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Dadaab's Hidden Ties

How Colonial Legacies and Informal Economies Contribute to Protracted Refugee Situations

Katherine Landberg
University of San Francisco
San Francisco, CA
November, 21 2017

Master of Arts
in
International Studies

Dadaab's Hidden Ties

How Colonial Legacies and Informal Economies Contribute to Protracted Refugee Situations

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

in

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

by Katherine Landberg

November 21, 2017

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Under the guidance and approval of the committee, and approval by all the members, this thesis project has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.

APPROVED:

Adviser _____ Date _____

Academic Director _____ Date _____

Abstract

Protracted Refugee Situations (PRS) persist despite the founding intentions of the international refugee regime. Explanations behind PRS typically focus on international law, human rights, and security concerns, while the conventional media narrative presents an oversimplification that erases complex contextual nuances. Using the case of the Dadaab refugee camp, I explore (1) historical colonial legacies of social control and domination in Kenya, and (2) Dadaab as an informal economic power center, as two ‘hidden ties’ that contribute to Dadaab’s persistence. By identifying and exploring hidden ties that contribute to PRS, policy-makers and power brokers gain a deeper understanding of the realities of the hidden systems of relevant interests and power relations present in PRS contexts. This nuanced and complete understanding is essential for any negotiations of practical, feasible resolutions to PRS.

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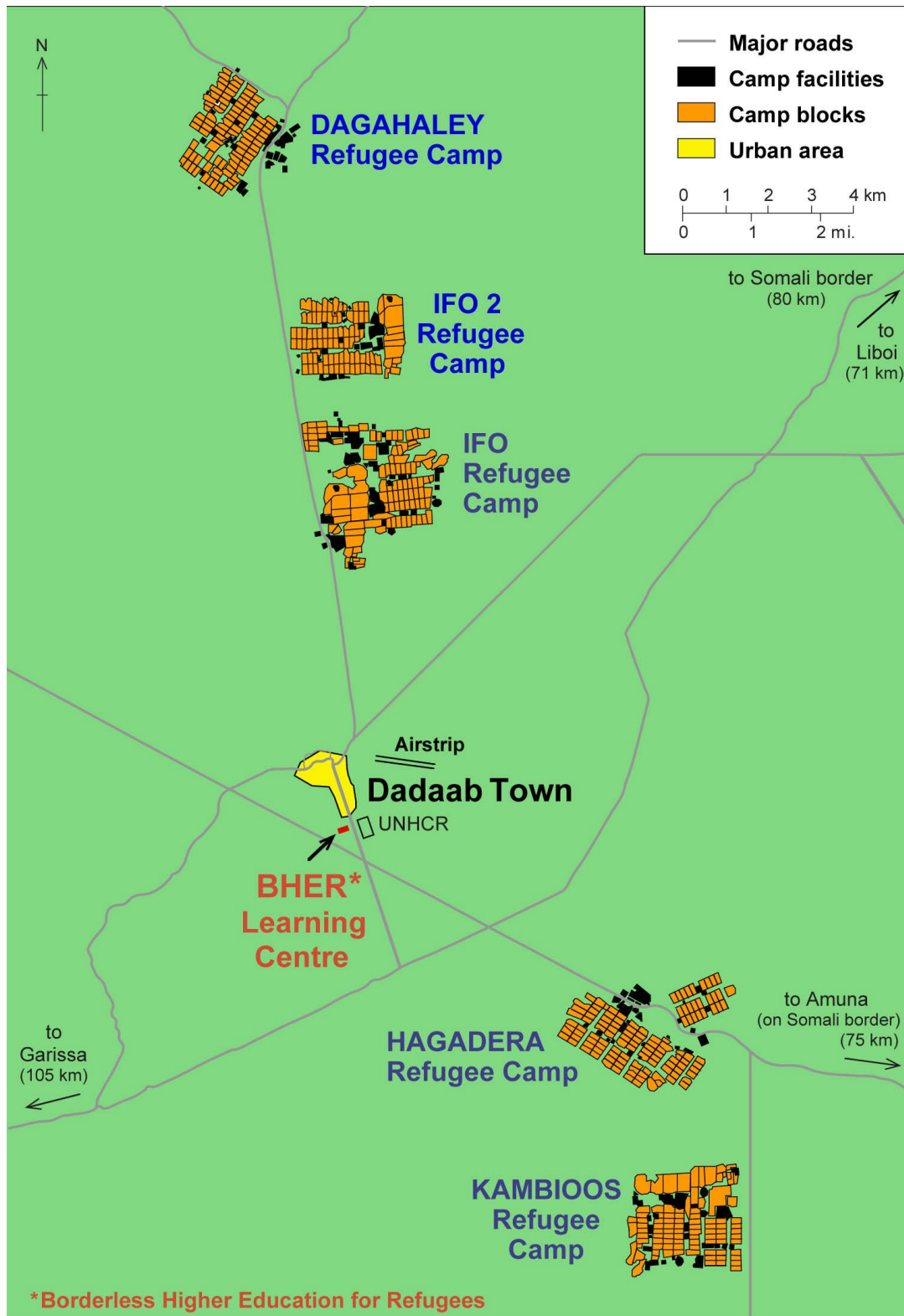
Acknowledgements

Thank you to my advisor for providing valuable direction for this thesis, to my family for their unending support, to my chosen family of friends for putting up with my busy schedule over the last year and a half and encouraging me all the way, and to my classmates and professors for helping expand my worldviews. This journey would not have been possible without all of you supporting me along the way.

Figure 1. Regional map indicating Dadaab's location (Google Maps)



Figure 2. Map of Dadaab area (*Borderless Higher Education for Refugees*, 2012)



I. Introduction

Over the last 30 years there has been an increase in the longevity and regularity of Protracted Refugee Situations (PRS),^{1 2} and more and more people find themselves trapped in long-term encampment systems (Milner and Loescher, 2011). Originally conceptualized to address the displacement stemming from World War II, the international refugee system is no longer able to address the current scope and scale of unending refugee crises. Encampment has been a strategy increasingly relied upon as a stopgap measure as the system struggles to cope, and as a result millions of people have found themselves relegated to indeterminate futures in “emergency” camps, unable to go home but also unable to determine their own future. It is a paradox that these camps continue to grow and persist despite the insistence of the international refugee system that they are only temporary, emergency measures. As an issue that affects the lives of millions of people, this paradox warrants further academic exploration, leading to the question: why do long-term refugee camps persist, despite being temporary, emergency measures?

The case of the Dadaab³ refugee camp in Kenya serves as an ideal example of a

¹ Per the UNHCR, the legal definition of a refugee is “a person who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.”

² PRS are defined by the UNHCR as situations where refugee populations of 25,000 or more have been in exile “for 5 years or more after their initial displacement, without immediate prospects for implementation of durable solutions.”

³ Dadaab is located in Eastern Kenya near the Somali border, and was established in 1991 following the collapse of the Siad Barre government in Somalia. Though termed a “camp,” in reality it is more accurately described as a camp complex, made up of four (formerly five) separate camps in the same area, referred to collectively as “Dadaab.” Dadaab is administered by the UNHCR and assorted local and international aid NGOs, and at the height of drought, famine, and violence in Somalia in 2011, Dadaab hosted almost half a million refugees. Currently, it hosts around 240,000 Somali refugees, which is significantly less than in 2011, but still clearly a substantive size. It is rife with failures to adequately protect and care for refugees, with well documented occurrences of violence, poverty, and inadequate food, water, sanitation, and

PRS that has persisted well beyond what could conceivably be termed ‘short-term’ and continues to exist despite the international laws and human rights ideals of the international refugee regime. From many perspectives, the continued existence of Dadaab is a conundrum that either defies explanation, or is a simplification that erases the complexities of the whole story. Dadaab is a seemingly undesirable solution for most actors involved: the refugees face daily struggles to survive, the UNHCR is extremely overburdened, Kenya does not want to host the camp, and the long-term existence of the camp is an undesirable outcome on the international community’s refugee regime record. Why does Dadaab continue to persist despite these factors?

Given the immense disparity between the current state of PRS worldwide and the founding intentions of the international refugee regime in the post-war era, it is clear that a new approach to studying and proposing resolutions for PRS is needed. Current scholarly literature on PRS generally focuses on international law, human rights, and security perspectives, and neglects the relevance of colonial histories and informal economic activities to the persistence of PRS. There is also a conventional wisdom displayed in media narratives regarding PRS, often involving failed states, a lack of donor funding, and a lack of political will. But the story is more complex than that, and this conventional wisdom only offers a limited understanding of the real dynamics at play that contribute to PRS.

In this paper, I investigate what I call ‘hidden ties’ that contribute to Dadaab’s persistence, factors that are unaddressed in the scholarly literature or the conventional wisdom. By exploring these hidden ties, vital contextual information is revealed that can

healthcare (for more on conditions in Dadaab, see “From Horror to Hopelessness: Kenya's Forgotten Somali Refugee Crisis.” Human Rights Watch, 2009).

be used by policy makers when taking steps to ameliorate the liminal existence of people stuck in PRS. Through a framing of host state practices of violence as a “hidden transcript” using James Scott’s (1990) seminal concepts regarding power relations of the dominant and the subordinate, I identify that the current Kenyan practices of state violence and social control of Somali refugees stem from Kenya’s colonial history. This colonial legacy of social control is the first hidden tie I explore in order to reveal a more comprehensive understanding of Dadaab’s persistence. Second, I use Hart (1973 and 2000) and Roitman’s (1990 and 2007) work on informal economies and the commercial-military nexus (termed by Roitman as the “garrison-entrepôt”) to explore the true economic significance of Dadaab for a range of actors, from the refugees themselves to high ranking Kenyan government officials. This economic significance reveals the second hidden tie contributing to Dadaab’s persistence – its importance as an informal economic power center. The significance of this “hidden ties” approach is in its revelation of nuances that may influence the actions of power holders and decision makers regarding Dadaab. These hidden ties are not widely studied but yet still contribute to the persistence of PRS. Studying these hidden ties reveals critical context that can help form more comprehensive understandings of the interests and motivations of power brokers, which is crucial information for policy makers to have when considering potential solutions for PRS.

Research for this paper began with a broad reading of scholarly research on the international refugee regime, PRS, refugee encampment, Dadaab, and Kenyan-Somali relations to identify different actors and their multifaceted interests in relation to Dadaab. I also relied on NGO reports produced by Western aid agencies and a Kenyan NGO

called Journalists for Justice, as well as both Western and Kenyan media reports. As I read, I kept running lists of actors and interests, and two questions began to stand out – what is the real reason behind Kenya’s treatment of Somali refugees, and what is the real economic impact of Dadaab, since it is such a large population center? These questions were not answered comprehensively in the literature or the conventional wisdom, and became the basis for the development of my ‘hidden ties’ framework.

By tracing the lineage of colonial practices of social control through state violence and collective punishment (Whittaker, 2015), a connecting line can be drawn to current day practices of discrimination against Somalis by the Kenyan state and policies of forced encampment for Somali refugees. Colonial practices and policies towards Somalis in British Kenya included restrictions on the freedom of movement, arbitrary search, seizure, and detentions, and pass-book requirements. Elsewhere in British Kenya, the British carried out a forced villagization campaign in response to the insurgent Mau Mau Rebellion. These practices were engrained in the governmental structure, and carried on post-independence (Whittaker, 2015). The way the Kenyan state treats Somali refugees today did not spring out of a vacuum, but is instead a replication and expansion of previous colonial precedent, and is an important part of the story behind why Dadaab persists.

Dadaab is largely an informal economy, and as a result its economic impacts are understudied. The limited information available reveals that Dadaab has great importance as a regional population and market center, bringing immense benefits to the host community surrounding the camps, and is an important hub in a multi-hundred-million-dollar sugar smuggling trade that lines the pockets of government officials and private

campaign donors. My assessment of existing data is a sufficient starting point, but further measuring of economic indicators and investigative reporting into the illegal sugar trade is needed to continue revealing the complex web of actors and their economic interests surrounding Dadaab.

Revealing colonial legacies of social control that are present in host-state treatment of refugees in PRS is a strategy that can be replicated in other PRS contexts. Since the majority of the world's refugees are hosted in the Global South, the context of a PRS located in a former colonial territory is not unique. Exposing these colonial legacies will reveal a more transparent regional and global history and even potentially motivate increased donor state responsibility towards resolving PRS. Second, since economic activities in refugee camps are largely classified as informal, their economic impacts are understudied. By studying previously un-measured impacts of informal economic power centers present in PRS contexts, more nuanced regional power relations are revealed than those found in the typical study of refugee camps through an emergency, humanitarian aid lens. This more transparent view of economic interests will contribute to a more accurate understanding of actors and their interests by policy makers striving to create solutions for PRS.

