strengthening Islamism in Somalia. In addition to the interplay between local and global ambitions, the manifestation of weak and corruptible state institutions will also need to be addressed in terms of their potential for manipulation by non-state actors with malevolent ambitions.

The conventional association between collapsed states and terrorist organizations generally stems from the fear of ungoverned spaces and the potential insecurities that may emerge from such areas.<sup>62</sup> Such fears of insecurity are magnified not only by a vacuum of authority, but also by a vacuum of knowledge – as it becomes increasingly difficult for international governance bodies to monitor these ungoverned areas. The African Union offers six explanations for the

---

<sup>61</sup> Ioan M. Lewis, *Saints and Somalis: Popular Islam in a Clan-Based Society* (Lawrenceville: The Red Sea Press, 1998), 8-9.

<sup>62</sup> Baylouny, "Authority Outside the State," 137.



development of terrorist groups in Africa, two of which focus on the vulnerability of ungoverned spaces. The first being that terrorist groups are constantly on the search for, “safe havens and refuge by criminal networks in a zone characterized by vast territorial expanses, low and insufficient security coverage and administrative presence.”<sup>63</sup> The second explanation effectively places partial blame for the proliferation of terrorist organizations on the institutional failures that allowed such territories to become ungoverned.

Particular blame is placed on “Government institutional weakness and the existence of long stretches of porous, largely ill-monitored and poorly-controlled borders, which, combined with vast, ill-administered spaces of territory, facilitate illegal cross border movement of people and goods and provide fertile ground for exploitation by terrorists and transnational organized criminals.”<sup>64</sup> As the African Union outlines, these areas are able to present some opportunities for both local and transnational organizations to exploit.<sup>65</sup> However, as Menkhaus and Shapiro note, external organization beyond this point has proven difficult – particularly in the case of Somalia, as much more emphasis was placed on ensuring local security.<sup>66</sup> The malleability of local legitimacy and the devolution of sovereignty down to the

---

<sup>63</sup> African Union, “Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa,” *Peace and Security Council 455<sup>th</sup> Meeting at the Level of Heads of State and Government*, 2 September 2014, accessed: 12 February 2015, [http://au.int/en/content/peace-and-security-council-455th-meeting-level-heads-state-and-government-nairobi-kenya#anchor\\_files](http://au.int/en/content/peace-and-security-council-455th-meeting-level-heads-state-and-government-nairobi-kenya#anchor_files).

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Von Hippel, “Roots of Terrorism,” 35.

<sup>66</sup> Ken Menkhaus and Jacob N. Shapiro, “Non-State Actors and Failed States: Lessons from Al-Qa’ida’s Experiences in the Horn of Africa,” in *Ungoverned Spaces: Alternatives to State Authority in an Era of Softened Sovereignty*, edited by Anne L. Clunan and Harold A. Trinkunas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 86.

individual level in many areas has allowed for alternative regulatory structures to move to the forefront of social organization.

Anne Marie Baylouny stresses the importance of ‘functional holes,’ where the state has retreated and the situation has left private sub-state actors to provide security and justice. In these areas, alternative sources of authority can serve as a major competitor for the loyalties of local populations, meaning that a group such as Al-Qaeda would need to rely heavily upon them in order to maintain a franchise operation.<sup>67</sup> Domestic operations are generally better equipped to attain the sympathies and domestic legitimacy than their transnational counterparts. Locally grown organizations are better equipped to utilize pre-existing local networks and relationships to establish themselves as a viable alternative to the state, which is no longer able to work in favour of the general population. Such local alternative sources of authority must prove that they are capable of providing security in addition to filling the gap in service provision left behind by a retreating state.<sup>68</sup> Once security and policing are assured, infrastructure, social services, and potentially even moral regulation can become an integral component of a group’s ability to garner such local legitimacy.<sup>69</sup> Therefore, the oft referenced ‘inherent logic’ of the connection between state collapse and terrorism is further complicated within the literature.<sup>70</sup>

Recalling the earlier discussion of service provision as a major component of the legitimization process, state fragility can be exacerbated by the inability to

---

<sup>67</sup> Baylouny, “Authority Outside the State,” 137.

<sup>68</sup> Mwangi, “State Collapse, Al-Shabaab, Islamism, and Legitimacy,” 524-527.

<sup>69</sup> Baylouny, “Authority Outside the State,” 140.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

provide essential public services, the failure to ensure internal security, as well as the social norms that support and perpetuate such constructs.<sup>71</sup> Eriksen addresses the question of service provision as an indicator of state failure, concluding that such an approach is inherently flawed as all states, at some level, are unable to perform all services to an equal level of proficiency – by this logic, all states express some level of fragility.<sup>72</sup> Although this perspective highlights the subjectivity with which state failure is ascribed, it remains too ambiguous for the purposes of this analysis. State failure will be conceptualized as an inability to project internal sovereignty, as opposed to simply a failure of service provision by a centralized state authority.<sup>73</sup>

Krasner's understanding of state failure is an extension of his categorical breakdown of sovereignty as a conceptual tool. Failure stems from an uneven representation of sovereignty between the international and domestic spheres. In the case of contemporary Somalia, this is displayed through the maintenance of 'international legal sovereignty.'<sup>74</sup> Meanwhile, the SFG and its representatives sparsely apply internal domestic sovereignty. Traditional conceptualizations of sovereignty can be considered problematic because the state, as a concept, tends to become synonymous with the government. Where the state is concerned, its existence remains contingent on international legal sovereignty – whilst the government remains accountable to the general population and their legitimacy is contingent on the maintenance of broad acceptance by the governed, either through

---

<sup>71</sup> Rotberg, "Failure and Collapse of Nation-States," 54.

<sup>72</sup> Eriksen, "'State Failure' in Theory and Practice," 231.

<sup>73</sup> Tobias Debiel et al., *Policy Paper 23: Between Ignorance and Intervention: Strategies and Dilemmas of External Actors in Fragile States* (Bonn: Development and Peace Foundation, 2005), 4.

<sup>74</sup> Stephen Krasner, ed., *Problematic Sovereignty: Contested Rules and Political Possibilities* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 9-10.

consent or coercion.<sup>75</sup> In states where internal power struggles exist, the internationally recognized government is often unable to exert such internationally legitimized authority over various areas within its recognized borders. Therefore, the existence of one form of sovereignty cannot immediately result in the expression of the other.

Krasner further notes that sovereignty actively maintains a policy of non-interference, where external actors are not to meddle in the affairs of recognized 'sovereign' states.<sup>76</sup> Such a policy presents a conundrum for governments, like the SFG, when trying to exert their internationally recognized legal authority internally. They run the risk of undermining their credibility by making heavy use of external security forces to support their claims of authority within the state. The leadership of Al-Shabaab has focused extensively on this practice by the transitional and post-transitional governments in Somalia in an attempt to further delegitimize and destabilize these governments and to act as an alternative to the political actors that have caused such bitterness amongst Somali youth.<sup>77</sup> Each conception of sovereignty relies on sources of legitimacy emerging from various actors at the national and international levels. Yet, a failure on behalf of any of these independent, but related actors can lead a state to progress further along the continuum of state failure. Here, an overlap exists in the state failure and sovereignty bodies of

---

<sup>75</sup> Krasner's discussion of coercion focuses on the effects of external actors' ability influence or intervene in the internal affairs of fragile states, which may undermine the perceived sovereignty of such states. Here, coercion refers to the internal relations between a governing authority and the citizenry, which may have devolved into one based on predation. See: Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*, 36-40; and Robert H. Bates, *When Things Fall Apart: State Failure in Late-Century Africa* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008): 25-29.

<sup>76</sup> Eriksen, "State Failure' in Theory and Practice," 233.

<sup>77</sup> Marchal, "Joining Al-Shabaab in Somalia," 268.

literature that reinforces the notion that a failure of sovereignty, in any of the above forms, may act as a precursor to state failure.

For the remainder of this analysis, the variation of sovereignty will be directly specified as either 'international legal sovereignty' or 'internal sovereignty.' In turn, state failure must be conceptualized as a continuum contingent on the manifestation of sovereignty, in any of its aforementioned forms. Therefore, inadequate development of sovereign internal authority or external legality will result in some manifestation of failure on behalf of the state.

In order to bridge the above concepts to the case study of Somalia, the literature addressing the issue of 'internal anarchy' will need to be assessed. The presence of internal anarchy is directly related to the severity of the formal institutional degradation within the borders of a given state. Total collapse is a necessary precursor for the propagation of internal anarchic conditions. These conditions are most easily identified through the absence of a credible governing authority, the process leading up to these conditions are rooted in the concept of state decay – or the process by which legitimate authority is whittled away causing long term degenerative repercussions, as opposed to short-term crises.<sup>78</sup>

As an internal environment deteriorates to the point where political and economic institutions seek to function in the formal sector, it should come as no surprise that an anarchic environment becomes possible within the territorial confines of the former state. Furthermore, the implosion of the former state while removing what typically constitutes the legitimate markers of statehood may leave

---

<sup>78</sup> Bah, "State Decay," 72.

alternative institutions intact. Indigenous pre-colonial structures that have operated continuously in the background of the 'legitimate' state institutions may continue to flourish and execute some regulatory functions within this anarchical environment.<sup>79</sup> Within this context, the absence of an official statehood does not negate the existence and continued influence of social norms and constructs.<sup>80</sup> Somalia's pastoral economy, which has been an integral dimension of Somali identity from before colonial powers took hold in the region, provides one such example of this.<sup>81</sup> It remained a parallel operation to the official state economy before the state's collapse in 1991, and remained intact after collapse and provided some degree of economic regulation.<sup>82</sup> When one writes of 'internal anarchy' it is important to recall the markers of sovereignty discussed above.

Within an environment of self-contained anarchy, held in check by the superficial maintenance of international legal sovereignty, various groups may be able to take advantage of the conditions. Terrorist and/or insurgency networks are only a small sample of the possible groups that may use these conditions for their own benefit. Transnational criminal organizations and narcotics smuggling groups may also benefit from such conditions. The argument also exists that within such a political vacuum it is increasingly difficult for such groups to obtain a foothold in these areas while maintaining their overall operational capacities.

---

<sup>79</sup> Debiel et al., *Between Ignorance and Intervention*, 4.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ioan M. Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics Among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: James Currey Publishers, 1999 [1961]): 12; and Little, *Somalia: Economy Without State*, 6-9.

<sup>82</sup> Jean-Germain Gros, "Towards a Taxonomy of Failed States in the New World Order: Decaying Somalia, Liberia, Rwanda and Haiti," *Third World Quarterly* 17, no. 3 (1996): 462.

It is possible for a local and in-ward looking terrorist organization to fill the void in collapsed states with relative ease, when compared to external counterparts. This is arguably what can be observed through Al-Shabaab's early rise to power after emerging from a broad movement of political Islam to an increasingly militarized and socially oppressive organization. The implementation of transitional governments in Somalia can be perceived as prolonging the uncertainty of the state of governance throughout the territory that it laid claim to; internal disagreements regarding how to govern and interact with international society complicated the transitional government's ability to impose strong institutions or to win the competition for local legitimacy.<sup>83</sup>

Krasner notes that indigenous groups may oppose the prescribed distribution of power and the constitutional structure being advanced by the transitional government, and therefore decide on placing their support behind alternatives to the state. The context in which Krasner frames this argument is that they may do this to "strengthen their own position in anticipation of the departure of external actors,"<sup>84</sup> whether such actors are international aid organizations or external security forces. This analysis notes that the lack of faith in Somalia's successive transitional governments' abilities allowed for society not only to throw support behind alternative organizations, but also emphasize the importance of

---

<sup>83</sup> Stephen Krasner, "New Institutions for Collapsed and Failing States," *International Security* 29, no. 2 (2004): 100.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

relative security. Alexandra Lewis cites the need for such alternative sources of security as a main driver of the resurgence of clannism within Somalia.<sup>85</sup>

The inability of successive Somali governments to fulfill this need led to an increased reliance on traditional and informal institutions in times of crisis, particularly those heightened by state stability.<sup>86</sup> In particular, Lewis took note of the nature of conflict resolution techniques in the absence of the state in non-urban settings; focusing on the application of local tribunals based on restorative justice administered according to pre-colonial customary law (known as the *xeer*) which is influenced by Islamic Shura councils along with clan elders.<sup>87</sup>

The reliance on such traditional methods of delivering restorative justice in the absence of the state allowed Islamist groups such as the ICU to garner popular legitimacy throughout large areas of Southern and Central Somalia prior to 2006. People generally accepted the ICU and their strict conservative interpretations of Islamic law out of a necessity for security, not necessarily because of broad ideological similarities between the organization and the population.<sup>88</sup> In the absence of formal state infrastructures the familiar and local institutions arguably become an effective way to restore relative security to communities that were not reached by centralized authorities. With the advent of Islamist institutions as the sole arbiters of justice in much of Somalia, the literature tends to acknowledge the existence of an early consensus that Somalia would become the next hotbed of

---

<sup>85</sup> Alexandra Lewis, *Security, Clans and Tribes: Unstable Governance in Somaliland, Yemen and the Gulf of Aden* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), 34.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>88</sup> Von Hippel, "The Roots of Terrorism," 34.



international terrorism.<sup>89</sup> Transnational groups such as Al-Qaeda also assessed the area in a similar manner and perceived it as the perfect option for an expansion of their network. However, the situation proved to be much more complicated than a simple matter of expansion.

Menkhaus and Shapiro's assessment of the transnational relationships between various groups inside Somalia and wider international networks credits Al-Qaeda's inability to establish their own foothold inside Somalia between 1992-2006 with the preservation of the general Somali population's moderate ideological leanings. Moreover, the high degree of skepticism and general xenophobia that persists within Somali society is often directed towards foreign fighters (that are not members of Somalia's vast diaspora community) and external organizations seeking to gain legitimacy within Somalia.<sup>90</sup> Al-Qaeda's internal correspondence notes that the group encountered an unexpected level of ideological incompatibility between the grassroots levels of Somali society and al-Qaeda leadership, while also noting the unanticipated costs of operating in an area with no reliable pre-existing infrastructure.<sup>91</sup> Menkhaus and Shapiro disagree with earlier reports, such as those compiled by the Heritage Foundation in Washington D.C., that emphasize the importance of longstanding relationships between al-Qaeda and local Islamist groups in Somalia throughout the 1990s.

---

<sup>89</sup> Patrick, *Weak Links*, 3.

<sup>90</sup> Thomas, "Exposing and Exploiting Weaknesses," 417.

<sup>91</sup> Menkhaus and Shapiro, "Non-State Actors and Failed States," 88; and David Shinn, "Al-Shabaab's Foreign Threat to Somalia," *Orbis* 55, no. 2 (2011): 205.

Despite maintaining a cooperative relationship with the group, al-Ittihad al-Islamiya (AIAI),<sup>92</sup> Al-Qaeda still found their Somali counterparts to be much more locally oriented than their global ambitions would have preferred. This exacerbated the ideological gap between the groups and contributed to Al-Qaeda abandoning their attempts to proactively extend their reach into Somalia, and caused them to re-evaluate their assumption that failed or collapsed states inherently provide ideal conditions for expansion. This example is important as it addresses a major theme throughout the literature that considered Somalia to be a hotbed or safe-haven for terrorist activity and organization. As subsequent chapters will seek to show, the contemporary advent of Al-Shabaab's success is rooted in a specific temporal and sociocultural context, which did not exist during Al-Qaeda's early exploits.

This analysis assumes the position that this perception of sub-state actors extends from the assumption of the state as an *a priori* entity established through the historic hegemony of Europe and North America within the international state system.<sup>93</sup> However, these assumptions fail to account for and explain what constructs persist parallel to the formal state structure. Formal institutions often hide informal constructs; their complexity overshadowed by an official bureaucracy. In the absence of formality the importance of residual institutions comes to light. Moreover, the roles that these informal institutions play allow for populations to survive conditions of internal anarchy. The next chapter will expand on how such

---

<sup>92</sup> James Phillips, "Backgrounder 1526: Somalia and Al-Qaeda: Implications for the War on Terrorism," *The Heritage Foundation*, 5 April 2002, accessed 12 February 2015, <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2002/04/somalia-and-al-qaeda-implications-for-the-war-on-terrorism>.

<sup>93</sup> Tobias Hagmann and Markus V. Hoehne, "Failures of the State Failure Debate: Evidence From the Somali Territories," *Journal of International Development* 21, no. 1 (2009): 45.

institutions have shaped the course of events in Somalia and account for Al-Shabaab's accumulation of power.

## **1.6 Conclusion**

This chapter provided the theoretical and methodological foundation upon which the remainder of this project will be constructed. The use of process tracing within a single case study analysis will allow for the identification of the variables that played an integral role in the development of Al-Shabaab in Somalia. This methodology was complemented by a thorough discussion of theoretical approaches to both sovereignty and legitimacy. Chapter 2 will further these discussions by placing the contemporary situation within the appropriate historical context, and identify the key informal institutions that played a significant role in Al-Shabaab's accumulation of power in Somalia.

## **Chapter 2: Formal and Informal Institutions in Somalia**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the gradual degradation of formal state institutions in Somalia, and the growing importance of informal institutional counterparts as a functional reality in regulating the daily lives and interactions of the Somali population. The chapter opens with a discussion of the retreat of the state throughout the 1980s, culminating in the collapse of President Siad Barre's regime in January 1991. Following this contextual assessment, a discussion of the three core informal institutions that aided in the regulation of a stateless society, including Somalia's complex clan system, the emergence of Islam as an institution, as well as the way in which Somalia's economy interacts with local communities and straddles the line between formal and informal. Understanding these elements of society is an integral component in understanding how a group such as Al-Shabaab is able to manipulate preexisting institutions and sociocultural elements in order to garner legitimacy and accumulate power.

### **2.2 The Retreat of the State**

This section will begin with a discussion of the retreating formal institutions in Somalia as the state decayed throughout the late 1970s and 1980s, which culminated in the collapse of Siad Barre's regime in 1991. Once the context of these events is well established, the chapter will discuss Somalia's resilient informal institutions, which will cover three core areas: internal clan dynamics that heavily influence internal social, political, and military realities; the rise of Islamism or

political Islam<sup>94</sup> as an ordering mechanism in south-central Somalia; lastly, the degradation of formal and informal economies through the manipulation by political elites, from early experiments with socialism through to contemporary state-building efforts, will form the final core area discussed in this chapter.

Somalia gained independence from British and Italian colonial administrations on 1 June 1960.<sup>95</sup> As the colonial period in Africa came to an end, Siad Barre assumed a dictatorial role in Somali politics after staging a successful military coup d'état. Barre served as an authoritarian president for the following 22 years. His presidency cannot be considered outside of the context of the Cold War. Under President Barre Somalia allied itself with the Soviet Union in an attempt to implement a regime built on a foundation of what he dubbed "scientific socialism." Through this relationship, Somalia came to rely on the Soviet Union to uphold its national security apparatus. These events soured Somali relations with the United States and its allies. The United States terminated any lingering commitments of economic assistance to Somalia under the administration of President Nixon after the revelation that Somali flagged ships had been delivering weapons to North Vietnam throughout the Vietnam War.<sup>96</sup> However, Somalia's Cold War relations with both global superpowers proved contentious and unstable.

---

<sup>94</sup> These terms are used interchangeably throughout this analysis.

<sup>95</sup> Theodoros Dagne and Amanda Smith, "Somalia: Prospects for Peace and U.S. Involvement," in *Somalia: Issues, History and Bibliography*, edited by: Nina J. Fitzgerald (New York: Nova Science Publishers Inc., 2002), 1.

