Horizons of security, state and extended family

the Somali safety net in Scandinavia

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Abstract

Issues of welfare entitlements and "deservedness" are increasingly permeating political debates in present-day Scandinavian welfare states, which are worldwide renowned for their comprehensive safety net. The Somalis especially, are oftentimes singled out in political debates about immigration and integration policies as the "least integrated" group in the entire region, or as a "burden" for public finances. Against this background, this study emphasizes that issues of welfare and security exist also among the Somali diaspora in Scandinavia, although they have attracted considerably less attention. Therefore, I explore constructions as well as negotiations of the safety net, reflecting on the encounter between the Somali society, which is definable to a good extent as stateless, and the countries of the so-called Nordic model, which display conversely a crucial component of both "statism" and nationalism in their social security arrangements. In this manner, this study intends to account for historical patterns of integration from the specific point of view of welfare and security. In order to pursue this aim, I have conducted qualitative interviews with Somalis living in Scandinavia about themes where matters of welfare and security emerge: the qualitative approach allowed me to underline the variety of experiences and solutions adopted by my interlocutors to re-construct a meaningful safety net. The study concludes that the Somalis are experiencing relevant changes in the way they think and formulate expectations about the safety net, often embracing elements of both welfare systems; at the same time, not all of the integration measures set up by Scandinavian states are conducive for alleviating Somalis' security issues, especially in the immediate time after the resettlement. This dynamic can open up for considerably degrees of insecurity and thus long-term social vulnerability among the Somalis.

Resumé

Spørgsmålet om hvem der fortjener disse velfærdsrettigheder gennemstrømmer i stigende grad politiske debatter i nutidens skandinaviske velfærdsstater, som er berømte verden over for deres omfattende sociale sikkerhedsnet. Særligt somaliere bliver ofte fremhævet i politiske debatter vedrørende immigration og integrations politik som den "mindst integrerede" gruppe i hele regionen eller som en "byrde" for offentlige midler. Det er med afsæt i denne kontekstuelle baggrund, at dette studie har undersøgt hvordan emner inden for velfærd og sikkerhed også eksisterer blandt den somaliske disapora i Skandinavien. Jeg undersøger derfor konstruktioner såvel som forhandlinger af det sociale sikkerhedsnet hos denne gruppe, hvor jeg reflekterer over mødet mellem det somaliske samfund, som – til en vis grad – kan defineres som statsløse, og de lande som tilhører den såkaldte nordiske model, som, i modsætning, fremviser en essentiel komponent af "statisme" og nationalisme i deres organisering af sociale sikkerheds spørgsmål. På denne måde har dette studie til hensigt at redegøre for historiske mønstre af integration gennem det specifikke synspunkt af velfærd og sikkerhed. For at nå dette mål har jeg udført kvalitative interviews med somaliere boende i Skandinavien omkring tematikker såsom uddannelse og rollemodeller, der refererer til de overordnede temaer velfærd og sikkerhed. Gennem en kvalitativ tilgang understreger jeg de varierede erfaringer og løsninger, som mine informanter har gjort brug af for at re-konstruere et meningsfyldt sikkerhedsnet. Studiet konkluderer, at somaliere erfarer relevante forandringer i den måde, de tænker om og formulerer forventninger vedrørende sikkerhedsnet, hvor de ofte gør brug af elementer fra begge organisationerne af sociale sikkerheds spørgsmål; samtidig er det ikke alle integrationstiltag som er blevet iværksat af skandinaviske stater, der er gavnlige i forhold til at lette somaliers sikkerheds spørgsmål, særligt i den tid der kommer lige umiddelbart efter deres ankomst. Denne dynamik kan føre til stor af usikkerhed og endda længerevarende social sårbarhed blandt somaliere.

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The welfare state for Scandinavians is like the camel for the Somalis! I once concluded with one of my Somali interlocutors met in Sweden. Most likely, though, I was the only one amused by the alleged novelty contained in the juxtaposition, since in Somali poetry the nation has long been represented allegorically by the *Maandeeq*, the she-camel "that satisfies the mind through her milk"[1]. For Somali pastoralists especially, inhabiting the country's northern regions, the camel is in fact a source of survival and wealth, the backbone of the economy. As a provider of meat, milk, leather, besides being a transportation means, the camel is also well into practices and representations of human welfare: for all these reasons, the humped animal has largely penetrated the Somali cultural and literary repertoire. Welfare is a cherished concept also within Scandinavian societies, as it is deeply embedded in many aspects of everyday life. It may lack a definite zoomorphic counterpart— at its best, the welfare state has been compared to the less appealing *bumblebee* that keeps flying despite physics laws, yet it plays an undisputable central role in the internal dynamics of the three countries in the region[2]. This thesis offers a historical perspective on the encounter between the Scandinavian and the Somali way of conceiving welfare, together with the perceptions and construction of security that follow as a result. Its empirical part is based on interviews and observations that I have conducted among the Somalis residing in the three Scandinavian countries.

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[1] Rirash 1988, 170; Ahad 2007, 53. The reference is to a poem by Abdullahi Suldaan Timacadde celebrating the independence of British Somaliland in late June 1960, few days prior to the reunification with Italian Somaliland.

[2] Cfr. for example the book *Sweden's Welfare State: Can the Bumblebee Keep Flying?* By Thakur, Keen, Horvath, and Cerra.

Introduction: experiencing hell in the welfare paradise

This research was triggered by the realization of what I figured out to be an intriguing paradox: on the one hand, Scandinavian countries are worldwide renowned for their 'from-cradle-to-grave' model of public assistance to citizens, which together with their routinely high-scorings in a number of international social indicators contribute in making of Scandinavia an attracting pole for many people. In the last twenty-five years, on the other hand, many refugees arrived there from Somalia, "the world's most dangerous place"[3], recount a different story of life in these countries. In a number of published reports, unemployment, discrimination, and negative attention in the media emerged quite starkly as the issues faced by Somali refugees, triggering a sentiment of exclusion and a lack of security among them. In these documents, one can read very resentful statements made by Somalis, like: "[t]here's no difference between a newcomer and someone who's spent twelve years in the country", or "you can't show what you're made of; there's no one who believes in you"[4]. Some have found the participation in the life of these societies so challenging that they have preferred to head towards other countries, mainly the United Kingdom, and it is said that more Somalis would do the same if they had received already an EU-valid passport. In sum, some among a group of refugees that have fled a war-torn country; that have been exposed to violence; and that were deprived of many public services in their homeland, are now leaving the world-recognized peaceful sanctuary of state welfare assistance: these are the sharp contours of the paradox.

The next passage of my preliminary investigation consisted in identifying a viable object of research that could shed light on the motivations for secondary migration. Quite interestingly, many researchers of Somali questions emphasize that migration is for Somalis a well-established, and even an ordinary security strategy put in place to reduce risk[5]. The origin of this practice is found in the

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[3] So James Fergusson titled his book about Somalia published in 2013.

[4] Abdirahman et al. 2011, 21-22. Both quotations refer to Sweden.

[5] Horst 2008, 2.

nomadic heritage inscribed in Somali cultural practices, which is still influencing the life of many individuals living within and outside the homeland, beyond romantic and "orientalist" representations. I postulated then a sort of continuity linking the experiences and the present conditions of the Somalis who moved from the homeland to Scandinavia: the line of continuity was provided by the act of migrating itself as a response to the deficit of security and risk. The idea, in other words, was that some of these Somalis could possibly feel unsafe in the new social environment, opting to organize a new life for themselves in another country, which they evidently considered more secure.

I tried to substantiate my theory: the available researches about the Somalis in Scandinavia, focusing on several themes (among which I shall mention: diaspora engagements with the homeland; access to health services; and educational dynamics), was very informative of the conditions of the Somalis in specific sectors of societal life. Nevertheless, they did not answer the question that was taking shape in my mind: what are the reasons, and in what sense, would ultimately a Somali feel insecure within the socially comprehensive Scandinavian welfare systems? My paradox was left with no breakthroughs, but I slowly came to realize that the different research contexts explored by other researchers were single episodes that, when treated alone, could hardly serve the scope of making sense of the long-term experiences of the Somalis in Scandinavia. The wide-ranging academic material available was not asserting if, say, the proneness to remit or the high school dropout rate among the Somalis in Scandinavia could be possibly connected to the level of security actually felt by the individuals and, more important, if this level was changing over time (whether for the good or for the bad).

Yet, all these researches could be re-connected one with the other as facets of one mosaic, to gain a more comprehensive picture of security through different contexts. Therefore, I have decided to look at the process of integration of the Somalis through the lens of security, and through what I will present in a moment as its complementary concept, 'welfare': these two concepts became the object of my research. But for such aim, I had to slice through the essential components constituting the experiences of security deficits for the Somalis, in relation to both

the social environment where they arise and to the strategies put in place to overcome them. This has set me on a journey to explore the encounter between Somali and Scandinavian notions of welfare and security.

Security and welfare

Before continuing, some working definitions are due to the reader, with the promise that I will explore concepts again and in more detail in Chapter Three. I start from 'security', which by now I have mentioned several times. Essentially, security consists in the lack of uncertainty and in the freedom from threats in human life enjoyed by the individual. This is a minimal and consequently broad definition, and a first way to narrow it down is by distinguishing the multi-sectorial fields of application. We may then talk about *food* security, meaning protection from famine; *political* security, against human rights abuses; *personal* security, as freedom from threats of physical violence, and so on.

In this thesis, the understanding and consequent reference to the concept relies primarily on "ontological security" as defined by Giddens, for whom it demarcates the "person's fundamental sense of safety in the world and includes a basic trust of other people"; "Obtaining such trust", he continues, "becomes necessary in order for a person to maintain a sense of psychological well-being and avoid existential anxiety"[6]. It is this psychological dimension that is especially concerned in this study, since it reveals the condition of individuals that lack "the sense of security provided by more traditional settings" and engage in various process of construction and reconstruction of similar settings[7].

The word security will also appear frequently preceded by the adjective *social*, to indicate more specifically the complex of institutions, norms and instruments that in a society are in charge of providing a 'safety net' against need and uncertainty: 'social security', in other words, informs us that we are shifting the focus from individual to collective security. However, such expression carries varying meanings in different societies, and it refers to distinct instruments and

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[6] Giddens 1991, 38-39. See also Kinnvall 2004.

[7] Ivi, 33.

policies aimed at defining and assisting the individuals that are exposed to uncertainty[8]. Therefore, the use of the expression social security will require a contextual and cultural explanation of the providers, the receivers as well as the measures involved for its achievement.

