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Chapter 2

SOMALIA'S INSECURITY AND THE NORMALISATION OF VIOLENCE

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INTRODUCTION

Today, impressions of Somalia are dominated by the threat to international shipping off the Somali coastline. Fundamental problems such as recent droughts, rising food prices,[1] the highest rate of malnutrition in the world, 3.2 million inhabitants being dependent on food aid and over one million displaced people are largely ignored (International Crisis Group (ICG) 2008 and Møller 2009). Periodically escalating levels of violence attracts some international interest but this tends to concentrate upon the acts themselves. That excessive violence, like the preceding issues, is systematic of much deeper problems is rarely acknowledged. Instead, perceptions are dominated by photographic images of attacks like Black Hawk Down, the 1993 killing, castration and gauging of Pakistani United Nations soldiers and equally snapshot populist reasoning. Alongside reporting and analysis, humanitarian goals,[2] interwoven within Western intervention, have tended to expand 'the pervasive image of Somalia as a barbarian nation' (Lauderdale and Toggia 1999: 158). Violence in Somalia is dismissed as tribal, an inevitable outcome of a 'failed state' and uncontrollable savages. Little or no attempt is made to question whether recent levels of violence are reflective of Somali history. Yet as Samatar (1992: 629) asks, 'since the lineage system has been part of Somali social organisation for centuries, why has this society not engaged in nihilistic fratricide before?'

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[1] In 2008 essential commodities, such as rice, rose between 110 and 375 per cent (ICG 2008 and Møller 2009).

[2] This is not to deny the role of food relief although the accompanying 'war economy' and manner in which food was allocated, and protection arranged, contributed to further divisions, rewards for warlords and widespread militarization (Stratford 1995).

Equally, the focus upon actions rather than longer term processes means that there is a lack of understanding about how and why contemporary forms of violence became widespread, normalised within certain social dispositions and behaviours. In his analysis of development in Africa, Chabal (1992: 51) argues that there is a requirement 'to ground political analysis of contemporary events in the deep history of Africa – that is, the history which reconnects the present with the colonial and precolonial past.' When seeking to explain the partial accounts within Somalia, Samatar (1992: 625) suggests that 'One of the casualties of the gruesome nightmare that is gripping Somalia has been the capacity to think historically and systematically about the nature of the malady.' Analysis is further complicated by the growing visibility of more radical forms of Islam which have led to conflict over religious and secular interpretations. Subsequently the region has been discussed within the broader 'war on terror' amidst, as yet unfounded, concerns that the country is vulnerable to the penetration by al-Qa'ida.[3] Again though, these fears indicate a snapshot approach and neglect the longer term transformations of Islam within Somalia, the underlying reasons for wider levels of activist adherence and varying incorporations of other forms of beliefs that include spirits and witchcraft.

In this chapter, the transformation of violence in Somalia is explored alongside concomitant shifting levels of insecurity and social constraint. Key historical, regional, national and international factors behind Somalia's structural weaknesses are examined. It is argued that shifting levels of social and individual constraints and the weakening and discarding of other forms of social controls have contributed to the diminution of levels of pacification and the normalisation of violence. These factors help to explain the recent pragmatic popularity of Islamic courts and institutions that have contributed to some degrees of security and predictability. Consequently I am not challenging the perception that Somalia faces considerable challenges with violence endemic. I am, however, seeking to embed these forms of violence within longer term social and political processes. Unfortunately the identification of the deep rooted nature of many of today's problems does not provide easy solutions. On the contrary, this analysis suggests that isolated acts of aid and/or intervention will not address the causes of violence over the longer term and acknowledges that the various attempts at state-building have ultimately proved detrimental. Nevertheless, addressing the fundamental problems facing Somalia can only become a possibility, however distant, when the long standing complexities are acknowledged.

VIOLENCE: BLENDING THE PAST AND PRESENT

Recent periodic bursts of Western media portrayals of Somalia tend to be dominated by piracy, violence, famine and increasingly the rise of militant Islam. The association of the

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[3] Bryden (2003), Marchal (2004) and Menkhaus (2003) point out that despite the lawlessness there has been little evidence for such links. International terror groups find the terrain inhospitable. Furthermore, the likelihood of extortion, threats, betrayal and limited endorsement of militant strands of Islam means that 'external' terror groups would not be secure. Certainly there are Islamic groups within Somalia that have adopted terror tactics and some foreign fighters have been reported although not on a large-scale. Nevertheless the indigenous groups tend to have local agendas and have little connection with al-Qa'ida's trans-nationalism. This is not to say that this will not occur in the future with American actions continuing to contribute to the mobilisation of more radical forms of opposition.

region with Islam is long standing and can be traced to the 9th century. Connections to conflict are also well established as Lewis' (1961) references to accounts of Somali warriors bravery and daring in the 14th century when battling Abyssinian Christians indicate. In the 15th and 16th centuries, during the rule of the Audal Kingdom, the region became part of the Islamic 'Golden Age.' This era was to become known as 'one of the greatest and most powerful Islamic states that existed in the Horn of Africa' (Mansur 1995: 121). Despite the subsequent decline in the fortunes of Muslim Empires, historical memories remain of periods of dominance and collective strength. For Somalis, these memories were retained within oral storytelling alongside the belief that Somali identity was 'maintained through constant struggle' (Ahmed 1996: 136).

The legacy of this early exposure to Somalis and accounts of violence in conflicts remains today. Impressions of Somali savagery began to permeate Western accounts and have rarely been subsequently challenged. On the contrary a continuum of brutality is discernible as subsequent interactions are viewed through the orientalist lens which in turn is magnified by what is partially witnessed. Broader, balanced perspectives, particularly within media and political, and on occasion academic, discussions are conspicuous by their absence. Thus today, Somalis are considered to be 'natural born-guerrillas', 'natural fighters' for whom 'it is second nature to surround and ambush effectively.'[4] Following the intervention of the United Nations in the early 1990s and subsequent descent into violence and chaos, Peterson (2001: 153) suggests that 'every soldier was convinced that Somalis were naturally violent.' As a departing intelligence officer informed him, 'We should have left them. They are happiest when they are shooting each other. For us that is barbaric, but here it's okay.'