<sup>96</sup> Ahmed I. Samatar, *Socialist Somalia: Rhetoric & Reality* (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1988), 125; and John L. Hirsch and Robert B. Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995), 6.

A by-product of adopting socialism was the initial attempt by President Barre to overcome and dismantle the pervasive 'clannism' of the Somali people.<sup>97</sup> This was partially due the relations that Barre's Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) had with the various clans in Somalia. Barre, having come from a relatively small clan, did not rely on the support of the larger clan-families for legitimacy and maintained a multi-clan governing coalition. The foundation of this coalition was balanced precariously on the premise that an overarching sense of Somali nationalism would provide a viable alternative to the fractional clan politics that had been so apparent in the previous government.<sup>98</sup> However, Barre's desire to omit clannism from Somali political life fell by the wayside due to their convenience and usefulness when trying to secure support for his regime. This became particularly evident through the "homogeneity of the military's officer corps," being composed predominantly of a sub-clan of the Darod clan-family, the Ogadeen. This reality increased the uniformity of interests within the military and made it clear that their continued support was integral to the maintenance of Barre's government.<sup>99</sup> Such divisions were not hidden from public view, and therefore continued to generate fractures based on clan relations despite Barre's early rhetoric to the contrary. The growing prominence of clan-based interests within this period saw the revitalization of pan-Somali interests, culminating in the attempted annexation of the (inhabited by the Ogadeen) Ogaden Region of Eastern Ethiopia.<sup>100</sup>

The 1977 war between Somalia and Ethiopia proved to be the breaking point,

---

<sup>97</sup> Stephen M. Saideman, "Inconsistent Irredentism? Political Competition, Ethnic Ties, and the Foreign Policies of Somalia and Serbia," *Security Studies* 7, no. 3 (1998): 74.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

not only for Barre's attempt to transcend clannism, but also as a breaking point for Somalia's foreign relations with the United States and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union explicitly supported the Marxist-leaning Ethiopian government, thereby ending their relationship with Somalia. Therefore the Somali-Soviet relationship, which had focused heavily on the provision of advanced military equipment to the African nation, ended.<sup>101</sup> The alignment of the Soviet Union with Ethiopia played a major role in the war as well as the policies that Somalia developed thereafter. The Soviet Union's abandonment of Somalia provided motivation for the United States, under the administration of President Jimmy Carter, to seek out friendly relations with Somalia. The impending dissolution of existing relations with the Soviet Union was not a surprise to Somalia's government and left them open to receiving support from the United States.<sup>102</sup>

Ambition became a reality after a series of back channel diplomatic discussions between the United States and Somalia occurred throughout 1977. Washington assured Somali diplomats that the United States would aid in bolstering Somalia's defensive capabilities. The agreement resulted in the 25 July decision to supply Somalia with defensive arms, which was officially announced by U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance on 26 July 1977.<sup>103</sup> In return for such assistance, the United States was promised access to air and naval facilities on Somali territory to act as a launching point for operations in the Horn of Africa.<sup>104</sup>

It was implied that U.S. military aid to Somalia would remain contingent on

---

<sup>101</sup> Dagne and Smith, "Somalia: Prospects for Peace," 2.

<sup>102</sup> Lefebvre, *Arms for the Horn*, 175.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 176.

<sup>104</sup> Dagne and Smith, "Somalia: Prospects for Peace," 1.

Somalia's ability to adhere to the limited terms of engagement with Ethiopia, as imposed by the United States. The supply of arms and munitions flowing from Washington was dependent on Somalia's commitment to maintaining stability and order within the Horn of Africa. To fulfill this expectation Somalia was to act only defensively, and not antagonize its immediate neighbours.<sup>105</sup> The aforementioned presence of large ethnic Somali populations beyond Somalia's established borders, as well as the continued influence of clan interests on Barre's ability to maintain the loyalty of his followers provided the necessary incentive for the Barre regime to ignore the established terms and act offensively.

The nationalist ambitions of Somalia only explain one facet of the conflict in question. Ethiopia, having experienced the fall of Emperor Haile Selassie's regime in 1974, was keen on maintaining its imperial holdings and hegemonic presence in the region.<sup>106</sup> The interplay between these two overarching ambitions, in addition to the shifting regional geopolitical realities, allowed for the development of conditions conducive to war. The factor underlying much of the decision making on behalf of Somalia under President Barre was the assumption that U.S. military and economic support would be a constant regardless of Somali aggression. Furthermore, Ethiopia became entangled with internal minority nationalist movements, which allowed for the partial fragmentation of the once cohesive empire. The reality of this situation directly challenged the integrity of the state itself. The persistence of internal tension and conflict in Ethiopia allowed Somalia to embrace the perception of their own military superiority, supported by their skewed understanding of their own

---

<sup>105</sup> Lefebvre, *Arms for the Horn*, 176.

<sup>106</sup> Samatar, *Socialist Somalia*, 132-133.



relationship with the United States.<sup>107</sup>

Somalia's support of the ethnic Somali insurgency group in Ethiopia, known as the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) escalated in light of the perceived weaknesses of Ethiopia and the questionable stability of the region. Somalia, having bolstered its military personnel to 23,000 service members by 1977, sought a decisive victory over Ethiopia in an attempt to improve the domestic perception of Barre's government as well as their regional status.<sup>108</sup> Partnering with the WSLF allowed the Somali government to invade the Ogaden region of Ethiopia and make key strategic advancements in the early phases of the conflict.<sup>109</sup> This operation was actively condemned by the United States as it further destabilized the region. Having violated the conditions for support, the United States suspended its agreement with Somalia as its belligerence escalated.<sup>110</sup>

The protestation by the United States and the formal support given to Ethiopia by the Soviet Union, as evidenced by an arms deal worth \$380 million, placed Somalia in a position where its relations with both international superpowers were frigid and fraught with animosity.<sup>111</sup> Soviet weapons and military advisors in conjunction with 17,000 Cuban troops<sup>112</sup> arrived in Ethiopia and presented a united front against the floundering Somali military.<sup>113</sup> The circumstances surrounding Somalia's international relations throughout the late 1970s resulted in the eventual withdrawal of Somali forces from the Ogaden region of Ethiopia. This also led to a

---

<sup>107</sup> Samatar, *Socialist Somalia*, 133.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 128.

<sup>109</sup> Lefebvre, *Arms for the Horn*, 177.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Samatar, *Socialist Somalia*, 133.

<sup>112</sup> Lefebvre, *Arms for the Horn*, 177.

<sup>113</sup> Hirsch and Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope*, 6.

large exodus of ethnic Somalis from this region as they faced potential persecution by the victorious Ethiopian government, thereby causing a mass flow of refugees into Somalia at the end of the decade.<sup>114</sup>

The failure of the 1977 Ogaden War, and the blatant clannism it displayed on behalf of the government, increased the discontent and tension between the ruling government and the northern-most clans. In addition to the direct effects of the failed attempt at annexation, the argument exists that the escalation of aid also worked against maintaining a social and political integrity within Somalia as the injection of such resources only made it easier for claims of nepotism and favouritism to further fuel discontent among minority clans.<sup>115</sup> The dissent against authoritarian rule, particularly by the northern Isaaq and Majerteen clans, caused them to become the target of brutal repression by the government.<sup>116</sup> Hargeisa, the capital of Somaliland, became the target of a bombing campaign as Barre's waning government resorted to hiring mercenary pilots from southern Africa.<sup>117</sup> The brutal repression of these clans extended outwards from the concentrated urban bombing campaigns into rural communities through the machine-gunning of livestock and the poisoning of wells.<sup>118</sup> These actions severely limited the capabilities of rural communities to survive and crippled local economies based on the trade and sale of livestock.

The reality of such brutal oppression and the increased competition amongst

---

<sup>114</sup> Dagne and Smith, "Somalia: Prospects for Peace," 2.

<sup>115</sup> Phillips, "Political Settlements," 11.

<sup>116</sup> Robert G. Patman, *Strategic Shortfall: The Somalia Syndrome and the March to 9/11* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2010), 9.

<sup>117</sup> Richard Greenfield, "Somalia: Siad's Sad Legacy," *Africa Report* 36, no. 2 (1991): 18.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

President Barre's former supporters and allies inadvertently led to a temporary transcendence of clannism; however this was only reached through an overwhelming consensus that President Barre and his allies must be removed from power by any means necessary.<sup>119</sup> As opposition to the old government was the only common thread uniting the opposition groups, it is understandable that whatever alliances were made dissolved after he was removed from power.<sup>120</sup>

The increasingly militarized culture and the availability of foreign supplied weaponry in Somalia set the stage for the chaos that followed the breakdown of these temporary alliances.<sup>121</sup> This was accomplished through the steady delegitimization of the former government's authority and the collapse of internal military and bureaucratic institutions.<sup>122</sup> Barre, being the head of state, as well as the chairman of the SRC, the Politburo, and the Cabinet, had consolidated power in such a way that there was little hope for any continuation in governance after his removal.<sup>123</sup> Therefore, the resulting political vacuum expedited the fragmentation of society into conflicting factions that failed to overcome the collapse of the state's formal institutions.

The United States, in an effort to stabilize the country and prevent its eventual collapse, provided substantial developmental aid packages to Somalia. This was, by 1985, the largest of such programs in Sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>124</sup> In the decade between 1979 and 1989, the United States via the U.S. Agency for International Development

---

<sup>119</sup> Greenfield, "Somalia: Siad's Sad Legacy," 18.

<sup>120</sup> Samuel M. Makinda, "Clan Conflict and Factionalism in Somalia," in *Warlords in International Relations*, edited by: Paul B. Rich (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1999), 128.

<sup>121</sup> Samatar, *Socialist Somalia*, 128.

<sup>122</sup> Hirsch and Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope*, 9.

<sup>123</sup> Greenfield, "Somalia: Siad's Sad Legacy," 15.

<sup>124</sup> Patman, *Strategic Shortfall*, 23.

(USAID) invested over \$620 million on various projects in Somalia.<sup>125</sup> The United States and its European allies worked to re-establish Somalia's vital infrastructure and production capacities.<sup>126</sup> The increase in international aid and intervention displays the gaps in the state's ability to adequately provide services and security to its population. Therefore, the already pervasive legitimacy gap experienced by Somalia's pre-collapse government was widened, allowing for dissent to fester beneath the surface until the state dissolved on 27 January 1991.<sup>127</sup>

One of the major precipitators of state collapse, in addition to its diminishing credibility and legitimacy, was the steady decline of the military. As discussed above, the Somali military was its peak prior to the Ogaden War, which saw increases in both manpower and technological capability. The integrity of the organization was undoubtedly compromised after their defeat in Ethiopia. The demoralization of the military became compounded as recruitment in the 1980s fractured along clan-lines with new recruits being grouped according to their localities and under the authority officers of the same clan. This was particularly prominent amongst the Ogaden, Marehen, Hawiye and Majerteen clans.<sup>128</sup> This effectively whittled away whatever integrity remained as the country descended into an ever increasing anarchic state as one could no longer effectively differentiate between the various clan militias supporting individualized interests and the newly formed army

---

<sup>125</sup> Melissa C. Pailthorp, "Development Before Disaster: USAID in Somalia 1978-1990: A Retrospective of Lessons Learned in Pre-Civil War Somalia," *Report for USAID/Somalia*, 1994, accessed: 17 July 2015, [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/pnabx503.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnabx503.pdf).

<sup>126</sup> Hirsch and Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope*, 7.

<sup>127</sup> Patman, *Strategic Shortfall*, 23.

<sup>128</sup> Makinda, "Clan Conflict and Factionalism," 127.

units.<sup>129</sup>

Overall, Somalia's clan dynamics came to play a significant role as the formal state infrastructure became increasingly unstable. The influence wielded by dominant clans in the background of official political life in Somalia would prove to have the potential to order society under the conditions of internal anarchy that emerged in 1991. The next section will explore, in detail, how specific relations were manipulated and altered by political elites, as well as how these systems as a whole have been affected by decades of authoritarian rule and poor governance.

### **2.3 Clan Dynamics**

Having discussed the circumstances that caused the implosion of Somalia's formal internal institutions, this analysis must discuss the importance of Somali clan dynamics on shaping political life both throughout the process of state decay and afterward. If traditional conceptions of ethnicity are maintained (meaning the persistence of a shared history, language, and culture within a specific group), then this dimension of Somali society can be held as a constant. Nevertheless the vast majority of differences emerge out of clan-based organization; this varies as these identities are based on an oral tradition emphasizing ancestry and direct kin-based relationships. These identities, while polarizing at times, are also extremely fluid;<sup>130</sup> they are shaped by the context within which they are constructed. Particularly through the pragmatism and survivalism embedded in Somali culture through their inhabitation of a difficult environment, populations tend to organize themselves in such a way that they can aid in the negotiation of survival and to mediate access to

---

<sup>129</sup> Makinda, "Clan Conflict and Factionalism," 127.

<sup>130</sup> Lewis, *Security, Clans and Tribes*, 29.

finite resources.<sup>131</sup> The pre-colonial self-regulating dimensions of clanship facilitated such mediation until the encroachment of colonial administrations began to chip away at pre-existing social structures and hierarchies.

Clanship was traditionally embedded within the context of a broad, but loose hierarchical system, which was regulated through the *xeer*, a customary contract that acts to regulate and ensure fairness in judicial decision-making between clans or sub-clans. The *xeer* itself can be broken down into subsections, which regulate various elements of inter/intra clan relations. Hatem Elliesie in an analysis of constitution building in Somalia lists these as, “a body of customary law called *xeer Soomaali*, which is linked to elements of Shari’ah (*sic*) based regulations, defined basic social norms and values. In addition to *xeer*, traditional values (*xeer caado*) and a code of social conduct (*xeer dhaqan*) also serve to mitigate conflict and maintain public order.”<sup>132</sup> The *xeer* is imposed by groups of clan elders that are assembled on an ad-hoc basis as the need arises.<sup>133</sup> The main function of this overarching customary law is to provide a template for inter-clan relations; Menkhaus notes that this informal construction roughly acts in a similarly imperfect manner as those institutions regulating international law on a global scale.<sup>134</sup> The pre-colonial hierarchical system included a figurehead, sometimes called a Sultan, which

---

<sup>131</sup> Ken Menkhaus, “The Question of Ethnicity in Somali Studies: The Case of Somali Bantu Identity,” in *Peace and Milk, Drought and War: Somali Culture, Society and Politics Essays in Honour of I.M. Lewis*, edited by: Markus V. Hoehne and Virginia Luling (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 90.

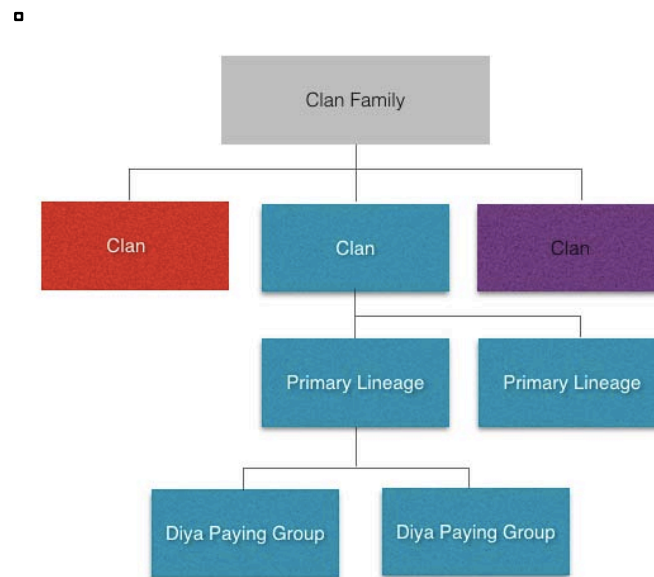
<sup>132</sup> Hatem Elliesie, “Statehood and Constitution-Building in Somalia: Islamic Responses to a Failed State,” in *Constitutionalism in Islamic Countries: Between Upheaval and Continuity*, edited by: Rainer Grote and Tilmann J. Röder (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 555-556.

<sup>133</sup> Michael Walls and Steve Kibble, “Identity, Stability, and the Somali State: Indigenous Forms and External Interventions,” in *Globalizing Somalia: Multilateral, International, and Transnational Repercussions of Conflict*, edited by: Emma Leonard and Gilbert Ramsay (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 261.

<sup>134</sup> Menkhaus, “Ethnicity in Somali Studies,” 90.

represented many sub-clans over a vast geographic area.<sup>135</sup> Yet, there existed no centralized form of governance or administration.<sup>136</sup>

The heads of respective sub-clans, and elder councils would facilitate the administration of the *Diya* (blood payment) that would be applied collectively to the male members of the *Diya* paying group (see Figure 2.1) that committed the crime or 'blood-offense,'<sup>137</sup> and it would be the responsibility of the group to ensure that



**Figure 2.1 Basic Clan Hierarchies**

<sup>135</sup> Abdurahman A. Osman-Shuke, "Traditional Leaders in Political Decision Making and Conflict Resolution," in *War Destroys: Peace Nurtures: Somali Reconciliation and Development*, edited by: Richard Ford, Hussein M. Adam, and Edna Adan Ismail (Asmara/Lawrenceville: Red Sea Press, 2004), 148.

<sup>136</sup> Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy*, 5.

<sup>137</sup> Frank H. Steward, "Archaic Forms of Contract in Max Weber's Theories and in Arab and Somali Customary Law," in *Law, Custom, and Statute in the Muslim World: Studies in Honor of Aharon Layish*, edited by: Ron Shaham (Boston: Brill, 2007), 142.

the issue was reconciled.<sup>138</sup> An example of this would be if one member of a specific sub-clan or *Diya* paying group murdered a member of another, the clan elders could order a blood-payment by the offending group as a means of justice and compensation.<sup>139</sup>

The specific conditions of payment are based on the precedent set by similar cases and are regulated by *xeer* customs in order to ensure fairness. The effectiveness of this system relied on the maintenance of group cohesion in the face of conflict, group obedience of the clan to the authorities mediating the conflict resolution process, and the unquestioned acceptance of the community to the legitimacy of this authority.<sup>140</sup> It is important to note that, as an oral tradition, the *xeer* is not broadly applied in the same manner; nuances in its application appear between clans and sub-clans in various regions of Somalia. However, the general function of the *xeer*, as a tool to coordinate local conflict resolution and meditation remains conceptually congruent between communities, regardless of minor differences in its interpretation. As such, an analysis of the *xeer* can be applied so as to allow for consistency across time.

The variations in customary application of the *xeer*, as well as the subtle differences in clan structure can stem from several sources. Variations in lifestyle based on geographic location, or from historical persecution in the post-colonial era of Somali independence, are able to have a significant influence on the development or degradation of these customary regulations and hierarchies. Historical traditions

---

<sup>138</sup> Little, *Somalia: Economy Without State*, 16.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Osman-Shuke, "Traditional Leaders in Political Decision Making," 154.



of competing for resources and political power have continued to perpetuate divisive identities that have shaped Somali society under the conditions of state collapse.