In this discourse, 'welfare' fits in to represent the result of the combination of social, cultural and political instruments used by people to cope with uncertainty: here too, we can apply welfare both at the individual level and at the macro level of society at large. We all practice forms of self-insurance through tradeoffs between consumption and savings, and we often help a sibling or a friend with a mindful expectation that the others would do the same in turn. Or again: we all pay taxes, or almost all of us do, with the idea that the state will give us something back, usually services. Self-insurance and reciprocity are two paramount components behind the establishment of welfare systems of different kinds in Western countries, often supported by altruism, the act of giving for solidarity's sake[9]. The latter applies best when there is a shared feeling of belonging to the same group: within this group, in fact, individuals maximize their perception of ontological security. Not by chance, Brubaker and Cooper indicate "self-understanding" as an alternative term to "identity", in order to designate "what might be called 'situated subjectivity': one's sense of who one is, of one's social location, and of how (given the first two) one is prepared to act"[10]: that is the essence of the group. People's overall perception of security is then the result of the interplay between different factors that altogether help the individual positioning himself/herself in the world. More specifically, I believe that ideas, imaginaries and constructions of: 'I' in the world; 'we' in the world; and 'the others' in the world contribute to improve ontological security at the individual, communitarian and societal level, provided that these categories are well-established and kept constantly alive in people's mind. As acknowledged also by the United Nations:

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[8] Walker 2005, 4.

[9] Einhorn and Logue 2003, 158.

[10] Brubaker and Cooper 2000, 17.

> Most people derive security from their membership in a group – a family, a community, an organization, a racial or ethnic group that can provide a cultural identity and a reassuring set of values.[11]

Beliefs and views can change though in consequence of particular circumstances like migration, when individuals are pulled out of the 'space of predictability' that once embraced most part of their actions. Migration, therefore, unfolds a condition of vulnerability that can only be overcome by the individual if s/he manages the transition from one 'security net' to the other. Understood in this sense, the lack of security represents the incompatibility between individual experiences, as well as collective constructions, and *new* expectations in relation to welfare. This context, I argue, represents a subject of investigation: human beings are repositories of personal accounts, memories and experiences linked to welfare and security that represent inestimable sources for the researcher.

Welfare in the space of the nation-state

I found interesting to investigate the encounter, at times better defined as *clash*, between the Somali and the Scandinavian welfare systems in order to underline what sort of negotiations as well as outcomes derive out of it. Is the result a newly defined notion of security? And what happens to all those actions we may call welfare practices? For this scope, the role of the experiences of the Somali individuals are of paramount importance, because they illuminate on how security has been achieved in the past: the same strategies to cope with uncertainty have yet less chances of applicability in the present, that is in the new country of residence. Still, as I will try to show in my thesis, in most cases we do not witness the abandonment of Somali practices and understandings of welfare *in toto*, but we see rather a process of adaptation in which many cultural features are retained, and find even new spaces of manifestation. I became nonetheless interested also in those Somalis who showed criticism or even shied away from Somali cultural practices once they moved to the new hosting states, exactly in virtue of their exposition to new models and systems.

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[11] UNDP 1994, 31.

The nation-state is anything but a neutral background to project my research concerns about welfare and security. As a matter of fact, the conceptual pair above represents a recurring theme of political debates entertained in the West, for example in relation to spending reviews. In addition, almost every single recent electoral campaign has been accompanied by promises of more security for the citizens, in one form or the other. For this reason, my thesis contemplates an outline of the development of state provision of welfare in the Scandinavian cases, which will underline the shift from social assistance as a right, to risk and vulnerability seen as an inevitable consequence of people's (lack of) actions[12]. With the rise of both nationalism and international migration in the previous century, the categorization of blamable, "undeserving" individuals has begun to overlap with ethnic classifications, creating the persistent imaginary of groups of foreign welfare "scroungers" that for a number of reasons, including alleged cultural dispositions, are ruining the systems of public assistance.

On top of that, in the last decades the redefinition of issues of societal concern has occurred in conjunction with the sanctioning of the free market of neoliberal inspiration as the best antidote, and at the same time solution, to inequality issues vis-à-vis the social intervention of the state[13]. To different levels in the West— but certainly to a lesser extent in Scandinavia, these phenomena have contributed to divert the attention from inequalities generated by the globalized economic market, to the failures of the individual. Such shift opened up the way for a process of criminalization of welfare recipients and, consequently, for the application of coercive measures by state authorities against them. Some of the experiences I have collected in my research refer quite clearly to the control exercised by state authorities.

Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these measures in improving either the security of national citizens at large, or that of welfare beneficiaries especially, is questionable. On the one hand, the routinely targeting of welfare "burdens" has the effect of hiding the socio-economic system's shared responsibilities, while

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[12] Charlesworth 2010.

[13] Schubert, Hegelich, and Bazant 2009; Schubert, de Villota, and Kuhlmann 2016.

fostering (ethnic) tensions within different groups in the society[14]. On the other hand, forms of increasing coercion on refugees and migrants bring additional challenges and security threats to already societal vulnerable groups, in a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy that risks perpetuating their status, rather than improving it. The latter process initiates thus a sort of circle of 'artificial' creation of insecurity affecting vulnerable social categories, from which political actors can benefit through more and more promises of securitization for the national majority. But can they honor these promises? It is a Gordian knot, because nation-states are integrated in global markets, and thus the answers to inequality and market failures often fall outside national borders. Consequently, state institutions have really hard times in serving as an address for internal demands of greater security. Or, as Bauman has put it:

> The extant political institutions, meant to assist them [citizens] in the fight against insecurity, offer little help. In a fast globalizing world, where a large part of power, and the most seminal part, is taken out of politics, these institutions cannot do much to offer security or certainty. What they can do and what they more often than not are doing is to shift the scattered and diffuse anxiety to one ingredient of *Unsicherheit* alone – that of safety, the only field in which something can be done and seen to be done.[15]

I went as far as to call this whole dynamic between state, national majority and minorities an 'artificial' process, because some of the difficulties related to integration seem to find their origin in the mechanisms of the welfare state, rather than in the refugee's failure to accomplish his/her integration duties. In fact, the way these policies are designed does not take into account practices and understandings of welfare and security among refugees: this becomes particularly evident in relation to practices that transcend national borders. State policies are meant to work in a national and "nationalizing" socio-political space. This discourse will become more concrete in Chapter Six, where I will adduce some examples extrapolated from education, child welfare and other sectors.

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[14] Jones and Novak 2012, 5.

[15] Bauman 1999, 5.

Problem formulation: national problems in global perspective

Today's world is made of increasingly frequent transcultural encounters between individuals, favored by developments in communication and transportation technologies[16]. Far from involving just human bodies, these encounters involves also ideas, values, histories and lifestyles, that all together mirror both the different structures of power retrievable throughout the globe at intra- and inter-societal levels, as well as the histories behind their establishment. If it is true that the twenty-first century will be "the century of the migrant", with more than one billion people moving for different reasons, the saliency of analyses of the encounter is thus well justified[17].

The argument made so far has indirectly suggested that migrant populations are too often prevented from practicing the forms of welfare that ensure them security, especially in the early aftermath of their resettlement in a new country. This condition matches with a segment of Western discourses at the academic, political and everyday level indistinctly, which over time have all 'naturalized' some forms of welfare provision over others. The price being paid is the deterioration of the migrant's own safety net and, eventually, more security deficits, from which a lot of unwanted social consequences may retrieve their origin, or at least a potent catalyst. Ironically, the solutions voiced by governments often entail increasing level of stigmatization of 'deviant' practices and the closing of frontiers. This works against the desirable aim of incorporating migrants actively into the safety net structures of the receiving state, in a way that is meaningful to them in order to feel secure in the Giddensian sense.

The case study I brought to the attention of the reader makes no exception in this regard, and possibly presents further elements of complexity: in Denmark, Sweden and Norway, the Somalis have been labeled repeatedly as the "least integrated group" in the media or in political discourses and have become a favored target in pre-electoral campaigns[18]. My intention is thus to add a new

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[16] Eriksen 2014.

[17] Nail 2015, 1.

[18] Cfr. *Kristeligt Dagblad*'s 2002 article, *Berlingske* (2010), and the Theoretical Framework in this thesis.

perspective to contemporary debates, which seemed to me to have reached a deadlock, in the way they ignore issues of welfare and security from the point of view of comparatively vulnerable individuals.

As anticipation, though, we should perhaps reflect on the thought that "true multiculturalism is found in those regions that were never subject to the nation state and its forced homogeneity", while it is precisely under the rule of the state that questions of cultural coexistence becomes all the more noticeable[19]. In nation-states, the degree to which different practices of welfare can reciprocally harmonize usually depends on the relation between two moral/legal imperatives: the need to integrate within the new socio-political environment and the right, more or less codified, to preserve one's own culture against discrimination and oblivion. To be sure, I found that the reasons for Western states' headaches with integration policies do not originate all the time in practical or, for that matter, economic difficulties in providing for the migrant's needs. I suggest instead that we should treat part of the failures in integration programs as a *chronic* condition stemming from the inner working of the nation-state, and even more so in the case of its most 'consolidated' form: the welfare state. I elaborate more on this consideration. Welfare states operate through specific goals of 'standardization' and economic planning to be met, in order to maintain the efficiency of such advanced, integrated systems[20]. This goal has historically favored dynamics that divide the society between those who contribute and those who do not and need thus assistance. In the last three decades especially, nationalist discourses have moved the frontier of societal demarcation along ethnic lines, associating the foreign origin with an expectation of welfare use and abuse in the national space. This has become a refrain of the political game and the process of singling out alien groups in the society seems to have even significant repercussions for national identity, as I will consider later in Chapter Five.

In their entirety, these reflections about the welfare state guided me in complementing the study of concepts and practices related to welfare and security

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[19] Baldwin 1990, 180.

[20] Myrdal 1982; Rothstein 1998; Kildal 2003, 13.

with the analysis of the dynamics occurring in key sectors such as integration policies, education as well as in the intimate space of the family. In fact, these areas can help revealing welfare as an extension for the pursuit of nationalist goals, in the sense that the enacted legal measures appeal to a national-contained understanding of the society, which need to be unfolded.

Research questions

I have articulated the purposes of this study in the following research questions:

A. What are the reasons for the the lack of security experienced by the Somalis in Scandinavia?

> A1. What strategies do they adopt to cope with these challenges?

> A2. What are the effects over time on their traditional practices of welfare?

B. To what extent is the migrant'/refugee's lack of security a product of the politics of the welfare state?

> B1. What is the long-term impact of the welfare state system on the safety
> net of the Somalis living in Scandinavia?

'A' and 'B' shall be understood as complementary questions, as two sides of the same coin. In fact, welfare state institutions are part and parcel in explaining Somalis' construction of security in Scandinavia, just as welfare nationalism becomes more evident with respect to foreign groups.