Nevertheless, if we look beyond these dominant images of 'natural' savagery, the same peoples have also been imposing social constraints upon the use of violence and allocation of scarce resources within, and frequently between, clans. Family and clan loyalties were, and remain, extremely important, codes of conduct to protect individuals were well embedded, access to land and water was negotiated, the extent of hostilities was limited by deterrents, peacemakers were valued, essential members of clans, and clan relations were frequently based upon alliances and traditional rules (Bakonyi and Stuvøy 2005, Peterson 2001). Intra and inter clan councils had long been established to settle social, political and economic matters (Lewis 1988). Such practices and associated behaviour rarely feature within accounts of Somali life. This is not to declare that violence between Somalis was not prominent because relations were marked by both negotiation and conflict. The brutal environment and sparse resources meant that conflict was often inevitable in the fight for survival. Again though, it is important to note levels of constraint. Peterson (2001: 9) draws upon examples from oral history that promote the virtues of harmony over discord, exemplified by the proverb 'War results in the death of a son, but not the birth of one.' Contrary to popular depictions, excessive brutality was unusual, a consequence, Peterson (2001) argues, of the shifting balances of dominance and the fear of retaliation in kind. He also reports upon narrative from the past that refers to 'unsanctioned violence' and the fear of a curse upon those who perpetrated cruelty and which would result in punishment from Allah. Furthermore, the principle of blood money and the imposition of compensation for killing provide effective constraints that operate as a form of conflict resolution and reduce the

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[4] US Ambassador Smith Hempstone and scholar on Somali, John Drysdale, are quoted within discussions with Peterson (2001: 53; 77 respectively).

probability of retaliation. This applies both within and between clans with precedent based laws established that have been retained through oral transmission (Lewis 1988). In other words prior to colonialism, forms of social constraint were embedded within Somali relations which helped govern activities and restrict violations. The extensive, inter-generational development and transmission of these codes of conduct meant that they were internalised as forms of individual restraint.

Colonialism

The scramble for Africa formerly entered what is today Somalia in the late 19th century. The northern region was established as a protectorate in what was to become known as British Somaliland. In 1925 Italy colonised the southern area and this became Italian Somaliland. Events surrounding colonisation will be discussed elsewhere in this book and it is not the intention here to examine in detail. Instead the primary interest is upon the immediate and longer term impact of colonisation upon levels of constraint and violence. Nevertheless a brief discussion of colonial requirements is required.

Following the British intervention, conflict quickly became prominent, led most notably by Sayyid Mohamed Abdullah Hasan. He and his followers, overwhelmingly of the Darod clan and Dulbahante sub-clan,[5] reclaimed the Ogaden region from Ethiopia and its Emperor Menelik II. In Britain, Hassan, derisively nicknamed the 'mad mullah,' was to become notorious, for the manner and duration of the struggle against the British.[6] When the resistance was finally defeated over twenty years later, around one third of the Somali population had died. These were either casualties in fighting or the result of mass starvation during a period that became known as the 'Time for Eating Filth' (Peterson 2001: 10). The magnitude of the challenge, ongoing resentment and fear of attacks meant that Britain was cautious about investing heavily in the protectorate. By comparison, Italy sought to use Italian Somaliland and neighbouring Ethiopia and Eritrea as examples of its emerging power. For Fox (1999) the Italians' therefore adopted a more militant approach towards the indigenous population.[7] Southern Somalia therefore became more explicitly colonised than the northern region. Significant numbers of Italians migrated and bureaucracy, transport and communication infrastructures and agricultural base were developed. One of the consequences of this became particularly noticeable when, in 1960, both regions were united within the newly independent Somalia. Considerable, obvious disparities existed between the agriculture and economic development of the two regions. This was to become the basis for considerable resentment yet it is the 'richer' south where violence was to be most transformed and embedded.

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[5] Menkhaus (2002) notes how the resistance was also beset and weakened by clannism.

[6] Lewis (1988: 91) emphasises the legacy of Hasan and conflict against the British. The 'vain struggle had left in the Somali consciousness an ideal of patriotism which would never be effaced and which was to inspire later generations of his countrymen.' For Hanley (2004) and Peterson (2001), the standard for fighting spirit associated with Hasan was to influence subsequent generations.

[7] Although Fox (1999) does acknowledge that the British became more actively involved following the war with Hasan and in the 1930s when Italian interests became pervasive.

Colonialism also had other, perhaps less obvious, consequences which remain fundamental to understanding post independence shifts in violent behaviour. Kibble (2001: 11) outlines how,

> The colonial imposition of artificial boundaries, Western judicial systems, and centralized government disrupted traditional grazing patterns as well as the authority structures and thereby the equilibrium of clans and management of resources … political leadership altered from regulating kin relations and entitlements to pastoral resources, to regulating access to the political and economic benefits of the state.

Shifting social relations were further influenced by growing urbanisation and the commercialisation of the pastoral economy which resulted in exports in livestock. At one level this improved the balance of payments and incomes for many of those involved. On the reverse, the fragile coping strategies for addressing the scarcity of resources were adversely affected with animals leaving the 'food chain' and the regulation of water and land less equitable. The increased trade was to enhance the wealth and status of merchants and the power balance changed at the expense of pastoralists and an increasingly marginalised rural population.

One Somalia, Many Somalis?

Prior to colonialism, Somalis shared common language, culture and Islamic beliefs of the Sunni denomination. As Meredith (2006: 464) states,

> Unlike most African states, Somalia embarked on independence with a strong sense of national identity …. Yet, by one of those cruel twists of fate that occurred so often during the Scramble for Africa in the nineteenth century, the Somali nation was carved up into five separate territories.