This paper begins with definitions of several key terms employed throughout the text. Next, the literature review summarizes the existing literature both on Dadaab itself and on relevant concepts in the refugee/forced migration fields. This includes a discussion of the founding intent of the international refugee regime, state sovereignty as it relates to refugee issues, PRS, and encampment as a containment strategy, as well as scholarly perspectives commonly used to analyze Dadaab, including international law,

human rights, and security. Next, I define the conventional wisdom generally used to explain Dadaab's persistence in common media narratives, which includes discussing the failure of the Somali state, the lack of political will in both Kenya and the international community, as well as a lack of donor funding or interest from wealthy states. These common scholarly perspectives and the conventional wisdom demonstrate gaps in the explanation of why Dadaab persists despite the international refugee regime's founding intent, leading to lines of inquiry for exploring the hidden ties of actors and interests that contribute to Dadaab's persistence.

Following the literature review, I will construct a conceptual framework for the two hidden ties I investigate, using the works of Scott, Hart, and Roitman to explore concepts of social control and informal economies. The next two sections of the paper explore in detail the hidden ties that contribute to Dadaab, contextualizing the colonial legacies of social control in Kenya, and the significance of Dadaab as an informal economic power center. I will then conclude with a discussion of the significance of these hidden ties in the larger context of PRS.

II. Key Terms

Before beginning the literature review, I first wish to define some key terms that I will be employing throughout this text. By "international refugee regime," to borrow Charles Keely's definition, I am referring to a

"collection of conventions, treaties, intergovernmental and non-governmental agencies, precedent, and funding which governments have adopted and support to protect and assist those displaced from their country by persecution, or displaced by war in some regions of the world where agreements or practice have extended protection to persons displaced by the general devastation of war" (Keely, 2001, 303).

“Dadaab” refers to the complex of four (formerly five)⁴ refugee camps surrounding its namesake, the town of Dadaab in Kenya, individually known as Dagahaley, Hagadera, Ifo, and Ifo 2. Per the UNHCR, the official population of Dadaab as of August 31, 2017 was 240,595 refugees and asylum seekers, and 96.21% of the population was from Somalia. Dagahaley, Ifo, and Hagadera are the old camps, established from 1991-1992 during the first wave of refugees fleeing Somalia’s civil war, and Ifo 2 is the new camp established in 2011 in response to the significant wave of approximately 130,000 new arrivals fleeing drought and famine in Somalia.

A phrase I will be frequently employing is the “persistence of Dadaab,” by which I am referring to the ongoing, protracted, embedded, de facto permanent existence of the Dadaab camps in Kenya, despite the official designation of Dadaab as an emergency, temporary humanitarian response to the conditions in Somalia causing an overflow of refugees into Kenya. I will also be referring to the generally accepted and widely discussed ‘conventional wisdom’ to explain Dadaab’s persistence. The conventional wisdom behind Dadaab refers to common media narratives used to explain Dadaab’s persistence. The final and most important term I will be utilizing are the ‘hidden ties’ behind the persistence of Dadaab, by which I am referring to underlying factors and connections between actors and interests that are not widely studied or discussed, and are not included in either the conventional wisdom of Dadaab or the variety of scholarly perspectives commonly used to analyze Dadaab. By studying hidden ties, we can discover deeper nuances and contexts that inform the actions of PRS power brokers.

⁴ Kambioos camp, the smallest of the Dadaab camps, was closed in early 2017 following the transfer of its remaining 1,308 residents to Hagadera (see UNHCR’s “Dadaab Bi-Weekly Update”, March 15, 2017 and UNICEF’s “Kenyan Humanitarian Situation Report”, April 2017).

III. Literature Review

In this literature review, I first summarize the founding intent of the international refugee regime and the subsequent Cold War and post-Cold War contexts that shifted attitudes regarding refugee protection. I then discuss the trend of increasing regularity and longevity of PRS, and refugee encampment as a stopgap measure response to the unachievable requirements of the international refugee regime in the current PRS context. With this background context in mind, I identify key scholarly perspectives from which Dadaab is commonly analyzed and briefly discuss them in relation to Dadaab's specific context. I also further explore the conventional wisdom to explain why Dadaab persists. These scholarly perspectives and the conventional wisdom are critical in identifying gaps that need further academic exploration to identify hidden ties that contribute to Dadaab's persistence.

Shifts in the International Refugee Regime

The international refugee system constructed after World War II has ceased to function in the way it was intended to. The legal concept of a refugee and states' responsibilities to care for and accept refugees was originally conceptualized to remedy the displacement of Europeans specifically stemming from World War II. This definition was slowly but surely expanded by removing the original temporal and geographic requirements, but the basis of the definition remained as originally conceived – one's refugee status was based on civil and political persecution (Hyndman, 1999). Hyndman argues that this was a Euro-centric definition that reflected post-war tensions in Europe concerning communism and fascism. This conceptualization of refugees neglected the realities of displacement outside of Europe that stemmed from colonial independence

struggles and civil wars, and favored civil and political rights over social, economic, and cultural rights (Hyndman, 1999). This neglect of colonial realities is an area of exploration for the study of displacement and PRS in former colonial territories, such as Dadaab in Kenya. If the system was not built to address displacement in non-European settings and conflict stemming from colonialism, then studying the colonial legacies of conflict and displacement in former colonial territories is a logical point of entry into studying current PRS contexts.

This original framing of the legal concept of a refugee has created a system that is attempting to put a square peg in a round hole – in other words, many situations in the Global South that result in refugee crises are largely at odds with the international refugee system’s core concept of what a refugee is and what protections that should entail. The proliferation of the Cold War also muddled the reality of the international refugee system compared to its original framing and intention. As the United States and the Soviet Union became entangled in proxy wars all over the world, the geographic scope of new refugee crises became wider (Hyndman, 1999 and Milner and Loescher, 2011) and expanded well beyond the capacity of the international refugee system meant to address these crises.

In the Post-Cold War era, the majority of refugees are from the Global South, fleeing civil conflict (as opposed to fleeing ‘formal’ international wars, as was the case in the early 20th century), and there has been a corresponding shift in how the international refugee system is responding to refugee needs. The donor states in the Global North have shifted from a “right to leave” perspective to a “right to remain” perspective, preferring that those fleeing violence or persecution seek protection within their own countries instead of fleeing to safer shores. These donor states are demonstrating this preference by

funding in-country assistance rather than supporting efforts for refugees to flee to the Global North where they can seek asylum (Hyndman, 1999). This burden shifting was intensified following the terror attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11), after which refugee and migration issues have been increasingly analyzed through a national security lens at the policy level, and states have sought to “expand their borders beyond the physical demarcations of their territories...to control migration” (Saunders, 2014, 70). Such extensions of borders include practices such as offshore detention facilities, increased restrictions on travel and visas, and most relevantly to this paper, “regional protection zones” located near the conflict areas to address the needs of refugees and asylum seekers locally, far from the borders of the Global North (Saunders, 2014).

Protracted Refugee Situations (PRS)

Over the last 60 years, there has been an increase in the intensity and scale of what has been termed by the UNHCR as PRS. Major PRS occurred throughout the Cold War era in the 1970s and 1980s, more than tripling the global refugee population from 3 million people in 1977 to 10 million in 1982 (Loescher 2001 and Milner and Loescher, 2011), and the PRS population has only increased from there. At the end of 2016, 11.6 million refugees (two thirds of all refugees) were stuck in PRS, and of those, 4.1 million were in PRS lasting 20 years or longer (UNHCR Global Trends, 2016). In the early 1990s, the average time spent by refugees in PRS was nine years, but is now approaching 20 years (Milner and Loescher, 2011). More generally, as of 2016 there were at least 65.6 million people forcibly displaced globally, which includes 22.5 million refugees, 40.3 million internally displaced people (IDPs), and 2.8 million asylum seekers. This figure is a record high, and almost double the 1997 figure of 33.9 million forcibly displaced

individuals. 84% of all refugees, or about 14.5 million people, are hosted by countries in the Global South (UNHCR Global Trends, 2016).

The UNHCR contends that PRS are a result of political impasse both in the country of origin and in the country of asylum, and that PRS “endure because of ongoing problems in the country of origin, and stagnate and become protracted as a result of responses to refugee inflows, typically involving refugee movement and employment possibilities and confinement to camps” (Milner and Loescher, 2011, 3). While the Global North expands its “right to remain” policies in an attempt to keep refugees from reaching its shores (Hyndman 1999), the Global South is simultaneously pushing back and attempting to reify and uphold their national sovereignty by limiting their responsibility for refugees (Milner and Loescher, 2011).

It is important to view this exertion of sovereignty by the Global South in context. As many states rapidly achieved independence from colonial powers in the post-war era, they achieved recognition from the international community as sovereign states, but lacked parity with the power of the Global North due to economic development challenges over the ensuing decades (Jackson, 1990 and Milner and Loescher, 2011). This limited sovereignty experienced by formerly colonized states led to a sense of vulnerability (Ayoob 1995, 2-3 and Milner and Loescher 2011) that influences how these states view large and lengthy inflows of refugees. This vulnerability casts incoming refugees as a threat to sovereignty because of perceived weakened border security and a loss of independent policy making as international actors seek to dictate states’ responsibilities to refugees (Milner 2009 and Milner and Loescher 2011). The UNHCR and NGO humanitarian agencies are left to fill in the gaps left by these political impasses

and act as a de facto state attempting, often unsuccessfully, to provide rights and protection to refugees (Agiers, 2011). Essentially, the power of the Global North collides with the exertion of state sovereignty by host-states in the Global South, leaving refugees to suffer the fallout. This intersection of power dynamics between the Global North and the Global South is a space to inform how to frame investigations into colonial legacies in PRS contexts.

As one considers the increased scale and unending nature of modern PRS, it is important to look back at the context of the original European refugee crisis that led to the creation of the international refugee regime. What worked in that case that has ceased to work in the intervening time? As persons displaced by WWII lingered in European camps throughout the 1950s, a new migration of refugees from the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 brought the subject back into the international spotlight. Refugee advocates, the UNHCR, and NGOs rallied for a major appeal to powerful Western states, advocating a solution comprised of both funding and resettlement quotas that resolved the PRS by the mid-1960s (Milner and Loescher, 2011). It is clear that as Cold War proxy conflicts proliferated across the globe, the scale and scope of refugee crises quickly outgrew the capacity of the international refugee regime to provide such comprehensive solutions. While funding and resettlement certainly provide a neat solution for a single PRS of manageable size, the same solution cannot be realistically replicated over and over again for PRS totaling tens of millions of people.

Encampment

The international refugee regime has failed to provide any viable alternative solutions for ever-expanding PRS, and as a result long-term encampment has become a

regular stopgap measure to both address the needs of refugees at this intensified scale, and to promote the Global North's attempts to "externalize asylum" offshore (Hyndman 2011). Though they are 'officially' meant to be temporary, emergency measures, refugee camps have instead turned into de facto permanent solutions. They exist indefinitely, but are still framed by the international refugee regime as a crisis. This crisis framing is a logical necessity since the concept of a refugee camp is not mentioned or defined anywhere in the founding instruments of the international refugee regime (which include the 1951 Convention, 1967 Protocol, and the regional OAU 1969 Convention) (Janmyr, 2016). If refugee camps were not meant to be an official mechanism of the international refugee regime, then the reality of their existence must be reconciled as a logical necessity borne of an ongoing emergency situation.

Since refugee camps have no basis in international law, they fall into a grey area that defies clear definition. The realities of PRS and encampment mean that rights of refugees are not upheld, especially with regard to the right of freedom of movement and the right to seek paid employment (Milner and Loescher, 2011). Because of the realities of refugee camps' restrictions on the freedom of movement, they can be viewed as "generally illegal" (Verdirame, 2011). Similarly, refugee camps can be viewed as spaces of detention that merit much closer scrutiny from the international human rights community (Edwards, 2008). The humanitarian industry has been critiqued for complicity in, and even the perpetuation of, human rights abuses of refugees. Though camps under humanitarian management are often framed as the lesser of two evils (compared to no humanitarian assistance at all), Chkam questions if that exempts aid agencies from critique or consequences for failing to adequately protect the refugees in

their care (Chkam, 2016).

The presence of humanitarian agencies in these spaces may in fact serve to legitimize the arbitrary detention of refugees, while at the same time quieting public concern over the matter (Janmyr, 2016). Humanitarian agencies cannot be credited with upholding refugees' right to asylum if that asylum means indefinite containment and living conditions that constitute human rights violations on a massive scale (Chkam, 2016). Refugee camps are not purely humanitarian spaces and the different actors within the humanitarian "arena" strategically employ the concept of humanitarian space to promote their own agendas and priorities (Hilhorst and Jansen, 2010). These actors do not share a unified humanitarian vision, but rather construct the camp as a space of containment via a set of highly articulated everyday practices. The humanitarian assistance produced by these practices is inadequate and fails to meet minimum standards of human welfare. The refugees' pursuit of other means of maintaining their well-being via informal or illegal economic strategies can be interpreted as a practical, real-world critique of the failures of the refugee humanitarian aid regime (Newhouse 2015). These informal or illegal economic strategies present another point of entry into further inquiry into PRS. A refugee camp that is home to hundreds of thousands of people who are engaged in informal economic activities must have an economic impact of some kind, so the questions to ask are: how significant are these economic impacts, what effects do these informal economic strategies have on PRS, and what can they reveal about stalemates to resolve PRS?