Motivations for the case study

Now, I wish to set forward the reasons for choosing this case study as well as the arguments for its appropriateness. I believe that several reasons back up my case study, and the 'probationary' questions that I intend to address in this respect are three: *why the Somalis*? *Why Scandinavia*? *Why welfare and security*? A first and intuitive point of interest is represented by demographic facts. Around 140,000 Somalis (migrants and their descendants) currently live in Scandinavia (circa 80,000 in Sweden; 40,000 in Norway and 21,000 in Denmark), and this makes of them the biggest African community in the concerned area, as well as one of the largest foreign nationalities in each of the three countries. I argue that the

significant relative size of the Somali community in Scandinavia denotes in itself a motivation to undertake such research: dynamics similar to the ones I explain may affect or have affected a considerable high number of people, and can have wide-ranging implications, not just for the community in question, but for the society and its welfare structures as a whole.

A second motivation stems from the acknowledged difficult process of integration faced by many Somalis in Scandinavia. A look at the available statistics reveals in fact that the Somalis are generally low educated and perform rather poorly in the job market, when compared with national and other non-national groups: consequently, the majority of them are beneficiaries of welfare assistance, often for protracted periods, with great concerns for the authorities as well as for the Somalis themselves[21]. My motivation, and perhaps 'ambition' is the word I should use, is to reflect on the long-term factors that possibly lead to this pernicious situation for all parts concerned. The combination of the previous points is conducive for the next consideration: there is indeed a hot media and political debate, which does not spare harsh tones, having the Somalis as recurrent targets. They are often associated with terrorism and piracy on a global level, and with welfare benefits abuse and petty crimes in Scandinavian countries, and yet the possible causes for the illegal conducts does not seem to attract an equal degree of attention[22].

A fourth reflection concerns Scandinavia. I believe that it is quite interesting to have Denmark, Sweden and Norway as case study, since these countries are known for their unequalled generous welfare system, which is assumed to

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[21] In Denmark, 2013 statistics show that the lowest employment rate is found among immigrants of Somali, Iraqi and Lebanese origin (Statistic Denmark 2015). In Sweden, the employment among Somalis in 2010 scored as low as 21%. (Carlson, Magnusson, and Rönnqvist 2012). For the Somalis in Norway, in 2014 36% of men and 22% of women were employed (Statistics Norway 2016; the average in the country is respectively 71 and 66 percent). Fangen (2006) has summed up that Somalis in Norway are more often unemployed than any other groups of first-generation immigrants; their total income per households is very low when compared to that of other immigrant groups; they have more difficulties in finding accommodation. In terms of public assistance, 69% of men and 81% of women of Somali origin, aged 30-59, were full recipients of assistance in Denmark in 2014. In Norway, the same is true for four out of ten Somalis.

[22] When I started my research in 2014, and until the breakup of the Syrian civil war, the Somalis were the latest foreign group arrived to Scandinavia: many among my interlocutors observed that this fact contributed to put them in the spotlight of political discussions, a condition that does not seem to have changed much since.

efficiently curb the societal risks faced by the population. Nowhere else in the world one can retrieve such comprehensive system of public assistance, and it is not an exaggeration to say that the three countries take high pride in having established and maintained over time, with reforms of course, their high-standard welfare system. In this sense, there is no better place to set up a research based on welfare and security and to underline possible fallacies of welfare institutions.

What just said paves the way for the fifth motivation, to a certain degree the most fascinating one. I argue that the welfare system and understanding in Scandinavian and Somali societies, which will be described in the two designated chapters, are placed at opposite sides of an ideal spectrum representing the existing types of welfare provision arrangement one could retrieve around the globe. To put it briefly: in the former we see some of the most comprehensive, far-reaching systems of social assistance provided by the state; in the latter, the provision is fundamentally stateless, and in the absence of the state welfare is carried out by another kind of social operator, the extended family or clan. This welfare 'group', to anticipate the terminology that I will introduce in Chapter Three, operates also transnationally, and is capable of sending back home something like 2 billion USD in remittances yearly, in addition to commercial trade. Since the Somali diaspora worldwide consists of around one million individuals, this makes of Somalis abroad some of the most active per-capita remittance senders in the world, right after the Indians and the Filipinos. I am thus motivated by the academic curiosity to know how such different systems encounter and interact one with the other.

Aims

This thesis aims at providing both a theoretical structure and a methodology for the investigation of welfare mechanisms and the (re-)constructions of the safety net among newcomer groups. The intent is showing that welfare and security have a much more relevant role to play for integration than what they are usually accorded. To say it differently, welfare and security *are* important conceptual partners for the study of integration process that have been less prioritized in previous researches, in favor of a focus on ethnicity, cultural issues, and the like.

Moreover, this thesis puts forward an analytical approach that breaks away with what I believe to be a 'compartmentalization' of knowledge between different disciplines, a tendency that has eventually reduced the possibility to account meaningfully for processes of long-term social change. In this respect, the conceptual pair of welfare and security can be treated in fact as self-standing and comprehensive themes of research that can be suitable tools to illuminate more efficaciously on dynamics of change taking place over time.

This research will hopefully stimulate the question of whether more information about welfare practices and understandings of non-national groups are needed, and perhaps useful for future policymaking in the social area. As a matter of fact, many among my interlocutors were convinced that the type of information being shared during our interviews were not known, and thus not included, in the policy framework and welfare services design of the Scandinavian countries where they live. Clearly, this is not a question that concerns only Scandinavian states, and certainly not only their relations with the Somalis. Still, the case analyzed in this thesis will provide specifically relevant information to deal with such question, as illustrated in the previous sections. Following well-established academic lines, I intend to demonstrate the importance of including experiences and first-hand narratives besides the use of statistics, official documents, journalistic pieces and other sources. All the more so, since the interlocutors often recount "biographies of social exclusion", as social sciences have it, namely they represent vulnerable categories in the society that lack many opportunities of having their voices and concerns being heard[23].

Structure of the thesis

The envisaged research will unfold chapter by chapter in accordance with the following structure: I begin my dissertation with the description of theories and methods that back up the contents of my research. The theoretical framework (Chapter One) inquires accordingly into theories of the diaspora, providing a *tour d'horizon* of the usage of the term in different contexts and time. The analysis of

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[23] The reference here is to the book titled "Biography and Social Exclusion in Europe: experiences and life journeys", edited by Prue Chamberlayne, Michael Rustin, and Tom Wengraf (2002).

the literature reveals that the term has increasingly expanded to refer to a large number of classifiable dynamics involving a group residing abroad with co-nationals and the homeland. Despite this potential conceptual vagueness, some theories help designing a model to 'locate' the diaspora, in order to define more accurately the type of relations linking one actor to the other. The transnational engagements of the diaspora make of the exploration of theories of nationalism an appropriate companion. However, I will not touch on the classic academic debate between Primordialism, Modernism and Ethnosymbolism[24]: instead, I will look at some theoretical passages that illuminate on how the nation and its categories of representation are reproduced in everyday life. Through this approach, I intend to shed light on less evident expressions of nationalism, which are though any less powerful in embedding the idea of the nation in the structures of welfare and social security. In fact, these expressions cast a sort of teleological expectation according to which societies shall maintain forms and modalities of national organization, which in the established view concur in defining the concept of 'modernity'.

The subsequent methodological section (Chapter Two) gives details about the instruments adopted for pursuing my research aims. First of all, I discuss the influence of different disciplines and the interview design. Secondly, I describe the interviews, the participants as well as other activities through which I have collected the empirical material for my thesis. Successively, this section will clarify the method for temporalizing the notions of welfare and security, a fundamental passage for the design of this study, with reference to the works of two eminent intellectuals: Reinhart Koselleck and Arjun Appadurai.

Chapter Three deals with the notions of welfare and security with the scope of substantiating the argument made in the methodological section about their temporal dimension. For this scope, I provide analytical guidelines to interpret issues of human security, normative principles and institutions as components of the said temporal construction. These components set also the basis to understand welfare and security as context-specific, rejecting thus claims of universalism

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[24] Competent analyses of the different intellectual positions can be found in Connor 1994; Özkirimli 2010; Karolewski and Suszycki 2011.

across world societies. Taken together, the three components build up the 'welfare group': a unit of analysis that allows a comparative research centered on welfare and security, beyond conventional constraints possibly linked to ideologized understanding of modern societies. In the case of Somali families, the economic base in the homeland together with social structures, determine a reproduction of certain welfare practices and solidarity links aimed at curbing the numerous risks brought by the natural as well as social environment. Through transnational connections, these practices eventually affect also the individuals in Scandinavia: they are thus regularly exposed to welfare practices as well as needs expressed by their family members, and some of them are evidently in contrast with the Scandinavian model of welfare provision. On this basis, I argue that welfare practices responds to a series of variables that create different synchronic understandings of it: many ways of interpreting and practicing welfare in fact exist in a multicultural society, yet several ways to carry out welfare do exist also within the same welfare group dispersed in the diaspora.

Chapter Four focuses on the Somali society in order to analyze, this time with a prevalent diachronic method, some crucial aspects of the organization of social security. Applying the notion of welfare group, I examine experiences of risk management, normative principles of welfare and finally institutions, of which the clan represents the main actor for welfare provision. Comparing the available literature and the information collected during the interviews, I reason on the main changes the Somali society has gone through in relation to welfare and security, making of the civil war in the early 1990s the pivot of my analysis.

Chapter Five carries out a similar task in the Scandinavian context. In particular, the chapter realizes an overview of the establishment of the welfare state, paying attention to the shifting notion of risk as well as the principles that have guided social policy over time. The description of Scandinavian welfare institutions and societies after the Second World War shows that a number of tensions, reverting around questions of individualization, changing family structures and immigration, are bringing new challenges to the established model of state welfare provision.

Chapter Six offers an analysis of the changing patterns of welfare practices among the Somalis in Scandinavia and is largely based on the information collected during interviews and participatory observation. Mindful of both diachronic and synchronic perspectives, it will be possible to contextualize current challenges as well as highlight instances of change in the processes that I am describing. The chapter touches upon all the most important aspects of the life of the Somalis in Scandinavia: introductory programs; the transformation of nuclear and transnational families; education; the role of the media, shedding light on the different ways in which lack of security materializes.

Chapter Seven, finally, attempts at describing change in welfare practices and security constructions and at depicting some possible future scenarios, combining literature, empirical evidence and personal reflections. Through thematic clusters, important, recognized features of the encounter between the Somali and the Scandinavian welfare system will be scrutinized for what they reveal in terms of change over time. Some examples of these themes are solidarity; trust; individualization; and the changing functions of the clan in the diaspora. The conclusion will sum up some of the major findings of this research and will provide a direct answer to the research questions.