Clan allegiances and their political implications, as previously stated, are fluid social constructs. As relative homogeneity exists on multiple other fronts in terms of language, ethnicity etc., such relational groupings (specifically those at the sub-clan and sub-sub clan level) are subject to the often tumultuous and shifting political climate in south-central Somalia.<sup>141</sup> This thesis maintains that the processes of social and institutional change that were present in post-independence era Somalia remain relevant to the various stages of statehood that Somalia has experienced since the fall of Siad Barre's government and the rise of non-state actors such as Al-Shabaab. Clannism remains an influential factor in shaping local political realities; it is argued that the form it has assumed in modern Somali society is wholly different than its pre-colonial predecessor.<sup>142</sup> By acknowledging these changes, the constructed identities can be perceived as malleable and adaptable, thereby maintaining the ability to respond to the contemporary needs of Somali society.

In the time since independence, throughout the aforementioned civil repression and conflict, clan relations have been in a state of change influenced by shifting social realities, and manipulated by those in power in order to carve out a haven of legitimacy amongst local populations. I.M. Lewis described such social

---

<sup>141</sup> David M. Anderson, "Clan Identity and Islamic Identity in Somalia," in *CEADS Papers Volume 2: Somalia*, (Kingston: Centre for Security, Armed Forces and Society; Royal Military College of Canada, 2012), 7.

<sup>142</sup> Anderson, "Clan Identity and Islamic Identity in Somalia," 11; and Marleen Renders, *African Social Studies Series, Volume 26: Consider Somaliland: State-Building with Traditional Leaders and Institutions* (Leiden: BRILL, 2012), 34.

changes as emanating from: the growing prominence of western education, the increased urbanization of the population, as well as the development of distinct social classes. Each of these dimensions further complicate the place of clannism in the political organization of Somalia, making it only one piece of a much larger and infinitely more complex puzzle.<sup>143</sup>

Beyond the natural response to social change, classical elements of Somali culture and identity were explicitly chosen by political elites for their ability to further particular political agendas, while others were intentionally omitted.<sup>144</sup> The omission of select cultural elements arguably stems from nationalist movements and their disdain for the divisiveness of clans, which were perceived as allowing for foreign powers to exploit and manipulate internal affairs. Attempts to re-shape clannism into a pan-Somali identity attempted to remove overt references to clan affiliations from public life, which inherently diminished the effect of adjacent cultural constructs, such as the *xeer*, that acted in a regulatory fashion in favour of centralized national judicial regulations. This became a common theme throughout the immediate post-independence governments, as well as through that of Siad Barre.

The adoption of “scientific socialism” as an official policy in 1970 was a direct attempt to transcend these relationships.<sup>145</sup> The *Oloeh* campaign of 1971 was specifically oriented towards the elimination of traditional institutions, including the *xeer* and *diya* systems, as well as the prohibition of outward references to one’s clan

---

<sup>143</sup> Ioan M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Oxford: James Currey Publishers, 2002), 166.

<sup>144</sup> Renders, *State-Building with Traditional Leaders and Institutions*, 34.

<sup>145</sup> Elliesie, “Statehood and Constitution-Building in Somalia,” 557.

affiliation.<sup>146</sup> The impracticality of such attempts became evident as the state receded from rural areas throughout the 1980s; communities increasingly relied on such informal institutions to regulate their social interactions and administer justice. President Barre's efforts also proved to be hypocritical; his reliance on specific clan relations to maintain his authority was strengthened as his government's hold on legitimate authority steadily weakened. The duplicity became so obvious that many began to refer to his government by the acronym: "MOD." This acronym specifically referenced the three segmentary clans from within the Darod clan-family from which he drew his support: the Marehan (Barre's own clan), Ogaden (the clan of his mother), and Dulbahante (the clan of his son-in-law).<sup>147</sup> Yet, this alliance proved tenuous as competition arose within these groupings, between their constituent lineages, for power and status within the government and the military.<sup>148</sup>

One of the first and stronger resistance movements against the Barre regime came from the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF).<sup>149</sup> The SSDF was made up of members of the Darod clan-family not included in the MOD alliance, with the majority from the Majeerteen clan, but also included members of the Dulbahante and the Warsangeli, as well as fighters and prominent members from the Hawiye clan-family.<sup>150</sup> Their main goal was the removal of President Barre, which as mentioned previously, was one of the overarching themes upon which the various

---

<sup>146</sup> Osman-Shuke, "Traditional Leaders in Political Decision Making," 147

<sup>147</sup> Elliesie, "Statehood and Constitution-Building in Somalia," 558; and Shaul Shay, *Somalia: Between Jihad and Restoration* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2008), 6.

<sup>148</sup> Virginia Luling, "Come Back Somalia? Questioning a Collapsed State," *Third World Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (1997): 293.

<sup>149</sup> Luling, "Come Back Somalia?," 293.

<sup>150</sup> Maria H. Brons, *Society, Security, Sovereignty and the State in Somalia: From Statelessness to Statelessness?* (Utrecht: International Books, 2001), 185.

resistance movements and tenuous alliances were constructed.<sup>151</sup> Traditionally, conflicts arose between groups that were much more closely related in the segmentary lineage system; the dissolution of the state mirrors this reality as an upwards of 10 different clan-aligned movements emerged. This further contributed to the degradation of formal institutions in Somalia as no faction was strong enough to assert its dominance over the others, causing the vast majority of the population throughout the imploding state to increasingly rely on customary informal institutions to mediate their daily lives. This was a reality occurring in rural areas since Barre's government began to weaken in the 1980s.

Increased reliance on these informal institutions did not mean that they were not heavily influenced by the politics of corruption and instability. As discussed above, Barre's attempts to transcend tribalism and clan affiliations only served to eliminate the most benign elements of these institutions as well as those, such as the *xeer*, that served as a conduit for local conflict resolution.<sup>152</sup> Ahmed Samatar explained this best when he noted that kinship ties had been tainted due to a "decoupling of blood ties...from the great civilising [*sic*] or universalising [*sic*] factors of Somali culture: customary law and Islamic precepts."<sup>153</sup> The disconnection of various facets of these traditional structures prevents regulation based on traditional customs and religious beliefs.<sup>154</sup> This, therefore, further exacerbated conflict and lawlessness as the formal regulatory bodies of centralized government retreated.

---

<sup>151</sup> Brons, *Society, Security, Sovereignty and the State in Somalia*, 185.

<sup>152</sup> Luling, "Come Back Somalia?," 290.

<sup>153</sup> Ahmed Samatar (ed.), *The Somali Challenge: From Catastrophe to Renewal* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1994), 9.

<sup>154</sup> Luling, "Come Back Somalia?," 290.

It is important to acknowledge that President Barre was neither the first nor the last to attempt to shift Somali society away from clannism. Clan relations are typically viewed as a more conservative force in Somali society; attempts at 'modernization' generally highlight Islam as a progressive movement that can overcome the more conservative elements in society due to its broad applicability to the general population.<sup>155</sup> Ranging from anti-colonial movements to the contemporary threat of Islamic extremism, the use of Islam is an integral dimension of institutional reconstruction and social change in Somalia.

#### **2.4 Islam as an Institution**

It was not initially clear to international observers that political Islam would become a major polarizing element in Somali society between those supporting centralized governance structures and those that would come to support groups like Al-Shabaab. This was partially due to the many different groups that existed and aligned with various clans separated by geography, as well as each receiving support from different interested international parties.<sup>156</sup> The divisions between Somalia's Islamist movements were present in the late 1990s.<sup>157</sup> These were based on divergent opinions about the use of violence against certain Somali clans and warlords. Divisions generally occurred based on the tradition of political Islam, or Islamism, that a particular group followed. In the Somali context, the politically oriented affiliations include those that persist globally, the Ikhwani (Muslim Brotherhood) and Salafi schools of thought.

---

<sup>155</sup> Afyare Abdi Elmi, *Understanding the Somalia Conflagration: Identity, Political Islam, and Peacebuilding* (Oxford: Pluto Press, 2010), 50.

<sup>156</sup> Luling, "Come Back Somalia?," 295-296.

<sup>157</sup> Within the context of this research, political Islam assumes the focal point of discussion, as opposed to alternative perspectives based on the Sunni/Shi'a divide.

It should be noted that, similar to other dimensions of Somali society, such as the fluidity of clan identities, these traditions of political Islam are not as rigid in their membership or ideological leanings. Many prominent Islamists have been involved with both traditions of political Islam. This is a theme that has remained present within Somali Islamist groups, as affiliations to specific orientations of thought vary on an individual level; Hansen argues that one of the key determinants of group membership is based on pragmatism.<sup>158</sup> The individualization of ideology within the same group hierarchy highlights the fluidity with which these groups functioned in an environment of strong competition and weak formal governance.

Islam in Somalia is predominantly of the Sufi denomination and incorporates substantial elements of traditional culture into its expression. Likewise, its political expression assumes traits that are unique to Somalia. The presence of both Ikhwani and Salafi influences are foreign imports, and their respective political organizations in Somalia were funded externally and differed tremendously from Somalia's indigenous perspectives on Sufism.<sup>159</sup> These imported ideologies found favour with those disillusioned with Somalia's internal anarchic environment, and saw these interpretations of Islamic law as a way of transcending the domestic conditions that perpetuated these conditions.<sup>160</sup> However, in order to gain local legitimacy, these groups began to adopt elements of local beliefs and structures. Elmi quotes an interview in which a Somali Islamist explained that "the Salafis in Somalia are not the same as those in the Arab world and the Ikhwani groups are also not the same as

---

<sup>158</sup> Stig Jarle Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group, 2005-2012* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 16.

<sup>159</sup> Luling, "Come Back Somalia?," 296.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 295.

the brotherhood groups in other countries.”<sup>161</sup> Elmi continues to note the pervasive belief that, on average, Somali Islamists possess more in depth knowledge of Islamic traditions and basic roots of the faith than their counterparts across the globe.<sup>162</sup>

The majority of Somalia’s Islamist groups (such as AIAI) initially found themselves aligned with the Ikhwani traditions. These groups, as well as Islamic scholars, held the more restrained belief that violence – or defensive jihad – should only be reserved for the Ethiopian troops meddling in Somali affairs.<sup>163</sup> Meanwhile, groups such as Hizbul al-Islam and Al-Shabaab, aligned with the Salafi tradition, held the belief that violence was an acceptable means for achieving an overhaul in Somali society against both internal and external forces that were perceived to be destabilizing its Islamic foundations.<sup>164</sup> The first step in overcoming the immense competition between these groups came through a comprehensive alliance under the banner of the ICU in June 2006.<sup>165</sup>

The gradual elimination of competition and the persistent presence of external military forces in Somalia allowed for groups like the ICU, and eventually Al-Shabaab, to overcome many of the former differences between groups and consolidate their authority within a single power structure over a substantial geographic area.<sup>166</sup> By consolidating and absorbing competing groups under their banner, Al-Shabaab was able to use Islam as a political institution for interested parties to rally around. The dissolution of competition from likeminded groups has

---

<sup>161</sup> Elmi, *Understanding the Somalia Conflagration*, 55.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Luling, “Come Back Somalia?,” 296.

<sup>164</sup> Elmi, *Understanding the Somalia Conflagration*, 60-62.

<sup>165</sup> Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia*, 35.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

arguably allowed for Al-Shabaab, and their particular variety of Salafi Islamism that broadly condones violence against both external and internal actors, to negate the early skepticism about their potential to accumulate power and legitimacy.

Stephen Nemeth argues that under proper social and political conditions, the absence of competition allows the power of individual groups to grow unchecked, which allows incidents of terrorism to increase in both frequency and severity.<sup>167</sup> Al-Shabaab's relative monopoly on the Islamist cause in Somalia has allowed them to remain the only viable option for those actively seeking out such opportunities, which has preserved their ability to actively recruit new members to their cause. It is important to note that with their continued existence as the main arbiter of Islamism in Somalia, it becomes increasingly important to justify their continued use of violence, which allows the organization to retain their credibility and avoid any loss of perceived domestic legitimacy.<sup>168</sup>

Al-Shabaab has been able to rationalize and explain their reliance on violence by making use of the same rhetoric that all political Islamist groups have agreed with throughout the late 1990s and 2000s; opposition to the presence of external military forces within Somalia, particularly on the part of Ethiopia. By framing the conflict as religiously motivated, Al-Shabaab has maintained the ability to renew the perceived legitimacy of their actions, as more parties have become involved through AMISOM's efforts in the region. Additionally, this thesis argues that

---

<sup>167</sup> Stephen Nemeth, "The Effect of Competition on Terrorist Group Operations," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58, no. 2 (2013): 338.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 341.



the general trend of their targeting practices also has been an integral factor in preserving their existence and maintained organizational capacity.

Mia Bloom, in her exploration of a theory behind suicide terror, discusses the importance of targeting to terrorist groups. Bloom notes that, “suicide operations vary along a spectrum that encompasses the targeting of civilians, military personnel and bases, infrastructure and, recently, international organizations and other NGOs.”<sup>169</sup> It is particularly the wide array of targets that make the broad application of violence by Salafi leaning groups like Al-Shabaab such a precarious policy. If violence is applied in a way that aggravates the general population or their core supporters, legitimacy can dissipate rapidly.<sup>170</sup>

Al-Shabaab has been able to walk this fine line by limiting their targets to specific theatres of action. For example, civilians, international aid workers, and other soft targets are generally victimized by Al-Shabaab outside of Somalia – away from their core supporters. Meanwhile, within Somalia, hard targets such as military personnel or infrastructure as well as government representatives are favoured as they fit into the narrative of Somali nationalism and political Islam that they continue to sell. The effects of their multifaceted motivations will be more thoroughly examined in Chapter 3.

Of particular interest to this discussion is the way that the organization has framed its attacks. The majority of their internal operations are directly aimed at undermining the SFG, which they perceive to be ‘illegitimate’ and supported by

---

<sup>169</sup> Mia Bloom, *Dying To Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 91.

<sup>170</sup> Zartman, “Posing the Problem of State Collapse,” 10.

foreign actors that are believed to threaten Islam as well as Somali national interests.<sup>171</sup> Meanwhile, outside Somalia, the targeting of civilians arguably acts to persuade foreign governments to cease their military intervention in Somalia in support of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). The unique manifestation of Islamism in Somalia, through its amalgamation into local sociopolitical contexts, has allowed for an enhancement of its initial religiously grounded legitimacy. Islamism has come to encompass elements of Somali identity, as informed by historical legacies of resistance.<sup>172</sup> To fully understand the extent to which this framework lends legitimacy to groups espousing both Islamic and nationally oriented motives, Somalia's early experiences with Islamic political movements provide tremendous insight.

Somalia's Islamist movements have typically been those most strongly oriented towards national unity under the auspices of a politically motivated Islamist movement, which is vehemently opposed to external intervention or interference from those that have generally been perceived to be enemies of the Somali people. As such, these movements have been significantly influenced by Somalia's long history with frequent foreign incursions and conflicts, reaching back to the pre-colonial era. The SFG, and its transitional predecessors were widely perceived as foreign constructs by Somalia's Islamists following the Ethiopian defeat of the ICU in 2006. The fact that they were organized by external forces abroad<sup>173</sup>

---

<sup>171</sup> Hamza Mohamed, "Somalia's al-Shabaab Vows to Make Comeback," *Al-Jazeera*, 24 February 2014, accessed 23 March 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/02/somalia-al-shabab-group-vows-comeback-20142248557425260.html>.

<sup>172</sup> Elmi, *Understanding the Somalia Conflagration*, 72.

<sup>173</sup> Ioan M. Lewis, *Understanding Somalia and Somaliland: Culture, History, Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 83.

and transplanted into Mogadishu fuelled the rhetoric of these groups, providing them a platform from which they could question the legitimacy of these successive governments and their commitment to the Somali people. This has embedded a culture of skepticism, particularly in relation to the intentions of external actors.<sup>174</sup> In general, Islam had proved to be a uniting force across clan divisions within Somalia as it is an integral dimension of the overarching shared Somali identity.<sup>175</sup> Comparatively, clannism tends to be better equipped to preserve social cohesion at a local level due to the segmentary and fractious nature of such lineage systems.

The use of Islam as a tool for political unity began with the Darwish anti-colonial movement lead by Sayid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan, colloquially known as the 'Mad-Mullah,' in 1899. This movement was an attempt to purify Islam by resisting foreign control over Somalia. I.M. Lewis notes that his motivations were the result of a "belief that Christian colonization sought to destroy the Muslim faith of his people. This fired his patriotism and he intensified his efforts to win support...and urging his compatriots to remove the English 'infidels' from their missionaries."<sup>176</sup> Sayid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan is considered by many to be the father of modern Somali nationalism.<sup>177</sup> Hassan's positions as a fervent nationalist and as a devout Muslim leader have caused these concepts to be intertwined throughout modern Somali history. The anti-colonial struggle set the necessary precedent for subsequent movements rooted in Islam to claim historical legitimacy

---

<sup>174</sup> Richard H. Shultz Jr. and Andrea J. Dew, *Insurgents, Terrorists, and Militias* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 91.

<sup>175</sup> Luling, "Come Back Somalia?," 295.

<sup>176</sup> Lewis, *Modern History of the Somali*, 67.

<sup>177</sup> Elmi, *Understanding the Somalia Conflagration*, 50.

for their actions.<sup>178</sup> Additionally, the 'Mad Mullah' employed asymmetrical, guerilla, and paramilitary tactics throughout this resistance movement.<sup>179</sup> This lends further credibility to the suggestion that contemporary groups are actively emulating a glorified past rooted in political Islam and animosity towards external intervention.

The faltering Barre government's attempts to restructure and profit from Somalia's traditional livestock-based economy served as a flashpoint for the tinderbox created by the attempted 'de-tribalization' of Somali society. Conflict emerged between various groupings on the side of the government and those with less political clout. As the next section discusses, meddling in the local economies only served to further drive a wedge between communities, clans, and sub-clans.

## 2.5 Economy

The state of the Somali economy was deeply affected by the aforementioned decay of political institutional integrity, and the persistence of customary cultural and legal constructs throughout this tumultuous period. The advent of scientific socialism saw the nationalization of many key economic sectors, such as sugar production as well as banking. Nevertheless the policy overhaul allowed for some traditional modes of production to remain intact, most notably, the production of livestock and bananas. The continuation of the traditional livestock production is what is most relevant to this analysis, as it was permitted to persist due to the fact that it was decentralized, and generally subsistence based.<sup>180</sup> As discussed above, *diya* payments often rely on the exchange of camels as repayment for serious crimes,

---

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 51; and Luling, "Come Back Somalia?," 295.

<sup>179</sup> Shultz and Dew, *Insurgents, Terrorists, and Militias*, 91.

<sup>180</sup> Samatar, *Socialist Somalia*, 88.

up to and including murder. The integration of livestock into criminal punishment speaks to the extreme value that such commodities had within the traditional pastoral economy. The tacit acknowledgement of its importance by Barre's government allowed for it to function as a parallel institution to the state, relatively unhindered.

As formal state institutions continued to decay through persistent instability, Somalia's pastoral economy, while preserved throughout the country's experiment with socialism, began to see the effects of state interference and the clan-based fragmentation of society. In this context, clannism proved to be a more influential factor than political Islam, due to its proximity and accessibility to local populations. As a strong legacy of conflict-resolution and the containment of local violence had existed previously within the clan structure, its degradation provided more opportunities for social fragmentation in the face of economic hardships.<sup>181</sup>

The advent of subsidized private watering holes through the 'Water Development Program' was directly oriented towards benefitting Barre's allies, regardless of how precarious these political alliances became.<sup>182</sup> Tensions escalated when Marehan camel herders migrated into Ogaden territory, specifically that of cattle herders in the Lower Juba Province, as claims were made that the presence of foreign livestock contaminated the land.<sup>183</sup> The Marehan sought to use their substantial political connections with President Barre to bolster their presence in the region. As grievances increased, the groups began to engage in skirmishes

---

<sup>181</sup> Shultz and Dew, *Insurgents, Terrorists, and Militias*, 89.