The existence of protracted refugee camps outside of the founding parameters of the international refugee regime, and the conditions under which they exist (extremely

low living standards, de facto detention, restrictions on freedom of movement and employment), illustrate symptoms of a larger illness: the international refugee regime created in the post-war era is simply not equipped to handle today's constant, recurring, and unending PRS. The existing literature points to opportunities for additional study, including the power dynamics of the Global North and Global South, displacement and conflict in the context of former colonial settings, and the informal/illegal economic activities of refugees themselves.

Human Rights, International Law, and Security Perspectives

With this context of the international refugee regime's founding intent, the expansion of PRS throughout the Cold War, the burden-shifting strategy of the Global North following the end of the Cold War and 9/11, and protracted refugee camps as a symptom of a broken system, I now turn to several scholarly perspectives commonly used to analyze Dadaab. The following paragraphs examine Dadaab from multiple perspectives which, when analyzed together through a wide-angle view, demand further exploration of the hidden ties that contribute to Dadaab's persistence.

From a human rights and international law perspective, Dadaab has been an ongoing disaster since its creation in 1991 following the fall of the Siad Barre regime in Somalia and the subsequent disintegration of the Somali state. Somali refugees are legal rights holders under the international refugee conventions, and Kenya and the international community are obligated to provide them with a minimum threshold of protection and security. However, it is clear to human rights observers that this threshold is not being met. Human Rights Watch reports chronic shortages of food, water, healthcare, land, and provisions, in addition to recurring violations of non-*refoulement*,

rampant police corruption and bribery, and physical security threats (Human Rights Watch, 2009). While the existence of Dadaab is theoretically better for Somali refugees than nothing at all, the continued existence of the camp in its current structure and governance remains an untenable human rights situation.

Kenya is clearly failing to meet its international obligations of refugee protection and non-*refoulement*. Kenya acceded to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees in 1966, and acceded to the 1967 Protocol in 1981. Additionally, Kenya ratified the African Union (AU) Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa in 1992 (African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, 2017). As a party to these legal instruments, Kenya is obligated to accept and protect *prima facie* and statutory refugees, however the capacity and priorities of the Kenyan government consistently fail to provide satisfactory refugee protection (Lindley, 2011).

Regarding the international legal legitimacy of the refugee camp itself, humanitarian refugee aid administrators rarely analyze the camp in terms of legal nuances concerning freedom of movement or indefinite detention (Janmyr 2016). Highly securitized camps like Dadaab limit the freedom of movement of refugees and most refugees in Dadaab are there indefinitely, as the situation in Somalia does not provide optimism for safe return in the foreseeable future. The existence of a humanitarian aid camp governance system at Dadaab can be viewed as legitimizing arbitrary and indefinite detention of Somali refugees, and providing a rosier humanitarian lens through which the court of public opinion can view the de facto detention center that is Dadaab (Janmyr, 2016).

Dadaab also brings into the spotlight the ongoing tensions between state

sovereignty and human rights discourse. Human rights are conceived of as ‘inalienable’ and independent of any government. However, as soon as government protection is lacking, there is no longer any institution that acts as guarantor of rights (Arendt, 1973). The protracted refugee situation at Dadaab makes this point abundantly clear - the refugees fleeing Somalia have no state to guarantee their rights, and at Dadaab there is no institution strong enough to act as rights guarantor. PRS bring this disjuncture to the forefront, and present a direct challenge to the “state-nation-territory trinity” that governs the nation state system (Nyers 2006, 41). Refugees present this direct challenge to sovereign power because “by breaking the continuity between man and citizen, nativity and nationality, they put the originary fiction of modern sovereignty in crisis” (Agamben 1998, 131). In this space of challenges to the state-nation-territory trinity, Dadaab remains a conundrum, stuck in limbo between these worlds of inalienable human rights and of nation state sovereignty.

PRS are commonly analyzed through a security lens and framed with a nationalist rhetoric. Local integration and asylum, one of the three durable solutions under the international refugee regime, is a complex process that would theoretically allow refugees to become full members of society in their host state, with all the same rights as citizens. Once allowed the opportunity to move freely, access education, and seek employment, refugees can become productive members of host communities (Low, 2006). However, this solution is dependent on a favorable position of the host country, and the official position of the Kenyan government is very clear: Kenya does not want to host Somali refugees. While Kenya’s foreign policy since independence has framed itself as a “benign regional leader,” the current international and regional contexts have led to a more

assertive foreign policy position with harsher consequences for refugees within its borders (Mabera 2016). There is a strong narrative of the threat of the external “other” in Kenya, aimed at perceived threats of terrorism. While there are certainly real security concerns in the region stemming from al-Shabaab and other militant groups, Kenya’s focus on the threat of the ‘other’ obscures the inherently interconnected and trans-border nature of the threat of al-Shabaab. This narrative of the ‘other’ and harsh crackdowns on people who Kenya groups into this category only serves to further destabilize the situation and plays right into al-Shabaab’s vision of disruption and terror (Lind *et al*, 2015). Kenya has also ventured into a border wall/fence building project, in keeping with current populist and nationalistic rhetoric, to purportedly decrease security threats from Somalia. However, such walls rarely accomplish their stated goals, and often have additional unintended consequences. In the case of Kenya, antagonistic wall building projects are likely to be mired in corruption, reignite old border arguments, and separate pastoral communities that exist along the geographic state border (Cannon, 2016).

Countries that host large numbers of refugees due to their proximity to locales of regional instability are more likely to experience domestic and international terrorism, and that the infusion of large amounts of aid resources provides militant groups with attractive foreign targets (Choi and Salehyan, 2013). Given this information, it is seemingly in both the international community and host state’s interests to effectively resolve PRS in the interest of increased security. To this end, Kerwin advocates three main points:

“(1) refugee protection can advance both human and state security; (2) refugees and forcibly displaced persons can contribute to a state’s vitality, economic well-being, diversity, core values, and military strength; and (3) refugee protection and national security strategies largely align” (Kerwin, 2016, 84).

The Kenyan government, however, is attempting to ‘resolve’ the PRS at Dadaab in a way that would only serve to further destabilize the region and add to insecurity by completely shutting the camp down. However, from a security perspective the next logical step to alleviate insecurity is not to close Dadaab and move hundreds of thousands of refugees just across the border at the mercies of poverty, the desert, and al-Shabaab militants. Instead, the next step to address these security concerns is to conceive of refugee protection and national security as complementary state goals, and that adequate refugee protection should be pursued instead of neglect of refugee protection obligations.

These scholarly perspectives on human rights, international law, and security constitute the primary lenses through which Dadaab is analyzed and policy is informed. While these perspectives provide valuable insight at a global policy level to PRS and Dadaab, they lack nuanced analysis of historical and economic factors at play in the Horn of Africa that contribute to Dadaab’s persistence. The power dynamics at play between the Global North and Global South are lost in these analyses, and there is a historical erasure of the colonial roots behind conflict and displacement in refugee-producing regions. Refugees are primarily characterized as passive victims whose rights are not being upheld or as threatening ‘others’ whose motives are suspect, while little attention is paid to refugees as autonomous actors, contributing to local economies through informal economic activities.

Conventional Wisdom

Along with these scholarly perspectives, another relevant component in analyzing Dadaab and informing policy is the conventional wisdom found in common media narratives. This conventional wisdom is similarly limited in its portrayal of Dadaab and

leaves open areas for exploration. The conventional wisdom to explain Dadaab's persistence can generally be summarized as a disintegrated Somali state (and the consequent complications stemming from violence, drought, and famine), a lack of political will on the part of Kenya and the international community to find a solution for the residents of Dadaab, and a lack of international donor funding to change the status quo. These three components of the conventional wisdom also loosely correspond with the three "durable solutions," under the UNHCR's purview: repatriation, asylum and local integration in the host country, and resettlement in a third country. However, these narratives are narrow in focus and therefore limit our understanding of the full picture of Dadaab's persistence. They do not account for the full range of both formal and informal actors that affect Dadaab, or provide enough contextual nuance to fully understand the historical impacts of conflict and displacement in the region. Without a full understanding, policy makers cannot make informed decisions on issues affecting the lives hundreds of thousands of people.

"A disintegrated Somali state" is an extremely short phrase to sum up the outcome of decades, or even centuries, of regional history, and this brevity is frequently used in media coverage of Dadaab as the reason behind why the refugees in Dadaab cannot repatriate to Somalia. The common narrative often cited in news articles explains the plight of Somali refugees in Dadaab in one or two sentences, i.e. "The camp was first established in 1991 when civil war broke out in neighboring Somalia, and over subsequent years has received waves of refugees fleeing conflict and drought" (Al Jazeera, April 2015), or "Dadaab was founded more than 20 years ago - after Somalia first descended into chaos. It has not had a functioning central government since 1991

and has been racked by fighting between various militias (BBC, July 2012). All the history, the pain and suffering, the lives of people who fled and those who remain, are succinctly wrapped up in an explanatory sentence for a Western audience, making it difficult for the casual observer to understand the multifaceted dynamics at play in the region, or to imagine any solution is possible for those living in Dadaab.

Kenya's official narrative is that Dadaab should close, the Somali refugees should be repatriated, that local integration is out of the question given past and current Kenyan policies and treatment of Somalis. However, its efforts to close Dadaab or forcibly repatriate the refugees have been unrealistic, unsuccessful, and inconsistent, illustrating a lack of political will to achieve its objectives. Looking chronologically at news media headlines about Dadaab illustrates the inconsistencies and disorder in the Kenyan government's approach to managing refugees within its borders. In March 2014, Kenya ordered all refugees living outside of Dadaab (in Nairobi or elsewhere in Kenya) back into the camps (Al Jazeera, 2014), sending a message that refugees are not welcome in Kenya but yet contribute to Dadaab's persistence by reifying its purpose as the container of refugees. This action not only illegally restricted the freedom of movement of refugees, but also caused added confusion for ethnic Somalis who are Kenyan citizens, who had proper citizenship paperwork but got caught up in police efforts to ensure all Somali refugees were relocated back to Dadaab.

The following year in April 2015, Kenya attempted to give the UNHCR a three-month deadline to remove Dadaab and move all the refugees across the border back to Somalia, with Kenyan Deputy President William Ruto stating "We have asked the UNHCR to relocate the refugees in three months, failure to which we shall relocate them

ourselves” (Al Jazeera, 2015). Kenya’s stated logic was that it was under attack from al-Shabaab after suffering several recent terrorist attacks, and it was exercising its sovereign right to secure its borders and protect its citizenry. This plan was completely at odds with international law and the principle of non-*refoulement*, not to mention logistically infeasible given Kenya’s resources, and was sharply criticized by the UNHCR and the international community. One month after this announcement, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry made a surprise visit to Somalia, and urged Kenyan government authorities to keep the camp open until proper conditions in Somalia are resolved for legal repatriation. After meeting with Kerry and top UNHCR officials, President Kenyatta backed off Kenya’s threat to move everyone out of Dadaab and promised there would be no forced repatriations (New York Times, May 2015).

One year later in June 2016 Kenya is back at it again, threatening to close down Dadaab permanently, and once again, the international community protested vehemently, both on the grounds of international law and the logistical impracticality of relocating hundreds of thousands of people back to a country not yet fit to receive them (Al Jazeera, June 2016). After much protestation, threats of withholding aid on the part of the donor states, and Kenyan government missing self-imposed deadlines for Dadaab’s closure, in February 2017 the Kenyan High Court blocked the closure plan, ruling it unconstitutional on the grounds of discrimination and against international law because it was a violation of Kenya’s obligations under various treaties and conventions (New York Times, 2017 and Al Jazeera, 2017).

Just after this ruling, in March 2017 President Kenyatta took a different tack. He appealed to the international community at the International Authority on Development

(IGAD) Summit on Somali Refugees to step up and provide additional aid to Somalia in order to stabilize the country enough to allow the refugees in Dadaab to repatriate legally. However, the threat of forced repatriation was still present, and the President of Somalia “pleaded with the African leaders and the international community not to force refugees to return back to Somalia noting that the drought and famine affecting Somalia will lead to mass displacement and deaths (Al Jazeera, 2017).

As shown from this sequence of headlines, Kenya’s approach to Dadaab over time is inconsistent and lacks the power and ability to follow through. The Kenyan government vacillates from wanting all the Somali refugees confined to Dadaab, to threatening to close Dadaab and repatriate all the refugees, to backing off its threat and ceding to the outcry of the international community, and then repeats the cycle. While Kenya may view its strategy of confining all the refugees in one place as a means to locate an alleged threat to national security to one place in preparation for removing the threat from its borders, I contend that sending more refugees to the camp only serves to expand the camps’ population and reinforce Dadaab’s persistence. This inconsistency leaves room for questioning why Kenya cannot settle on an official policy and practice – what conflicting interests exist that contribute to these tensions?

Furthermore, it is clear to a casual observer that Kenya lacks the resources to follow through on its threats, and realizes that closing Dadaab would be detrimental to its interests, otherwise it would have closed Dadaab already. Kenya not only lacks the resources to carry out such a huge logistical endeavor, it also cannot risk the consequences of violating its international agreements. Kenya would almost certainly lose donor development funding and risk ridicule on the world stage, which brings me to

the final common narrative regularly included in explanations of Dadaab – a lack of political will in the international community to resolve Dadaab’s persistence.