Following the imposed division of the Somalis, Møller (2009) suggests it was hardly surprising that since formation the Somali nation-state has been irredentist. The desire for a 'Greater Somalia' is noticeable in the national flag which was introduced at independence and incorporated a five-pointed star. The points represented former British Somaliland and Italian Somalia, discussed above, Djibouti, the Ogaden province of Ethiopia and northern eastern Kenya.[8] Since then, there have been periodic demands and actions undertaken on behalf of achieving 'Greater Somalia.' Saideman (1998) however points out that levels of irredentism have varied considerably over the different 'lost territories.' The Ogaden region, as I discuss below, has remained contentious while efforts on behalf of Somalis in Kenya and Djibouti have been much less concerted. Unsurprisingly levels of empathy within Somalia are related to shared clan loyalties with the neighbouring 'exiles' and their geographical proximity.

Nonetheless there is a danger that Somali commonalities can be overstated and even idealised. Stevenson (2007: 10) declares, 'most Somalis are paradoxically nationalistic as well as clan orientated.' For Ahmed the confusions around identification (1995: 141) stem

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[8] Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya had been French, Italian and British colonies respectively.

from the perception of Somalia as being '*in* Africa but not *of* Africa' and 'not enough Arab and not enough African.' Amongst perceptions of differences, allegiances to clans and sub-clans are obvious, cross cutting loyalties that can, and do, weaken the possibilities for a dominant Somali collective identification while becoming the basis for clan violence. However this 'conflict based upon clan' (Ahmed and Green 1999: 114) argument is also problematic, providing a 'one-dimensional exploration' (ibid.) that confuses the symptoms of state collapse with causes. Such approaches cannot account for the complexities and vicissitudes within Somali relations and activities and resource derived motivations. For example, President Barré's (1969-1991) later policies favoured particular clans who were allowed to seize farm land in southern Somalia that had been controlled by other, less powerful kinship groups. Similarly the subsequent association between warlords and clans and seemingly indiscriminate violence was also heavily directed towards fighting for resources. Thus what at first glance can be explained as inter clan conflict fails to acknowledge the underlying ethnic and economic issues (Cassanelli 1996, Menkhaus and Craven 1996). In other words, much of the violence has been about power, land and related resources. Certainly clans are collective resources that are mobilised towards these ends but kinship alone fails to explain the aims for conflict.

Furthermore, differences extend way beyond clan and sub-clan lineages. Throughout the region's history it has been exposed to exogenous influences whose impact has often been restricted to different localities with several Islamic orders prominent. Today the increasing presence of the more rigid forms of literalist *Wahhabism* is at odds with the more distinctively Somali forms of *Sufi* Islam. The presence of large 'minority' groups is also overlooked. This is most noticeable with the 'Bantu,' who are descendents of slaves and encounter racism from other Somalis. Racism is certainly instrumental within social relations and Besteman (1999) has argued that race was a fundamental cause within the civil war, leading to the destruction of the Jubba Valley farmers. Again though there is a danger of over relying upon one factor. Like elsewhere, other issues were instrumental in events of the Jubba Valley, including agricultural resources, government policies, levels of power and clans.

Cultural beliefs and behaviour also need to be taken into consideration. For example, Arab culture is more noticeable within northern regions which, at a pragmatic level, are closer to Arabia (Marchal 2004). This region is also less developed and urbanised than the south with the pastoral way of life continuing to be the main mode of production. One of the reasons for this, Marchal suggests, can be traced to the British attempt to minimise disruption to the social fabric of their protectorate in Somaliland (discussed above). By comparison, in the south, agro-pastoralists are more noticeable with different social structures and historical influences. For example, travellers from Persia, Yemen, Oman and the Zanzibar Sultanate have all been prominent across the coastal regions. Thus the boundaries for ethnic and clan identities are blurred and certainly not homogenous. These differences were to become magnified following independence and further diminution of constraints and mutual empathy.

Post Colonial - Independence

With the formal end of colonialism in 1960, Somalia like other newly emerging nation-states had to transform colonial arrangements into its own government, armed and police

forces, bureaucracy and economic systems. Despite the preceding preparatory period the withdrawal of the colonialists caused immediate problems, not least because they had held the most responsible jobs. Education and training for the indigenous population had been restricted to administrative and low-level technical occupations. Abdi (1998) comments upon how the restrictions imposed upon levels of education reflect the inconsistencies within colonialism and the project to 'civilise'. Instead of utilising education as a means of contributing towards personal and social development and critical citizenship, opportunities for education were severely restricted in Italian Somaliland. Those Somalis who were able to attend school could not reach beyond grade 7. For Abdi (1998: 331) the restriction exemplifies that 'the essence of that education ultimately fulfils the real objectives of imperialism.' Within the legal system, Lauderdale and Toggia (1999) detail how colonialism sought to shift responsibility from the long standing 'dia-paying' group to culpable individuals. Consequently at independence few Somalis were able to work within the centralised administration systems. The contemporary consequences of these changes in constraint are discussed below.

The immediate outcome of these restrictions in government, bureaucracy, armed forces and education was that the Somali populace lacked experience and expertise in providing governance, security and strategic development. These were areas that groups struggling for independence such the Somali Youth Club and Somali Youth League (Laitin and Samatar 1987) had been seeking to address. And like elsewhere in Africa, Somalia sought to generate national consciousness within the newly formed national boundaries while simultaneously overcoming tribal loyalties which were considered to be detrimental to broader allegiances.[9] Yet the nation-state lacked an effective and widespread infrastructure with which to achieve this. Little or no attention was placed upon the extent that the construction of the unified and organised Somali central state and its post colonial continuation was the result of the (former) colonial powers (Lauderdale and Toggia 1999). In other words, like many new nation-states, Somalia was emerging within boundaries and structures, systems and relations that had often been imposed or certainly had not evolved through indigenous interactions.

In a common development, education was to be integral to the Somali collective identification. Following on from the establishment, under UN Trusteeship (1950-60),[10] of more modern education facilities and systems, mass education was heavily promoted as a significant means for socio-economic advancement (Abdi 1998). Pupil enrolment rose dramatically. Yet pupils were largely taught in the old colonial languages of English and Italian and these were only ~~to be~~ replaced following the 1969 coup.