<sup>182</sup> Peter T. Leeson, "Better Off Stateless: Somalia Before and After Government Collapse," *Journal of Comparative Economics* 35, no. 4 (2007): 693.

<sup>183</sup> Little, *Somalia: Economy Without State*, 43.

around key resource points, such as water sources. The government intervened in support of the Marehan to counter what they deemed to be a rebel movement.<sup>184</sup> Under the command of Major-General Hussein Abdullahi, a member of the Marehan clan himself, the Somali Army used “a battalion of armored vehicles and tanks...to brutalize civilians and destroy towns in the area.”<sup>185</sup>

As the government began to lose its control over outlying areas, the tensions between traditional informal institutions and the central government escalated.<sup>186</sup> Such tensions were only inflamed by the intense clan-based rivalries that dominated military and political affairs. It is important to acknowledge that as the state’s power became less dominant, the government itself, in a last minute effort to maintain its monopoly on the use of violence and the legitimacy that emanates from it, increasingly fell back on the same informal institutions, such as clannism, that it had claimed to oppose so vehemently when it initially sought to incorporate socialist ideologies into their governance structure. In the government’s attempt to exploit these institutions for their own benefit, the end result was a perverted and destabilized version of these constructs.

International intervention did little to alleviate the dire economic straits that the government exacerbated, as the pastoral economy was undermined, and escalating violence displaced a substantial portion of the population. Mismanagement of international relief, including management of imported food, damaged the traditional local economy beyond recognition, causing the population

---

<sup>184</sup> Little, *Somalia: Economy Without State*, 43.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

to wholly rely on such international aid. The main driver of this was that the influx of food surpluses drove the local market demand for food down and caused farmers to cease their own production, as it was no longer profitable or feasible.<sup>187</sup> The realities of external aid subjugated formal economies and political institutions to the agenda's of creditors, which fueled the popular perception that domestic governments had begun to experience a severe legitimacy deficit.<sup>188</sup> Beyond disrupting traditional economic institutions through the mass injection of foreign aid, regional security policies regarding border security and transnational migration also posed significant problems for the traditional economy that has sustained many rural Somali peoples through the decades of state collapse.

The African Union's *Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa* which was discussed briefly in Chapter 1, flagged instances of "institutional weakness" along poorly monitored and maintained porous borders as key contributing factors to illicit trade, population movements, and terrorist threats.<sup>189</sup> In the decades since the initial collapse of the formal Somali state, while vulnerable from a security point of view, the porous border proved to be a vital economic lifeline for the communities straddling the border. Movement and trade between communities, although informal, became an engrained feature of the socioeconomic structure of these communities.

---

<sup>187</sup> Neyire Akpinarli, *Developments in International Law, Volume 63: Fragility of the 'Failed State' Paradigm: A Different International Law Perception of the Absence of Effective Government* (Leiden, NLD: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2010), 37.

<sup>188</sup> Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 188-189.

<sup>189</sup> African Union, "Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa."

When examining contemporary conditions, this analysis holds informal trade as a constant factor in supporting populations without access to formal state markets and institutions. Rural communities along the Kenya-Somalia border continue to rely on such informal economic relations for survival. The Kenyan government's recent efforts to construct a 440-mile (708 kilometer) wall along the Somali border have the potential to severely disrupt these transnational relationships at the expense of these borderland communities. Such operations are orchestrated as part of a renewed effort to quell the insecurities perceived to be emanating from Somali side of the border.

The border wall is planned to consist of, "a series of concrete barriers, fences, ditches and observation posts overlooked by CCTV stations that is expected to stretch from the Indian Ocean to the city of Mandera where both countries converge with Ethiopia."<sup>190</sup> Somalia's pastoral economy has generally relied on cross border trade with ethnic Somalis living across international borders. Increased physical security at these sites, while perceived as necessary and sanctioned by the vague recommendations of the African Union, may further impede rural developments and economic growth within Somalia, in a way that has rarely been seen since the formal closure of the border in 2007 in an attempt to stop the flow of refugees and other migrants crossing into Kenya.<sup>191</sup> If one understands poverty to be a major

---

<sup>190</sup> Aislinn Laing, "Kenya Erects a Wall Along Border With Somalia to Keep Out Al-Shabaab," *The Telegraph*, 22 April 2015, accessed 17 July 2015, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/kenya/11556269/Kenya-erects-a-wall-along-border-with-Somalia-to-keep-out-al-Shabaab.html>.

<sup>191</sup> BBC World News, "Kenyans Close Border with Somalia," *BBC World News*, 3 January 2007, accessed: 12 July 2015, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6227083.stm>.



contributing factor to recruitment by extremist groups such as Al-Shabaab,<sup>192</sup> such plans may only provide short-term security solutions for neighbouring states, while doing little to bolster Somalia's formal and informal institutions.

*The New York Times* highlighted local concerns about the efficacy of the planned upgrades to the border's physical security apparatus. Many local residents cited the possibility of rising food prices as well as a drastic increase in trade barriers between communities that straddle both sides of the border.<sup>193</sup> Meanwhile, both national and local government administrators emphasized the need to prevent the physical threat posed by Al-Shabaab's cross border incursions. Yet, many have expressed concerns about the effectiveness of such measures on the actual processes of recruitment and radicalization on both sides of the border. This calls into question whether the actual security benefits warrant the disruption to the local economies and cross-border trade.<sup>194</sup> While this economy has proven itself to be robust, as shown by its ability to survive several decades of government suppression, foreign interference, and state collapse, further disruption may aid in the continued alienation of rural populations on both sides of the border – which in turn may prove counter productive in terms of allowing Al-Shabaab to exploit increasingly vulnerable populations in these areas.

---

<sup>192</sup> Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, *A Country Under Siege: The State of Security in Kenya An Occasional Report (2010-2014)*, 2014, accessed 12 July 2015, <http://www.knchr.org/Portals/0/CivilAndPoliticalReports/The%20State%20of%20Security%20in%20Kenya.pdf>, 23-24.

<sup>193</sup> Isma'il Kushkush, "Kenya Envisions a Border Wall That Keeps Shabab Violence Out," *The New York Times*, 21 April 2015, accessed 12 July 2015, [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/22/world/africa/kenya-plans-to-build-a-border-wall-that-keeps-shabab-violence-out.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/22/world/africa/kenya-plans-to-build-a-border-wall-that-keeps-shabab-violence-out.html?_r=0).

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

It is important to acknowledge that Somalia's informal economy does not operate in a complete vacuum; at many points it interacts with the wider formal global economy. One dimension that straddles this line between formal and informal is the involvement of the vast diaspora in supplying remittances to relatives that remain in Somalia. Remittance transfers from the global diaspora totals approximately US\$1.3 billion annually, accounting for anywhere between 24-45% of the country's GDP in a given year.<sup>195</sup> Generally, remittances allow for households to support themselves by providing food, medical care, and education.<sup>196</sup> Regardless of their importance to general economic success, the international systems managing remittance payments to Somalia have been flagged by external governments (including Kenya, the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia) as having the potential to be easily exploited by international terrorist sympathizers to fund these organizations.<sup>197</sup>

International financial regulators have become increasingly skeptical of the potential these transfers have for abuse. Fears are primarily due to the lack of monitoring on both the sending and receiving ends of the remittance process, such circumstances allow for financial institutions to cancel their services in order to avoid the funds being manipulated by illicit criminal and/or terrorist

---

<sup>195</sup> Anne-Marie Schryer-Roy et al., "Somalia: Somali Lifeline Under Threat: Aid Agencies Express Concern at Closure of Money Remittance Providers in Kenya," *ReliefWeb Report*, 10 April 2015, accessed: 12 June 2015, <http://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somali-lifeline-under-threat-aid-agencies-express-concern-closure-money-remittance>.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

organizations.<sup>198</sup> Merchants Bank of California, the largest processor of Somali remittances in the United States, ceased its services in February 2015, after facing immense regulatory pressures. This warranted a response from representatives of the Somali Diaspora, the SFG, as well as lawmakers in the United States. Each cited the importance of these systems to the maintenance of the local economy and the general well being of those that rely on such sources of income.<sup>199</sup> Somali Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Sharmarke released statements ensuring international parties of the SFG's commitment to addressing their concerns regarding the transparency and accountability of these international transactions.<sup>200</sup>

Despite the efforts by Somalia's government to assure international partners of their efforts, the problem was further escalated by a large-scale attack by Al-Shabaab on Garissa University in north-eastern Kenya on 2 April 2015. This led the Central Bank of Kenya on 7 April 2015 to follow the example of their western counterparts, and revoke the licenses of 12 Kenya based 'Money Remittance Providers.' The Central Bank cited the potential for money laundering into the coffers of terrorist organizations as the primary reason behind these initiatives.<sup>201</sup>

The support that remittance payments provide to Somalia's overall GDP as well as to the maintenance of local traditional economies is substantial. The continued flow of funds have allowed individuals to survive and thrive within a

---

<sup>198</sup> Mahdi Abdile, "The Somali Diaspora in Conflict and Peace-building: The Peace Initiative Program," in *Diasporas, Development and Peacemaking in the Horn of Africa*, edited by: Liisa Laakso and Petri Hautaniemi (London: Zed Books, 2014), 77.

<sup>199</sup> Chris Cumming, "Remittances Cut, Somali & U.S. Politicians Demand Action," *American Banker* 180 no. F307 (2015): 1.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Schryer-Roy et al., "Somalia: Somali Lifeline Under Threat: Aid Agencies Express Concern at Closure of Money Remittance Providers in Kenya."

political environment that is less than conducive to supporting economic well-being across a broad spectrum of society. However, the potential for abuse does exist and undoubtedly has at times benefitted those seeking to use the funds for extremist purposes. This has, unfortunately, resulted in the suspension of such services in many different areas.

Despite decades of poor or non-existent governance and regulation, local trade based economies have continued to function and execute independent cross border trade initiatives. This section has sought to show that the main threats to these traditional institutions stem from two main sources. The first comes in the form of persistent insecurities generated by groups like Al-Shabaab through their ability to manipulate and extort local economies as sources of revenue. Second, the reactionary behaviours of foreign governments and transnational financial institutions to such security threats have served as impediments to sustaining traditional means of economic stability in rural communities. As mentioned, this is evidenced by the disruptions to cross-border trading caused by Kenya's plan to build physical security infrastructure along their border with Somalia as well as the barriers put in place that prevent the effective transfer of remittance payments between the diaspora and residents of Somalia.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

This chapter explained how Al-Shabaab was able to manipulate informal institutions as a means to accumulate social and political capital, in an environment where the position as a legitimate authority figure was contentious. Beginning with a discussion of growing state fragility, culminating in collapse, this chapter

illustrated how the process of state failure was able to change the way in which Somali society continued to function in such an environment. Somalia's clan structure had become increasingly degraded and deprived of its inherent regulatory mechanisms, which allowed it to become a much more fractious element of social organization in Somalia.

As clannism proved incapable of mediating conflict, Islamism emerged as a potential mechanism by which society could be effectively organized given its firm roots in Somali history. Islamist movements in post-collapse Somalia moved from relative obscurity to a much more vocal and formidable force within Somalia's political environment. This reality allowed Al-Shabaab to carve out an ideological niche from which it could make its claim to legitimate authority, and as the primary opponent to the foreign supported SFG.

This chapter concluded by highlighting the relevance of Somalia's post-collapse economy and its ability to straddle both formal and informal markets. The economic well being of those living in areas beyond the reach of formal state institutions is in a particularly precarious position, as they are often found on the front lines of the conflict with Al-Shabaab. Those that inhabit border regions are directly affected by the increased physical security initiatives by neighbouring states, which as outlined above poses a direct threat to the continued function of cross-border trade. As poverty is one of the main drivers of recruitment for Al-Shabaab, it becomes increasingly concerning that the disruption of local economies in this way may in fact be counter-productive. Chapter 3 will explicitly analyze the case of Al-Shabaab and work to illustrate their manipulation of these key informal institutions as an

attempt to accumulate power and navigate the complex environment within an anarchic Somalia.

### **Chapter 3: Organizing Al-Shabaab**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter will initially examine the emergence of Al-Shabaab in order to highlight the context within which it initially formed. Establishing this contextual position is integral to understanding how Al-Shabaab's experience differed greatly from that of Al-Qaeda in its initial attempts at expansion into Somalia. As Chapter 2 illustrated, Islamism was not initially perceived to be a major organizing force within Somali society due to the existence of many different groups each with their own clan affiliations. It is for this reason that this chapter will focus on the methodical way in which Al-Shabaab eliminated or absorbed competing Islamist organizations to become the primary Islamist organization in Somalia. After establishing this, the analysis will then focus on the evolving relationship that Al-Shabaab maintained with global terrorist networks and external groups such as Al-Qaeda. Additionally, the ways in which Al-Shabaab's internal organization was shaped and adapted to these changing relationships will also be assessed. Finally, the chapter concludes with the a discussion of how Al-Shabaab has worked to maintain it's internal legitimacy through tactical decisions that enable the organization to expand its mandate beyond the borders of Somalia and adopt a progressively more internationalist agenda.

#### **3.2 The Emergence of Al-Shabaab**

If one recalls the previous chapter's discussion of Islamism, any coherent discussion of Al-Shabaab's capabilities must extend from their early involvement within the ICU. The ICU replaced the clan-based militant warlords, and was able to

return some degree of order to Somalia, albeit under the auspices of Shari'a Law. The ICU emerged at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century as 11 clan-based courts amalgamated to form a loose conglomeration of Shari'a courts that oversaw the administration of justice in key areas, including Mogadishu and the surrounding area.<sup>202</sup> The general population, under the de facto rule of the feuding warlord factions, lived through "one of the world's most protracted humanitarian crises."<sup>203</sup> The population throughout this period experienced severe human insecurities generated by the perpetuation of conflict and the escalation of plights such as drought and famine.<sup>204</sup> These conditions, in addition to the devastated local economy, only added to the social and economic schisms that perpetuated internal conflict. This reality allowed for a popular revolt against the warlords, which allowed for a decisive military victory by the ICU. This ensured that such individuals and groups could not reassume positions of power in Somalia.<sup>205</sup>

The ICU, while consolidating Islamism in Somalia under a single overarching umbrella, also degraded the threat posed by non-Islamist militias. This created substantial consequences for Somalia's internal affairs once the ICU was removed as a result of the 2006 invasion of Somalia by Ethiopia. Ethiopia, fearing the potentially radical leanings of the ICU, sought to mitigate the potential security risks through direct military intervention. In a post-9/11 international environment, the United States condoned the intervention as a necessary campaign to stifle radical Islamist movements in the Horn of Africa. This conflict, while effective in achieving its

---

<sup>202</sup> Thomas, "Exposing and Exploiting Weaknesses," 414.

<sup>203</sup> Shay, *Somalia: Between Jihad and Restoration*, 153.

<sup>204</sup> Leeson, "Better Off Stateless," 691.

<sup>205</sup> Shay, *Somalia: Between Jihad and Restoration*, 153.



immediate short-term goals, reignited past sparks of nationalism and resentment that had lingered beneath the surface of Somalia's political landscape since the failure of the 1977 Ogaden War.

Strong anti-Ethiopia rhetoric remained in the remnants of the ICU, as the organization's leaders fled to Yemen and Eritrea after their decisive defeat. These leaders re-named themselves the 'Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia' (ARS). A subsection of the ARS (hereafter designated as the ARS-D based on their location in Djibouti) became party to the 2008-2009 Djibouti Peace Process.<sup>206</sup> The process also involved Somalia's TFG, and sought to find a solution to the 18-year long state of conflict within the country. The agreement was intended to:

Ensure the cessation of all armed confrontation and a political settlement for a durable peace; promote a peaceful environment; avoid a security vacuum; facilitate the protection of the population and the unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance and call for the convening of a reconstruction and development conference.<sup>207</sup>

The ARS-D maintained, as one of their demands, that prior to any agreement on the above issues with the TFG, Ethiopian troops must be withdrawn from Somalia. The TFG, being unable to effectively police the territory they claimed, sought to extend the Ethiopian presence until the aforementioned political settlement was achieved, and the opposition agreed to cease its armed resistance and explicitly renounce

---

<sup>206</sup> International Crisis Group, *Somalia: To Move Beyond the Failed State: Africa Report No. 147* (International Crisis Group: Nairobi/Brussels, 2008), ii.

<sup>207</sup> "Agreement Between The Transitional Federal Government of Somalia (TFG) and The Alliance For The Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS)," United Nations Political Office for Somalia, 9 June 2008, accessed: 22 June 2015, <http://unpos.unmissions.org/Portals/UNPOS/Repository%20UNPOS/080818%20-%20Djibouti%20Agreement.pdf>.

violence.<sup>208</sup> The latter was a relatively unrealistic demand, as the ARS-D had very little influence on the Islamists that remained in Somalia.<sup>209</sup>

The eventual terms agreed upon in December 2008 were derailed by several circumstances: the persistent political infighting within the TFG; the inability for the government to exert its presence beyond several city blocks in Mogadishu; and the increased reliance on AU peacekeepers for the provision of security.<sup>210</sup> The inability of the TFG to implement the policies of the peace process led to the defection of the groups that had initially allied themselves with the TFG as they became increasingly convinced of their inability to ensure the interests of all parties involved. Furthermore, the agreements of the peace process were undermined on the side of the ARS-D as they maintained little control over the militant Islamist groups that had filled the void left by the ICU. Al-Shabaab and Hizbul al-Islam were the two main groups that emerged out of the confusion and became the main challengers to the legitimacy of the TFG.<sup>211</sup> Al-Shabaab was quick to disassociate itself from all factions of the ARS at this time, as their relations prior to the 2006 invasion had been tenuous at best. Al-Shabaab determined that these competitors were too embedded in old clan hierarchies and embraced a branch of Islam that they deemed incompatible with their overarching ideology.<sup>212</sup> They also anticipated the inevitable

---

<sup>208</sup> Kasaija Phillip Apuuli, "Somalia After the United Nations-Led Djibouti Peace Process," *African Security Review* 20, no. 3 (2011): 47.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>212</sup> Roland Marchal, "A Tentative Assessment of the Somali Harakat Al-Shabaab," *Journal of East African Studies* 3, no. 3 (2009): 396.

division of the group and were able to solidify their own public perception as an independent and unified Islamist organization.<sup>213</sup>

In general, the Islamist cause had the opportunity to consolidate a wide power base and question the legitimacy of the TFG in the immediate aftermath of the Djibouti Peace Process. Political infighting, corruption, and a poorly maintained independent security apparatus lent credibility to the Islamist insurgency, as it remained the only embodiment of authority in many areas of Somalia. Given this opportunity, Al-Shabaab and Hizbul al-Islam were able to ignite a strong religiously motivated backlash to poor central governance and unwanted foreign intervention. Therefore, in addition to the series of events outlined in the previous chapter that first led to the degradation of political institutions, the failure of the Djibouti Peace Process, and the subsequent failure to negotiate the implementation of political institutions in Somalia, further undermined the legitimacy of the TFG and its successors. This situation provided the opportunity needed for the remaining Islamist insurgency groups to manipulate informal sources of legitimacy and stake their claim for authority over vast swaths of south-central Somalia.