Given the preceding discussion, it is clear that asylum and local integration into Kenya is clearly not an attainable option for the refugees in Dadaab. What then of the other two durable solutions, resettlement and repatriation? For those options to be attainable, it would take significant investment and action from the international donor community. There is a prohibitive lack of motivation on the part of donor states to provide the necessarily high resettlement quotas to resolve the PRS at Dadaab (Hovil, 2016), as evidenced by decreasing resettlement quotas over time since 1980 (Zong, 2017). In an obvious understatement, the UNHCR reported in a headline on their website that the “UN Refugee Agency study finds the number of people in need of resettlement far surpasses the opportunities for placement in a third country,” reporting that a monumental 1.19 million people would be in need of resettlement in 2017, but only about 170,000 slots were available from countries with resettlement programs (Dobbs, 2016).

In many Western states, including countries with the top resettlement programs like the U.S. and Germany, there has been a not-insignificant vocal resistance to refugee resettlement (and, more generally, immigration) from the far-right, making it a political liability for elected officials to make a strong case for refugee resettlement (Foster, 2016 and Strickland, 2016). There are moral, legal, and economic arguments to be made for why refugee resettlement is beneficial to donor countries, but those arguments do not carry the same political weight (or, maybe more importantly, regular media coverage) as vocal protestation based on xenophobia and racism.

Since large-scale resettlement is currently not an option, then the third option of repatriation must be considered. To create an environment in Somalia that is safe enough for refugees to repatriate to would take an enormous investment of financial, political, and military capital over an extended period of time from a coalition of Western states, the governments of Somalia's direct and regional neighbors (Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Eritrea), and the fragile government of Somalia itself. This is an almost unimaginable undertaking that would last many years, if not decades, especially considering the long and complicated histories of conflict in the region paired with an utter lack of interest from wealthy states in investing such extensive resources into a region that offers comparably few returns on investment. There have been significant investments made towards top-down Western state-building in Somalia since 1991 that have failed to solidify a functional central government with any reach beyond Mogadishu, and donor states are not eager to pour more money into what they view as a failed effort (Menkhaus, 2014 and Upsall, 2014).

These components (a disintegrated state in Somalia, a lack of political will on the part of Kenya and the international community to find a solution for the residents of Dadaab, and a lack of international donor funding to change the status quo) can be viewed as the conventional wisdom because they are the common media narrative regarding Dadaab and Somali refugees. These narratives are limited in scope, and erase much of the complexity of Dadaab's history and persistence, lacking information on the economic implications of Dadaab or the complicated history of colonialism and racial hierarchies in the region.

Literature Review Summary

As shown from this brief review of the international refugee regime's intent at founding, the proliferation of PRS throughout the Cold War, the Post-Cold War burden-shifting strategies of the Global North, long-term refugee camps as a symptom of a broken system, common scholarly perspectives from which Dadaab is usually discussed, and the conventional wisdom commonly found in media narratives, I have set the stage for further exploration of under-studied actors and interests that contribute to Dadaab's persistence. Most literature on Dadaab focuses on a particular angle such as security, humanitarianism, human rights, or international law, or presents a gross oversimplification in common media narratives that constitute the conventional wisdom. The gap in the literature lies in the dearth of discussion of the impacts on modern PRS of historical colonial realities behind conflict and displacement in the Global South, as well as in the lack of attention paid to the economic impacts of informal economic activities in PRS contexts.

A more comprehensive investigation of hidden ties between actors and power brokers reveals previously unseen or under-studied nuances of interests and motivations that may influence the actions of decision-makers regarding Dadaab. This will reveal critical context that can help form more comprehensive understandings of the interests and motivations of power brokers, which is crucial information for policy makers to have when considering potential solutions for PRS. Through a broad reading of the literature, it becomes clear that two aspects of Dadaab's persistence in particular require in-depth and continued examination: the historical colonial legacies in Kenya, and Dadaab's significance as an informal economic power center. In the following section, I construct a

framework for conceptualizing these topics as ‘hidden ties’ that contribute to Dadaab’s persistence, and then provide an in-depth examination of each.

IV. Conceptual Framework: Hidden Ties


The concept I use to explore deeper dynamics of why PRS and long-term refugee camps persist is that of ‘hidden ties.’ Hidden ties are the underlying power dynamics and connections between actors and interests that are not widely studied or discussed that lie beneath the surface of the conventional wisdom and existing literature regarding PRS. Without delving into hidden ties, the full picture of PRS remains obscured, inhibiting fully-informed policy-making decisions. I focus on two distinct hidden ties that contribute to the persistence of Dadaab: (1) colonial legacies of domination and social control, and (2) the significance of informal economic power centers. I explore these hidden ties in the specific context of Dadaab by forming a framework of analysis using the works of James Scott (on hidden transcripts), Keith Hart (informal economies), and Janet Roitman (informal economies and the commercial-military nexus). This approach can then be utilized to analyze these hidden ties in other PRS contexts.

From Hidden Transcript to Hidden Tie

The vast majority (84%) of refugees are hosted in the Global South (UNHCR Global Trends, 2016), many in nation-states which were colonial territories in the not-so-distant past. Yet this legacy of Western domination and social control is not deeply examined by the conventional wisdom or by refugee scholars when discussing PRS and strategies for resolving them. Of particular relevance to analysis of post-colonial nation-states that host refugees is James Scott’s (1990) seminal work on hidden and public transcripts. Scott theorizes that “every subordinate group creates, out of its ordeal, a

‘hidden transcript’ that represents a critique of power spoken behind the back of the dominant. The powerful, for their part, also develop a hidden transcript representing the practices and claims of their rule that cannot be openly avowed” (Scott, 1990, xii). Public transcripts, however, are “the self-portrait of dominant elites as they would have themselves seen...designed to be impressive, to affirm and naturalize the power of dominant elites, and to conceal or euphemize the dirty linen of their rule” (Scott, 1990, 18). In between these hidden and public transcripts lies a middle ground of the subordinate’s resistance to domination through “a partly sanitized, ambiguous, and coded version of the hidden transcript [that] is always present in the public discourse of subordinate groups” (Scott, 1990, 19). To illustrate this concept, it is useful to include a visual example given by Scott showing the continuum of public to hidden transcripts in the case of slaves and how they interact with and “perform” for different categories of people based on degrees of domination (Scott, 1990, 26):

Table 1. Scott's continuum of Public and Hidden Transcripts in the context of slavery

 Degree of Performance	Public Transcripts	Harsh Master/Overseer
		Indulgent Master/Overseer
		Whites having no direct authority
	Hidden Transcripts	Slaves and free blacks
		Slaves of same master
		Closest slave friends
		Immediate family

While Scott discusses hidden and public transcripts primarily in reference to individual resistance to personal domination in larger contexts of societal oppression (i.e. slavery), I contend that this framework can be extended to post-colonial nation states and be used to analyze their responses to PRS. I assert that post-colonial states are located at


the juncture of both the subordinate and the dominant. Through this juncture, these states demonstrate a dual identity of sorts. While displaying a public transcript to appease the hegemonic domination of the Global North, post-colonial nation states can also demonstrate a hidden transcript to resist this domination through aggressive treatment of refugees. Thus, this action of resistance against domination simultaneously becomes an act of domination in its own right – an act that is rooted in the replication of past colonial domination.

The state of Kenya, and other post-colonial states like it, operates as both a subordinate and a dominating power-holder. First, I will address its position as a subordinate to the dominating hegemonic power of the Global North. Kenya is subordinate because, as a result of its colonial history, it is dependent on donor funding and the goodwill of the international community. As a subordinate, Kenya projects a public transcript to appease its dominator (e.g. its former colonial master – the Global North). This public transcript includes outward-focused strategies of cooperation, such as becoming a signatory of global treaties, making statements and passing domestic legislation to promote human rights and respect international law, and participating in regional peacekeeping missions. Kenya utilizes this public transcript because it knows where the power lies – if Kenya were to cease these appeasement strategies to the international community, its donor funding would dry up and sanctions would likely be levied against it. But, Kenya knows what is in its economic interests, and so it performs the public transcript to appease the powerful.

Scott theorizes that subordinates employ hidden transcripts as acts of rebellion, small and large, against dominating powers. Kenya, too, employs a hidden transcript of

resistance towards the dominating Global North through the exertion of its state sovereignty against those identified as threats to the state. While Kenya outwardly espouses international cooperation, inwardly the state seeks to resist domination and re-assert its power through rhetoric of national security and the use of social control measures in the form of the forced encampment of Somali refugees (who the state identifies as a threat). Through this inward expression of power over an unwanted population, Kenya is resisting the external dominating pressures of the hegemonic Global North to bend to the will of the international community. With this framing in mind, consider this reconfiguration of Scott’s public/hidden transcript continuum to plot how the Kenyan state interacts with and “performs” for different actors depending on the degree of domination:


Table 2. Continuum of Kenya's Public and Hidden Transcripts

 Degree of Performance	Public Transcripts	United Nations/Donor States
		African Union
		Bi-lateral regional diplomacy
		Domestic Law
		Official Government Statements to Press
	Hidden Transcripts	Extrajudicial State Violence
		Bribery/Corruption of State Officials
		Private Communications of State Officials

Through this hidden transcript of resistance against the Global North, Kenya simultaneously becomes a power-holding dominator over Somali refugees through practices of extrajudicial state violence. In this position of domination, Kenya’s treatment of Somali refugees acts as a hidden transcript of “the practices and claims of their rule that cannot be openly avowed” (Scott, 1990, xii). In other words, under the guise of a

public transcript of national security rhetoric, Kenya is using a hidden transcript of policies and practices of discriminatory state violence that reveals its true sentiment towards Somalis, and invites deeper investigation into the histories of these practices of discriminatory state violence. Consider the following framing of Somali refugees’ public/hidden transcripts and the place of overlap with the Kenyan state’s chart: the threat of state violence. The ‘most’ public transcript for Somali refugees (i.e. when they are ‘performing’ the most to protect personal safety from the threats of the powerful) is their interaction with state security forces (the perpetrators of extrajudicial state violence):

Table 3. Continuum of Somali refugees’ Public and Hidden Transcripts

 Degree of Performance	Public Transcripts	State Security Forces
		UNHCR/Aid Agencies
		Westerners
	Hidden Transcripts	Kenyan Somalis
		Other Somali Refugees
		Clan Members
		Immediate Family

Through this framing, Kenya is shown to occupy a dual position in the traditional subordinate/dominator lens. As a post-colonial state, it is subordinate to the hegemonic Global North, and projects a public transcript of international cooperation to appease that audience. It resists this domination through a hidden transcript of inward facing expressions of state power to reassert its sovereignty. This hidden transcript of resistance against the Global North is simultaneously a hidden transcript of domination, showing practices of state power and social control that cannot be openly called what they are – discrimination against a particular ethnic population. In this way, Kenya is both subordinate and dominator – subordinate to the hegemonic Global North, and through its

hidden transcript of resistance, Kenya becomes the dominator of Somali refugees through the exercise of state sovereignty via discriminatory strategies of state violence.

Now that we have identified discriminatory practices of state violence to be Kenya's hidden transcript of resistance, we must further explore the realities and histories of these practices of anti-Somali discriminatory state violence. Are these practices of domination a replication of previous experiences of domination under colonial authorities and the Global North? Why are Somali refugees the population targeted by the Kenyan state as the subordinate group, and what practices of domination in Kenya's past could be influencing Kenya's hidden transcript today? These hidden transcripts practices of state violence have not sprung out of a vacuum and once one starts pulling the threads leading to where these social control techniques originate from (as I will do in Section V), it is revealed that the colonial legacies of social control and domination in Kenya greatly contribute to how present-day Kenya expresses its hidden transcript of power over Somali refugees. This legacy of colonial social control and domination constitutes the first hidden tie that contributes to Dadaab's persistence.

From Hidden Economy to Hidden Tie

While refugee camps are unquestioningly home to extensive and extended human suffering, they are also sites of economic opportunity. The details and significance of these economic opportunities are hidden from view in the conventional wisdom or literature regarding PRS and long-term refugee camps, likely because of the 'informal' or 'illegal' nature of these economic activities. Hart and Roitman provide useful points of departure for framing an analysis of Dadaab's economic significance through their contributions on informal economies (Hart) and the military-commercial nexus

(Roitman). Hart provides baseline definitions of informal economies, from which we can identify aspects of Dadaab that meet those qualifications, while Roitman builds on the conversation by conceptualizing the “garrison-entrepôt,” a military-commercial nexus present in post-colonial informal economies. Defined further in Section VI, this concept of garrison-entrepôt has a multi-layered relevance to Dadaab that reveals its economic significance. Delving into the details of Dadaab’s informal economies reveals a second important hidden tie that contributes to Dadaab’s persistence: its significance as an informal economic power center.