Post Colonial Coup and 'Tribalism Divides'

Hopes were initially high that independence would result in a prosperous Somalia and democracy and freedom of expression would flourish.[11] Expectations rapidly dissipated as

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[9] Hanley (2000: 125) when discussing the newly formed Youth League states that for the group, 'no more would there be *tribes* of which to be proud to kill for or ashamed to die for, only one united Somali people.'

[10] UN involvement was part of the process of preparing for independence.

[11] There was considerable interest in democratic politics and political and personality differences resulted in a proliferation of parties. For example, the last multi-party elections held before the 1969 coup were contested by

elected politicians utilised their positions for personal gain and politics tended to be divided according to clans and sub-clans. Hostilities between the north and southern regions quickly emerged and the hasty state expansion provided opportunities for personal and clan advancement and exclusion (Kibble 2001). Growing levels of dissatisfaction with the post 1960 governments allied to concerns about heightening tribal tensions meant that when, in 1969, the military intervened, it was widely welcomed. Led by the new President, General Mohamed Siyad Barré, 'scientific socialism' was introduced with support from the Soviet Union. The new regime sought to modernise the country and integrate the traditional clan structure within modern state apparatus. A popular slogan of the time was 'socialism unites, tribalism divides' (Ahmed and Green 1999: 117).[12] In the early stages of Barré's leadership, serious attempts were made at incorporating different clans within power relations. As part of the wider approach at modernisation, religious influence, although not prominent, was further reduced and elements of social cohesion weakened (Bakonyi and Stuvøy 2005, Marchal 2004). A policy of Somalization of education, government and bureaucracy accompanied by massive literacy programmes was also introduced with impressive short term gains in the rates of literacy both in urban and rural areas. In the process the Somali language became formally and informally embedded within state and social communication. This could have been an important step towards the solidification of national consciousness. But when faced with drought, food shortages and mounting economic and political difficulties, the government resorted to the tactics of tribal manipulation that had been so prominent in the build-up to the military coup (Lyons and Samatar 1995).

When encountering these multiple problems Barré revived the long standing irredentist goal of pan-Somalia and attacked Ethiopia ostensibly to re-claim the Ogaden region. The 1977-8 war proved ill-fated and when the Soviet Union chose to support Ethiopia defeat was inevitable. Ethiopian victory was humiliating for Barré. Both his credibility and irredentism on which he had sought to mobilise support, in part to offset internal problems, were badly undermined. National pride was severely dented, leaving limited options for popular mobilisation and collective consciousness. Weakened by the war the region also had to face the consequences of the arrival of at least 1.3 million ethnic Somali refugees from Ethiopia, placing even further strain upon the scarce resources. From this point, considerably less attention was directed towards national development and learning opportunities were to contract. Literacy rates decreased from 55% in the mid 1970s to 24% in 1990. Inter-relationships deteriorated further following an attempted coup by dissident military officers in 1978. In response, the government sought to destroy internal enemies and in the process reward, through various means, those clans deemed loyal. Nepotism and corruption became rife and connected into clan based politics and preferential access to resources. The declining economy deteriorated still further as repression and corruption became increasingly pervasive, contributing to rising costs and reducing opportunities. With the crisis in the formal economy, the informal economy thrived (Marchal 1996). Systems of extortion became more prominent and the lack of state control contributed to greater reliance on weapons. Lacking any formal guarantees within business arrangements, individuals chose to undertake business with those they most trusted and who tended to belong to the same clans or sub-

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over sixty parties (Ahmed and Green 1999). The extensive array of parties did not however contribute to vibrant, informed and progressive politics.

[12] Barré's interest in lessening the role of clans within politics, Saideman (1998) suggests, may have stemmed from his own clan being relatively small with limited appeal.

clans (Bakonyi and Stuvøy 2005). Unintentionally this contributed to greater onus upon clan affiliations, fear or distrust of others and reduced social interactions.

To try maintain power, the tactic of 'divide and conquer' was widely implemented by the government and large sectors of the population were blatantly excluded or suppressed. Over the longer term these policies contributed to growing resentments across Somalia that would be released during the 1990s (Abdi 1998, Gundel 2002). And although widespread violence only reached global prominence in the 1990s, political violence was noticeable in the immediate aftermath of the defeat over Ogaden. After the 1978 failed coup, the Somali Salvation Democratic Front formed and commenced guerrilla warfare. The government responded with further repression and reprisals upon the clan that was deemed guilty by association. Throughout the 1980s a number of opposition movements emerged, frequently using violence as a strategy and often connected by clan loyalties. Clan allegiance was further strengthened by government attempts to manipulate inter clan rivalries (Ahmed and Green 1999). In the northern towns, the number of deaths was estimated at approximately 100,000 as the government systematically attacked the civilian population, most notoriously through repeated bombing runs on Hargeisa, where the Isaaq clan were targeted. Soldiers were also encouraged to loot and sell their 'booty.' This hitherto little known strategy quickly became widely practised by the soldiers and was subsequently replicated by other armed groups (Peterson 2001).

During this period, the loss of livestock has been assessed at around 50% of the total and crops and water supplies were also deliberated destroyed or sabotaged.[13] Due to the extent of the conflict, trade within the north largely subsided. In the south, the establishment of state farms, new registration laws and land speculating by powerful groups and individuals, who were close to the government, resulted in displacement, threatened livelihoods and further fractures in the fragile social fabric and resource allocation (Menkhaus and Craven 1996). Finally, across the country, central authorities were absent from the massive refugee camps. In the camps the threat of attack and heightened insecurities were particularly noticeable. Violence and lawlessness became normalised with the proliferation of weapons and limited social constraints.