CHAPTER I
Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework puts the research questions in the perspective of contemporary scholarly discussions, with the belief that clarifying concepts and contextualizing events or objects of debate within certain traditions of thought can improve our ability to both comprehend and explain complex phenomena. The topics touched by this research require an initial pondering over the meaning of "diaspora", to illustrate what sort of community and processes does the word designate. It will emerge that such term (and we may add here "minority", "migrant" and "refugee") remind us, promptly and constantly, about the non-belonging of the concerned individuals to the society where they reside. Such terminology hints at their attachment to the homeland through networks, for example transnational solidarity, that are perceived by some as a clear violation of the political, cultural and social spaces of the nation in which the same individuals live. For this reason, I will also deal with nationalism or, more precisely, with one specific declination of it: "welfare nationalism", intended here as the translation of national categories in the sphere of welfare policies and discourses. This section will end with some general information as well as an overview of the literature regarding the Somali diaspora in Scandinavian countries.

Diaspora: the semantic journey of the term

Many definitions have been given of "diaspora" to date. A good starting point, before expanding the notion further, could be Van Hear's "people with multiple allegiances to place"[1]. In fact, analyzing a group of people as a diaspora presupposes always the allusion to or the inclusion of the "homeland", the new country of settlement, and the ongoing connections in between. However, the above captures only a part of the accelerated journey of semantic diversification that the term has gone through in the last fifty years or so. The concept of diaspora has in fact rather ancient roots. Since its inception in ancient Greek language,

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[1] Van Hear 1998, 3-4.

derived from the combination of the verb *speiro* (to sow) and the preposition *dia* (over), the term has appeared in modern European languages referring for long time only to the study of religions, and in particular to the context of the Jews scattered in different territories[2]. It was in the 1960s that the term was extended to incorporate specific populations, e.g. the Chinese, and most substantially the African diaspora, retaining yet a comparative orientation to the paradigmatic Jewish case[3]. The African case, in particular, reflected the growing scholarly interest for the establishment of African Diaspora studies as an autonomous discipline, entitled with the task of looking at the history of African migration and dispersion[4]. From there on, 'diaspora' has been applied to various populations across the world and in multiple senses, to the point that some have noted a conceptual loosening of the term[5].

The developments in the usage of diaspora in the last decades of the previous century have led to a main semantic shift of the term from a negative to a positive connotation: this consideration opens up for a clarification about typologies of diaspora. Following Cohen, in fact, it is possible to single out diasporas for their primary identity: there are accordingly *victim* diasporas (Jews, Africans, Armenians and Palestinians); *labor* diasporas, e.g. the Indians; *trade* diasporas, like the Chinese and Lebanese; *cultural* diasporas (the Caribbean); and what he calls *imperial* diasporas, namely the British, French, Spanish and Portuguese[6]. Clearly enough, oppression, persecutions, slavery, big catastrophes and a narrative of "exile" subsumed in the experiences of the early victim diasporas have contributed in delineating the early negative assessment of diasporic stories. Similarly, this characterization suggests a specific attention given to the original causes of the diaspora in the task of defining it. However, both recent and contemporary migration phenomena are characterized by several streams of

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[2] Dufoix 2008, 16.

[3] Brubaker 2005, 2; Manning 2009, 3.

[4] See for example Harris 1996, 6.

[5] Tölölyan 2000; Brubaker 2005.

[6] Cohen 1997.

people that migrate and live temporarily as expatriate elsewhere for different reasons, including motivations that we can frame positively, such as personal ambitions and the pursuance of better economic opportunities.

Therefore, in recent understandings of diaspora, the attention seems to have shifted to, or at least have included more systematically, the type of relation that groups abroad entertain with both the homeland and the host land. In doing so, the concept has been applied either in a descriptive fashion that emphasizes the political and economic nature of these connections, or as a process of cultural exchanges that shapes new social "spaces". I provide some examples of both below. While the academic debate still lacks a univocal definition of 'diaspora', a number of similarities (or prerequisites even) between diasporas have been identified. In the 1991 inaugural issue of *Diaspora*, William Safran noted six common features: dispersal from the homeland ("the center"), towards two or more "peripheries"; retention of collective memory and myth about the homeland; belief of not being fully accepted in the host society; aspiration to return to the homeland; and derivation of group consciousness and solidarity with co-ethnic members[7]. To these, Cohen would later include in his own definition the "expansion from a homeland in search of work" as well as the possibility of settling in host countries with the prospect of an "enriching life"[8]. We can thus elaborate that a diaspora is a relational network made of discourses and practices between co-ethnics and the homeland that has originated from a specific cause or set of problems in the place of origin. In connection with that, as Tölölyan spelled out in the same inaugural issue of *Diaspora*, the semantic domain of the diaspora includes "words like immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest worker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community", that is, "the vocabulary of transnationalism"[9].

The idea of transnationalism came out as an important analytical alternative to the dominant approach in migration studies in the 1970s and 1980s, which saw

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[7] Safran 1991, 83-84.

[8] Cohen 1997, 26.

[9] Tölölyan 1991, 4-5.

the figure of the migrant either as someone who would completely amalgamate in the receiving country or as a temporary sojourner who would eventually come back to the homeland[10]. Transnationalism is also a key word to move from the descriptive notions above to the *processes* ascribable to the diaspora: 'transnationalism' is used to indicate everyday practices of migrants that operate across borders and connect territorial and social spaces one with the other, or that even create brand new spaces of interaction. We recognize some examples in the "reciprocity and solidarity within kinship networks, political participation not only in the country of emigration but also of immigration, small-scale entrepreneurship of migrants across borders and the transfer and re-transfer of cultural customs and practices"[11]. In the last decades, internet communication has provided even more opportunities for the diaspora's transnational engagement with the homeland[12].

The picture of change was captured in 1999 also by Schnapper and Davis, for whom, due to "the dialectic between the transnational society and national societies (…) the meaning given to diaspora has changed, and is now positively marked. It appears to share an affinity with the very values of modernity"[13]. The transformations in communication and transport promoted by globalization, the integration of markets in a global yet unequal system have resulted in more diverse migration in the new millennium. Immigrants now come literally from everywhere, and they do not follow necessarily predictable patterns, such as migration from ex-colonies to the old metropole, but a wide range of variables: "super-diversity" is thus what fills the social spaces of global cities[14]. Technological developments enable transnational flows to stretch over larger distances with much more regularity than in the past, and this has created the possibility and the incentives to sustain transnational networks. This development has also triggered the definition of new, contemporary diasporas at the theoretical

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[10] Basch, Glick Schiller, and Blanc1994; Rouse 1995.

[11] Faist 2010, 11.

[12] For a case study on the Eritrean diaspora's online engagement, see Bernal 2014.

[13] Schnapper and Davis 1999, 239.

[14] Vertovec 2010.

level. Gabriel Sheffer, in particular, has distinguished four types of "non-ethnic trans-national formations" that comprehend not just the circulation of people, but also that of ideas and trends revealing potential for non-ethnic aggregation: global religions, political-ideological dispersals; trans-national linguistic communities; global youth culture(s)[15]. The concept of diaspora has thus known multiple points of application, and this fact has led to the "dispersion of the meanings of the term", what Brubaker has condensate in the now famous expression "diaspora diaspora"[16]. Through the analysis of contemporary uses, he derives that the concept has still some common denominators, namely "dispersion"; "homeland orientation"; and "boundary-maintenance" (the latter is explained as the "preservation of a distinct identity vis-à-vis a host society")[17].

Old and new ideas about diasporas seem thus to continuously blend in each other to create new meanings and understandings. Today, in fact, diasporas do not symbolize only dispersion but also aspiration to unity in the country of resettlement, under different possible discourses. Ethnicity, moreover, has lost its monopoly on the definition, while cultural and ideological criteria for aggregation have become possible. Diasporas are not just originated from forced migration, but are also expression of voluntary relocation. Living in a diaspora is not necessarily a temporary arrangement, but also a permanent solution: it can be established as a long-term mode of economic subsistence for those members of the family that live elsewhere, usually somewhere in the "global South". In this variety of epiphanies, diaspora remains the context of transnationalism par excellence: diaspora is the locus of transnational political engagements; of financial obligations towards the homeland; of global knowledge exchange; of culture negotiation; of reiteration of the homeland's culture features; and, often in connection with the previous features, is the locus of suspicion towards the host state's institutions[18]. The increasing dynamism of the diaspora seems to justify the

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[15] Sheffer 2006.

[16] Brubaker 2005, 1.

[17] *Ivi*, 6.

[18] See, respectively, Horst 2008; Carling, Erdal, and Horst 2012; Patterson 2006, 1892; Arthur 2010; Fangen 2007a, Horst 2008; Brinkhurst 2012, 245.

final (until now) reconsideration of its meaning, from that of a somehow fixed "entity" to a more fluid set of "diasporic stances, projects, claims, idioms, practices, and so on"[19].

The ever expanding notion of diaspora— distilled from contexts as various as the destruction of Jerusalem, the internet as an extension of national engagement, or the "micro-political system" of the slave ship across the Atlantic route, has posed remarkable methodological challenges to researchers[20]. As a result, studies in the field of migration and diaspora today are a showcase of interdisciplinary methods. There are at least two orders of motivations for that. First of all, diaspora studies have quickly become an analytical container for a lot of different but overlapping phenomena that have traditionally appealed to different disciplines. Quayson offers a fine glimpse in the excerpt below:

> The arts of memory, the dialectics of place, the ethnographies of nostalgia, the intersubjectivities of social identity, and the citational practices that ground senses of cultural particularity outside the homeland (names, family photographs, memorializations of the homeland, special community journals, etc.) along with the categories derived from a social typology (village of provenance, race, class, gender, generational differentiations, and degrees of capacity and opportunities or lack thereof for integration into the host land) are all crucial for understanding diasporas.[21]

Over time, the practice of diaspora studies has thus favored interconnections and excursions from one discipline to the other(s), especially since the cultural material available to the researcher in this kind of studies is considerably enriched by the inclusion of the homeland. Secondly, and following the first motivation, diaspora studies have invited for empirical comparisons between different communities, an approach that became a methodical academic practice presumably in 1986, with the publication of Sheffer's edited book *Modern Diasporas in International Politics*. In heuristic terms, comparisons are useful to reach new potential explanations for aspects that were not taken in consideration before. Yet also in descriptive terms, comparisons may help underlining what is

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[19] Brubaker 2005, 13.

[20] The image of the slave ship is borrowed from Gilroy's book *The Black Atlantic* (1993, 4).

[21] Quayson 2007, 589.

peculiar about one specific case. Finally, systematic comparisons can lead up to the formulation of models that have larger chances of application across time and space, and allow thus to 'locate' a diaspora in a theoretical framework comprising other agents.