Hart defines to the distinction between formal and informal income opportunities as “based essentially on that between wage-earning and self-employment...whether or not labour is recruited on a permanent and regular basis for fixed rewards,” and observes that migrants are drawn to urban centers in search of opportunity despite the dearth of formal wage-earning opportunities in cities like Accra, Ghana (Hart, 1973, 68). Writing in 1973, Hart asks a question that has since been answered many times over in the affirmative: “Does the ‘reserve army of urban unemployed and underemployed’ really constitute a passive, exploited majority in cities...or do their informal economic activities possess some autonomous capacity for generating growth in the incomes of the urban (and rural) poor?” (Hart, 1973, 61). Hart also categorizes all informal income opportunities as either “legitimate” or “illegitimate,” based on the legality of the activity in question. However, this distinction is largely moot in Dadaab’s context, since all refugees are technically not allowed to work under Kenyan law. While certain income generating activities at Dadaab are likely to be viewed as more suspect than others (smuggling weapons versus running a vegetable stall in the camp market), they are all

technically “illegitimate” in the view of the state. In Section VI, I clearly show how Dadaab also answers this question in the affirmative, showing the capacity for generating significant regional growth despite the fact that much of the economic activity in the area is categorized as “illegitimate” and “informal.”

Moving from Hart to Roitman, here I briefly discuss her definitions of informal economies, and her conceptualization of the garrison-entrepôt, a military-commercial nexus present in post-colonial informal economies. Informal economies are defined in their oppositional position to the state and ‘formal’ markets, viewed as a failure of the formal realm. These ‘failures’ are then given residual categorizations as “black, informal, illegal, parallel, second...” (Roitman, 1990, 679). There is a technocratic norm to study informal markets with much less scientific rigor than formal markets, leading to an oversimplification of the true nature of state and market relations (Roitman 1990, 677). The extent to which the formal and the informal are examined is often also oversimplified by presenting them as two opposing poles instead of a complex system of productive relationships (Roitman, 1990, 685).

Roitman provides a translation of text from O.J. Igué that provides a useful context on the history of the development of secondary, informal economies during the colonial era. This context of the development and reification of informal economies in post-colonial states serves as a backdrop to the concept of garrison-entrepôt.

“Parallel commerce was nothing other than the new circuit of exchange put into place by the old market communities on the caravan of commerce whose activities had been paralysed by the new laws of the colonial economy...Contraband appeared...as a phenomenon which served to reduce regional disparities created by colonial ‘partage.’⁵ Thus the commercial situation of the colonial epoch is characterised by a certain dualism born of the existence of a clandestine informal structure next to another modern, official structure. This dualist situation continued

⁵ French terminology for the ‘Scramble for Africa’ in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

to reinforce itself even after the independence of the colonies” (Roitman, 1990: 693 and Igué, 1983: 38-40)

In order for subjugated populations to evade colonial authorities’ attempts to control, regulate, and collect tax, a cross border ‘illegal’ trade evolved that allowed enterprising businesses to shirk regulation and avoid paying tax (Roitman, 1998, 310). In the post-colonial context,

“...unregulated activity and armed factions compete with the nation-state for financial power and regulatory authority...[giving] rise to...frontier or hinterland-based economic activities that have become indispensable for the continuing enrichment and command of both the urban merchant and political classes” (Roitman, 1998, 298).

This informal economy may deprive the state of revenue through tax evasion, but the state still maintains control of the “infrastructure and channels of distribution” required to complete informal transactions, such as controlling border crossings or holding legislative powers over economic and criminal statutes (Roitman, 1990, 681). The state does not ‘formally’ control these markets, but yet it retains a degree of power and control. The informal sector and the state have been observed to be:

“two indissociable elements of a totality, one ‘feeding off’ the other...the national sector consists of individuals who may well have significant interests in ‘black market’ activities...the state often assumes an ambiguous stance towards, or even abets, this ‘informal’ sector” (Roitman, 1990, 682).

This symbiotic relational system between formal and informal is of key importance when examining the hidden ties of informal economies to Dadaab’s persistence.

This brings us to Roitman’s garrison-entrepôt,⁶ which she defines as a “military-commercial nexus [that] is a hub for wealth creation through violence and [is] home to powerful figures of regulatory authority that compete with those associated with the

⁶ Literally translated to English as ‘garrison-warehouse’ or ‘garrison-store.’

state” (Roitman, 1998, 297). The garrison-entrepôt is constructed of “alliances [involving] renegade militias, demobilized soldiers, gendarmes, customs officials, well placed military officers, local political figures, members of the opposition, and government ministers” (Roitman, 1998, 315). In other words, the garrison-entrepôt is the convergence of diverse actors who participate in informal economic activities outside the regulatory reach of the state, though some of the actors involved are they themselves members of state structures. Simultaneously, the garrison-entrepôt also serves (in the context of a weak state-welfare system) as a “context of redistribution, certain forms of social welfare, and rents that contribute to the viability of state power itself” (Roitman, 1998, 297). This concept of garrison-entrepôt is exceedingly relevant to Dadaab’s persistence, and is visible both in Dadaab’s informal local economy, and its role in the Kenyan Defense Force’s (KDF) sugar smuggling operation out of the port of Kismayo in Somalia, which will be expanded on in detail in Section VI. This exploration of informal economies in and around Dadaab reveals the sheer scale and significance of Dadaab as an informal economic power center, constituting the second hidden tie contributing to Dadaab’s persistence.

Conceptual Framework Summary

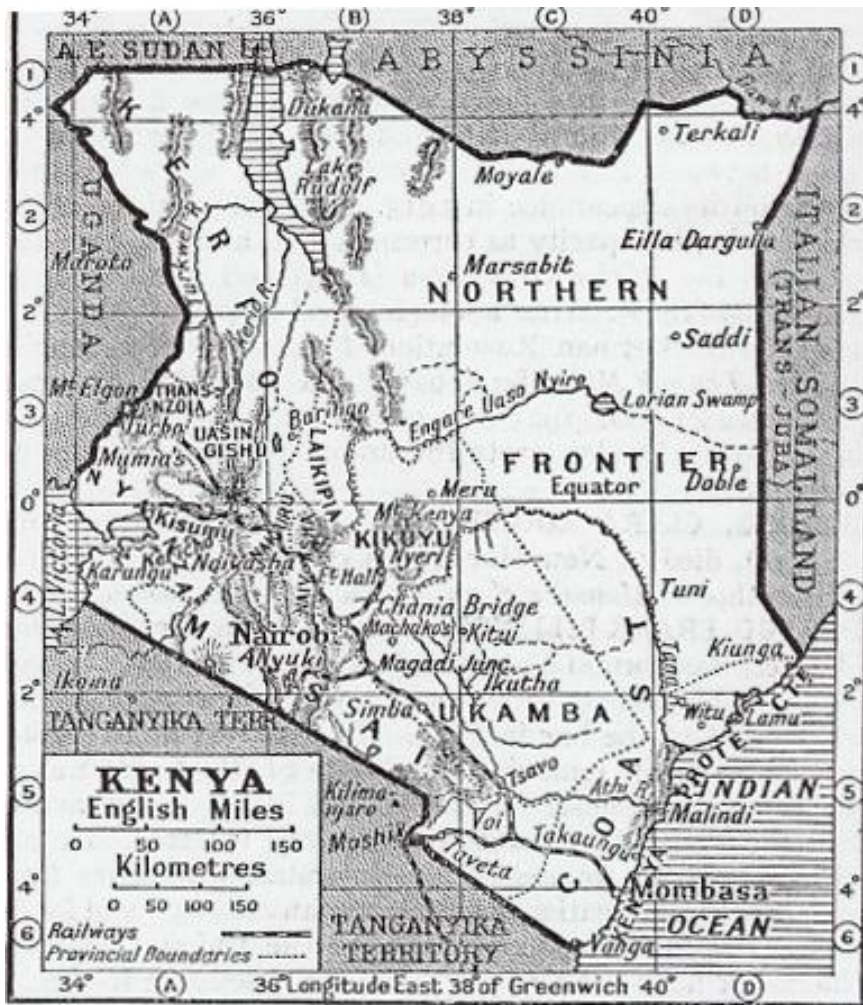
In this section, I framed two hidden ties for further exploration with the goal of revealing a fuller picture of why Dadaab persists. Using Scott’s concept of hidden transcripts, I theorize how the state of Kenya employs expressions of state sovereignty and violence against Somali refugees as a hidden transcript of resistance against the domination of the hegemonic Global North, revealing the first hidden tie warranting investigation: colonial legacies of social control and domination in Kenya. I then frame

the concept of informal economies and the military-commercial nexus (the garrison-entrepôt), and assert that analysis of informal or illegitimate markets are an understudied but critical measure of economic activity and significance, revealing the second hidden tie for investigation: Dadaab's significance as an informal economic power center. In the following two sections, I explore in detail these two identified hidden ties that contribute to Dadaab's persistence.

V. Hidden Tie: Colonial Legacy of Social Control and Domination

State violence and collective punishment were initially used as a strategy of social control by the British colonial government in Kenya, and these practices were replicated and expanded after independence under the rule of the Kenyan elite. British counterinsurgency strategies employed during the Mau Mau Rebellion were mirrored and expanded by the Kenyan government during the later *shifita* conflict (Whittaker, 2015), and I argue, in policies and practices contributing to the persistence of Dadaab. I argue that practices of social control through state violence and collective punishment are so pervasive and entrenched in Kenya as a result of colonial precedent that a directional line can be drawn from previous colonial policies to Kenya's current refugee policies, Kenya's ongoing harsh treatment of Somalis, and Dadaab's persistence. In the following section, I first summarize the colonial government's policies and practices of social control towards Somalis in the Northeastern Frontier District (NFD), and then show the replication and expansion of these practices under the post-independence Kenyan government (Whittaker, 2015), drawing a connection to Kenya's ongoing discriminatory treatment of Somalis and the persistence of Dadaab.

Figure 3. Map of Colonial Kenya, 1926



Colonial policies

The British began expanding into northern Kenya in 1899, and established several administrative outposts in 1909 and 1912. During this time, there was an extended process of Somali migration into northern Kenya underway, and clan power struggles played out over competition for scarce water and grazing resources (Whittaker, 2012). British rule in the area was contested and highly dependent on local political relationships. The pastoral Somalis of northern Kenya constantly moved around, crossing arbitrarily imposed colonial borders and creating disorder (from the colonial authorities’

perspective) as boundaries and colonial attempts at resource allocation were ignored.

There was some solidification of British presence in the area as time went on, and by the 1930s, the British were concentrating on using the NFD as a “buffer zone” to keep Ethiopia from encroaching on fertile Kenyan lands in the Central Highlands. In order to exert control over the population in the area, the British colonial administrators used a strategy of state violence and collective punishment – a strategy that would be continued and expanded by the Kenyan ruling elite after independence (Whittaker, 2015).

Strategies to this end included the 1902 Outlying District Ordinance, which pronounced the entire NFD a “closed district” and required that anyone located in the district carry proper documentation and movement passes, or else risk forcible removal and the confiscation of any property. In 1932, the Special District Administration Ordinance (SDAO) was put into effect, giving provincial commissioners powers to divide up grazing boundaries between ethnic groups. This was part of a larger effort to control cross-border movements of people that threatened to destabilize British imperial designs through the placement of boundaries around certain zones for particular (perceived) ethnic groups as a means of population control. Violations of these ordinances resulted in livestock confiscation, arrest, and arbitrary detention, as well as extra-judicial violence, including rapes and beatings. This policy had the predictable result of incentivizing the Somali pastoralists in the region to bypass these demarcated areas as best they could to avoid interaction with the state, and to disregard colonial authority and the ‘official’ international and provincial boundaries (Whittaker, 2015).

The (quite literally named) 1909 Collective Punishment Ordinance (CPO) and the 1913 Stock and Produce Theft Ordinance (SPTO) further solidified British authority to

exert state violence over whole groups of people that it deemed unruly. The CPO allowed collective punishment of any village or community who flouted British law, and the SPTO was a response to regular cattle raiding amongst different pastoral groups and European farms. This idea of collective punishment was viewed as an acceptable tool against Africans, who the British judged as being backwardly accepting of livestock theft as a viable self-sustaining economic strategy. Continued incidents of mutual cattle raiding, the fluid movement of people across borders, and general disregard for British authority propagated a negative reputation and narrative for Somali pastoralists that colonial officials used to prop up justifications for collective punishment and state violence (Whittaker, 2015). For example, in 1928 the British governor of Kenya stated “the Somali tribesmen have always adopted an independent and truculent attitude...they defy our laws and they pay no taxes” (Whittaker, 2015: 645). A colonial government report just prior to Kenyan independence claimed that “the volatile character of the Somali leads them to be easily excited and roused to violence” and that the region remained backwards due to “tribal feuds and internecine strife; the unsettled frontier lines and the constant raids” (Whittaker, 2015: 646). This prejudiced attitude towards Somali pastoralists permeated the government elite, and set the stage for the continued mistreatment of Somalis in Kenya today.