Descent and the New World Order

Following the 1991 demise of the Barré regime, restraints were further weakened when the associated forms of repression, that had been necessary for prolonging the period of power, disappeared. In these environments the removal of state controls and preceding destruction or weakening of traditional constraints contributed to the country descending into civil war. Fighting was widespread, much of the capital Mogadishu and key infrastructural facilities such as generators, refineries, bridges and telecommunications were destroyed. Agricultural land in southern Somalia was further laid to waste and an estimated one to two million people were displaced (Menkhaus 2000) with around a quarter of a million leaving rural areas for Mogadishu. Initially Abdi (1998) argues, the descent into civil war was driven by competing warlords with designs on obtaining power. Menkhaus (2003) details how, at this phase, warfare was largely inter-clan. Large lineage groups, the Darood and Hawiye

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[13] The devastating 1991-92 famine should therefore have been anticipated.

fought, but militias within the clans operated independently and coordination of attacks was lacking. Consequently constraints upon soldiers were also limited and atrocities were committed, most notably massacres and rape against civilians of enemy or weaker clans. As Marchal (2004: 122) remarks, 'old traditional bonds among the urban population collapsed, armed youth were flooding the capital city and one could witness the violent outbreak of all kinds of social and economic contradictions within the population.'

Feelings of insecurity affected all society and signs of Islamic behaviour became more widespread as the conditions and emotions led to people searching for solace and salvation. Initially, however as Marchal (2004) explains, the extent of Islamification was not simply the outcome of processes of radicalisation but was heavily pragmatic. For example, Western clothing was associated with wealth so people chose other forms of attire, including religious, to try reduce the likelihood of being robbed and/or attacked. Moreover, although the fighters or 'bandits' disliked Islamists, they were superstitious and believed that God could retaliate if they attacked his devout followers. Consequently being cloaked in the attire and behaviour of Islam could provide a sense of spiritual and physical security.

Conflict became further fragmented towards the end of 1991 when internal fractures emerged within the previously relatively cohesive Darood and Hawiye clans. Extensive and often indiscriminate use of violence against new and long standing rivals ensued. This pattern of fighting within clans, and not as widely perceived against clans, was Menkhaus (ibid.) argues, to continue after the UN withdrawal (discussed below). Consequently the fighting was usually more localised, restricted to particular localities often driven more by parochial political agendas, rather than economic interests, with less fatalities because of smaller levels of support and armaments. Furthermore, Menkhaus draws attention to the greater levels of authority of elders within these tensions who were often able to intervene. Combatants could be held accountable in reconciliation processes and these, or the possibility of them, resulted in individuals internalising greater restraint and helped to curtail excessive use of violence.

Other forms of crime spiralled alongside the violence indeed violence was often integral to theft, robbery and looting. The remnants of the infrastructure was destroyed, stolen, stripped and sold. When these supplies were exhausted and new materials and businesses were protected by hired militias, looting was significantly reduced (Menkhaus 2003). At one level, this contributed to a loss of status and earnings of a gunman and led to the career dropping in popularity. Many such gunmen were demobilised, on occasion becoming absorbed into 'neighbourhood watch' schemes established in localities or involved in providing (paid) protection for communities. At a higher level, the power of warlords and militia leaders has also declined for similar reasons. By comparison, the significance of businessmen has been enhanced, in part through their abilities to secure their own defences. Conversely though, this also led to a further increase in lawlessness and activities like kidnap for ransom, often of Somali nationals linked to international agency employment and car-jackings. Samatar (1991: 141) suggests that the perpetrators are 'thugs who are answerable to no one… . They will continue looting, pillaging and terrorizing the city'. Much of the violence is believed to have been committed by individuals from non local kinship groups. For Bakonyi and Stuvøy (2005) many of these *mooryann* (looters) became involved in insurgent groups against Barré. When his regime was overthrown they were reluctant to return to their homes and traditional ways of behaviour. Instead they enjoyed the freedoms within their new lives and the power and status associated with their weapons and militia membership. Consequently the *mooryann* lack discipline, which is often compounded by

chewing the narcotic *qat*, and are not constrained by the inter-clan rules and obligations concerning transgressions and compensation. At senior levels of Somali society, opportunities for criminal activities remain rife, including for example, embezzlement, counterfeit currency, land grabs and piracy.

With the escalating humanitarian crisis, exacerbated further by famine,[14] the United Nation mounted a peace enforcement operation (UNOSOM) between 1993 and 1995. Yet Møller (2009) declares that the country was left in an even worse position than before the intervention. The UNOSOM intervention proved to be ill-fated and ill-considered and arguably reinforced the systemic problems that were present from independence. Since the *realpolitik* of the 1970s, impressions of the United States had been, at best, ambiguous. Memories of American support for Ethiopia, when U.S. diplomats and Peace Corps volunteers were spat at and hit by thrown stones, continued to linger (Peterson 2001). Consequently the dominant role by the Americans within UNOSOM was likely to be controversial and needed to be very sensitively handled. On the contrary, the UN, with America prominent, intervened with little or no consultation and in the process reinforced historical memories of colonialism and foreign imposition. Peterson (2001: 51) reports on the behaviour of U.S. commanders after arrival. In media interviews held immediately after landing, they promoted the,

> birth of the New World Order, the first purely benevolent use of the strongest army on the planet, the military might of the last superpower harnessed to feed people, to save innocent Somalis from the medieval predations of warlords and gunmen, to rescue a useless Third World nation in Africa from devouring itself.

President George Bush's declaration that the troops were undertaking 'God's work' hardly allayed Somali concerns. With hindsight the lack of American insight into Somali politics and social relations is striking, although less striking when considered alongside the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Like Iraq, there was considerable initial support for intervention alongside the lack of an American detailed grasp of societal intricacies. In both places the crude 'for us or against us' demarcation was to exemplify the limited attention placed upon social and cultural dynamics and provided the criteria for establishing who to engage in discussions or battle. Against this backdrop and inappropriate, frequently provocative actions, UNOSOM's relief operation quickly transcended into armed conflict.