Locating the diaspora

So far, I have deliberately focused only on the diaspora: however, the definitions given above made explicit reference also to other actors involved in these transnational relations, such as the new country of residence and the homeland. The next step of this theoretical reflection points then to the identification of the broader space of action— and constraint, of the diaspora. There are several models illustrating the collective transnational relationship matured by the aforementioned actors, and I will briefly review some of those with the scope of reasoning on how they are reflected in my study[22]. A particularly influential model to illustrate these dynamics is the triangular structure of migration alluded by Shaffer in 1986, elaborated by Safran in 1991, and then expanded by Brubaker and others during the 1990s[23]. According to the triangular model, migration studies should move around three poles: the homeland of the diaspora, the diaspora itself and finally the "hostland" where the same diaspora is located. In Safran, one can retrieve an emphasis on the diaspora consciousness as well as on the political behavior of both the homeland and the hostland. Rogers Brubaker, Professor of Sociology at University of California, articulates the whole issue in terms of a new phase of the old 'national question': the three poles are subsequently configured as *national* minorities, *nationalizing* states and external *national* homelands. I explore his framework in more detail.

The idea behind the model is capturing the interdependence, the dense relations within and between poles as well as the "reciprocal interfield monitoring" performed by the actors. Nationalism becomes then the way in which the actors struggle to impose and sustain their power over time: for example, it

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[22] Some examples of models and objects of study not included here are: "transnational communities" (Vertovec 1999); "transnational social spaces" (Faist 2000); or the "cosmopolitan arena" (Beck and Grande 2010).

[23] Brubaker 1995, 1996. See also Persson 2000.

can take the form of the "nationalizing nationalism" (as Brubaker calls it) operated by the hosting state, which is the result of the competition between different stances to influence state policy in a specific direction. Brubaker explains that despite having institutional power, nationalizing states may remain in an overall weak position in the society, to the point of seeing themselves as incomplete nation-states; therefore, nationalizing elites establish a number of "compensatory" measures in order to promote the interest of the "core" nation[24]. There is then the nationalism of the external national homeland, which on the one hand has a political/moral mandate to protect its own citizens abroad, while on the other hand develops a great variation in the way it engages with ethnic co-nationals abroad. Finally, members of the minorities living in the nationalizing state resort to arguments based on their "distinct ethnocultural nationality" to demand the hosting state certain "collective cultural and/or political rights", while they are also active in seeking recognition in the ethno-nation that forms the core of their respective external homelands[25]. What Brubaker describes is thus a confrontation between nationalisms having different purposes and strategies.

The merit of the model is that of providing a structure to predict political dynamics between and within poles, and in doing so, it becomes usable also for comparison among cases. Another quality of the model is that of theorizing each given actor in a continuous stage of competition with different instances of political interests, avoiding thus a static representation of their political position. As seen above, political parties are the ones animating the public sphere of the nationalizing state; at the same time, different organizations within a national minority compete in order to represent the entire minority to the host state, so to access the privileges that this connection entails. A similar discourse of political dynamism can be extended to analyze the dynamics in the external national homeland.

Can we apply this relational model for the analysis of the dynamics involving the Somali diaspora in Scandinavia? Brubaker's triadic nexus, as he claims, finds

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[24] Brubaker 1996, 5.

[25] Brubaker 1995, 112.

its "locus classicus" in interwar East Central Europe in the aftermath of the disintegration of the Ottoman, Habsburg and Romanov empires, where the requisites of the model (most notably a "core nation" controlling state power yet distinguished on ethno-cultural bases from the permanent resident population) are best applied. The direct translation of the model to my case study, therefore, is invalidated by the specificities pertaining to the politics and processes of nationalization of the three Scandinavian states, it is argued here. Yet, if we "situate" our approach within the relational context (see next chapter), the model becomes usable as a basic framework to understand the processes concerning welfare and security analyzed in this thesis.

What I am suggesting is thus to look at the model for inspiration, through the lens of a 'welfare question' unfolding through a *pas de trois* between the said actors. In this re-formulation, I understand the nation-state as the institution imposing a specific welfare regime on the entire population. The diaspora is the structure of negotiation of practices afferent to two conceptions of safety net, namely the one of the nation-state of residence, and the one of the homeland. The latter, hence, represents the pole that in many ways attracts the welfare concerns of the diaspora. There are few yet relevant considerations to make about this adaptation of the model. First of all, the welfare systems functioning in the three Scandinavian states address the concerns of the majoritarian share of the population in relation to how social security should be achieved. They are not, in any sense, an expression of a minority group within the society (Chapter Five will deal in more detail with this question). Secondly, the connection between the diaspora and the homeland is ensured by the norms of mutual assistance embedded in the moral code of the extended family. For example, Somalis abroad transfer remittances to the homeland, or some of them travel in order to look after a relative living in another country that has fallen severely ill. As a further point, the extended family takes over the very definition of homeland, in lieu of state institutions. In fact, solidarity links and financial assistance are operated by transnational familiar networks through *xawilaad*, a value transfer system in which the sender turns to a company to deliver money to a recipient: the company instructs then a number of trusted agents located all around the world to make sure

that the money are delivered in hand to the intended person[26]. Therefore, the study of transnational connections can be applied also to cases, like the Somali, in which the homeland government can exert comparatively less attractive force on diaspora members, due to the precariousness of its institutions.

Moreover, this framework allows to identify also one potential limitation in Brubaker's model: it does not conceptualize that a diaspora does not emanate only from the homeland, but also from previous diasporic places. This phenomenon, which for example we observe with the Somalis who left Scandinavia for other countries, may imply a number of social implications that we need to explore *ex novo,* like for the example the agency of the network of information among people. Therefore, at least for the Somali case, it seems pertinent to talk about a "multiangular structure" to include countries of onward migration[27]. The migration matrix proposed by Van Hear is appropriate to back up this point[28]. His theoretical contribution reflects on force and choice in migration, associating different typologies of migration to more or less intense degrees of coercion behind the movement. Van Hear recognizes five typologies: concomitant "inward" and "outward" movements (respectively, movements from a place of origin to some other place); a "return" to the place of origin or previous residence; "onward" movements from an already non-original place to some other new place; and finally, "staying put", in reality a non-movement that can be yet still relevant for study purposes. His matrix thus contemplates more specifically onward migration, namely the kind of movement that stimulated the paradox explicated in the introduction of this thesis, and defines it with these words:

> The onward cells include households that choose strategically to disperse their members in different parts of the world as a means of insurance or spreading risk. Since they may exercise some choice, refugees or other forced migrants settled in a third country might be located at an intermediate position on the scale, while at the other end of the continuum lie people forcibly scattered or dispersed after prior migration.[29]

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[26] See Horst 2006, 35.

[27] Faist 2010, 14.

[28] Van Hear 1998, 45.

[29] Van Hear 1998, 46.

In Chapter Six, I will show that in the narrative of my interlocutors the dispersal of kin emerges indeed as an insurance strategy in response to a number of challenges to security in the homeland. The necessity to ensure constant livelihood support to family segments living in Somalia, together with onward migration phenomena, is what accounts for a potential reconsideration of the notion of return in the definition of diaspora. As noted also in other studies, in fact, life abroad is becoming a prolonged although not necessarily permanent configuration of diaspora relations, and subsequently "return is perhaps questionable as a defining criterion of diaspora", especially when considering second-generation members[30]. The semantic journey of diaspora thus continues, and since ethnicity and the notion of return are not as dominant as in the past, we should not overlook the continuous transformative power of the concept.

Welfare nationalism

The second part of the theoretical framework explores the role of the "host state" in the relational structure rotating around welfare matters, as seen above. Brubaker stated that his model was a reassessment of the national question, and the poles of the relation were analyzed accordingly. When we re-calibrate the model in terms of welfare and security, how relevant still is the notion of nationalism? My argument here is that a specific declination of it, "welfare nationalism", can be applicable to put current dynamics on focus. Before discussing it, I start out with a brief outline of nationalism, whose thorough historical analysis however falls outside the task of this thesis.

Nationalism is a type of claim for political power and legitimation affirming that rulers and ruled should belong to the same ethnic background and inhabit the same bordered space of the nation-state[31]. The latter, it follows, is the contemporary geopolitical unit through which political elites should exercise legitimate power and seek recognition both internally and internationally. Such polity creates a bond between the two sub-units: the *state*, the institutional

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[30] King and Christou 2010, 171.

[31] Gellner (1983, 1), for example, defined nationalism as "primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent".

structure responding mostly to law and governance matters; and the *nation*, alluding instead to the ethno-cultural conceptualization of the citizens inhabiting that bordered portion of land.

This primary definition of nationalism puts accent on questions of power and sovereignty, which have been indeed common features among the early expressions of the phenomenon in the previous century[32]: nationalism is a claim— when there is no corresponding nation-state; or, when a nation-state already exists, nationalism can strengthen the legitimacy of its political narrative. In the early nineteenth century, nationalism has consolidated itself in a definite political doctrine, which promoted the nation-state as the most natural subdivision of human societies, and as a means to identify a sentiment or idealistic identity and a cultural movement[33]. However, this grand-scale definition is necessarily complemented by the specification that without a "national consciousness"— i.e. the sense of commitment and the sentiment of affection for the nationalist project among ordinary people, a nation cannot exist. This is the "view from below" of nationalism[34].

The political historian Benedict Anderson has specifically talked about the nation in terms of an "imagined political community". According to him, "the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship" or "fraternity", and is *imagined* because even "the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion"[35]. Anderson attributed much of the power to imagine to the mass consumption of newspapers, which had created a completely new idea of time with the realization of "calendrical coincidence" among their readers, and to the diffusion of the printed book in the market ("printed-capitalism")[36]. All this fostered the creation of large-scale

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[32] Barkey and Von Hagen 1997; Wimmer, Min, and Katz 2006, 873.

[33] Breuilly 2013, 6.

[34] Hobsbawm 1990, 11.

[35] Anderson 1983, 7.