These early colonial policies set a precedent of collective punishment and state violence towards Somalis in Kenya, and these precedents served as the backdrop for both the British counterinsurgency response to the Mau Mau Rebellion in the 1950s using forced villagization, and the post-independence forced villagization project perpetrated by the Kenyan government (Whittaker, 2015). The Mau Mau Rebellion was an

insurgency against British colonial rule formed by the Kikuyu, Embu, and Meru peoples of central Kenya. Operating from the rainforests around Mount Kenya, the rebels conducted raids on European farms and against Africans loyal to Britain in order to fight back against land seizures and the relegation of their people to less fertile fringe areas (Feichtinger, 2016). While the specifics of the rebels' grievances against the colonial authorities in the Mau Mau Rebellion differed from the context of Somali pastoralists in the NFD, the colonial government's response is relevant to the background context and policy precedent of counterinsurgency tactics that continued after Kenyan independence (Whittaker, 2015).

The British response to the Mau Mau Rebellion was an intensification of previous collective punishment and state violence approaches, and included "property confiscations, livestock seizures, detention without trial, screening exercises, and the creation of concentrated villages" (Whittaker, 2015, 646). Over the course of one year starting in 1954, about 1.2 million people were forcibly relocated into over 800 guarded camp-like villages. In these camps, most people were completely at the mercy of state or NGO agencies for the provision of supplies and services, and residents were collectively punished by forced labor required by the colonial state to build out and maintain the villages (Feichtinger, 2016).

The driving theoretical concept behind forced villagization is to undermine the public's support of insurgents by providing social services in the new villages, thus reducing the political incentive to give support to rebels. However, during the Mau Mau Rebellion, the villages amounted to little more than forced labor concentration camps that stripped the population of their land and ability to sustain a living independently. This

context of forced villagization during the Mau Mau Rebellion was still fresh in the minds of Kenyan elite at the time of Kenyan independence a decade later, and carried through into policies responding to Somali secessionists in the North Eastern Province (NEP) (Whittaker, 2015).

Post-Independence Kenya and the Shifta Conflicts

In the 1960s, there was growing support in the region for Somali unity as Somalia and then Kenya gained independence, and Somalis in the north of Kenya favored self-determination and secession from Kenya and unity with Somalia (Khalif and Oba, 2013). After Kenyan independence, a Somali separatist movement formed in the NEP, which was given a pejorative label by the Kenyan government, '*shifta*', meaning bandits or rebels (Whittaker, 2015). In so naming these secessionists as mere criminal bandits, the Kenyan government sought to delegitimize a group of rebels who could have otherwise been viewed favorably by fellow Africans as patriotic freedom fighters in the era of independence from colonial rule (Whittaker, 2012).

The ruling elite who constituted the Kenyan government post-independence in 1963 had previously worked closely with the British colonial authorities, and were well versed in the counterinsurgency policies employed against the Mau Mau Rebellion (Whittaker, 2015). The *shifta* insurgent activity in the NEP consisted primarily of ambushes of Kenyan security forces (police and army), using foot patrols and vehicle convoys (Whittaker, 2012). In response, the Kenyan government quickly declared a state of emergency, required all people living in the North Eastern Province to register themselves, carry personal documentation, and live under a curfew. There were arbitrary detentions and livestock seizures – tactics identical to previous early colonial policies

(Whittaker, 2015). The state of emergency regulations established first a five-mile, and then a 15-mile, 'prohibited zone' along the Kenyan-Somali border. Anyone caught inside this zone without the required paperwork and permissions was subject to immediate imprisonment, and police were empowered to forcibly search any vehicle or property within the zone (Whittaker, 2012).

The most striking example of replicating colonial policies of collective punishment and state violence was a renewed effort at sedentarization through forced villagization in 1966, as had been seen previously during the Mau Mau Rebellion. In June of 1966, the Kenyan government announced that everyone living in so-called *shifita* affected areas had 30 days to move into special government villages. These villages would theoretically provide for all the needs of the people, but in reality, they were barely more than forced detention centers for monitoring a maligned and suspected population. There were 28 villages created, 15 of which were located in the North Eastern Province. However, the Kenyan villagization project did not have the resources behind it that had supported the British Crown's efforts, and in the end only about half of the target Somali population was forcibly moved into these villages. The money and resources behind the project were not sufficient to implement the development projects that could have potentially won over the people. Moreover, there were regular human rights abuses carried out by the state that ensured the villagization project would never win over any "hearts or minds" of the people (Whittaker, 2012, 343).

However, this failure to complete the forced villagization project is not to minimize the collective punishment and state violence carried out during this time by the government in the name of fighting the *shifita* insurgents. The policies of villagization,

movement passes, livestock seizures, designated grazing zones, and curfews was an exertion of state power that had the essential consequence of making the Somali pastoralist lifestyle a crime, despite the fact that pastoralism was the most viable economic strategy given the ecological realities of the region (Whittaker, 2012 and 2015). While the *shifita* conflict officially came to an end in November 1967, the policies of state violence and collective punishment continued under a state of emergency designation well into the 1990s (Whittaker, 2015). In effect, the Kenyans were creating policies that turned the people they had consistently stereotyped as criminals into actual criminals in the eyes of Kenyan law.

These continuities of policy were both conscious efforts of the Kenyan elite to maintain and expand their power, and efforts on the part of former colonial policy makers to maintain influence and protect their interests. Many of the colonial government structures remained in place after independence, including British civil servants and military officers, many of whom had direct experience carrying out these counterinsurgency tactics (Whittaker, 2015). Post-independence Kenya is essentially a “neo-colonial” state because “independence did not effect any major ideological or structural break with the colonial state; and that all Kenya did was expand former colonial administrative and economic structures” (Ogot and Ochieng, 1995: xiii).

Dadaab's Roots in Colonial Policy

This pattern of state violence and collective punishment of Somali pastoralists first exhibited by British colonial authorities, and then mirrored and expanded by the independent Kenyan government (Whittaker, 2015), is directly relevant to the persistence of Dadaab. Somali refugees in Kenya are confined to living in Dadaab, must carry proper

documentation,⁷ and are subject to restrictions on freedom of movement. Confining all Somali refugees to Dadaab and imposing these oppressive restrictions is a modern-day version of collective punishment through forced villagization that operates within the more publicly acceptable context of the international refugee regime and the humanitarian system. Somali refugees both in and outside of Dadaab have suffered a great deal of violence and harassment at the hands of Kenyan state security forces, further replicating previous colonial and post-independence strategies for exerting the authority of the state through violence and collective punishment.

There have been well documented reports published by Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International⁸ regarding police abuses of Somali refugees at all stages of their journey into Kenya and throughout their time living in Dadaab or elsewhere in Kenya. These abuses are extensively documented over time so I will not detail them here, save to comment on the connection between past colonial and post-independence collective punishment and state violence practices summarized in the paragraphs above and the replication of these abuses in the present day against Somali refugees. A clear example of these practices is seen in a particular campaign of state violence in 2014 called Operation *Usalama Watch*,⁹ during which thousands of Somalis (both refugees from Somalia and Kenyan Somalis) were harassed, beaten, arbitrarily detained, extorted for bribes, and/or forcibly relocated from Nairobi to Dadaab.

⁷ Proper documentation could mean refugee identity card, travel authorization, a fake Kenyan national ID card, or simply a cash bribe (Balakian, 2016).

⁸ See HRW's 2010 report entitled "*Welcome to Kenya: Police Abuse of Somali Refugees*", and Amnesty International's 2014 report entitled *Somalis are Scapegoats in Kenya's Counter-Terror Crackdown*.

⁹ Per Amnesty International's definition in their 2014 report, *Usalama* is a Kiswahili word meaning 'security,' and the 2014 operation is widely known as '*Usalama Watch*'.

Operation *Usalama* Watch (along with many of Kenya's general practices concerning refugees) was extralegal in nature. Under international law, states are obligated to allow refugees within its borders freedom of movement, but Kenya's 2006 Refugees Act contradicts this obligation by empowering the government to designate camps as residences, and requires that refugees apply for special movement passes to travel beyond the designated camp (Amnesty International, 2014). These policies have been used by Kenyan state security forces to violently crack down on refugees outside of Dadaab, particularly in the Somali neighborhood of Eastleigh in Nairobi. To its credit, in 2013 the Kenyan High Court ruled these restrictions of movement unconstitutional, stating that the government had not demonstrated that refugees were truly a threat (Amnesty International, 2014).

However, this ruling did not stop the Department of Refugee Affairs (DRA) from organizing the forcible relocation of over 1,000 refugees and asylees from Nairobi to Dadaab during Operation *Usalama* Watch, a tactic which not only harshly disrupted people's lives, but also often had the consequence of separating parents from minor children or elderly grandparents in need of care (Amnesty International, 2014). Human Rights Watch reported that during Operation *Usalama* Watch,

“government security forces have raided homes, buildings, and shops; looted cell phones, money, and other goods; harassed and extorted residents; and detained thousands – including journalists, Kenyan citizens, and international aid workers – without charge and in appalling conditions for periods well beyond the 24-hour limit set by Kenyan law” (“Kenya: End Abusive Round-Ups,” Human Rights Watch, 2014).

Such screenings and documentation requirements are a direct inheritance of previous colonial precedents of forced relocation, identification screenings, and arbitrary detentions. These illegal practices are a clear example of the Kenyan government

exerting state violence to enact screenings to separate out who it views as threats from who it views as loyal citizens, and in the process the government is collectively punishing any Somalis caught in the violent roundup by forcibly sending them back to a designated village zone in which they must live: Dadaab.

As a policy, the Kenyan government requires Somali refugees to live within Dadaab's camps. This containment of Somali refugees in Dadaab is a modern-day version of forced villagization that exists in a sphere of semi-legitimacy due to the international humanitarian presence in Dadaab. The Kenyan government is expressing its hidden transcript by trying to control a population it views as threatening and disorderly by confining Somalis to a designated area. Living in Dadaab, Somali refugees have access to humanitarian aid and services, which is a mutation of the original colonial concept of villagization. In its original theoretical conception, forced relocation was meant to be paired with government-sponsored development projects to encourage the people's support of sedentary villagization (though as seen in the preceding paragraphs, this comprehensive villagization vision was not successfully carried out in either the colonial response to the Mau Mau Rebellion or the post-colonial *shifita* counterinsurgency effort). In Dadaab's context, the humanitarian aid industry is acting as a pseudo-state, providing services and aid to the forcibly relocated and contained population of Somalis.

Kenya is expressing a hidden transcript of resistance against the hegemonic Global North by taking advantage of the obligations and resources of the international refugee regime and humanitarian industry in order to replicate and expand colonial villagization precedent. Kenya is exerting its state sovereignty by containing a perceived threat to its national security, with the added bonus of shifting the burden of basic service

provision to the humanitarian aid industry. While the Kenyan government may complain about the burdens of Dadaab and repeatedly threaten to shut it down, this often has the effect of soliciting additional aid and resources from the international community. This pattern of acquiescence in exchange for aid can be viewed as an additional way Kenya expresses a hidden transcript of resistance against the Global North. Dadaab persists because it is a way for Kenya to forcibly contain a population it views as threatening, and because it is a useful tool for eliciting funds for the provision of services, all within the context of the international refugee regime and humanitarian system. The overall effect is very similar to the forced villagization and collective punishment programs of the past, but is made more palatable to the international community through this refugee crisis framing.

In sum, the early British colonial practices of Somali population control in the NFD through closed districts, movement passes, boundary drawing of designated grazing areas (and state violence as punishment for violations of these policies via arbitrary detention, physical violence, and livestock seizures), created a context in which negative, criminal narratives could be created about Somalis as further justification for their subjugation by the state (Whittaker, 2015). The forced villagization response to the Mau Mau rebellion was a further solidification of precedent for collective punishment and state violence as a government counterinsurgency response. Following Kenyan independence, the Kenyan ruling elite drew on this precedent and experience to implement similar counterinsurgency measures to suppress the Somali separatist movement in the north east during the *shifita* conflicts. The Kenyan government declared a state of emergency, established a zone of restricted movement along the Kenyan-

Somali border, required individuals to register and carry identification documentation, instituted curfews that restricted pastoral activities, and attempted to implement a forced villagization program to relocate the mobile pastoral Somali population into more easily controlled designated villages. Violations of these policies followed the same pattern as previous colonial era punishments of arbitrary detention, physical violence, and livestock seizures (Whittaker, 2012).

These replications and expansions of colonial state violence and collective punishment are visible today in Kenya's policies and attitude towards Dadaab and Somali refugees. Dadaab provides the Kenyan government with an opportunity to forcibly villagize a population of Somali refugees it views as a threat, using the structure of the international refugee regime and the resources of the humanitarian system to make this process more outwardly acceptable in its public transcript. To enforce this villagization, the Kenyan government continues to repeat patterns of state violence and collective punishment of Somalis within its borders, restricting the movement of refugees, requiring people to carry personal documents, extorting Somalis for cash bribes, and arbitrarily detaining and forcibly relocating people to Dadaab. Through this history of colonial and post-independence policy towards Somali pastoralists in Kenya, a direct line can be drawn to the Kenyan government's use of Dadaab as a social control and collective punishment strategy that actively contributes to the persistence of Dadaab.