The homogenous demands of the New World Order replicated the neglect of acknowledged diversity that has been noticeable throughout the history of the nation-state (Lauderdale and Toggia 1999). This is not the place to discuss the multitude of mistakes made by the UN. For the purposes of this chapter, the outcomes are of most importance, namely the Western approach exacerbated tensions, further grounded clan conflict and fundamentally undermined UN credibility, the US aura of invincibility and any subsequent attempts at conflict resolution. As a Somali security chief informed Peterson (2001: 120) following 'Bloody Monday' when many Somalis were killed in a concerted attack by American led forces, 'They [Americans] always talk about human rights and democracy, so this really surprised me… They lied … . They came to Somalia for relief—Operation Restore Hope—

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[14] Møller (2009) estimates that, by March 1992, at least 300,000 people had died from hunger in Mogadishu and approximately 44,000 had been killed by the fighting.

but they changed it to another thing, a war which had never been seen before.' The attack caused more fatalities than any other single attack in the preceding thirty months of conflict. For Peterson, this was the turning point when the opinions of most Somalis, irrespective of their original impressions and clan allegiance, shifted against the UN. By utilising large-scale armaments, the UN, in an environment where even the 'peacekeepers' had decided that mass weaponry was essential for delivering peace, also contributed to the further normalisation of violence.

NORTH AND SOUTH DIVIDES: NORMALISATION OF SECURITY AND INSECURITY

Tensions within Somalia can also be noticed in the fragmentation within the north into two relatively autonomous administrations, Somaliland and Puntland, which have their own civil judicial systems which incorporate traditional mechanisms. After promising beginnings in both administrations with civil and traditional practices contributing to higher levels of personal security (Menkhaus 2000), the situation in Puntland has recently deteriorated (ICG 2009). The recent high profile acts of piracy can often be traced to this region. This increased threat to international shipping is symptomatic of deeper problems that include weakened governance, corruption, unemployment, Ethiopian and Egyptian politicking and the collapse of intra clan cohesion and solidarity (ibid). Crucially, the administration's initial aims for inclusion, consensus and representation of the different interests of the population has been fatally undermined by favouritism, exclusion and coercion that connect into sub-clan loyalties. As a consequence public support for the political administration has diminished and disputes are increasingly resolved outside formal politics through violence. With the security forces disproportionately composed of one powerful sub-clan and members unable or unwilling to address some of the systemic criminal powers, security has deteriorated significantly. ICG (2009: 14) suggest that 'failure to institutionalise consensual-style politics, as Somaliland did, has been a major driver of the debilitating crisis that has dogged the regime since 2001.' Because of the marked differences in levels of social constraint and violence between (south) Somalia and Somaliland, these two regions are the basis for comparative analysis in order to try illuminate processes behind the different experiences.

Somalis living in Somaliland (north western part of Somalia) became almost immediately dissatisfied with union in 1960 and resented the dominance of the south and continuing northern underdevelopment. Following the demise of the Barré regime, Somaliland has been relatively secure since 1991. Although tensions remain they are much more constrained in comparison with events in the south. The reasons for this can be traced to pre, colonial and post periods. North and south had different experiences under colonialism, discussed above, and these clearly influenced post independence developments. Fox (1999) explains how prior to colonialism, a market economy, with commerce and industry, had emerged without a clearly distinct social hierarchy. By comparison, the south was reliant on slave labour, had a wide ranging social hierarchy and experienced relentless tension and conflict. Following British and Italian involvement, the north experienced less direct, imposed control and retained considerable autonomy in commerce, social relations and order, although this deteriorated as described above. Overall the clan system was largely maintained. In Italian

Somaliland, hierarchical structuring, repression and subordination were enforced and slavery continued and was even further adopted by the Italians. After independence the north quickly regretted unification and was to harbour the most vehement opposition to Barré culminating in his decision to destroy the city of Hargeisa in 1988. The attack was both to strengthen opposition to the regime and collective Somaliland identification.

More recent encounters with occupying forces are also different. Unlike the south, Somaliland was not occupied by UNOSOM. Partly as a consequence, Ahmed and Green (1999) suggest, the role of indigenous 'peacelords' was not marginalised, democratic participation is promoted, elders are appointed on merit and security and collective identification is much stronger. The consensual, cross cutting approach can be noticed in the manner in which the Somali National Movement, which forced the Somali national army out of Somaliland, and other militias were demobilised and absorbed into the new Somaliland military when the secessionist state was established (Menkhaus 2004). Comparisons between north and south in the remainder of the decade are also informative. Today,

> the two northern entities[15] are demonstrating an impressive capability for consensual, cooperative self-rule and great economic resourcefulness. In the south, Mogadishu is curiously a divided city once again, and the region is replete with authoritarian rule, chronic fighting, kidnapping of NGO workers, competition for international trade among the faction leaders, reports of forced labour, and all manner of human rights abuses (Fox 1999: 28).

Yet even against this backdrop of southern lawlessness and state collapse, informal mechanisms and systems of governance have been (re)introduced to impose law and to safeguard personal security (Menkhaus 2003, 2004 and Møller 2009). Instead of universal anarchy as is widely perceived, different levels of governance can be noticed in cities, towns, villages and pastoral regions. Levels of personal security are often highest within individuals' 'home areas' of their clan in which they are provided with protection by their kinship group (Menkhaus 2000). By extension, the impact of the collapse of the state can be overstated. Individuals are not defenceless, passive victims but seek to reduce and manage risk which in Somalia is often undertaken through informal systems. This is particularly true for the nomadic areas which, as Menkhaus (2004) observes, have never been under effective state control. Consequently the decline of the central governing authority has not had uniform consequences. When communities have been able to (re)establish and/or maintain law and security, traditional arrangements and structures such as clan elders and blood payments have reintroduced constraints on excessive violence, particularly against civilians and looting (Menkhaus 2004) and have been applied, often alongside complimentary Islamic law through local *shari'a* courts.

Islamic Courts emerged in North Mogadishu in 1994 in neighbourhoods that were not organised along nomadic ways and lacked social constraints and concomitantly security (Marchal 2004). After recruiting judges and militias, the courts began to function and provided a 'quasi-normal' level of security.[16] The subsequent fluctuating fortunes of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) have been more a consequence of struggles within clans, against

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[15] Fox (1999) is referring to Puntland and Somaliland. The situation in the former had yet to deteriorate at the point he was writing.