[36] *Ivi*, 33-36.

networks bound to the imagery allowed by shared language and culture, rather than to immediate face-to-face contacts. In this form, of more interest here, nationalism is intended as the individual or collective commitment to the national idea, which is visible in four narratives:

> first, the idea that nations are real, which means that there exists a specific factor differentiating people belonging to one nation from those belonging to other nations (…). Second, it is the belief that membership in a nation confers rights and imposes obligations. Nations are communities in which members recognise special ties to their compatriots, and they feel that they owe them more than they owe non-members. Third, this idea is reinforced by the principle of fundamental equality of membership, which allows for the open class system of stratification. (…). The fourth narrative is the idea that nations are valuable communities and nationhood is the very core of political and social life. Therefore, nationalism wants to maintain political institutions that allow national decision-making free from external coercion, and, in more extreme cases, they expect the members to maintain their nation even at the price of significant sacrifices.[37]

These narratives are engendered, or become salient, in reason of the perceived incongruity between the cultural and the political boundaries of the nation: diasporas and migrants in fact challenge the construction of nations as homogeneous societies. They are said to erode the "isomorphism" between people and nation, between people and the solidarity group in the society[38]. The violation of this principle, as much as its fulfillment, generates a "nationalistic sentiment" among those who believe in the sanctity of the nation and equate it to the ideal of the good society[39]. These dynamics are particularly visible in the politics of the welfare state, a consolidated form of nation-state, because it has long operated distinctions among its members as a tool for governance[40]. In fact, given that welfare states rely extensively on the logic of full employment as well as on citizens' fiscal contribution, discourses setting apart contributors from non-contributors, "deserving" from "undeserving" groups have been frequent at all levels of the society. In the last decades, specific groups like asylum seekers, immigrants and unemployed have been singled out as especially problematic, and

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[37] Suszycki 2011, 53.

[38] Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002, 309. With the term "isomorphism", they refer to the coincidence of the imaginary boundaries of the notions of citizenry, sovereign, solidarity group and nation.

[39] Gellner 1983, 1.

[40] See for example Bak Jørgensen and Thomsen 2013, 2016, forthcoming; Sciortino and Finotelli 2015.

scholars have warned against the overlapping of ethnicity with constructions of non-deservingness in European and Scandinavian welfare states[41].

At the same time, national criteria have resulted to be very effective in mobilizing solidarity among citizens, providing the ground for what goes under the name of "welfare nationalism". This brings us to the central matter: Suszycki, who primarily inspires the following theoretical considerations, has illustrated five types of narrative of welfare nationalism[42]. (1) the idea that differences between nations are a result of their different socio-economic development; (2) the belief that one's own national welfare system is superior to other welfare and non-welfare systems; (3) the moral commitment to make sacrifices for compatriots, in order to preserve the national welfare; (4) the assumption that fundamental equality of membership and rates of social mobility can be achieved only within the national welfare system; (5) the idea of independence of the national welfare from laws passed for other national welfare communities. The scopes of welfare nationalism can be explored at four alternative but highly interacting levels: the micro (the individuals); the meso (mainly political parties); the macro (national governments) and the supranational level, in which we scrutinize also the impact of international politics[43].

Understood as such, instances of welfare nationalism are recognizable in the rhetoric of democracy, usually underlining the positive societal achievements and the internal political cohesion[44]. Or, the other face of the same coin, in the guise of welfare chauvinism, a restrictive nationalist rhetoric claiming that access to welfare benefits should be limited to certain groups, in particular the natives of a country. This represents nevertheless only a part, the one we can most immediately discern, of welfare nationalism: the next question to take into consideration in this theoretical framework concerns thus the unnoticed forms of manifestation of welfare nationalism, with the ultimate scope of illuminating on

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[41] Bak Jørgensen 2012.

[42] Suszycki 2011, 54-55.

[43] *Ivi*, 56-61.

[44] For a national and regional analysis of the Nordic area see Kurunmaki and Strang 2010.

how it affects the Somali diaspora at both individual and (transnational) extended family levels. Once again, we interrogate theories of nationalism first.

Everyday forms of nationalism

Nationalism has been usually associated and concerned with big *events*: the French and English Revolution, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the outbreak of ethnic wars; with big *processes*, like the anti-colonial struggle; with big *personalities*, like Fichte and his "Addresses to the German Nation". Or again, nationalism was analyzed in respect to special occasions, commemorations, and invented traditions[45]. Anderson suggested that the recent prevalence of political power over philosophical elaborations of nationalism is a question of categories of analysis: nationalism is too often intended as an ideology, while he classified it as a form of "kinship" or "religion"[46]. Following his suggestion, we should then see nationalism as something that holds a much more practical and affective consistence. Most importantly, our categories of analysis should focus on the 'everyday' dimension of nationalism, the one that is disguised in the notions of kinship, family and in ideas of the 'good society'. These concepts, in fact, are not mobilized only in specific occasions or by specific actors: they are experienced in different forms and extents by ordinary people, citizens and immigrants, although with different degrees of awareness and implications.

As a matter of fact, scholars have recently suggested that kinship images, metaphors of the nation as a family, and nostalgic discourses in Scandinavian politics are still relevant for policymaking and consensus, and they are capable of influencing the process of integration as well[47]. The theoretical intuition of Michael Billig, a social scientist with a modernist understanding of the nation, is very insightful: moving towards Anderson's direction, he notes that nationalism has become so entrenched in the consciousness of the citizenry that it is a snubbed presence in many practices of everyday life. As he states, nationalism "is not a

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[45] Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; McCrone and McPherson 2009.

[46] Anderson 1983, 5.

[47] Gullestad 2002; Rytter 2010; Norocel 2013.

flag which is being consciously waved with fervent passion; it is the flag hanging unnoticed on the public building"[48]. And the flag is ignored because its reminding is so familiar to the national citizen that it is not consciously registered as something of special interest. For this to happen, Billig argues that a "whole complex of beliefs, assumptions, habits, representations and practices" must be reproduced: not through an elaborate process of identity formation, but "in a banally mundane way" that speaks to the everyday life of experiences[49].

His 1995 book titled *Banal Nationalism* refers thus to contexts in which the citizenry are daily reminded unconsciously of their nation, and presents it as "an endemic condition" of Western nationalism. The way in which Billig describes mid-1990s nationalism makes it clear that it has now turned into a mature and consolidated set of practices (that indeed can be even taken for granted). Many of these mundane rituals, I argue, serve to distinguish the Self from the Other; to collocate the experiences of migrants outside the range of those that will be ever available to the national majority. Billig tackles also another crucial issue: the relation between nationalism and globalization. He argues that while much of the debate is oriented towards the supposed erosion of the nation-state due to the multiple effects of globalization, "nationhood is still being reproduced"[50]. But we may fail noticing it because nationalism in the West has been 'exoticized'— perhaps for the increasingly negative connotation with violence and war that it has assumed over time, as a phenomenon belonging to others: located on the periphery, and not on the established democracies. Since nationalism has been confined to exotic, passionate and violent exemplars, its routinely forms tend to slip from attention. Nationalism has thus micro-level, psychological dynamics that can be connected to the specific theories of welfare nationalism.

In a more sophisticated fashion, the Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek had talked about the Nation as a "Thing", a "way of life" that only national ethnics own. This Thing manifests in "the way our community organizes its feasts, its

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[48] Billig 1995, 8.

[49] *Ivi*, 6.

[50] *Ivi*, 8.

rituals of mating, its initiation ceremonies, in short, all the details by which is made visible the unique way a community organizes its enjoyment"[51]. These social practices of enjoyment, he contends, are transmitted through national myths, and this transmission in turn ensures the survival of the nation. The nation, in other words, provides always "the frame within which welfare regimes are constructed and practised"[52].

Towards everyday welfare nationalism?

The five narratives presented earlier refer to manifestations of welfare nationalism among the majoritarian population, and can be articulated in common parlance, in political speeches and campaigns, and in other forms. Now, I wish to expand the theoretical argument in the direction of how immigrants and refugees may face the welfare nationalism of the majoritarian population. To state it more correctly, I want to show that welfare nationalism is not found only in programmatic statements and political speeches targeting immigration, or in the contents of a government bill. We retrieve it also in a number of normative foundations of the welfare state, where it comes often unnoticed because it represents the familiar, the mundane, to refer once again to Billig. However, while for the majoritarian population this second version of welfare nationalism can possibly appeal to ordinary understandings of the society, this is less so in the case of immigrants.

There are few examples of these foundations that I can point out here, in the attempt to sketch a theoretical model of everyday forms of welfare nationalism. A first item on the list is the control on newcomers' physical *mobility* inside and outside the country as part of the governance instruments. Historically, state authorities throughout Europe and Scandinavia have been concerned with the limitation of movement for certain categories of people at least since the seventeenth century, when Poor law and coercive employment in workhouses became the preferred solution for beggars, vagrants, "good-for-nothing"

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[51] Žižek 1993, 200-201.

[52] Lewis 1998, 4.

individuals and undeserving poor[53]. Legislation highly curtailed the mobility of the vagrants, as everyone was associated with a parish of origin and would be forcedly brought back there if found begging elsewhere. Wimmer and Glick Schiller have revived the debate on "methodological nationalism", an expression that designates the analytical as well as epistemological compartmentalization of the world and the disciplines into nations and national categories, which they criticize. In challenging this reductionist approach that tends to disregard what does not present itself in a nation-like recognizable form, they noted:

> in the eyes of nation-state builders and social scientists alike, every move across national frontiers becomes an exception to the rule of sedentariness within the boundaries of the nation-state. The exceptionality of cross-border settlement is, evidently enough, linked to the territorialization of the nationalist imaginary.[54]

These considerations, stretching from pre-industrialization poor laws to the phase of nation-building in the nineteenth and twentieth century, help explaining the enduring conceptualization of internal/external mobility and its control for governance purposes. In contemporary Scandinavian welfare states, this legacy is still visible in the introductory programs for newcomers and refugees, a measure of integration policy common to all three countries that places refugees in municipalities countrywide, to favor interactions with local national communities. Introductory programs are mandatory in Denmark and Norway and voluntary in Sweden, and the granting of welfare benefits to target groups are connected in all cases to the attendance of courses on language and culture, and to the mandatory placement in the municipality in the first two countries[55]. The politics of (im-)mobility in its latest manifestations reveals a tension between the "considerable integrative effect" of trusted relatives and co-ethics already settled in the country, and policy-makers' vision of national local communities providing conducive social environments for integration[56]. Therefore, the bound between mobility and governance, and the pressure to comply that can be exerted with the instrument of

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[53] Kouri 2003; Ladewig Petersen 2003; Riis 2003; Hindle 2004.

[54] Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002, 310.

[55] Fernandes 2012, 196.

[56] Larsen 2013, 153.

introductory allowances, should not be overlook at the theoretical level, for its practical consequences in the early phase of refugees' resettlement.

A crucial matter for the assessment of welfare nationalism is also that of *family*. Issues of parenting, gender equality and childcare have been traditional spheres of interest for Scandinavian welfare societies, from the de-patriarchalization of the family to the dual-earner model, and still take center stage in many debates[57]. Moreover, the need to deal with profound transformations such as falling birth rates, ageing population and divorce challenges welfare states to find solutions for the changing patterns of needs and risks associated with the new characteristics of the 'ordinary' family, the basis for future welfare policies, whose definition is though not an easy task for policymakers. The "politicization of the private sphere", consists therefore in (re)designing the expected family relationship, at gender, parental, and societal levels. Family relations are also "a central arena of negotiation and contention in the welfare states' efforts to integrate immigrants and refugees and in the latter's attempts to maintain control over the lives that they desire to live"[58]. The inherent tension that we should bear in mind is thus between the action of welfare states in taking on many of the socio-economic functions of the family, and the source of security that family relations can represent instead for newcomers.