VI. Hidden Tie: Informal Economies and the Garrison-Entrepôt

Dadaab is the largest economy in the NEP, yet, because most of the market activity occurring in Dadaab is considered informal, illegitimate, or illegal, the scale of its economy is hard to measure due to a lack of formally recorded indicators. However, a

2010 study suggested Dadaab contributed multi-millions of dollars annually to the regional economy (Rawlence, 2016). There is a lot of money to be made in Dadaab, by a variety of stakeholders ranging from refugees to Western aid agencies to private contractors, to Al-Shabaab funded smugglers and Kenyan government officials. This range of actors and systems reveals Dadaab to be a garrison-entrepôt as conceived by Roitman. Simply shutting Dadaab down would put a lot of people out of business and switch off the tap to major revenue streams for powerful actors. While the international refugee regime debates how to reach (seemingly impossible) durable solutions for the Somali refugees stuck in the PRS, Dadaab's markets still open for business every day, bribes are still paid, goods are still smuggled across the border, and government contracts are still awarded. Yet the scale and significance of these economic activities are not included in those high-level debates, creating a hidden tie that stems from the erasure of a large component of the reality of Dadaab and its persistence. The following section first discusses Dadaab's regional significance as a de facto city, highlighting how entrenched its local markets are, despite their informality and illegitimacy. Second, I detail how important Dadaab's persistence is to the surrounding host community's economic livelihoods. Lastly, this section discusses the rampant sugar smuggling trade from Somalia to Kenya, and how Dadaab plays a key role in the smuggling chain, solidifying its status as a garrison-entrepôt.

Regional Economic Significance

As a large regional population center (around 500,000 officially registered refugees at its peak in 2011, and about half that currently), Dadaab is home to major marketplaces and business opportunities where relative fortunes can be made. In a region

with few natural resources to speak of, there is opportunity in business and trade. However, the markets of Dadaab exist in a purely informal sphere due to the restrictions against refugees legally working in Kenya. Because of this informal status, there is limited formal data available, but a 2010 study sheds some light. At that time, before the sharpest point of influx of new arrivals during the 2011 famine emergency, there were around 5,000 businesses in the camp, with an annual sales turnover of approximately \$25 million. Dadaab's informal markets are a draw that has caused a significant in-migration to the area, and the nearby town of Dadaab has been transformed from a small village to a regional hub of travel and commerce where pastoralists can purchase food cheaply and sell livestock products to a large market (Enghoff *et al*, 2010 and Montclos and Kakwanja, 2000).

With its current population, Dadaab is ostensibly a city the size of Reno,¹⁰ and it feels like it too, boasting its own cinemas, soccer leagues, hotels, schools, and hospitals. Though the land Dadaab sits on officially belongs to the Kenyan government and is leased to the UNHCR, within the camp a bustling informal property market exists, in which the most powerful clans control the permits for the best marketplace stalls. Amongst these stalls, one can buy pretty much anything for the right price, either produced locally or brought in via Somalia. Even the construction contracts for camp expansion were for sale – Kenyan MPs personally profited from contracts to expand the camps during the 2011 emergency influx of refugees. They exerted their powers of government bureaucracy to delay the opening of the expanded Dadaab camps until their personal firms were awarded the contracts for camp expansion and building a new

¹⁰ Dadaab is about the size of Reno at its current population level. At its largest in 2011, its population size was more comparable to Sacramento or Kansas City.

UNHCR compound. Under pressure with the 2011 emergency, the UNHCR essentially had to give in to their demands and awarded the contracts (Rawlence, 2016).

All of this is to say – Dadaab is a de facto city in terms of size and economic impacts, but of course it cannot be truly called a city in its current form, with refugee residents under the pseudo-state governance of the humanitarian system, unable to move or work freely outside of the camp, and required to remain there in limbo for decades until a durable solution is found for them. But despite these contextual caveats of the encampment system, the sheer size of Dadaab in terms of population, marketplaces, and economic significance cannot be ignored despite their informal nature, and require deeper critical investigation in the face of blanket threats by then Kenyan government to close the camps outright. In the following section, two aspects will be explored in detail, the economic impact of Dadaab on the host community, and the economic importance of Dadaab in a large cross-border sugar smuggling scheme.

Host Community

The economic impact of Dadaab is not limited to refugees who receive aid and build businesses to make a living. The Kenyan host community in the area surrounding the camps also benefits immensely from the persistence of Dadaab, and their methods of earning a living have been significantly influenced by the camps and the ready availability of services and free or subsidized access to food from humanitarian organizations. The host community benefits from food relief, access to running water, electricity, education, health services, transport, communications, and a slaughterhouse, with the added benefit of these services and opportunities being relatively concentrated all near each other (Enghoff *et al*, 2010 and Montclos and Kakwanja, 2000). The total net

economic benefit for the host community is estimated at \$14 million annually. This estimate is based on lower costs of household supplies and sundry goods that have been smuggled into the camps; jobs brought to the host community; food aid subsidies (acquired illicitly, either via unauthorized re-sale or fraudulent possession of a refugee ration card); health and social services available to the host community because of Dadaab; and development projects brought to the area because of the camps (Enghoff *et al*, 2010).

In 2010 alone, donor states and NGOs invested some \$5.5 million in 12-15 local development initiatives. There are some 370 businesses in the town of Dadaab because of the existence of the camps, and 600-750 host community members have steady employment related to camp operations, while another 500 jobs are created for the local community through camp-related business enterprises. The ready availability of food aid via refugee ration cards can account for a subsidy worth about one third of the total average income for an individual host community member. As of 2010, there was estimated to be about 25,000 tons of smuggled goods imported into Dadaab annually, and the host community members benefit alongside the refugees from the lower prices of these goods compared to prices found in the rest of Kenya (Enghoff *et al*, 2010).

The host and refugee communities at Dadaab overlap in terms of Somali Muslim pastoralist culture and identity, sharing a common language, culture, and religion, as well as clan and sometimes sub-clan identities. Most are pastoralists, and have a collectivist approach to land and resources that transcends the international border. The largest component of host community income is pastoral production (through milk and livestock sales), and the camps provide major markets for these sales, since the refugees

themselves are not permitted to earn a living raising any livestock outside of the camps. These sales generate a huge purchasing power for the host community, generating \$3 million annually in income. While the host community generally views refugees as ‘getting the better deal’ through the provision of humanitarian aid, overall the positive economic impacts of the camps on the host community far outweighs any negatives stemming from tensions over humanitarian aid. All told, the total economic benefits of Dadaab for the host community in the NEP represent approximately 25% of average annual income per capita (Enghoff *et al*, 2010).

Overall, despite the informal nature of much of its economic opportunities, Dadaab’s persistence provides continued and consistent livelihoods for both the refugees living in the camps, and the host communities living in the surrounding area. Hart refers to this as “an island of regularity and predictability in a sea of ephemeral opportunities...the search for economic *form*, the search for the invariant in the variable, for rules and regularity in a world constituted by flux, emergence, informality” (Hart, 1973, 178). If Dadaab were to close, the people forcibly repatriated and the camps facilities closed or torn down, then local community would suffer harsh economic consequences.

Since the local community is primarily composed of Kenyan nationals who are ethnic Somalis, the Kenyan government may not be as fundamentally concerned with their well-being given their well-documented discriminatory attitude towards Somalis. However, from a national security perspective, it is demonstrably in Kenya’s interest to maintain Dadaab as an “island of regularity” providing economic opportunity (informal though it may be) for its citizens in the region in an effort to combat extremism that can

arise from extreme poverty, exclusion, and the chaos of forcibly displacing a large population. In Kenya, people are more likely to radicalize if they have been excluded by the host society. Western intelligence agencies confirm the theory that extremist recruitment in East Africa is not as dependent on cultural and religious factors as previously thought, and is much more dependent on socio-economic disadvantages and/or political exclusion (Anderson and McKnight, 2015). Thus, despite the Kenyan government's insistence that Dadaab poses a national security threat, in reality, closing Dadaab would pose a much greater risk of increasing extremist recruitment. The significant economic opportunities that Dadaab brings to the region are in fact a tool to combat extremism, and it is in Kenya's national security interest to maintain the "island of regularity" offered by Dadaab's informal markets, thus contributing to Dadaab's persistence.

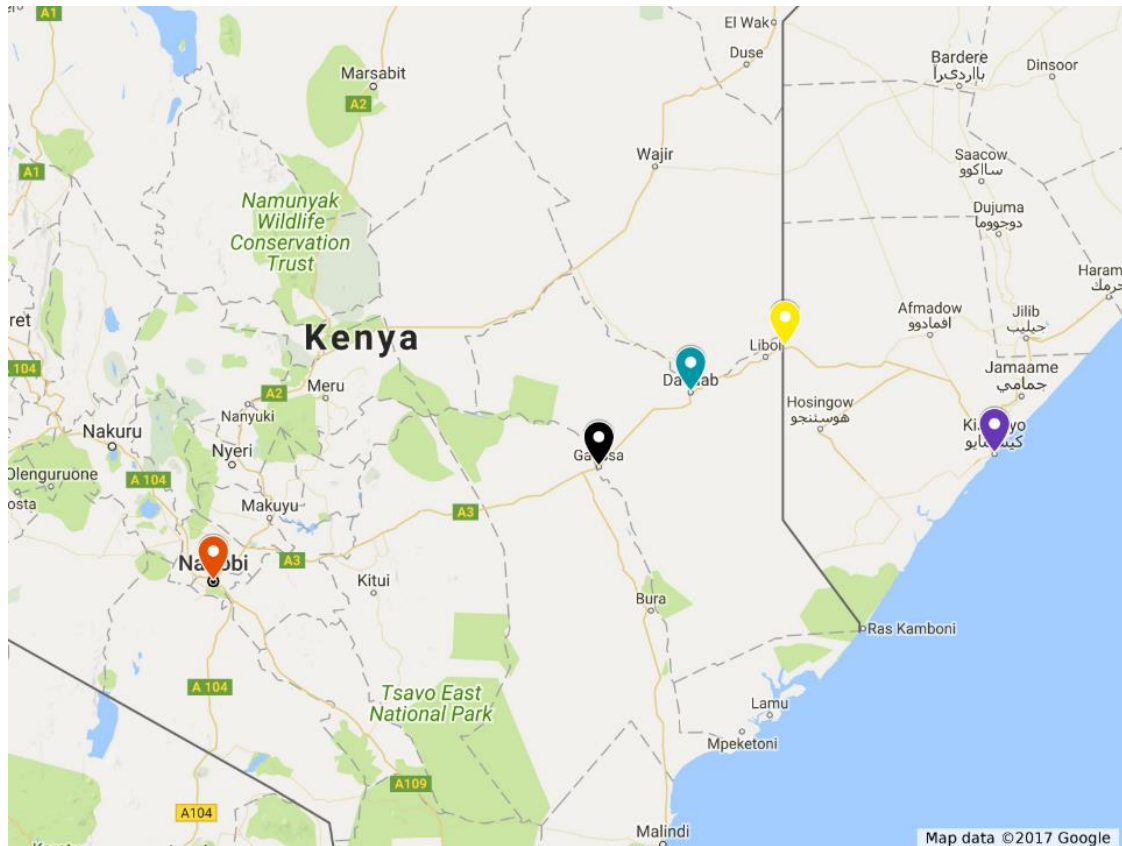
Dadaab as a Garrison-Entrepôt

In addition to being a bustling informal market with economic opportunity for refugees and Kenyans alike, Dadaab is also an important hub in an extensive sugar smuggling route from Somalia to Kenya – a cog in a complex system of unregulated trade constituting a garrison-entrepôt. Journalists for Justice (JFJ), a Kenyan NGO, produced a comprehensive report authored by Rawlence and anonymous (for personal safety) researchers in November 2015, based on in-person interviews, undercover investigation, and desk research, detailing the scope and implications of this smuggling ring. This report pulls back the curtain on previously rumored corruption extending high into the upper echelons of the Kenyan government that actively contributes to Dadaab's persistence. Over 3,000 tons of illegally imported sugar leave the Somali port of Kismayo





every week on trucks headed for Kenya, and merchants in Dadaab report hundreds of trucks loaded with sugar arriving every month. The reporting and research conducted by JFJ reveals a smuggling network comprised of a wide range of actors, including commanders of the KDF forces within the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), key officials in the Ministries of Defense, Immigration, and the State House, all benefiting from the protection of high ranking politicians (Rawlence and Anonymous, 2015). Dadaab's informal markets are an important piece of this multi-hundred-million dollar smuggling scheme that personally benefits the political elite of Kenya, and if Dadaab were to close, powerful pocketbooks would take a significant hit as a result.

To briefly summarize, the Kenyan Defense Forces (KDF) invaded Somalia in 2012 (ostensibly to fight al-Shabaab extremism in response to recent terrorist attacks inside Kenya), and drove Al-Shabaab out of the port of Kismayo (Branch, 2011). The KDF then took over the management of the port and adopted the illegal smuggling activities that had previously been carried out entirely by al-Shabaab. Up to 150,000 tons of sugar are illegally smuggled into Kenya through Kismayo, and through the management of this port the KDF earn millions of dollars per year as part of an illegal sugar trade network that generates \$200-\$400 million per year in illegal taxes. These funds are then divvied up amongst local Jubaland administrators, the KDF, and Al-Shabaab, and the report details a 'tacit cooperation' between the KDF and al-Shabaab. The Journalists for Justice report even goes so far as to assert that the smuggling trade is the entire reason that the KDF is in Somalia at all (Rawlence and Anonymous, 2015), though this claim has a conspiratorial bent that requires further investigation and corroboration to officially confirm.