The TFG, because of their institutional deficiencies, failed to address issues such as the provision of security in the areas of Somalia previously administered by the ICU, which, as discussed in Chapter 2, has had direct long-term implications on the maintenance of economic infrastructures in areas outside of TFG control. International reactions to Somalia's pervasive insecurities have also had a direct and substantial effect on local economies. By perpetuating circumstances of poverty, as

---

<sup>213</sup> Marchal, "A Tentative Assessment of Harakat Al-Shabaab," 396.

compounded by other issues such as famine and drought, the economic incentives provided by membership in such militant Islamist insurgencies have become a major source of support.<sup>214</sup>

The degradation of formal social security networks allowed for an entire generation of Somali youth, even those possessing some form of post-secondary education, to become economically disadvantaged and, for the most part, unable to find employment.<sup>215</sup> As laid out in the previous chapter, informal support systems such as clan-based relations and the global remittance system were able to provide some relief; however, the perversion, manipulation and exploitation of these constructs over time have diminished their overall effectiveness at mitigating such circumstances. The gap created by the shortcomings of traditional kinship relations and the traditional economy has allowed for the third pillar of Somali society outlined in this analysis, Islam, to fill the void. At its height, in 2009, Al-Shabaab's strict interpretation of Shari'a Law returned some degree of order to the areas under its control, similar to that experienced under the ICU. This allowed for an expansion of economic activities in strategically advantageous urban areas, such as Kismayo and Baidoa.<sup>216</sup> The stability provided, albeit through strict Islamic jurisprudence, provides a strong case for the interaction between local economies and Islamism in areas where officially recognized state institutions no longer exist.

In the absence of moderate Islamist groups, an increasingly militarized and politically motivated manifestation of Islam became the primary tool used to

---

<sup>214</sup> Marchal, "Joining Al-Shabaab in Somalia," 267.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., 268.

<sup>216</sup> Christopher Anzalone, "The Life and Death of Al-Shabab Leader Ahmed Godane," *CTC Sentinel* 7, no. 9 (2014): 20.

compensate for the inabilities of alternative institutions in Somali society. This reality, when combined with the very real economic incentives and social security benefits offered by Al-Shabaab, became a major factor in the group's increased recruitment capabilities. Beyond this, the specific ideological leanings of Al-Shabaab members became less relevant, as social conditions left few alternatives for many individuals. This also allowed for Al-Shabaab to absorb its competition for the position as champions of the Islamist cause in Somalia.

### **3.3 Al-Shabaab and its Competitors**

Competition has the potential to severely limit the capabilities of any given terrorist organization, as they become preoccupied with presenting themselves as the sole champions of a given cause that their abilities to actually execute substantial attacks are limited.<sup>217</sup> This becomes increasingly evident when one looks at the relationship Al-Shabaab has formed with competitors such as Hizbul al-Islam, and the circumstances surrounding its eventual absorption by Al-Shabaab. Hizbul al-Islam was born out of an extremely loose alliance between four smaller Islamist groups. These groups included a subsection of the ARS (hereafter designated as the ARS-A based on their location in Asmara)<sup>218</sup> that opposed the ARS' initial merger with the TFG in 2009, Jabatulla al-Islamiya, Ras Kamboni, and Anole.<sup>219</sup> The main sources of antagonism between Al-Shabaab and Hizbul al-Islam that prevented their merger at an earlier date were their differing views on the relevance of international or global jihad to the situation in Somalia. Hizbul al-Islam was predominantly

---

<sup>217</sup> Nemeth, "The Effect of Competition," 338.

<sup>218</sup> International Crisis Group, "Somalia: To Move Beyond the Failed State," ii.

<sup>219</sup> Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia*, 107.

focused on addressing local concerns through a militant Islamist agenda, whereas Al-Shabaab placed a greater emphasis on the relevance of Somalia as one part of a global jihadi mission.<sup>220</sup>

As noted previously, pragmatism plays a large role in determining one's membership within a Somali Islamist organization; this merger is underscored by the same logic. The power differentials between Hizbul al-Islam and Al-Shabaab prior to their merger were significant. For many in Hizbul al-Islam, the decision to amalgamate the organizations was also one that would preserve the social status and lives of its leaders. This included the leader of the Ras Kamboni sub-group, Hassan Turki, a veteran and well-respected jihadi in Somalia who forged his credentials in Afghanistan.<sup>221</sup> Hizbul al-Islam was fully amalgamated into Al-Shabaab on 28 December 2010, however this was only after a systematic military campaign that saw Al-Shabaab decimate Hizbul al-Islam's control over the organization's remaining territories.<sup>222</sup> Given the nature of their defeat, the negotiated terms of the merger were far more one sided than had initially been intended, causing much embarrassment on the part of Hizbul al-Islam as they were further denied positions within Al-Shabaab's governing *Shura* council and were forced to abandon all of their former branding.<sup>223</sup>

Regardless of the manner in which such groups were absorbed into Al-Shabaab, the fact that these relationships were able to co-exist within the organization, and that they did not cause fatal internal rifts, solidified their status as

---

<sup>220</sup> Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia*, 108

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, 108.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, 108-109.

the “most organized and diverse (multi-clan) of all [Somalia’s] Islamist movements.”<sup>224</sup> This reality allowed Al-Shabaab to focus its efforts on maintaining its operational readiness and strengthening its asymmetrical warfare capabilities against the SNA and AMISOM.<sup>225</sup>

Al-Shabaab’s ability to maintain its coherence as an organization through such a tumultuous period is a testament to the leadership’s ability to navigate the underlying nuances of Somali society. However, Al-Shabaab’s core leadership was not immune to internal disagreements over military realities and the group’s governance structure. The mitigation of internal competition for authority is but another element of Al-Shabaab’s ability to maintain its resilience and organizational capacity.

An important internal mechanism existed within the overall structure of Al-Shabaab that enabled the leadership to maintain unwavering control over the organization, a secret police force known as the *Amniyat*. The *Amniyat* was organized in such a manner that allowed it to be used as a failsafe for Amir Ahmed Godane and his deputy, Mahad Mohamed Ali, should the outer structure of Al-Shabaab crumble or fall victim to the divisive identities that had undermined so many previous governance structures in Somalia. It was for this reason that the *Amniyat* was predominantly composed of those that possessed, “close family and clan connections to high-level Al-Shabaab commanders.”<sup>226</sup> The structure of this secret police force was embedded with significant security measures, as each unit of

---

<sup>224</sup> Elmi, *Understanding the Somalia Conflagration*, 71.

<sup>225</sup> “Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea,” United Nations Security Council S/2013/413, 12 July 2013, accessed 10 June 2015, [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/413](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/413), 7.

<sup>226</sup> “Report of the Monitoring Group,” 57.

the *Amniyat* is autonomous and ignorant to the existence and actions of other units. Organizing in this manner allows smaller units to work independently of one another and the infiltration or failure of a single unit does not jeopardize other operations that may be underway.<sup>227</sup>

The *Amniyat*, as an internal police force, differed from the main organization through the composition of its membership. By having significantly less clan-based diversity, the leadership seemed to tacitly acknowledge the pervasive influence of clan-relations on individual loyalties. Additionally, the centrality of this internal organization to Al-Shabaab's core leadership is further evidenced by reports of their internal policing of new foreign recruits for Al-Shabaab's main fighting force, as well as by the substantially higher salaries paid to *Amniyat* members in comparison to the average Al-Shabaab fighter.<sup>228</sup>

Discontent had been festering among core elements of the leadership as Ahmed Godane increasingly worked to centralize authority within an inner circle constructed around himself and few other key members of his inner circle. The maintenance of the *Amniyat*, and its use of intelligence and counter-intelligence operations, as well as political assassinations and other clandestine missions, formed an integral part of this concentration and consolidation of authority.<sup>229</sup> The *Amniyat* became a vital tool in addressing the internal organizational schisms with relative ease and effectiveness. Early examples of discontent within the higher ranks of Al-Shabaab had emerged in 2011, after the addition of the Ethiopian and Kenyan

---

<sup>227</sup> "Report of the Monitoring Group," 57.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., 56-57.



militaries into AMISOM. Both countries had originally entered Somalia independently, and neither force was able to successfully achieve their strategic goals while unaffiliated with AMISOM.

The Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) spent their early involvement in Somalia, with their equipment, quite literally, stuck in the mud during Somalia's rainy season near the border.<sup>230</sup> The costs of the operation began to amass, as the equipment was unable to move for several months. As the rains subsided, and Ethiopia also added its forces to the coalition, the KDF made fewer strategic blunders of this scale.<sup>231</sup> The stark change in operational success by the coalition forces displayed that the partnership created under the flag of the African Union has been an integral factor in forming a cohesive, well planned, and effective resistance to Al-Shabaab. The amalgamation of opposition forces to Al-Shabaab was enough to pose a significant threat to the group's territorial holdings, however the inefficiencies and corruption of the TFG still prevented any effective long term solution other than a sustained military intervention from occurring during this time period.<sup>232</sup>

The discord between key members of the leadership had been particularly notable amongst those that had been traditionally respected within the organization's ranks as well as by the general population, as they posed a legitimate threat to Godane's leadership; those in opposition included Muktar Robow, the former press-spokesman for Al-Shabaab, as well as Ibrahim al-Afghani, a founding

---

<sup>230</sup> Bronwyn Bruton and J. Peter Pham, "The Splintering of Al Shabaab," *Foreign Affairs*, February 2, 2012, accessed June 30, 2015, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/africa/2012-02-02/splintering-al-shabaab>.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

member of Al-Shabaab. These quarrels heightened as the tripartite efforts between Kenya, Ethiopia, and AMISOM became more effective, and were further compounded by the official merger of Al-Shabaab with Al-Qaeda in February 2012.<sup>233</sup> The public nature of the feud within the leadership's various factions caused Godane and his loyalists to act swiftly and directly, using the *Amniyat* to track down and exterminate dissidents within Al-Shabaab's network.

In addition to the former leaders mentioned above,<sup>234</sup> high-profile foreign fighters had also become increasingly disillusioned by the ideological differences, as well as by their poor, and at times racially motivated, treatment by the Al-Shabaab's core members.<sup>235</sup> Although brutal, this systematic and swift elimination of the competition alludes to the organizational prowess maintained by Godane and his loyalists throughout this turbulent period. Furthermore, the structure of the *Amniyat* as an internal organization designed to survive even the dissolution of Al-Shabaab, aids in understanding the effectiveness of the group's contingency planning abilities.

In September 2014, Al-Shabaab again faced the death of a leader as Godane fell victim to a U.S. led drone strike.<sup>236</sup> The loss, while being strategically significant to the international effort to incapacitate Al-Shabaab, was not considered to be decisive. This is due to the fact that an institutional precedent existed. Similar circumstances had allowed Godane's rise to power in the first place, after the death

---

<sup>233</sup> Anzalone, "Life and Death," 21.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>235</sup> "Report of the Monitoring Group," 70.

<sup>236</sup> Helene Cooper, Eric Schmitt, and Jeffrey Gettleman, "Strikes Killed Militant Chief in Somalia, U.S. Reports," The New York Times, September 5, 2014 (accessed: June 30 2015), <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/06/world/africa/somalia-shabab.html>.

of former Al-Shabaab leader Aden Hashi Ayro in a 2008 U.S. missile strike.<sup>237</sup> Regardless of Godane's personal investment in Al-Shabaab's centralized power structure, there existed sufficient institutional memory to aid in navigating the loss of another leader. Furthermore, as the most prominent challengers for authority had been systematically eliminated, options were severely limited for those seeking to diverge from the mainstream organization and the chain of command left behind by Godane, which heavily featured the *Aminyat*. These factors can be seen as having played an integral role in their ability to sustain the organization as a cohesive entity.

As has been argued throughout this thesis, Al-Shabaab's organizational prowess and ability to navigate Somalia's complex informal sociocultural institutions has been a substantial and influential factor in its ability to withstand such devastating blows, setbacks and instances of internal discord. Having been bred from the interaction between global and local trends,<sup>238</sup> it is only fitting that this analysis now turns to Al-Shabaab's attempts to assert its presence on a global stage through the legitimizing process of becoming an official Al-Qaeda affiliate.

### **3.4 Tenuous Relationships: Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaeda**

The official merger with Al-Qaeda widened the rift between Al-Shabaab and the Somali people, while also causing discontent among some key members of the leadership. The extremist official Salafi and Wahhabi leanings of Al-Qaeda are not

---

<sup>237</sup> Cooper et al., "Strikes Killed Militant Chief in Somalia, U.S. Reports."

<sup>238</sup> Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia*, 18.

easily reconciled with the Sufi traditions of the general population.<sup>239</sup> The Sufi based tradition receives lineage-based legitimacy rooted in local history, and therefore compliments the clan structure in a way that the Salafist tradition does not.<sup>240</sup> This is evident in the proprietary way in which Somali Islam is treated internally, and the ambivalence with which external impositions are considered.<sup>241</sup> External Islamist traditions are placed in direct conflict with local sociocultural realities, particularly in clan-based relations, and are often framed as a way to overcome or transcend such institutions.

According to Matthew Thomas, the strict official Islamist motivations of Al-Qaeda, on paper, appear to transcend clan-based relations. The reality is much different, as they still play an omnipresent role in Al-Shabaab's internal politics and administrative style.<sup>242</sup> The poor alignment of interests between Somalia's clan-oriented social hierarchies and a globally minded terrorist network such as Al-Qaeda were evident through the organizations initial attempts at establishing a foothold in Somalia.

Al-Qaeda, in its attempts to expand into an anarchic Somalia, experienced the complications created by such local dynamics. Even amongst those that appeared to align with Al-Qaeda's ideology by espousing radical Islamist views, local issues and concerns proved to be of paramount concern. The loyalties of these factions were much more locally oriented than one would expect from a global jihadist network

---

<sup>239</sup> Thomas, "Exposing and Exploiting Weaknesses," 418; and Marchal, "Tentative Assessment of Harakat Al-Shabaab," 382.

<sup>240</sup> Peter S. Henne, "Is all jihad local? Transnational contention and political violence in Somalia," in *Globalizing Somalia: Multilateral, International, and Transnational Repercussions of Conflict*, edited by: Emma Leonard and Gilbert Ramsay (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 82.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

<sup>242</sup> Thomas, "Exposing and Exploiting Weaknesses," 418.

such as al-Qaeda. In fact, Ken Menkaus and Jacob Shapiro note that the potential partners of al-Qaeda were “frustratingly clannish and internally divided.”<sup>243</sup> The divergent priorities of these groups also caused problems for the trustworthiness of such partners, further calling into question the efficacy of an expansion of such foreign transnational actors into Somalia. This occurred in spite of the apparent logic behind operating an illicit organization in an area with no risk of interruption by state security forces. One of the most prevailing reasons why Al-Qaeda’s initial attempts to consolidate their presence in Somalia failed are congruent with the overarching themes of this thesis; that the strength of domestic informal institutions are impossible to ignore within the context of Somalia and the organization of non-state actors. The non-monetary benefits that Al-Qaeda was able to offer were simply outweighed by the benefits that were provided by local interests.<sup>244</sup>

In the absence of formal governance structures, social and political clout was still firmly rooted in clannism. Local relationships and concerns proved to be a much more valuable asset to Somalia’s Islamists than involvement in global jihad during the late 1990s and early 2000s, regardless of the rhetoric such factions espoused. Al-Shabaab’s latter growth out of the ICU and their early incorporation of nationalists and Islamists into the organization is what allowed for their brand to grow within Somalia, and eventually allowed ambitious leaders such as Godane to seek out affiliation and collaboration with global networks after their domestic foothold was firmly established.

---

<sup>243</sup> Menkhaus and Shapiro, “Non-State Actors and Failed States,” 81.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid., 83.

Al-Shabaab typically relied on decentralized forms governance in the areas under their control. General administration is often left to local clans, with the exception being in the provision of security as well as the collection of tax revenues from local peoples.<sup>245</sup> Much of the area that remains under Al-Shabaab control is rural and sparsely populated, which allows for the group to limit its direct administrative involvement, and to delegate such responsibilities to the local level.<sup>246</sup> The rampant corruption that often results in the coercive extortion of local populations has not diminished Al-Shabaab's reliance on clan-based governance in local matters. Moreover, it has allowed for Al-Shabaab to develop its organizational structure in such a way that allows them to rely on traditional means of organization where it is helpful, and to focus their attention on issues with a higher strategic significance. In essence, their ability to rely on these institutions as a means to bolster their domestic organizational capabilities has made Al-Shabaab a relatively unique host of the Al-Qaeda brand.<sup>247</sup> The skepticism with which foreign fighters and external operatives have been greeted in Somalia suggests that the merger was not a natural progression of events, but one that was forced and molded by key players within each organization, namely Godane on the side of Al-Shabaab and Ayman al-Zawahiri with Al-Qaeda.<sup>248</sup> Godane's push to link the organizations fits with the general trend of Al-Qaeda's bottom-up style of recruitment.

As Sageman notes the absence of any top-down push from Al-Qaeda's central leadership to increase individual recruitment, the same themes appear to have

---

<sup>245</sup> Bruton and Pham, "The Splintering of Al Shabaab."

<sup>246</sup> Baylouny, "Authority Outside the State," 139.

<sup>247</sup> Marchal, "Tentative Assessment of Harakat Al-Shabaab," 383.

<sup>248</sup> Thomas, "Exposing and Exploiting Weaknesses," 419.

existed in the addition of franchise operations around the world.<sup>249</sup> Given their established brand and global recognition, many groups, including Al-Shabaab, have petitioned for affiliation over the years.<sup>250</sup> Recruitment and organization at the grassroots level in addition to strong connections to the local business community have been longstanding features of Somali Islamism. Such circumstances aided in ensuring the leadership's ability to conduct its campaign for admission into Al-Qaeda's formal ranks and portray itself as a profitable ally and franchisee.<sup>251</sup>

Despite the effectiveness of their campaign, the resulting internal purge of dissenters and the marginalization of moderate Islamists played a particularly important role in the widening gap between the group and the Somali population. Given that religious clerics in Somalia often represented a neutral force in an environment of strong politicization based on clan affiliations, the consolidation of power by hard-liners within Al-Shabaab and the official adoption of the Al-Qaeda brand may prove to ostracize the group from many of their former supporters. Adopting this type of rhetoric arguably diminishes the legitimacy of their nationalist leanings, as the jihadist messaging becomes much more internationally oriented and increasingly dominant. This is particularly evident through the evolving rhetoric surrounding the role of foreign fighters inside Al-Shabaab.

Official statements surrounding these issues have framed these fighters as having, "shared transnational ties through a different constitutive identity

---

<sup>249</sup> Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 123.

<sup>250</sup> Leah Farrall, "How al Qaeda Works," *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 2 (March 2011), accessed: 7 July 2015, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/south-asia/2011-02-20/how-al-qaeda-works>.

<sup>251</sup> Abdelkérim Ousman, "The Potential of Islamist Terrorism in Sub-Saharan Africa," *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 18, no. 1 (2004): 85.

community.”<sup>252</sup> This suggests that it is an international brotherhood of like-minded Muslims that feeds the call to jihad, as opposed to true Somali nationalism.<sup>253</sup> There are signs however that the group has attempted in some way to maintain their legitimacy in this regard. This is particularly evident through their tactical operations both within and outside of Somalia.