[16] Despite proclaiming the need to transcend clan loyalties, such allegiances did influence the functioning of the Islamic Courts and implementation of controls.

militias and military defeats, in part due to Islamists overambitious designs (Stevenson 2007). Conversely the appeal of the ICU has been enhanced through further American interference, not least the attempt to fund a 'counter terrorist' alliance of warlords in Mogadishu in order to eradicate the Courts and growing Islamic influence (Møller 2009, Samuels 2008, Shank 2007). However ICU control mechanisms and social services, including major educational initiatives, were widely appreciated with broad, cross cutting support from across the business community and civil society. Consequently American intentions were viewed with considerable concern and anger. Feeling threatened, support for the ICU was mobilised, resulting in the defeat of warlords. Mogadishu was secured which reflected the ICU's position as the dominant force which was, of course, contrary to American intentions.

After this success, the ICU became more radical and confronted the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). The TFG was geographically isolated with limited local support[17] but considerable international backing. With the threat exacerbated by its own policy, the United States supported the Ethiopian invasion of Somalia in late 2006 in order to impose order and weaken the Islamist threat. Again the outcome was not as intended. The considerable and indiscriminate civilian fatalities caused by the Ethiopian armed forces and humanitarian crisis, that followed the mass exodus from Mogadishu, further compounded levels of anti-Americanism and support for Islamic alternatives. Because the attack was considered to be not only physical but ideological, people united under the ICU umbrella, around what they considered to be under threat, namely their religion (Shank 2007). Consequently, and somewhat ironically, clan loyalties became subservient as individuals and groups united around what they shared in common, Islam. In the process, religion has become further embedded within forms of national identification. However after the Ethiopian invasion, divisions within the ICU's diverse support base, which had been controlled if unresolved when in power, meant that the ICU lost its broad, popular backing and pre-existing rivalries and tensions saw the coalition fragmenting into smaller, localised, frequently clan based alliances. Despite this setback, Menkhaus (2007) points out that political Islam continued to have broad support, its infrastructure had become embedded and social services were popular. Unless these services and associated levels of security can be provided by other agencies then Islamic organisations are likely to retain and increase support. At a political level, al-Shabab and Hizb-üt-Islam have emerged from the remnants of ICU. These groups have built effectively upon previous networks to gain control of much of southern and central Somalia.[18] *Shari'ah* law has been imposed in some areas. Again, of course, this partly happened as an unintended consequence of foreign intervention.

EXPLAINING THE NORMALISATION OF VIOLENCE

Contrary to Western perceptions, violence is not naturally endemic in Somalia. Like, in other parts of the world, it is socially constructed, a symptom of deeper rooted issues that stem from interactions between the environment and people, individuals and communities, communities and government, nation-states and the international 'community'. The extent to

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[17] The TFG failed to engage with the populace, was unable to enhance levels of security and was widely associated with the West, corruption and ineptitude (Shank 2007).
[18] Conflict with the TFG and Ahlu Sunnah, a more moderate Muslim group, continues.

which violence and levels of 'barbarism' are the consequence of social processes is evidenced by the undeniable increase in the number and magnitude of attacks over recent years alongside shifting relationships, structures and control mechanisms. Throughout its modern history, the nation-state has not fully incorporated the population, political regimes have rarely attracted a popular mandate, national and international leadership has been badly lacking and the imposition of social control has been arbitrary. And within these conditions individual and social constraints have been eroded. Lauderdale and Toggia (1999) observe how the influence of traditional assemblies and institutions, that have provided negotiation and consensus building, have been reduced from the colonial period and the subsequent establishment of the central state and associated bureaucracy. Equally informal social contacts and forms of justice that provides source of unity within kinship groups and regulation between clans have been undermined by national and international attempts at governance and the associated shift towards individual, and not communal, liability.

This helps to explain why instead of levels of violence being reduced following independence, they have increased. The optimism that accompanied the formal end of colonialism quickly dissipated. Ahamed, a Somali corporal to the British army during the second world war (Hanley 2000: 179) provides an example of changes that could occur and the duration that would be required for this to happen, 'It will take years for men here to forget their knives and spears… They still think that killing changes things.' Today, over sixty years later, it can be argued that knives and spears have been largely forgotten. However this is not the outcome of the gradual pacification of the population through enhanced social controls, reliable food and water supplies and national security. On the contrary, daily threats to lives and livelihoods remain and levels of fear and uncertainty mean that enhanced individual restraint is unrealistic. Consequently violence remains or to be more precise more violent and extensive forms of violence has become normalised. And instead of traditional weapons, individuals and groups today rely upon more modern, indiscriminate and destructive forms of armaments.

Since the end of the Cold War and preceding bursts of support from both the United States and Soviet Union, military hardware is easily and readily available throughout the region. Furthermore, the changing nature and purposes of violence have contributed to its perceived successes, warlords became hugely powerful, individuals with Kalashnikovs could rob, loot and kill and businesses would pay for 'protection'. In other words, contrary to Ahamed's guarded optimism, killing has indeed changed things. However, as Ahamed did explain, forgetting weapons would take years. The recent history of Somalia shows that people did not have the time in which to forget. Interrelated processes such as the rapid demarcation of the state into individual and clan interests, deteriorating inter and intra clan relations and weakened or destroyed social control mechanisms meant that levels of mutual interdependence and cooperation were reduced while levels of fear and insecurity increased. For peoples' to develop collective senses of identification within a national framework these levels needed to be reversed and the legacy of violence, that can be traced back many generations, is weakened. A period of sustained peace, stability and calculability is required if people's emotional management is to gradually change to incorporate greater pacification (Elias 1996, 2000). Instead with levels of empathy diminished between and within clans and concomitant fears rising over attacks and the possibility of attacks, people looked to the best forms of protection. These tended to be localised and both further reinforced clan and sub clan loyalties and detached them from the 'nation-state' and wider forms of collective

identification. By comparison, Somali governments failed to build upon existing language, behavioural and religious commonalities and cohesive, strong forms of national consciousness have not developed. Events that could have provided the basis for collective identification, such as conflict with Ethiopia, have often ended in defeat which in turn has undermined the credibility of the concept of the nation-state. By comparison, religious identification has become more embedded in part because Islamic groups can make legitimate connections to previous periods of success and the contemporary services and elements of stability they provide.