Similar theoretical reflections can be expanded to at least another space of everyday confrontation with the way in which the nation is socially reproduced: *upbringing and education*. Theories of nationalism have indicated the role held by standardized education, communication and literacy initiated by modern state institutions for both processes of cultural homogenization as well as creation of a unified national identity[59]. For the welfare state, education remains a strategic area, especially for its direct connections to the job market and employment chances. In Scandinavian societies specifically, the various institutions composing the welfare state have the responsibility to provide the necessary assistance for the

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[57] Ellingsæter and Leira 2006.

[58] Olwig 2013, 12.

[59] Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Hearn 2006, 67; Eriksen 2010, 125.

incorporation of immigrants and refugees into the society. From introductory programs for newcomers and refugees, to the education system or child day care, all of these parts play an important role for that purpose. As pointed out recently, however:

> this assistance is problematic, largely because it entails active intervention in the private lives of refugees and immigrants by professionals within the Scandinavian welfare system seeking to shape these population groups - socially, culturally, physically and psychologically - according to Scandinavian norms.[60]

This brief theoretical overview opens up for few final considerations. To start with, we need to consider that the Western historical experiences of governance (including welfare systems) have become a sort of paradigmatic model that has for long time privileged the nation-state as unit of analysis[61]. "The assumption that the nation/state/society is the natural social and political form of the modern world", i.e. methodological nationalism, has led to both the shaping of a unidirectional and evolutionary understanding of modernity, and to a marginalization of human communities living under other forms of political association[62]. For this reason, I believe that connecting welfare with everyday dimensions of nationalism is a theoretical necessity for the study of contemporary Western societies. It sheds lights, in fact, on how integration can be intended as a project based on welfare that requires individuals to redefine practices and understanding of their own safety net to embrace instead the one of the receiving country. To put it differently, we see a process of long-term reconfiguration of the loci of solidarity production and 'consumption', since the different components of the welfare state have an impact on the expectations connected to gender roles; child upbringing; the definition of the family as a whole; duty to work; or again on the relation of the individual qua member of a larger community.

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[60] Olwig 2013, 6.

[61] In the discipline of history, Berger, Donovan and Passmore (1999, 282) have talked specifically about "historiographical nationalism", with reference to works in which the "nature of historical writing cannot be fully understood in isolation from the nation-state".

[62] Quotation in the text by Wimmer & Glick Schiller 2002, 302. As Kuper has explained (1988, 5), "modern society was defined above all by the territorial state, the monogamous family and private poverty". On the relation between societies and modernity, see also Mudimbe 1988; Chakrabarty 2000; Appadurai 2013.

Secondly, the micro level of analysis described by Suszycki becomes very relevant in order to bring into light sources of tension between two different understandings of welfare and security; interdisciplinary strategies are useful here, since we are entering the sphere of experiences, aspiration, expectations of integration and better life, which require anthropological perspectives *in primis*. Thirdly, the selected matters above represent arenas of confrontation where it is possible to apply historical perspectives to conclude something about changes occurring over time, and this goal may be pursued through different methodologies (in this thesis, I take the path of qualitative interviews).

There are at least two reasons to refer to welfare policy as a specific sub-type of nationalism. First of all, because Scandinavian welfare states have established goals like full employment, equality under the law, and gender equality as their primary attributes, and rely on a mix of interventions on public institutions, the labor market and the family in order to achieve them. Since there is a strategic interest in ensuring that also non-national groups conform to these societal 'moral' norms, with a view on the general wellbeing of the nation, the efficiency of social security provisions and the popular support for the system, these attributes become forms of belonging and ways of imagining the nation[63].

In second place, it is well documented that factual or perceived deviance from the established norm lends itself to phenomena like the construction of un-deservingness; the narrative about welfare scroungers; and the rise of welfare chauvinism among certain segments of the society and the political hemisphere[64]. Among the reactions we may find, stands also the criminalization of welfare practices associated with non-nationals. Combining the theoretical notions presented so far, thus, we can put forward the idea that welfare is employed as a yardstick to evaluate diversity among communities and elaborate political measures to correct it.

If we now turn to consider what is specifically unnoticed, or "banal", about welfare nationalism, literature points to the fact that welfare institutions meet

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[63] Lewis (1998, 4) expresses similar considerations for the British case.

[64] Rytter 2010; Bak Jørgensen and Thomsen 2013, 2016; Norocel 2013.

standardized risk situations while at the same time they tend to normalize people's attitude to risk[65]. By doing so, they work with political defined needs that are moreover tied to specific requirements or conducts (e.g. activation policy, see Chapter Five). Therefore— to sum up, we may argue that the essence of welfare nationalism is that the nation, for all it represents discursively and practically, sets expected behaviors and defines social problems. However, it has been argued that the underpinnings of state measures "may have the opposite result of hindering rather than facilitating the sort of social incorporation that was intended"[66].

There is also another aspect that I wish to underline: while the generosity of social assistance in Scandinavian states is usually associated with smooth integration policies and the overall societal achievements of these societies, we know comparatively less about the Somali welfare system and corresponding construction of the safety net. Only little has been said about how the Somali community, or for that matter any other community, build and preserve moral and legal structures that ensure the wellbeing and the security of its members. Hence, a matter that needs to be included in the theoretical dimension of welfare nationalism is the tendency to overlook other welfare systems or dynamics, all subsumed in the pressure to comply with its normative principles. This is not so much a question of expressing qualitative judgments about different welfare systems or policies: it is primarily a problem of identifying the consequences deriving from the impossibility to engage in welfare practices that help achieving security.

Solidarity and the outcome of the tension

It is somewhat daring to develop a research about security and welfare without referring to the idea of solidarity, and I did not intend to pursue any exceptional path in this respect. For the purposes of this thesis, the incorporation of solidarity helps providing a more accurate picture of the long-term effects of the encounter between the two welfare systems from the specific point of view of the individual.

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[65] Kildal 2003, 14.

[66] Olwig 2013, 12.

The richness contained in the idea of solidarity can be puzzling, to say the least: conceptually speaking, solidarity confronts us with a rather univocal designative word opening up though for multiple meanings, including political ones, which calls for a brief theoretical clearing up[67].

On a very general line, solidarity is the feeling of mutual concern derived from a sense of common belonging; at its best, solidarity repudiates social injustice and allows individuals to pursue certain acts and behaviors even in the absence of compensation. Early scholarly engagements with the topic argued for the origin of solidarity in the societal response to the problem of scarcity and the common management of scarce resources that was supposed to put an ideal end to the quest for more wealth. Yet already in the nineteenth century, sociologists were not satisfied with this explanation, as they contended that "[b]ecause human beings are creatures of desire, it is assumed not only that scarcity is a permanent feature of all human existence, but that desire will expand with the promotion of commodities under capitalist conditions"[68]. Intellectuals like Comte, Simmel, Durkheim and Weber thus moved in the direction of establishing the division between biological and culture-specific needs, placing moreover the notion of solidarity within the context of the changing social structures of the West, which would have the effect of increasing individual's expectations and demands vis-à-vis the community.

Industrialization was regarded to be a process leading to increased level of hazard and uncertainties, since technological innovations did not just bring more happiness and comfort to people's life, but they also imposed new kinds of needs,

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[67] We are not short on definitions. Few examples: according to Hecter (1987, 186) solidarity does not derive from "the biology or personalities of individuals, but from the socially conditioned reactions of individual actors to their circumstances". Mason (2000, 27) has underlined that solidarity consists of mutual concern in a context of no systematic injustice; Turner and Rojek (2001, 37) affirm that "The development of solidarity derives from a sense of common belonging. It is precisely this sense of belonging which is compromised by risk society"; de Beer and Koster (2009, 10) sum up that solidarity is "the positive bond between the fates of different people". The concept can become an item of political agendas, giving birth to political-connoted definitions, such as those afferent to the political traditions of social democracy and Christian democracy in many European countries. The political language of solidarity in the West is explored by Stjernø (2009, 2): for political actors and parties it becomes "the preparedness to share resources with others by personal contribution to those in struggle or in need and through taxation and redistribution organised by the state".

[68] Turner and Rojek 2001, 33.

and therefore threats arising in the case of their absence. Scholars were intrigued by the kind of solidarity emerging out of that historical development. Within sociological studies, the normativist and the functionalist schools became predominant in explaining the mutating context[69]: the argument of the normativists was quite intuitively that the internalization of norms fosters solidarity because individuals, especially members of the same family, share more and more behaviors. According to the structuralists, sharing common individual interests is instead more important in order to establish a solidaristic community. Durkheim would encapsulate these alternative views in what he famously named *mechanical* solidarity— found in primitive societies, where the 'sameness' in living condition sparked a common set of beliefs and consensus, and *organic* solidarity, characterized by interdependence between anonymous citizens based on the division of labor and on social roles diversification among individuals, a typical condition of industrialized societies[70]. It was then understood that industrialization was eroding the previous forms of solidarity while creating on the other hand the basis for a new type that had to replace that sort of common consciousness characterizing once the mechanical era.

Before Durkheim, August Comte argued that it was continuity, rather than solidarity, the force behind the societal integrative force; commenting on the work of the French sociologist, Stiernø notes that in such a vision "our interdependence in the past develops bonds that make us more interdependent in our present social organization. We are dependent upon the past for its accumulation of experiences and resources, and we are dependent upon others in our own day for the production of goods and services"[71]. It is an interesting passage, as it tells the same story of this historical development (solidarity in the time of industrialization) yet from the side of the individual and his internal tension

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[69] Hecter 1987.

[70] Durkheim 1893; Turner and Rojek 2001, 33; de Beer and Koster 2009, 50.

[71] Stjernø 2009, 32.

between new and old ways to achieve security[72]: solidarity too, thus, contributes to the explanation of security.

What said so far presents solidarity mostly as an active pursuit of the citizen. Other scholars have underlined that alongside the voluntary manifestation of solidarity, there exist also another type: the state is in charge of organizing "compulsory" solidarity, the most extensive form of solidarity retrievable within the welfare state[73]. The most interesting aspect of compulsory solidarity is that the state's attitude to solidarity does not need correspondence to that of the citizens, in the light of the state's position of power within the society[74]. In fact, the state has democratically managed to establish the payment of tax as mandatory; it detains the management of income transfers; and it compensates for the hazards affecting the citizen[75].