### 3.5 Tailored Tactics

Al-Shabaab has attempted to reconcile their diminished domestic legitimacy by framing their militant operations against AMISOM forces, as well as the individual militaries of Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia as a struggle against external aggression directed towards the Somali people and Islam.<sup>254</sup> When faced with a growing internal legitimacy deficit caused by the reclamation of territory by AMISOM coalition forces, Al-Shabaab has compensated through tailored targeting practices in various theatres.

This thesis maintains that such practices have allowed Al-Shabaab to straddle a precarious line that allows them to maintain some semblance of their nationalist credentials as a means of reasserting their legitimacy undermining that of AMISOM and the SFG. To appear as though they are working within the social frameworks addressed in Chapter 2, Al-Shabaab is inherently working to satisfy the requirements of underlying social norms to be perceived as a legitimate alternative

---

<sup>252</sup> David Malet, Bryan Priest, and Sarah Staggs, “Involving Foreign Fighters in Somalia,” in *Globalizing Somalia: Multilateral, International, and Transnational Repercussions of Conflict*, edited by: Emma Leonard and Gilbert Ramsay (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 94.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid.

<sup>254</sup> Blake Edward Barkley, “The Last Vestiges of Statehood: Failed States and the Groups that Work Within Them,” *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 16, no. 2 (2015): 38.



for authority over south-central Somalia.<sup>255</sup> Furthermore, by consistently reaffirming their ability to strike at the heart of SFG authority in Mogadishu, they are able to effectively bring the SFG's shortcomings into public view and make it increasingly clear that the presence of international legal sovereignty remains insufficient to ensure the physical integrity of the state and its institutional capacity.<sup>256</sup>

To protect whatever positive public image they have in a given community, they make every effort to appear ambivalent to local opposition when assuming control of internal territories. Al-Shabaab mitigates these local threats through the use of strangers from other clans or communities that cannot be directly connected with the organization to eliminate those vocally opposed to their presence. This prevents Al-Shabaab from being connected locally to abhorrent acts that might undermine their image of transcending clan-based quarrels and being advocates for Somali well being.<sup>257</sup> Such actions can be perceived as a direct attempt by Al-Shabaab to satisfy the requirements for establishing legitimacy, as dictated by local social convention, as the persistent power vacuum has enhanced the necessity for informal social approval of any group wishing to consolidate their power and authority. Therefore, an extension of this principal leads Al-Shabaab to differentiate their primary targets, as well as the justifications that they employ for each attack as based on its location.

---

<sup>255</sup> McLoughlin, *State Legitimacy*, 2.

<sup>256</sup> Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*, 228.

<sup>257</sup> Marchal, "Tentative Assessment of Harakat Al-Shabaab," 398.

Within Somalia, Al-Shabaab's general focus is on hard targets, such as government or military personnel and infrastructure; meanwhile, outside Somalia, in neighbouring states, Al-Shabaab tends to act in a tactical form with Al-Qaeda, focusing on soft targets often resulting in substantial civilian casualties. This assessment is derived from their major publicized attacks and public statements made by Al-Shabaab's representatives since 2010.

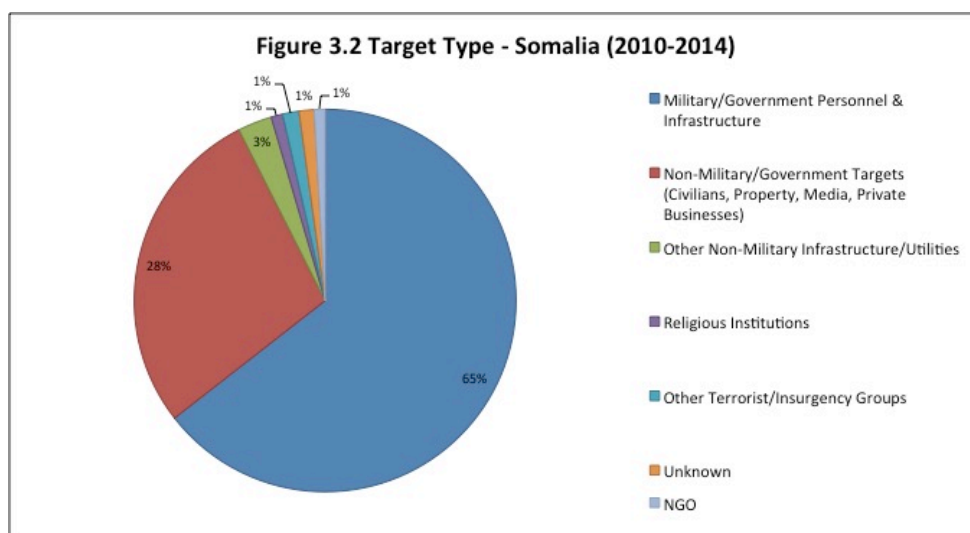
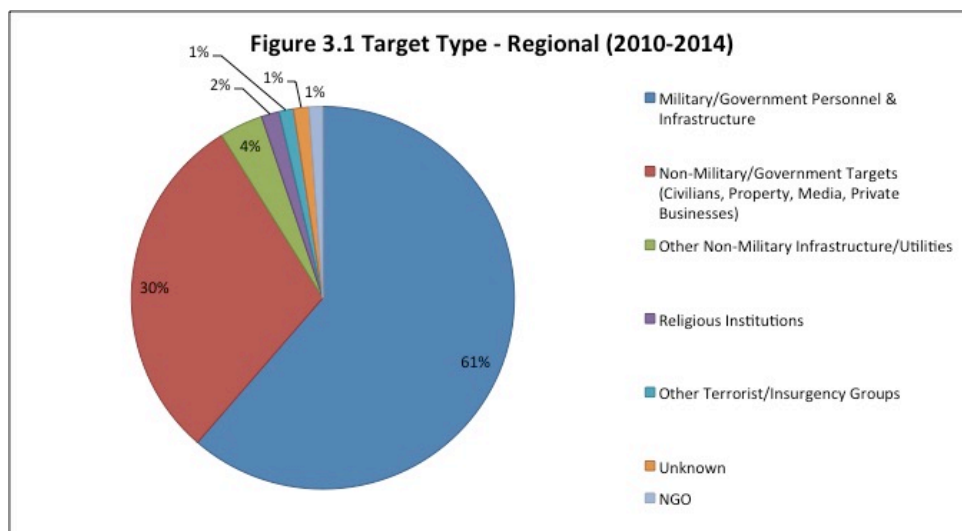
2010 represents a significant milestone for Al-Shabaab, as on 11 July 2010 Al-Shabaab operatives executed an attack inside two Kampala, Uganda, bars where patrons were viewing a match of the 2010 *Fédération Internationale de Football Association* (FIFA) World Cup.<sup>258</sup> This incident resulted in a combined 75 fatalities and an additional 71 injuries.<sup>259</sup> This represents the group's first major attack oriented towards civilian targets outside Somalia, as according to the GTD, most previous attacks had been directed towards military or political targets, or against competing insurgency groups both inside and outside Somalia.<sup>260</sup> Therefore, 2010 presents a substantial change in their tactical operations, in which casualty rates increased and the group began to embrace an overtly international perspective of jihad, despite their official merger with Al-Qaeda being roughly two years away.

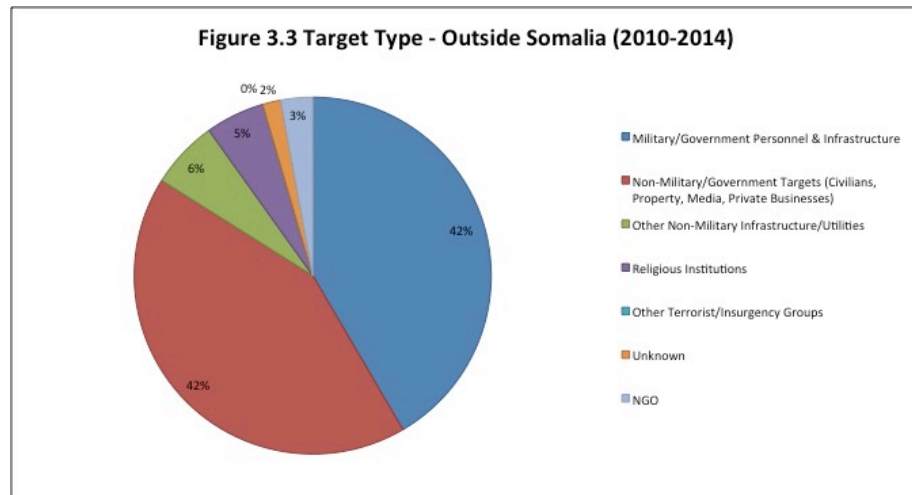
---

<sup>258</sup> BBC World News, "Somali Militants 'Behind' Kampala World Cup Blasts," 12 July 2010, accessed 13 April 2014, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10602791>.

<sup>259</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), (2013), Global Terrorism Database [Data file], Retrieved from <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

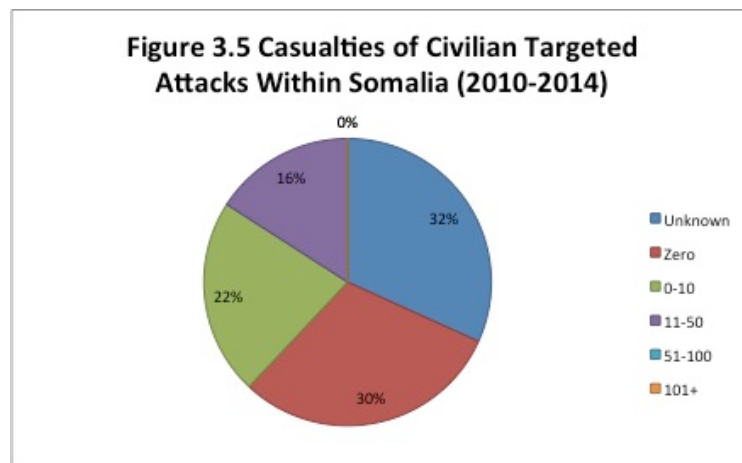
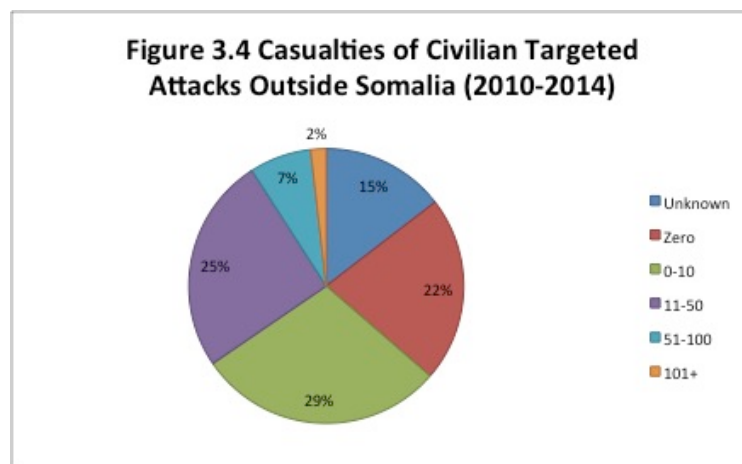




Figures 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 use data from the GTD in order to examine Al-Shabaab's targeting practices between 2010 and 2014. Although the GTD data collection only includes information up to and including 2014, it still provides a useful snapshot into Al-Shabaab's activities at this time. Furthermore, it must be noted that some attacks have various targets and are included in multiple categories therefore, these graphs are not representative of the absolute number of attacks, but are useful for displaying the relative frequency with which certain targets are chosen.

As these figures show, the vast majority of Al-Shabaab's operations take place within Somalia proper; however, the overwhelming majority of these operations are directed against representatives of government, AMISOM, and military authority. Figure 3.3 displays that when compared to internal actions, civilian targets were chosen 14% more often in Somalia's neighbouring states of Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia; each are also key stakeholders in AMISOM's success. Furthermore, the average casualty rates of these attacks generally exceeded those executed within

Somalia. Figures 3.4 and 3.5, also making use of GTD data, examine these differences in casualty rates, and show that on average, more civilians were killed or injured in individual attacks outside Somalia. Additionally, mass casualty events, defined as those with 50 or more killed and/or wounded, occurred a total of five times within this time period outside Somalia, while there were no such recorded events internally where civilians were the primary target.<sup>261</sup>



<sup>261</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), Global Terrorism Database.

As international coalition forces began to make major headway in pushing Al-Shabaab from key urban areas in 2011, through recapturing the Bakara Market in Mogadishu and the port city of Kismayo, Al-Shabaab took note of their economic losses as well as the substantial military disadvantage when compared to AMISOM and its allies.<sup>262</sup> This reality caused Al-Shabaab, in Somalia, to severely limit their formal military campaigns that had brought them past success in capturing territory, instead favouring the asymmetric tactics that had brought them to notoriety.<sup>263</sup> The BBC described it best when they wrote that these renewed tactics were evidence that Al-Shabaab had begun “striking like mosquitos.”<sup>264</sup>

Abrahms and Potter posit an interesting hypothesis in regards to the targeting practices of such groups, citing the proximity of those executing attacks to the core leadership of an organization as being an influential factor in these decisions.<sup>265</sup> Those members with a close relationship with an organization’s high-level leadership are less likely to target civilians primarily because they generally have more experience, more resources to execute more substantial attacks, and prioritize the long-term strategic goals of the organization.

Generally, those with little connection to high-level leadership are typically recently recruited foot soldiers who place increasing value upon short-term personal gain as opposed to long-term strategic goals. Their motivations can be

---

<sup>262</sup> Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia*, 112.

<sup>263</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

<sup>264</sup> BBC World News, “Somalia’s Al-Shabaab: Striking Like Mosquitos,” 25 February 2014, accessed 10 June 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-26343248>.

<sup>265</sup> Max Abrahms and Philip B.K. Potter, “Explaining Terrorism: Leadership Deficits and Militant Group Tactics,” *International Organization* 69, no. 2 (2015): 316-317.

rooted in ambitions such as the extraction of wealth from targeted civilians, or the achievement of an enhanced reputation within the organization itself.<sup>266</sup> Also, these lower ranking members generally have access to fewer resources, which diminishes their abilities to engage in sophisticated attacks on hard targets.<sup>267</sup> The use of diaspora members, or those foreigners sympathetic to Al-Shabaab's cause, in foreign operations targeting civilians fits within this trend as those that execute large scale attacks often are in possession of foreign passports, and are rarely high ranking members of the organization. The examples outlined below further explore the tactical decisions made by Al-Shabaab, and how these relate to their ability to maintain credibility and legitimacy within Somalia.

In addition to the 2010 Kampala World Cup attacks, there are three other mass casualty events executed by Al-Shabaab that clearly display the selective and strategic targeting practices that are employed. In neighbouring Kenya, the Nairobi Westgate Mall attacks on 21 September 2013 resulted in the deaths of 61 civilians and security officers after four armed gunmen entered the mall from various points of entry and opened fire on the civilians within.<sup>268</sup> Al-Shabaab claimed direct responsibility for the attack and noted that its motivation was retaliation for the KDF's presence in Somalia and involvement with AMISOM.<sup>269</sup>

Alternatively, there are two major events within Somalia that warrant the attention of this analysis. The first was an incident on 4 October 2011, in Mogadishu,

---

<sup>266</sup> Abrahms and Potter, "Explaining Terrorism," 317.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> BBC World News, "Nairobi Siege: How the Attack Happened," *BBC World News*, 18 October 2013, accessed 13 April 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-24189116>.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid.

where 70 people were killed and an additional 42 were injured after an improvised car bomb detonated near a compound that housed various government ministries, including the Ministry of Education.<sup>270</sup> Al-Shabaab claimed that the intended targets of this attack were government officials and African Union peacekeepers.<sup>271</sup> The second incident was focused primarily on the military presence in the Lower Juba region of Somalia. Here, the security forces of the Interim Juba Administration (IJA), which is widely perceived as a puppet of the Kenyan government by Al-Shabaab, were directly targeted. Al-Shabaab began their assault on 8 November 2014 in an attempt to capture the island of Kudhaa, 130 kilometers southwest of Kismayo.<sup>272</sup> Accounts from residents of the island stated that Al-Shabaab managed to kill 43 IJA soldiers (while taking a loss of 31 fighters themselves).<sup>273</sup>

The above examples allow for an important dimension of Al-Shabaab's overarching strategic goals to be observed: framing such attacks as outright military successes against well-armed opponents is an important narrative for Al-Shabaab to maintain internally. This is particularly true in a time when much of their previous holdings have been recovered by AMISOM and the SFG. Therefore, the symbolism of domestic operations is equally, if not more important than the casualties that result.

---

<sup>270</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), Global Terrorism Database.

<sup>271</sup> Abdi Guled, "Truck Bomb Kills Dozens in Capital of Somalia," *Yahoo News*, 4 October, 2011, accessed 14 July, 2015, <http://news.yahoo.com/truck-bomb-kills-dozens-capital-somalia-201055212.html>.

<sup>272</sup> VOA News, "90 Killed as Al-Shabaab Takes Somali Island," *Voice of America*, 10 November 2014, accessed 2 June 2015, <http://www.voanews.com/content/al-shabab-takes-somali-island/2514466.html>.

<sup>273</sup> *Ibid.*



In addition to the events outlined above, Al-Shabaab also manages to strike more symbolic targets within Somalia, aimed at undermining and delegitimizing the SFG. On 21 February 2014, Al-Shabaab attacked the presidential palace in Mogadishu, known as 'Villa Somalia,' with a vehicle-borne explosive device. The intent of this attack was to display that, regardless of whatever strength AMISOM and the SNA forces may have within Mogadishu, Al-Shabaab has maintained its capabilities within the urban areas of Somalia despite their loss of control in such areas. Mary Harper interviewed an anonymous Al-Shabaab official after the attack in the capital, which killed 11 people.<sup>274</sup> This official is quoted as declaring that:

Villa Somalia is meant to be the most protected part of Mogadishu, and Mogadishu is meant to be the most protected part of Somalia...Yet we managed to strike the president's house. My advice to the apostate President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud is try to protect your house and your staff before trying to protect your country.<sup>275</sup>

This directly incorporates Al-Shabaab's nationalist leanings by calling into question the legitimacy and the capabilities of the SFG, and contrasting their own abilities against the government's shortfalls.

Through the use of the above examples, it becomes evident that Al-Shabaab's justification for significant, high-impact operations is clearly catered to the goal of maintaining their legitimacy, both as a key player within Somalia and as a viable threat at the regional level. To do so, the group must successfully frame their conflict as one in which they are perceived to be a frontline militia defending Somalia against foreign incursion, as opposed to being framed as a 'toxic jihadi movement'

---

<sup>274</sup> BBC World News, "Somalia's Al-Shabaab: Striking Like Mosquitos."

<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

that actively seeks to undermine peaceful Somalis.<sup>276</sup> Therefore, public perception becomes a vital tool for the organization; the ability to manipulate and shape the conflict is an integral factor in their past successes and remains central to their ambitions going forward.

### **3.6 Target: Legitimacy**

Recalling the discussion of the interplay between perceived legitimacy and sovereignty in Chapter 1, the performativity of legitimacy in relation to underlying sociocultural elements again becomes an integral point of discussion. In order to achieve the groups evolving strategic goals, they were required to wage a multi-front initiative geared towards maintaining their position at home and extending their influence abroad. Noting that, by 2010, Godane had begun his campaign to garner favour with Al-Qaeda's leadership; the way was paved for Al-Shabaab's adoption of an increasingly internationalist agenda. By doing so, the intention was to enhance their international reputation for two dominant reasons. First, this was done as a means of increasing the recruitment and financial contributions of like-minded Muslims from around the world. Somalia's vast diaspora played a substantial role in this capacity, as they are generally perceived to be an extension of domestic society; therefore, the diaspora's repatriation to Somalia and their provision of financial support to Al-Shabaab was considered necessary for further

---

<sup>276</sup> BBC World News, "In Prison With Al-Shabaab: What Drives Somali Militants," *BBC World News*, 5 October 2013, accessed: 7 July 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-24379013>.

success.<sup>277</sup> Secondly, by courting Al-Qaeda, Al-Shabaab opened itself up to a global support network that could provide the resources necessary to aid in maintaining the necessary organizational capacity to successfully operate on multiple fronts.