In the vacuum there has been support for international interventions and 'the Somali conflict or crisis has been extensively internationalised for decades' (Moller 2009: 29).[19] Yet attempts to negotiate peace[20] and international forces have contributed to the intensification and magnification of violence during the implementation of large scale military technology during the period of the New World Order (Lauderdale and Toggia 1999) and subsequently during the 'war on terror'.[21] Indeed the consequences of recent American policies, Ethiopian actions, international support for the increasingly irrelevant TFG, misguided development strategies and allocation of funding mean it is difficult to challenge Møller's (2009: 5) claim that 'there seems to be an eerie correlation between interference by the so-called "international community" in Somali affairs and deteriorating conditions for the local population.' Partly as a consequence of the serious weakening of Western credibility generally, and American in particular, that are interpreted against historical memories of colonialism, Somalis have looked to other forms of support and discourse.

For numerous reasons, some of the West's making, Islamic groups are operating in this void and are likely to retain widespread support for their services and the level of security and stability they provide. There are considerable tensions over the extent to which more rigid forms of *Wahhabism* can be imposed without mobilising significant opposition. At present, normative forms of Islam in Somalia are still not particularly militant. Therefore Muslim groups that want to retain broad civilian and business support must incorporate populist interpretations. Throughout history these parameters have shifted, with Islamic mobilisation most prominent in response to foreign, non Muslim threats (Menkhaus 2002). When confronting foreign (Christian) occupation, Islamists are able to integrate religion within the 'national' struggle and in the process further embed Islam within national identification and enhance discursive legitimacy. As recent American and Ethiopian activities have shown, any subsequent Western sponsored attempts to destroy Islamic groups will again exacerbate the situation and generate further support for radicalism.

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[19] An often overlooked international element is the involvement and role of the Somali Diaspora and the impact of returning migrants.

[20] For instance, Samuels (2008) reports on in excess of 14 failed attempts by the international community to help bring about peace between 1988 and 2006.

[21] Reasoning behind intervening in Somalia has changed from the New World Order to 'war on terror' reflecting changed motivations, from humanitarian and altruistic to selfish and security based (Møller 2009).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS: PROCESSES FOR NORMALISING CONSTRAINTS

Against this backdrop alternative forms of governance and commerce have been seriously weakened. Nevertheless forms of social constraint continue to be resilient. This is particularly noticeable in the administrative area of Somaliland that lacks international recognition. Yet in this north western region, traditional arrangements and institutions have provided a framework for behaviour and there are signs that previous forms of social constraint are being applied and internalised. This is particularly noticeable within some localities where much of the law associated with formal judiciary and police had not been implemented prior to Barré's regime. Instead law was composed of traditional precedents and disputes mediated or adjudicated by local elders and religious leaders. At the time, Somalia was one of Africa's safest places. Similarly, not all parts were equally affected during the latter stages of Barré's regime, the subsequent civil war and international intervention and were able to retain traditional forms of constraint or had been retained within collective memories and could be reintroduced within conducive conditions. However customary law can only be successfully implemented with several conditions. For Menkhaus (2003), these are the restoration of authority and responsibility of clan elders and a rough balance of power between local clan groupings. Relatively equitable distribution of power is crucial because the threat of revenge is a powerful tool for settling disputes. Groups that are weak and powerless pose little threat and as consequence there is little incentive for the more powerful clan and sub-clans to negotiate or to impose constraint. Nevertheless as Menkhaus (ibid.) suggests, the use of Somali forms of protection can enable more stable and secure environments and provide services within the intermediate area between protection rackets and a nascent police force. Some caution though has to be added to Menkhaus' list, namely these informal arrangements also have to be established against preceding forms of behaviour, in different conditions from those in which they evolved, including hugely diminished levels of trust between clans and sub-clans. And, the dislocation of the *mooryann* means they lack wider allegiances which would impose social controls. Facing less constraint these individuals continue to cause insecurities and fear amongst the wider population. Without addressing the *mooryann's* alienation and subsequent impact upon other groups, it will be extremely difficult for individuals to internalise higher levels of pacification when they continue to live under threat of violence.

Furthermore, despite the mass killings, insecurities and unpredictability, Somalia has not remained static. Power relations and economic interests continue to shift with warlords in the descent and business and religious leaders in the ascendancy. The informal economy has consistently shown resourcefulness and resilience (Ahmed and Green 1999). This shift may offer opportunities both for economic development, and the expansion of the labour force, governance and security and concomitant reduction in unemployment, poverty and homelessness. An alliance between commerce and Islam may have the potential to incorporate clans and collectively possess the authority and popular mandate that has been lacking. Thus, such a partnership may prove mutually beneficial with both providing a restraint upon the excesses of the other.

Undoubtedly, social orders have, and will continue to, emerge out of the Somali disorder. Menkhaus (2004: 163) suggests that

These social orders are almost invariably violent, exploitative, and illiberal, and they may not be at all interested in culminating in a revived central authority. However, they are orders, not anarchy, and their evolution may in some instances constitute the best chance a country or community has to emerge from the ruin of war into something worthy of the expression 'post-conflict.

In summary, because of the duration of the problems facing Somalia and the transformation and deterioration of social relations, violence has become normalised and embedded within processes and activities. To implement widespread security therefore requires both systemic problems to be addressed and generations of socialising experiences to be undermined. At present the prospects for this are extremely bleak. Conversely, in areas that have been least subjected to state control and foreign intervention, there are more obvious signs of communal constraints, stability, concomitant individual controls and noticeably less acts of violence. This raises important questions about the nature and extent of future Western involvement in Somalia.

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