Figure 4. Sugar smuggling route from Kismayo to Nairobi, as reported by JFJ



**Strategic Sugar Smuggling
Transactional Locations**

-  Kismayo
-  Dhobley
-  Dadaab
-  Garissa
-  Nairobi

The smuggled sugar avoids official state regulation and taxation, yet is still illegally taxed, some of which ends up in the pockets of state officials. Illegal taxes are collected at each step of its smuggling journey clear the path for safe transport into Kenya and then on to Dadaab or other locations. First, KDF and Jubaland officials levy a tax on imported sugar at \$2 per bag (totaling \$250,000 per week, or \$13 million per year). Next, Al-Shabaab taxes the sugar trucks as they leave Kismayo at \$1,050 per truck (totaling

\$230,000 per week, or \$12.2 million per year). The truck is then given a stamped receipt that allows it safe transit throughout the al-Shabaab controlled territory on the road to Kenya. When the trucks travel through Dhobley, a strategic Jubaland administrative town, the Jubaland administration levies a tax of Ksh60,000 (\$700) per truck. Finally, when the trucks arrive at Dadaab, they are taxed by police for an additional Ksh60,000 (\$700) per truck. At the border crossings, drivers report that the illicit taxes paid are all processed through agents who then ensure that all necessary police, customs, and politicians are appropriately paid off. JFJ reporters rode along on a sugar smuggling truck route, and the convoy of 13 trucks they were riding with was not stopped once because the smuggling network had already paid off everyone who may have stopped them (Rawlence and Anonymous, 2015). This web of actors conducting business outside the regulatory parameters of the state is a garrison-entrepôt as conceived by Roitman, operating as an informal, parallel economy. The garrison-entrepôt deprives the state of tax revenue streams, while simultaneously reifying state power through the enrichment of certain state officials, be they politicians, administrators, or KDF troops.

According to the flow of illegal taxes levied against the smuggled sugar on its journey from Kismayo to Kenya, 230 trucks per week calculates out to \$350,000 in revenue for the KFD per week, or \$17 million per year. This may seem a high price to pay for the transport of sugar, but the domestic shortfall of sugar production in Kenya makes the profit margins exceedingly worth these taxes for the smugglers. In Kenya, the domestic supply of sugar has been unable to meet demand, and there is a 200,000-ton shortfall that the legitimate sugar trade has been unable to meet. 230 trucks, each loaded down with 14 tons of sugar, travel from Kismayo to Kenya each week. This amounts to

2,940 tons per week, and 150,000 tons per year. This is a significant amount of the 200,000 ton shortfall in the domestic market, and with a *daily* value of almost \$1 million in sales revenue, real fortunes can be made in sugar smuggling that make the payoffs to the KDF, al-Shabaab, and Jubaland administrators a reasonable price to pay (Rawlence and Anonymous, 2015).

There is a 100% tariff on legitimately imported sugar, which creates the environment for these attractive profit margins. The JFJ report and Rawlence's research allege that this production shortfall and high import tariff is by design. High-ranking politicians who offer protection and tacit cooperation in this smuggling scheme are always in need of campaign funds, and are known to use their political influence to keep borders closed, legal sugar import taxes high, and protection in place for police and customs agents who facilitate the sugar flow, all in exchange for campaign funding from sugar smuggling barons (Rawlence, 2016; Financial Mail, 2014; and Jubat, 2013). For example, in the 2013 election, Evans Kidero, a former managing director of Mumias (Kenya's largest sugar producer), was elected mayor of Nairobi. A newspaper report that was too dangerous for the journalist to formally publish was leaked, claiming that he purchased the nomination and election by purposely slowing sugar production at Mumias in order to get money into the right hands via the sugar smuggling networks (Rawlence, 2016).

Dadaab's role in this garrison-entrepôt is critical. Dadaab traders in the Ifo camp report 160 trucks coming through the camp per month, and 100 trucks per month coming into both Dagahaley and Hagadera, for a total of 360 trucks per month into Dadaab (Rawlence and Anonymous, 2015). According to the calculation of 14 tons per truck, this

means 5,040 tons per month, or 60,480 tons per year, come into Dadaab from Somalia – a full 40% of total tonnage of sugar illegally imported into Kenya via Kismayo. If 40% of all illegally imported sugar is distributed and sold via Dadaab, then 40% of all the illegal taxes assessed on smuggled sugar is tied up in Dadaab's persistence. Applying this 40% to the total taxes levied (\$200-\$400 million annually), Dadaab's role in the sugar trade is worth somewhere between \$80-\$160 million annually in illegal taxes to the KDF, al-Shabaab, and Jubaland administrators. This calculated worth captures illegal taxes alone but, though it is impossible to accurately calculate the combined daily value of illegal sugar sales that make the sugar smugglers their millions and the back-door campaign funding deals, it is safe to say that these transactions make Dadaab's markets an extremely valuable transactional space. These hidden aspects of the garrison-entrepôt are an opportunity for further study by scholars and investigative reporters to reveal the full scope of these hidden transactions. Through the garrison-entrepôt, Dadaab's facilitates fortunes in the hundreds of millions of dollars, thus further contributing to Dadaab's persistence.

While it may be useful for political narratives preceding an election to make threats to close Dadaab in the name of national security (Beck, 2016 and Craig, 2016), actually closing Dadaab in reality would mean attacking the garrison-entrepôt, and disrupting informal but extremely significant flows of capital for politicians, Kenyan security forces, and al-Shabaab. Disrupting these funding streams would arguably be counter-productive to national security, since al-Shabaab would be left to find other means of maintaining power and control over their territories. It would be similarly counter-productive for politicians seeking re-election, since their campaign funding deals

with sugar smugglers would surely be impacted if Dadaab and its markets were to actually close. These dynamics are a strong indicator of why Dadaab persists.

In sum, Dadaab's economic significance stems from its sheer size in terms of both population and informal market opportunities, its impact on the host community, and its critical role in the sugar smuggling garrison-entrepôt. These factors are largely unstudied due to their informal nature, yet these hidden ties still actively contribute to Dadaab's persistence through the complex web of informal economic activities that enrich powerful actors and reify state power. Unless these informal economic activities are further studied by academics and reported on by journalists, the same ineffective strategies for negotiating durable solutions will continue – leaving the residents of Dadaab in limbo for even longer.

VII. Significance of Hidden Ties

Through a framing of hidden transcripts and hidden informal economies, I identified two hidden ties that, though understudied, contribute to Dadaab's persistence. By delving deeper into the hidden tie of social control and domination, I show that the strategies of state violence and collective punishment employed by the Kenyan state against Somali refugees are both an expression of a hidden transcript of resistance against the hegemonic Global North, and a direct inheritance of British colonialism. After independence, Kenya became the dominator of Somalis while still maintaining its status as subordinate to colonial structures, and in the same way, the Kenyan state today plays both the dominator of refugees and the subordinate of the hegemonic Global North. This legacy has translated into the replication and expansion of specific strategies of state

violence and collective punishment carried out by the Kenyan state against Somali refugees in order to express power and resistance against the dominate Global North.

While the context I examine is specific to Kenya and Dadaab, since 84% of refugees are hosted in the Global South, the pattern of colonial influence on current state practice in former colonial territories is not unique (UNHCR Global Trends, 2016). For example, another regional context that could benefit from this approach of studying colonial legacies and their implications on current state practice towards refugees is the revolving door of refugee crises in the African Great Lakes region (Burundi, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania). This entire region is still mired in complex conflicts that cause large flows of refugees and IDPs, and delving into possible implications and replications of former colonial practices in these PRS contexts could provide more nuanced insight into the continued causes of refugee flows.

Colonial influences on practices of social control are an important contextual nuance that needs to be brought to the surface in the study of PRS, and doing so will hopefully encourage the donor states of the Global North to acknowledge their complicity in the creation of PRS and their responsibility to commit funds to refugee aid, increase resettlement slots, and/or participate in meaningful negotiations for PRS resolutions. At the very least, further study of colonial legacies of social control in PRS contexts will reveal more transparent and less whitewashed regional and global histories from which policy makers can draw to make informed decisions.

Through a framing of informal economies and the military-commercial nexus known as the garrison-entrepôt, I explore the true economic significance and impact of Dadaab. Dadaab's markets are largely an informal economy (both because Kenya does

not allow refugees to hold formal employment, and because of the volume of illegally smuggled sundry goods for sale), and consequently its size and reach are largely unmeasured. This paper presents the existing data on Dadaab's economic reach to illustrate why it is so important to continue studying and measuring informal economic activity surrounding refugee camps. Dadaab is a regional informal economic power center, a garrison-entrepôt that enriches and strengthens the state despite the informal economy's circumvention of regulatory authorities and formal taxes. Somali refugee residents are able to build livelihoods in Dadaab, creating vast markets where almost anything can be bought and sold. The host community benefits immensely from Dadaab's aid and development funding, as well as access to its markets for livestock sales. Private businesses earn millions of dollars annually through the illegal sugar trade, financing political campaigns and lining the pockets of influential government officials (Rawlence, 2016). All of these factors certainly contribute to Dadaab's persistence, yet these significant transactions are not typically included in debates about PRS and Dadaab.

Without following the trail of unregulated and informal economic activities, it is impossible to know whose interests are truly at stake when negotiating solutions for PRS, making it that much more difficult to reach politically feasible compromises that could lead to durable solutions. This model of studying previously un-measured impacts of informal economic power centers in Dadaab will be useful for investigating the persistence of long-term refugee camps and PRS in other contexts. For example, the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan, founded in 2012 and home to almost 80,000 Syrian refugees, has developed its own web of informal and black-market economies (Johnson,

2013 and Guttman, 2016). These economic activities surely have an impact on the surrounding region and therefore have real world policy implications. By studying the camp as an informal economic power center, some of these impacts can be revealed. This method develops more complete understandings of systems of actors, interests, and regional power relations than the typical study of refugee camps through an emergency, humanitarian aid lens, and thus provides policy-makers with a more complete picture of a PRS's contextual complexities. Further, by revealing the true economic scope and scale of long-term refugee camps, host states could potentially be motivated by the prospect of a larger tax base and increased revenues to take steps towards refugee integration through the formalization of refugee labor and market activities.

VIII. Conclusion

To return to my research question – why do PRS and long-term refugee camps persist, despite being temporary, emergency measures? In Dadaab's context, long-term encampment is seemingly an undesirable solution for most actors involved - the refugees face daily struggles to survive, the UNHCR is extremely overburdened, Kenya protests the burdens of hosting, and the long-term existence of the camp is an undesirable outcome on the international refugee regime's record. But yet the camp persists, over a quarter century past its founding.

In the case of Dadaab, hidden ties can be identified that are not accounted for in the literature or conventional wisdom. Using the frame of hidden transcripts and informal economies, I have identified two hidden ties that contribute to Dadaab's persistence: the colonial legacy of social control and domination in Kenya, and the unmeasured significance of Dadaab as an informal economic power center. A hidden transcript of

dominant/subordinate power relations between the Hegemonic Global North and the post-colonial states that host most of the world's refugees reveals a hidden tie of colonial legacies of social control and domination. These legacies include replications and expansions of state violence and collective punishment of Somalis in Kenya by the state. This replication and expansion of colonial practices has a direct connection to the contemporary Kenyan state's discriminatory practices towards Somali refugees and policies of forced encampment, thus contributing to Dadaab's persistence.

Secondly, by analyzing Dadaab as an informal economy, it can be classified as a garrison-entrepôt as conceived by Roitman: an important hub of unregulated economic activity for a diverse system of actors located at a military-commercial nexus. By studying the realities of Dadaab's economic impacts on the region due to the size of its markets, its large population concentration, its benefits for the host community, and its essential role in a complex sugar smuggling trade, the second hidden tie that contributes to Dadaab's persistence is revealed: Dadaab's importance as an informal economic power center. Dadaab persists because if it were to close or be shut down, not only would the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of refugees and host community members be decimated, but powerful government officials and campaign donors would lose a significant funding stream that flows through Dadaab via smuggled sugar.

These two hidden ties reveal avenues of further study not only for Dadaab, but also for other PRS and long-term refugee camps. Revealing colonial legacies of social control and the correlations to current host-state practices will serve to remove historical whitewashing, and potentially motivate greater responsibility from donor states in the Global North. While most discussions of refugee camps are from an emergency,

humanitarian aid lens, investigating and measuring the economic significance of long-term refugee camps as informal economic power centers provides a deeper understanding of systems of regional power relations. The revelation of previously hidden economic activities could also potentially motivate host states to adopt policies of refugee integration because of the prospect of a larger tax base and increased revenues. Investigating these two hidden ties contributes to a more contextually nuanced understanding of actors and their interests in PRS contexts, and it is essential that policy makers and power brokers understand these contexts in order to negotiate practical, feasible resolutions for PRS.

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