When examining their internal campaigns, Al-Shabaab's reliance on the three main informal institutions, as laid out extensively in Chapter 2, is arguably a key component of their quest for maintaining internal legitimacy and staking a claim for internal sovereignty. Their ability to embed themselves within the economic realities of Somalia through taxation on traditional pastoral goods, extortion, kickbacks, exports and remittances gave them an operating budget of approximately \$70-100 million annually at the height of their influence.<sup>278</sup> The removal of Al-Shabaab from key sources of revenue has limited their ability to wield the same level of economic influence, yet they maintain the ability to provide compensation on a monthly basis to their soldiers – which makes them an attractive economic option for those with limited resources in rural communities.<sup>279</sup>

Al-Shabaab may have been correct in their assessment that Islamism has the *potential* for unifying the Somali people, and to act as a tool for transcending clan-based identities.<sup>280</sup> This was rooted in Islam's far-reaching and nearly homogenous application in Somalia, as well as the fact that Islamism was embedded within the roots of Somalia's early anticolonial movements. These ideals, being rooted in

---

<sup>277</sup> Michael J. Boyle, "Recrossing the Mogadishu Line: US Policy Toward Somalia 1994-2012," in *Globalizing Somalia: Multilateral, International, and Transnational Repercussions of Conflict*, edited by: Emma Leonard and Gilbert Ramsay (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 155.

<sup>278</sup> Thomas, "Exposing and Exploiting Weaknesses," 414.

<sup>279</sup> Marchal, "Tentative Assessment of Harakat Al-Shabaab," 395.

<sup>280</sup> Walls and Kibble, "Identity, Stability, and the Somali State," 259.

significant historical events, were solidified within the overarching Somali identity. However, the external influences present in Al-Shabaab's ideological foundations predominantly stem from the Saudi Arabian schools of Wahhabi thought<sup>281</sup> and these are not easily amalgamated into Somali society. Most individuals tolerated the rise of Al-Shabaab due to their abilities to provide security, stability, and in some cases employment to a desperate population.<sup>282</sup>

Despite the general disdain and contempt that Somalia's general population has for the violent, extremist, and foreign branch of Islamism that Al-Shabaab represents, there is some residual legitimacy that may be retained as a result of their attempt to maintain strong nationalist leanings inside Somalia. Furthermore, since the reign of the ICU, even moderate Islamists favoured the imposition of Shari'a law as it represented one component of Society that Somalis – regardless of clan affiliation – could agree upon. Elements of the SFG and its predecessors were drawn from these less extreme members of Islamist groups, and have been able to work effectively alongside coalition forces. It was the ability of these moderates to work with these external forces that paved the way for Al-Shabaab's accusations of apostasy and treason.<sup>283</sup>

Yet, the support received from Al-Qaeda and the presence of both foreign ideologies and foreign fighters within Al-Shabaab seems to be a point of hypocrisy on behalf of the Islamist group, as it appears that their nationalist rhetoric and

---

<sup>281</sup> Shay, *Somalia: Between Jihad and Restoration*, 48.

<sup>282</sup> Human Rights Watch, *Harsh War, Harsh Peace: Abuses by al-Shabaab, the Transitional Federal Government and AMISOM in Somalia* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2010), 22.

<sup>283</sup> Mwangi, "State Collapse, Al-Shabaab, Islamism, and Legitimacy," 520.

focused targeting practices are not enough to maintain their popularity with the Somali public. While Al-Qaeda has remained relatively aloof from Somali affairs, instead acting mainly in a support role, the narrative that it presents is still one that does not mesh well with general Somali opinion, which in the end may undermine the very ideological foundation upon which Al-Shabaab was developed.

Al-Shabaab must be ever conscious of the effect that their operations will have on their public image within Somalia – as they walk a fine line between tolerance and abhorrence. The explicit targeting of civilians comes with a substantial political risk, and may prove counter productive in achieving overall strategic goals if they are unable to preserve the precarious balance that appears to exist within Somalia.<sup>284</sup> Menkhaus and Shapiro note that in order to mitigate this risk, it becomes in their best interest to draw external actors into the ‘Somali quagmire,’ as this would allow them to reaffirm their nationalist rhetoric and declare themselves to be defenders of both Islam and the Somali people.<sup>285</sup> Therefore, it becomes extremely clear that their actions abroad are intended to antagonize neighbouring states directly. Additionally, it remains in their best interests to preserve the fragility of the Somali state, as they may be able to make use of the very principal that prevented Al-Qaeda from consolidating its authority in Somalia in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

An important distinction emerges from this reality, that one must not confuse Al-Shabaab’s manipulation of Somali national identity with support for a transition to a post-conflict federalist government in Somalia. The SFG has a constitutional

---

<sup>284</sup> Abrahms and Potter, “Explaining Terrorism,” 314.

<sup>285</sup> Menkhaus and Shapiro, “Non-State Actors and Failed States,” 91.

mandate to form such a federation between newly minted and longstanding federal state entities within Somalia; however the limitation placed on the reach of the central government since the collapse of the Barre regime has created substantial challenges for the development of such a governance system.<sup>286</sup> If Al-Shabaab is to maintain their integrity and organizational prowess, they must actively seek to extend the state of internal conflict and distrust between the central government and the outlying regions where its authority is tenuous and relies on external support and intervention to maintain security.

In a survey conducted by the Heritage Institute for Policy Studies, a majority of respondents, hailing from major cities across Somalia, believed that properly instituted federalist governance would inherently work to build trust between the various regions and the government. It is also considered to be a major precipitating factor in fostering reconciliation between feuding communities by devolving governance to a more local level.<sup>287</sup> However, at the time of writing, such a system has not been implemented and the SFG continues to rely heavily on AMISOM for the provision of security and to support its position as the sole recipient of international legal sovereignty within Somalia. Furthermore, by perpetuating the state of fragility within Somalia Al-Shabaab is able to exploit the absence of a credible claim to sovereign authority over vast areas of Somalia in an attempt to draw in foreign intervention, as neighbouring states fear for their own national security.

---

<sup>286</sup> Heritage Institute for Policy Studies, "Federal Somalia: Not If but How," *Policy Brief 2* (2015), accessed: 10 July 2015, <http://www.heritageinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/HIPS-Briefing-Federal-Somalia-ENG-3.pdf>.

<sup>287</sup> Heritage Institute for Policy Studies, "Federal Somalia: Not If but How."

If done ineffectively, or with disregard for humanitarian conditions on the ground, continued foreign interventions could work in favour of Al-Shabaab's cry for internal legitimacy and bolster their efforts to undermine the SFG and AMISOM.<sup>288</sup> Their ambitions and motivations are much more nuanced than simply being 'jihad for jihad's sake;' their overarching strategy and the resulting tactical decisions are employed as a means of survival, and as a way of preserving, not only the perception of their legitimacy but also their *raison d'être*.

### 3.7 Conclusion

This chapter traced the development of Al-Shabaab from its earliest manifestation as a part of the ICU to an independent terrorist organization that has become a major force for destabilization in East Africa. The inclusion of a thorough examination of how Al-Shabaab eliminated its competition and effectively organized itself to withstand the fractious nature of Somali society illustrated the unique actions and conditions that allowed them to become the most unified, diverse, and multi-clan of any previous Somali Islamist movement. By becoming a cohesive organization with an independent agenda Al-Shabaab was then able to look outside of Somalia.

The formal merger with Al-Qaeda's network in 2012 was the result of Al-Shabaab's leadership adopting an evermore internationalist agenda. The result of this expansion was the heightened prominence of external terrorist attacks in neighbouring states as a part of Al-Shabaab's evolving overarching strategy. This

---

<sup>288</sup> Menkhaus and Shapiro, "Non-State Actors and Failed States," 91.

strategy was implemented to intimidate foreign governments and challenge their military involvement in Somalia. This chapter also identified a key component of this strategy; the ability to cater tactical decisions based on the theatre in which they are acting. It is important that the organization maintain some positive symbolism within Somalia, therefore they present themselves as a highly organized formal opposition force to the SFG and AMISOM. Meanwhile, the adoption of asymmetric tactics explicitly targeting foreign non-Muslim civilians has become standard fare for their operations outside of Somalia. This difference is a key component in their attempt to ensure that they maintain a relatively positive public perception by the Somali people for whom they claim to fight. The final chapter will revisit the bodies of literature examined in Chapter 1 and discuss how the case of Al-Shabaab in Somalia challenges some of the underlying assumptions made within the existing literature.



## **Chapter 4: Conclusion**

Recalling the question posed at the opening of Chapter 1, this project has aimed to answer the question: *How has Al-Shabaab's position of power across large swaths of Somalia challenged assumptions about the organizational capacities of terrorist organizations within the context of state failure?* In order to respond to this question, this analysis made use of several key concepts ranging from the broad social realities of a post-collapse Somalia to the complex internal hierarchies of Al-Shabaab. At its core, this research argues that formal institutions decay in a process akin to that outlined by Zartman. This process means that there exists an escalated devolution of power followed by the retreat of popular trust into increasingly localized forms of governance.<sup>289</sup> When applied to Somalia, the revitalization of clan-relations and local informal economies provides clear evidence of the localization of authority in an attempt to compensate for the loss of centralized governance and the services it had provided.

Chapter 1 focused on establishing the theoretical and methodological foundations of this research. It emphasized the importance of understanding the intervening variables that complicate the relationship between state failure and the organizational capacity of terrorist groups. By acknowledging the sustained debate about the above relationship, this research sought to determine what had allowed Al-Shabaab to maintain a cohesive identity within a post-collapse Somalia. The conclusions reached through the discussions present in Chapters 2 and 3 suggest that the retreat of the state and the supplementation of formal institutions with

---

<sup>289</sup> Zartman, "Posing the Problem of State Collapse," 9-10.

informal counterparts continues to play a significant role in the enhancement of internal legitimacy among non-state actors such as Al-Shabaab. The strength of local clan based identities, despite past attempts to eliminate them from Somali society, proved to be an integral dimension in the rise of Islamism as a defining feature of the political realities inside Somalia.

As identified in Chapter 2, post-collapse conditions within Somalia prevented any singular clan-based faction or militia from filling the political vacuum. The fallout from decades of war and inter-clan animosity overwhelmed any external attempts at establishing internal social cohesion. The resulting hostility severely undermined successive U.S.-led United Nations stabilization missions, and resulted in the international community's widespread disillusionment with the Somali conflict and skepticism about any potential solution.<sup>290</sup>

The longevity of the domestic turmoil and the lack of any foreseeable solutions aided in generating the necessary conditions for popular frustration with the roving banditry of these militias throughout much of south-central Somalia.<sup>291</sup> Frustration with the fragmentation along local clan lines eventually resulted in the consolidation of authority along domestic Islamist principles. The ICU's ability to successfully wrench power from Somalia's warlords established Islamism as a legitimate contender for authority. Yet, the resurgence of Islamism in Somalia was met with criticism and hostility from Somalia's neighbours, as it was perceived as a direct threat to their own national security.

---

<sup>290</sup> Patman, *Strategic Shortfall*, 142.

<sup>291</sup> Lorenzo Vidino, Raffaello Pantucci, and Evan Kohlmann, "Bringing Global Jihad to the Horn of Africa: al Shabaab, Western Fighters, and the Sacralization of the Somali Conflict," *African Security* 3, no. 4 (2010): 220.

There was much uneasiness felt within the region as the ICU rose to power, as many onlookers were concerned by the potentially extremist leanings of some of its members. This directly resulted in a sustained foreign military presence in Somalia. Additionally, the result of militarized foreign policies towards Somalia by its neighbours has severely compromised economic stability within Somalia. This has been accomplished through the restrictions placed on global remittance networks, as well as through the physical disruption of cross-border trade through enhanced border security measures and the sustained presence of external military personnel via AMISOM. Furthermore, following the mass injection of foreign aid to address the threat of famine and widespread poverty in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the resulting free fall of local food prices rendered internal production unrealistic, and any future shock to the fragile Somali economy may only perpetuate poverty and augment Al-Shabaab's recruitment capabilities.<sup>292</sup>

The perpetuation of poverty in Somalia was influenced by Al-Shabaab's ability to manipulate local economic realities. Such manipulation can occur in several ways. First, they are able to provide economic incentives to impoverished communities in an effort to drive recruitment and enhance their influence throughout Somalia. Second, they may play a more sinister role in extorting local communities and collecting tax revenue from those living under their control. Both of these scenarios allow for Al-Shabaab to increase its influence on the daily lives of those living under their control.

---

<sup>292</sup>Akpınarlı, *Fragility of the 'Failed State' Paradigm*, 37.

Chapter 3 documented Al-Shabaab's development and noted the organization's departure from their moderate Islamist contemporaries that sought to negotiate a peace settlement with the TFG throughout the Djibouti Peace Process. The rise of Al-Shabaab can be partially attributed to the environment created in the wake of Ethiopia's occupation after toppling the ICU. Ethiopia's presence was a major theme of contention for the ARS-D during the Djibouti Peace Process. The animosity was further compounded by Ethiopia's hardline military doctrine and the use of heavy artillery in urban settings. This further fostered discontent amongst the civilian population living in these areas. Again these circumstances presented Al-Shabaab as an appealing alternative to foreign occupation.<sup>293</sup> The renewed animosity on behalf of large subsections of the population, in addition to the general consolidation of Islamist ideology, provided Al-Shabaab with the opportunity to present itself as an organized and unified opposition force. Furthermore, the TFG's institutional deficiencies prevented them from maintaining an independent security presence to counter the growing threat from an increasingly organized Al-Shabaab.

As noted several times throughout this thesis, the role of pragmatism is important in determining one's relationship to an Islamist organization in Somalia; this is also true of relations between groups. Al-Shabaab's merger with Hizbul al-Islam, albeit under unequal terms, enhanced their combined ability to challenge AMISOM and the SFG. Additionally, the lack of competition for support between such like-minded groups enhanced their ability to execute substantial and strategically

---

<sup>293</sup> Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia*, 49-50.

significant attacks.<sup>294</sup> This analysis, while acknowledging the increased capabilities of Al-Shabaab, also emphasized the importance of public perception that is of a favourable nature, or at the very least one of tolerance.

As the data presented in Chapter 3 from the GTD demonstrated, there is a perceivable trend in how Al-Shabaab chooses its targets. Through analysis of the GTD data, this thesis posits that this trend is informed by Al-Shabaab's desire to avoid offending the local Somali population, while retaining the ability to attain their strategic goals. As such, Al-Shabaab rarely executes large-scale attacks domestically where civilians are the primary targets, instead favouring targets with symbolic significance that aid in their attempt to undermine and de-legitimize the SFG. However, such caution is notably absent when one examines their targeting practices outside of Somalia. The most notable and high profile attacks abroad tend to directly target non-Muslim civilians in an attempt to dissuade foreign governments from continuing their military operations in Somalia.

Abrahms and Potter's use of a leadership deficit to explain the rationale in targeting civilians further adds another layer to this scenario, as those furthest away from the core leadership are the ones that most often execute Al-Shabaab's civilian oriented attacks abroad.<sup>295</sup> Keeping with this trend allows the core leadership in Somalia to maintain the integrity of their core messaging, which is primarily anti-government and anti-foreign intervention. These positions are rooted in a perception that Al-Shabaab is the sole organization fit to claim legitimate authority in Somalia.

---

<sup>294</sup> Nemeth, "The Effect of Competition," 338.

<sup>295</sup> Abrahms and Potter, "Explaining Terrorism," 317.

Returning to the core question of how Al-Shabaab's power challenges assumptions about the organizational capacities of terrorist organizations within the context of state failure, it becomes evident that specific sociocultural conditions played a substantial role in the development of the necessary political realities that are conducive for the emergence of a group with the ability to challenge the state's internationally recognized government so vehemently. The slow progression of Islamism from a tool of colonial resistance, to one with the ability to eliminate the divisive in-fighting of Somalia's warlords and their clan-based militias created the conditions necessary for the consolidation of like-minded individuals first behind the banner of the ICU, and later under that of Al-Shabaab. The retreat of formal institutions gave their informal counterparts the opportunity to be established as a necessary part of daily life in Somalia, and it was these ordering mechanisms that became tools for manipulation and exploitation by Al-Shabaab.

Regardless of their ability to infiltrate such social realities, the members of Al-Shabaab's core leadership were also aware of the inherently divisive qualities they possessed. Of principal importance is Somalia's clan-structure, which maintains the potential to fracture society at the most local levels. The advent of internal contingency mechanisms such as the *Amnyiat*, which worked with those clan affiliations closest to Al-Shabaab's core, served as a way to circumvent potential divisions in the overarching organizational structure. Therefore, the ability of the leadership to mitigate potentially fatal divisions and to rapidly quell internal dissent displays the requisite comprehension of internal power structures and sociocultural realities needed to sustain a terrorist organization within the context of state failure.

The intention of this analysis was to address how the case of Al-Shabaab has challenged the general academic perception of the potential for successful expansion of terrorist organizations in areas of complete state and institutional failure. It is important to reiterate that the relationship between state fragility and the proliferation of terrorist organizations is complex and rooted within the spatial and temporal contexts of specific cases.<sup>296</sup> Given this reality, an infinite number of possible results exist. The case of Somalia provides a unique and informative snapshot of one such outcome that deviates from certain assumptions that the development of such organizations rely on 'weak but functioning' states to effectively establish themselves as a credible threat.<sup>297</sup>

Within the Somali context, there was a notable shift in attitudes towards, and the capabilities of, such non-state actors between Al-Qaeda's early failure and Al-Shabaab's subsequent success at establishing a foothold within the country. The dramatic shifts in the social and political reality of Somalia during this interim period allow for the identification of the specific circumstances necessary for these conditions to emerge. These conditions included the escalation of external military intervention and sustained poor governance, as well as the consolidation of Somalia's Islamist groups and the elimination of any viable competition. These precipitating factors allowed for a more cohesive and unified vision to emerge.

As the literature suggests, when states become increasingly fragile their claims to international legal sovereignty, while upheld by the international community, become more susceptible to violation. This reality provided the

---

<sup>296</sup> Patrick, *Weak Links*, 38.

<sup>297</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

opportunity for a heightened presence of external militaries in Somalia, which in turn created a rallying point for Somalia's Islamists. In the wake of the ICU's decisive defeat, Al-Shabaab's rise to prominence was fuelled by their ability to present themselves as a homegrown organization with ambitions that appeared to be equally as nationalist as they were Islamist. An extreme interpretation of Shari'a jurisprudence was generally perceived as preferable to anarchic internal conditions. Islamism also proved to provide Al-Shabaab with a degree of internal legitimacy, as the general population had grown weary and distrustful of the clan-based militias that had overrun Somalia.

The general malleability of legitimacy in addition to the devolution of sovereignty to increasingly localized levels increased the prominence of informal regulatory institutions that played off of pre-existing local networks and relationships. Al-Shabaab's ability to manipulate such institutions to create conditions in much of Somalia that were conducive to their development have provided a new dimension of understanding to how similar groups may find alternative and informal routes to legitimization under conditions of state failure.



### **Bibliography**

- “Agreement Between The Transitional Federal Government of Somalia (TFG) and The Alliance For The Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS).” *United Nations Political Office for Somalia*. 9 June 2008. Accessed 22 June 2015.<http://unpos.unmissions.org/Portals/UNPOS/Repository%20UNPOS/080818%20-%20Djibouti%20Agreement.pdf>.
- Abdile, Mahdi. “The Somali Diaspora in Conflict and Peace-building: The Peace Initiative Program.” In *Diasporas, Development and Peacemaking in the Horn of Africa*, edited by Liisa Laakso and Petri Hautaniemi, 77-97. London: Zed Books, 2014.
- Abrahms, Max and Philip B.K. Potter. “Explaining Terrorism: Leadership Deficits and Militant Group Tactics.” *International Organization* 69, no. 2 (2015): 311-342.
- African Union. “Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa.” *Peace and Security Council 455<sup>th</sup> Meeting at the Level of Heads of State and Government*. 2 September 2014. Accessed 12 February 2015.[http://au.int/en/content/peace-and-security-council-455th-meeting-level-heads-state-and-government-nairobi-kenya#anchor\\_files](http://au.int/en/content/peace-and-security-council-455th-meeting-level-heads-state-and-government-nairobi-kenya#anchor_files).
- Akpinarli, Neyire. *Developments in International Law, Volume 63: Fragility of the 'Failed State' Paradigm: A Different International Law Perception of the Absence of Effective Government*. Leiden, NLD: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2010.
- Anderson, David M. “Clan Identity and Islamic Identity in Somalia.” In *CEADS Papers Volume 2: Somalia*. Kingston: Centre for Security, Armed Forces and Society; Royal Military College of Canada, 2012.
- Anzalone, Christopher. “The Life and Death of Al-Shabab Leader Ahmed Godane.” *CTC Sentinel* 7, no. 9 (2014): 19-23.
- Apuuli, Kasaija Phillip. “Somalia After the United Nations-Led Djibouti Peace Process.” *African Security Review* 20, no. 3 (2011): 45-53.
- Bah, Abu Bakarr. “State Decay: A Conceptual Frame of Failing and Failed States in West Africa.” *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 25, no. 1 (2012): 71-89.
- Barkley, Blake Edward. “The Last Vestiges of Statehood: Failed States and the Groups that Work Within Them.” *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 16, no. 2 (2015): 25-52.
- Bates, Robert H. *When Things Fall Apart: State Failure in Late-Century Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

- Baylouny, Anne Marie. "Authority Outside the State: Non-State Actors and New Institutions in the Middle East." In *Ungoverned Spaces: Alternatives to State Authority in an Era of Softened Sovereignty*, edited by Anne L. Clunan and Harold A. Trinkunas, 136-152. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010.
- BBC World News. "In Prison With Al-Shabaab: What Drives Somali Militants." *BBC World News*. 5 October 2013. Accessed 7 July 2015. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-24379013>.
- BBC World News. "Kenyans Close Border with Somalia." *BBC World News*. 3 January 2007. Accessed 12 July 2015. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6227083.stm>.
- BBC World News. "Nairobi Siege: How the Attack Happened." *BBC World News*. 18 October 2013. Accessed 13 April 2014. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-24189116>.
- BBC World News. "Somali Militants 'Behind' Kampala World Cup Blasts." 12 July 2010. Accessed 13 April 2014. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10602791>.
- BBC World News. "Somalia's Al-Shabaab: Striking Like Mosquitos." 25 February 2014. Accessed 10 June 2015. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-26343248>.
- Beetham, David. "Max Weber and the Legitimacy of the Modern State," *Analyse & Kritik* 13 (1991): 34-45.
- Bloom, Mia. *Dying To Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.
- Boyle, Michael J. "Recrossing the Mogadishu Line: US Policy Toward Somalia 1994-2012." In *Globalizing Somalia: Multilateral, International, and Transnational Repercussions of Conflict*, edited by Emma Leonard and Gilbert Ramsay, 141-168. New York: Bloomsbury, 2013.
- Brons, Maria H. *Society, Security, Sovereignty and the State in Somalia: From Statelessness to Statelessness?* Utrecht: International Books, 2001.
- Bruton, Bronwyn and J. Peter Pham. "The Splintering of Al Shabaab." *Foreign Affairs* February 2, 2012. Accessed June 30, 2015. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/africa/2012-02-02/splintering-al-shabaab>.
- Clapham, Christopher. *Africa and the International System*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

- Cooper, Helene, Eric Schmitt, and Jeffrey Gettleman. "Strikes Killed Militant Chief in Somalia, U.S. Reports." *The New York Times*. 5 September 2014. Accessed 30 June 2015. <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/06/world/africa/somalia-shabab.html>.
- Cumming, Chris. "Remittances Cut, Somali & U.S. Politicians Demand Action." *American Banker* 180 no.F307 (2015),1.
- Dagne, Theodros and Amanda Smith. "Somalia: Prospects for Peace and U.S. Involvement." In *Somalia: Issues, History and Bibliography*, edited by Nina J. Fitzgerald. New York: Nova Science Publishers Inc., 2002. 1-14.
- Debiel, Tobias, Stephan Klingebiel, Andreas Mehler, and Ulrich Schneckner. *Policy Paper 23: Between Ignorance and Intervention: Strategies and Dilemmas of External Actors in Fragile States*. Bonn: Development and Peace Foundation, 2005.
- Elliesie, Hatem. "Statehood and Constitution-Building in Somalia: Islamic Responses to a Failed State." In *Constitutionalism in Islamic Countries: Between Upheaval and Continuity*, edited by Rainer Grote and Tilmann J. Röder, 553-582. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Elmi, Afyare Abdi. *Understanding the Somalia Conflagration: Identity, Political Islam, And Peacebuilding*. Oxford: Pluto Press, 2010.
- Englebert, Pierre and Denis M. Tull. "Postconflict Reconstruction in Africa: Flawed Ideas about Failed States." *International Security* 32, no. 4 (2008): 106-139.
- Eriksen, Stein Sundstøl. "'State Failure' in Theory and Practice: The Ideal of the State and the Contradictions of State Formation." *Review of International Studies* 37, no. 1 (2011): 229-247.
- Farrall, Leah. "How al Qaeda Works." *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 2(2011). Accessed 7 July 2015. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/south-asia/2011-02-20/how-al-qaeda-works>.
- George, Alexander L. and Andrew Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: MIT University Press, 2005.
- Greenfield, Richard. "Somalia: Siad's Sad Legacy," *Africa Report* 36, no. 2 (1991): 13-18.
- Gros, Jean-Germain. "Towards a Taxonomy of Failed States in the New World Order: Decaying Somalia, Liberia, Rwanda and Haiti." *Third World Quarterly* 17, no. 3 (1996): 455-471.

- Guled, Abdi. "Truck Bomb Kills Dozens in Capital of Somalia." *Yahoo News*. 4 October 2011. Accessed 14 July 2015. <http://news.yahoo.com/truck-bomb-kills-dozens-capital-somalia-201055212.html>.
- Hagmann, Tobias and Markus V. Hoehne. "Failures of the State Failure Debate: Evidence From the Somali Territories." *Journal of International Development* 21, no. 1 (2009): 42-57.
- Hansen, Stig Jarle. *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group, 2005-2012*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2013.
- Helman, Gerald B and Stephen R Ratner. "Saving Failed States." *Foreign Policy* 89 (1992): 3-20.
- Henne, Peter S. "Is all jihad local? Transnational contention and political violence in Somalia." In *Globalizing Somalia: Multilateral, International, and Transnational Repercussions of Conflict*, edited by Emma Leonard and Gilbert Ramsay, 73-92. New York: Bloomsbury, 2013.
- Herbst, Jeffrey. *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- Heritage Institute for Policy Studies. "Federal Somalia: Not If but How." *Policy Brief* 2 (2015). Accessed 10 July 2015. <http://www.heritageinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/HIPS-Briefing-Federal-Somalia-ENG-3.pdf>.
- Hirsch, John L. and Robert B. Oakley. *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping*. Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995.
- Howard, Tiffany. *Failed States and the Origins of Violence: A Comparative Analysis of State Failure as a Root Cause of Terrorism and Political Violence*. Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2014.
- Human Rights Watch. *Harsh War, Harsh Peace: Abuses by al-Shabaab, the Transitional Federal Government and AMISOM in Somalia*. New York: Human Rights Watch, 2010.
- International Crisis Group. *Somalia: Al-Shabaab – It Will Be a Long War: Policy Briefing: Africa Briefing No. 99*. Nairobi/Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2014.
- International Crisis Group. *Somalia: To Move Beyond the Failed State: Africa Report No. 147*. Nairobi/Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2008.

- Jackson, Ashley and Abdi Aynte. "Al-Shabaab Engagement With Aid Agencies," *Humanitarian Policy Group: Policy Brief 53*. London: The Heritage Institute for Policy Studies, 2013.
- Jackson, Robert. *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Kenya National Commission on Human Rights. *A Country Under Siege: The State of Security in Kenya An Occasional Report (2010-2014)*. 2014. Accessed 12 July 2015.  
<http://www.knchr.org/Portals/0/CivilAndPoliticalReports/The%20State%20of%20Security%20in%20Kenya.pdf>, 23-24.
- King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- Krasner, Stephen, ed. *Problematic Sovereignty: Contested Rules and Political Possibilities*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001.
- Krasner, Stephen. "New Institutions for Collapsed and Failing States." *International Security* 29, no. 2 (2004): 85-120.
- Krasner, Stephen. *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- Kreijen, Gerard. *State Failure, Sovereignty and Effectiveness: Legal Lessons from the Decolonization of Sub-Saharan Africa*. Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2004.
- Kushkush, Isma'il. "Kenya Envisions a Border Wall That Keeps Shabab Violence Out." *The New York Times*. 21 April 2015. Accessed 12 July 2015.  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/22/world/africa/kenya-plans-to-build-a-border-wall-that-keeps-shabab-violence-out.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/22/world/africa/kenya-plans-to-build-a-border-wall-that-keeps-shabab-violence-out.html?_r=0).
- Laing, Aislinn. "Kenya Erects a Wall Along Border With Somalia to Keep Out Al-Shabaab." *The Telegraph*. 22 April 2015. Accessed 17 July 2015.  
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/kenya/11556269/Kenya-erects-a-wall-along-border-with-Somalia-to-keep-out-al-Shabaab.html>.
- Leeson, Peter T. "Better Off Stateless: Somalia Before and After Government Collapse." *Journal of Comparative Economics* 35, no. 4 (2007): 689-710.
- Lefebvre, Jeffrey A. *Arms For The Horn: U.S. Security Policy in Ethiopia and Somalia 1953-1991*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991.

- Lewis, Alexandra. *Security, Clans and Tribes: Unstable Governance in Somaliland, Yemen and the Gulf of Aden*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015.
- Lewis, Ioan M. *A Modern History of the Somali: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa* 4th ed. Oxford: James Currey, 2002.
- Lewis, Ioan M. *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics Among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa*. Woodbridge: James Currey Publishers, 1999 [1961].
- Lewis, Ioan M. *Saints and Somalis: Popular Islam in a Clan-Based Society*. Lawrenceville: The Red Sea Press, 1998.
- Lewis, Ioan M. *Understanding Somalia and Somaliland: Culture, History, Society*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.
- Little, Peter D. *Somalia: Economy Without State*. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2003.
- Luling, Virginia. "Come Back Somalia? Questioning a Collapsed State." *Third World Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (1997): 287-302.
- Lyons, Terrence and Ahmed I. Samatar. *Somalia: State Collapse, Multilateral Intervention, and Strategies for Political Reconstruction*. Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institute, 1995.
- MacKay, Joseph. "State Failure, Actor-Network Theory, and the Theorisation of Sovereignty" *Brussels Journal of International Studies* 3 (2006): 61-98.
- Makinda, Samuel M. "Clan Conflict and Factionalism in Somalia." In *Warlords in International Relations*, edited by Paul B. Rich, 120-139. London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1999.
- Malet, David, Bryan Priest, and Sarah Staggs. "Involving Foreign Fighters in Somalia." In *Globalizing Somalia: Multilateral, International, and Transnational Repercussions of Conflict*, edited by Emma Leonard and Gilbert Ramsay, 93-115. New York: Bloomsbury, 2013.
- Marchal, Roland. "A Tentative Assessment of the Somali Harakat Al-Shabaab." *Journal of East African Studies* 3, no. 3 (2009): 381-404.
- Marchal, Roland. "Joining Al-Shabaab in Somalia." In *Contextualizing Jihadi Thought*, edited by Jeevan Deol and Zaheer Kazmi, 259-274. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011.

- McCloughlin, Claire. *State Legitimacy: Developmental Leadership Program Concept Brief 2*. Birmingham, UK: The Developmental Leadership Program, 2014.
- Menkhaus, Ken and Jacob N. Shapiro. "Non-State Actors and Failed States: Lessons from Al-Qa'ida's Experiences in the Horn of Africa." In *Ungoverned Spaces: Alternatives to State Authority in an Era of Softened Sovereignty*, edited by Anne L. Clunan and Harold A. Trinkunas, 77-94. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010.
- Menkhaus, Ken. "Somalia: Next Up in the War on Terrorism?" *CSIS Africa Notes* 6, no. 1 (2002): 1-9.
- Menkhaus, Ken. "The Question of Ethnicity in Somali Studies: The Case of Somali Bantu Identity." In *Peace and Milk, Drought and War: Somali Culture, Society and Politics Essays in Honour of I.M. Lewis*, edited by Markus V. Hoehne and Virginia Luling, 87-104. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010.
- Mohamed, Hamza. "Somalia's al-Shabaab Vows to Make Comeback." *Al-Jazeera*. 24 February 2014. Accessed 23 March 2014.  
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/02/somalia-al-shabab-group-vows-comeback-20142248557425260.html>.
- "Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States." 26 December 1933, *Department of International Law: Organization of American States*. Accessed 13 November 2014.  
<http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/treaties/a-40.html>.
- Mwangi, Oscar Gakuo. "State Collapse, Al-Shabaab, Islamism, and Legitimacy in Somalia." *Politics, Religion & Ideology* 13, no. 3 (2012): 513-527.
- National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2013). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. Retrieved from <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>.
- Nemeth, Stephen. "The Effect of Competition on Terrorist Group Operations." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58, no. 2 (2013): 336-362.
- Osman-Shuke, Abdurahman A. "Traditional Leaders in Political Decision Making and Conflict Resolution." In *War Destroys: Peace Nurtures: Somali Reconciliation and Development*, edited by Richard Ford, Hussein M. Adam, and Edna Adan Ismail, 147-168. Asmara/Lawrenceville: Red Sea Press, 2004.
- Ousman, Abdelkérîm. "The Potential of Islamist Terrorism in Sub-Saharan Africa," *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 18, no. 1 (2004): 65-105.

- Pailthorp, Melissa C. "Development Before Disaster: USAID in Somalia 1978-1990: A Retrospective of Lessons Learned in Pre-Civil War Somalia." *Report for USAID/Somalia*, 1994. Accessed 17 July 2015.  
[http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/pnabx503.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnabx503.pdf).
- Patman, Robert G. *Strategic Shortfall: The Somalia Syndrome and the March to 9/11*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2010.
- Patrick, Stewart. *Weak Links: Fragile States, Global Threats, and International Security*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Phillips, James. "Backgrounder 1526: Somalia and Al-Qaeda: Implications for the War on Terrorism." *The Heritage Foundation*. 5 April 2002. Accessed 12 February 2015.  
<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2002/04/somalia-and-al-qaeda-implications-for-the-war-on-terrorism>.
- Phillips, Sarah. "Political Settlements and Peace in Post-Colonial Contexts: The Case of Somaliland." Paper Presented at the 56<sup>th</sup> Annual International Studies Association, New Orleans, LA, February 2015.
- Piazza, James A. "Incubators of Terror: Do Failed and Failing States Promote Transnational Terrorism?" *International Studies Quarterly* 52, no. 3 (2008): 469-488.
- Renders, Marleen. *African Social Studies Series, Volume 26: Consider Somaliland: State-Building with Traditional Leaders and Institutions*. Leiden: BRILL, 2012.
- "Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2060 (2012): Somalia." United Nations Security Council S/2013/413. 12 July 2013. Accessed 10 June 2015.  
[http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/413](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/413).
- Rotberg Robert, ed. "The Failure and Collapse of Nation-States: Breakdown, Prevention and Repair." In *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*, 1-50. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.
- Sageman, Marc. *Understanding Terror Networks*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.
- Saideman, Stephen M. "Inconsistent Irredentism? Political Competition, Ethnic Ties, and the Foreign Policies of Somalia and Serbia." *Security Studies* 7, no. 3 (1998): 51-93.
- Samatar Ahmed I., ed. *The Somali Challenge: From Catastrophe to Renewal*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1994.



Samatar, Ahmed I. *Socialist Somalia: Rhetoric & Reality*. London: Zed Books Ltd., 1988.

Schryer-Roy, Anne-Marie, Elizabeth White, Rufus Karanja, Jamie Dillon, Ed Pomfret, and John Kisimir. "Somalia: Somali Lifeline Under Threat: Aid Agencies Express Concern at Closure of Money Remittance Providers in Kenya." *ReliefWeb Report*. 10 April 2015. Accessed 12 June 2015.  
<http://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somali-lifeline-under-threat-aid-agencies-express-concern-closure-money-remittance>.

Shay, Shaul. *Somalia: Between Jihad and Restoration*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2008.

Shinn, David. "Al-Shabaab's Foreign Threat to Somalia." *Orbis* 55, no. 2 (2011): 203-215.

Shultz, Richard H. Jr. and Andrea J. Dew. *Insurgents, Terrorists, and Militias*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.

Steward, Frank H. "Archaic Forms of Contract in Max Weber's Theories and in Arab and Somali Customary Law." In *Law, Custom, and Statute in the Muslim World: Studies in Honor of Aharon Layish*, edited by Ron Shaham, 131-148. Boston: Brill, 2007.

Thomas, Matthew J. "Exposing and Exploiting Weaknesses in the Merger of Al-Qaeda and Al-Shabaab." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 24, no.3 (2013): 413-435.

Vidino, Lorenzo, Raffaello Pantucci, and Evan Kohlmann. "Bringing Global Jihad to the Horn of Africa: al Shabaab, Western Fighters, and the Sacralization of the Somali Conflict." *African Security* 3, no. 4 (2010): 216-238.

VOA News. "90 Killed as Al-Shabaab Takes Somali Island." *Voice of America*. 10 November 2014. Accessed 2 June 2015.  
<http://www.voanews.com/content/al-shabab-takes-somali-island/2514466.html>.

Von Hippel, Karin. "The Roots of Terrorism: Probing the Myths." *The Political Quarterly* 73, no. 25 (2002): 25-39.

Walls, Michael and Steve Kibble. "Identity, Stability, and the Somali State: Indigenous Forms and External Interventions." In *Globalizing Somalia: Multilateral, International, and Transnational Repercussions of Conflict*, edited by Emma Leonard and Gilbert Ramsay, 253-277. New York: Bloomsbury, 2013.

Zartman, I. William, ed. "Introduction: Posing the Problem of State Collapse." In *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*, 1-14. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995.