At first through imposition, the welfare state has thus developed the capability to mold the desires of its citizens: historian Peter Baldwin notes that with this process the modern state has had over time less and less need to command citizens, favoring instead softer means of education and persuasion to let them adopt certain behaviors[76]. The politics of the welfare state gains a determinant advantage in portraying a society of citizens that are mutually dependent, above whom it then constructs its role as legitimate and rational welfare provider. Compulsory solidarity acts by stimulating those existing experiences of collective management of risk analyzed previously, which thus

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[72] De Beer and Koster (2009, 16) set up the distinction between solidarity ("embodied in individual persons") and social cohesion and social capital ("characteristics of a group, a community").

[73] *Ivi*, 12.

[74] *Ivi*, 42. Nonsmoking enforcement in public spaces is a typical example of the potentiality of such statutory interferences by the state. Interestingly enough, F. von Benda-Beckmann and K. von Benda-Beckmann (2007, 37) have also pointed to a similar disconnection between the perceptions of the individual and the ideological and normative institutional conceptualizations of social security. They explain it with the fact that elites are the ones with the necessary resources required to set up institutions, which they can then blend with their own directional thoughts.

[75] This view corresponds indeed to Max Weber's understanding of solidarity as a special type of social relationship, which could be governed either by reciprocal expectations or alternatively by the exercise of authority (a point made by Stjernø 2009, 38). In its most radical reading, the definition and the management or risk could be considered a hegemonic tool in the hand of the government to exercise control over the population (Caplan 2000, 23).

[76] Baldwin 2003, 106.

become an expression of authority in disguise. Of course, the image of a state that resorts to coercive impulses, imposes its ideals on relations and obligations between members of a community, eventually politicizing the notion of solidarity, contrasts with the evidence that public opinion and welfare state's social policy are positively correlated[77].

Scholars point out also the existence of moral structures of solidarity, and in particular they denote the role of *trust*, namely the confidence in the efficient and lawful actions of institutions[78]: as long as trust is maintained, the mechanisms described by Baldwin are amplified, and the state can subsequently reduce its coercive interventions in the society. Trust can manifest though also as an interpersonal attitude between citizens, according to the similar idea between people that the other will remain committed to the principles of the welfare system[79]. It is said that trust "facilitates life in diverse societies and fosters acts of tolerance and acceptance of otherness" and stimulates the establishment of connections between people, creating in this way the basis of the *social capital*, another emblematic concept for these theoretical reflections[80]. Simply put, social capital is the combination of relational network, civic resouces like trust, and norms, which all together can improve the condition of the individual, and through the individual the broader collective fabric too.

Solidarity, and its corollary elements just described, is part to that constant interplay between the categories of we/us and others/them, because there can be no social cohesion without the prior definition of the fellow community members who deserve to be its recipients. We/us defines the group of members that believes to be engaged in relations of mutual obligation and consequently cares for the suffering of their fellow members. In the welfare state, the boundaries of this type of welfare group are often conflated with the national borders, in the form of the isomorphism described earlier. The "others" are those individuals in

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[77] Brooks and Manza 2007, 35.

[78] Rothstein 2000.

[79] Cfr. the definition given in De Beer and Koster 2009, 79.

[80] Hooghe and Stolle 2003, 4.

whose respect that "we" does not feel any specific moral or political obligation to extend its solidarity, or has little trust. Migrants routinely become the target of a certain strategy of "othering", and are described as those who do not conform to societal norms, allegedly endangering the healthiness of a long-standing system with their uncooperative approaches to the new society they live in.

Concrete and Imaginary solidarity

In comparative perspective, welfare at the state level is performed among a more numerically consistent welfare group, as the boundaries between "us" and "them" are enforced on a broader scale than what we see in the cases of the communities based on what Durkheim named organic solidarity. Some of the reasons for the enlargement of the solidarity boundaries of these welfare groups have been explored already, and identified chiefly in socio-economic changes and concomitant nationalism forces. Inspired by the findings of my research, I see it profitable to introduce a further specification concerning the subject matter of this section. I believe that it is useful to distinguish between two types of solidarity, on the basis of their 'concrete' and 'imaginary' dimensions.

Simply put, many among my Somali interlocutors expressed both the strife to fulfill solidarity obligations towards the extended family as well as the desire to have less family-centric relations in the hosting country. In their discourses, I have retrieved their predisposition to "shrink" solidarity from the extended family (which may count dozens and dozens members) to a smaller group of people, yet still larger than the nuclear family. This changing idea of solidarity, which seems to be reducing the space of reciprocity, is what I have named concrete solidarity. It consists of practical acts such as money transfers, granting of hospitality, helping with daily chores and so on: all those acts that put benefactor and recipient in direct contact and do not require the intermediation of the state. Concrete solidarity can be performed also at distance, but is nevertheless based on the principle of traceability of both senders and receiver, and in the majority of cases also on familiar bounds. The xawilaad system is a good example here (see note 26 in this Chapter).

There is then imaginary solidarity, which I use to refer instead to the idea of solidarity that is propagated successfully by institutions. In the case of the welfare state, its institutions are the ones that make associational relations between strangers possible, since they subcontract the management of risk to the government in exchange of the assurance that other citizens will be educated, encouraged or forced to do the same. In this structure, the space for practical solidarity is reduced to the essential and can be even looked upon with suspicion. I believe it is fair to call it *imaginary* because the welfare of an individual in such societies does not depend on direct contributions to him/her pocket by others, but his/her welfare "passes through" personal contributions to the system in the form of taxes and other legal measures (and vice versa). Hence, two strangers meeting for the first time on the street will know that they are already in a solidarity relation, simply because they are citizens of the same state, a condition that lead them imagining that they are contributing to their reciprocal welfare. The said difference does not mean that the two types of solidarity cannot coexist: I believe that concrete and imaginary solidarity exist side by side, although in an inversely proportional relation. If much of the solidarity arrangements is dealt with at the practical level of family, the solicitations to imaginary welfare groups will be less appealing and vice versa. Let us try to visualize it with a graph:
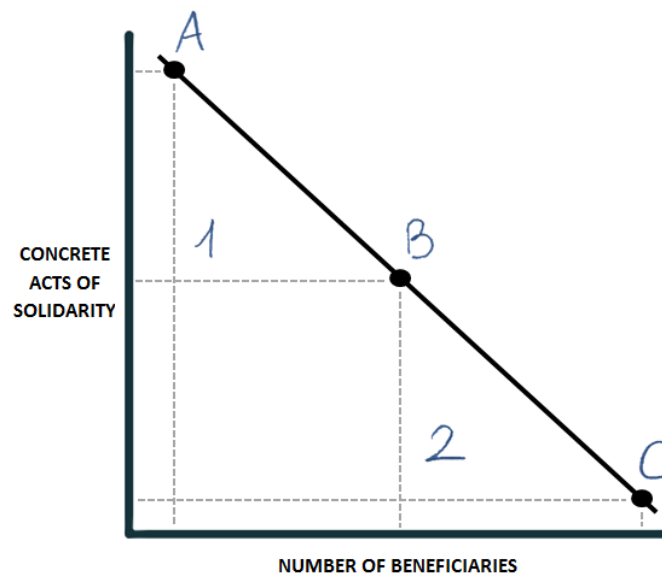
Fig. 1: Explaining the two types of solidarity

The figure above simplifies the perspective of the individual in respect to the two welfare systems. It is necessarily a simplistic representation, since the two types of solidarity may not realize a perfect zero-sum game, nor are qualitative information something that we can easily put into a figure. Despite these limitations, I argue that the figure is still useful as a reference to reason about the welfare dynamics involving the Somalis in Scandinavia, considering that they are exposed to the mechanisms of welfare states. Point A represents the solidarity arrangement at the clan level: concrete solidarity scores high, and is performed through sender-to-recipient exchanges in money, goods or non-material reciprocity. As the figure shows, only a limited group of people can be the target of concrete solidarity, namely the members of the clan and sub-clan family groups included within the circle of assistance, as there is limited space for imaginary bonds (which we can understand also as "number of beneficiaries"). However, the number of beneficiaries can be still several dozens: therefore, it is 'limited' especially when compared to that of the beneficiaries under a welfare state system.

The latter context is represented at point C, where the individual can imaginarily reach and feel part to a vaster community through the intermediation of the state, in reason of the mechanisms seen earlier. However, when this happens, the individual is also less prone to continue concrete practices, even at the cost of going against the solidarity obligations inscribed in the clan. They do so, I evince, because they believe that state institutions should be in charge of doing that. To complete the description of the diagonal line, I have also inserted an ideal point B, which represents positions characterized by mixed welfare preferences. The figure does not assume that individuals will naturally move over time from A to any point between B and C: this will happen, it is argued here, only if the two conditions below are fulfilled.

Points A, B, C construct two triangles: when describing the developments of welfare practices among the Somalis in Chapter Seven, I will identify the passage from A to B (triangle n. 1) as the result of 'trust', which is required in order to surrender a portion of concrete solidarity to the state. To put it briefly, the individual may lose part of the security s/he obtains from the family network, yet

s/he is also unburdened of some social responsibilities, which are now entrusted to state institutions. I will argue that the space from B to C (triangle 2) is filled by "individualization", the process triggered by state provision of social security measures to the citizen as individual. The realization of individualization ultimately allows the citizen to rely more and more to the state and less to the family, eventually enlarging the horizon of imaginary solidarity. Understood in the terms described in this section, we can see the diagonal as an expression of the changing needs as well as aspirations of the individuals over time.

If we look at the European historical experience, we may conclude that imaginary solidarity cannot be accomplished by individuals alone, but requires state institutions with power of coercion, education and persuasion. For the Somalis in Scandinavia in particular, it requires primarily participation in inter-clan horizontal activities, for which scope opportunities had become limited in the aftermath of the civil war. It could be argued that this is a primary issue of social capital and cooperation for mutual benefit. From the analysis of some fundamental principles of Somali society that I will undertake in Chapter Four, it emerges that network and norms are not absent, and are actually widely used to lubricate social life. What seems to be rather latent is *trust*, that is the prospect for, or the belief in reliable behaviors from individuals that are not part of one own's clan. Here, we have to confront the legacy of the post-colonial state and the civil war: in fact, if social capital and trust are produced when citizens engage with voluntary organizations, in Somalia the realization of the historical highest expression of collective engagement, the state, led instead to the civil war[81]. The processes described in the figure can instead lead to the formation of extra-clanic, imaginary solidarity in the diaspora, grounded of the new experiences made by the individual through educational, working, and welfare networks that cut across questions of clan belonging. The last part of the theoretical framework presents some themes about the Somali diaspora in Scandinavia.

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[81] As one Somali poem goes: "They destroyed each trace of the memory of statehood/ (…) anyone who might aspire to a better future they wiped out without a trace". (As quoted in Kapteijns 2012, 27). The poem is called "Disaster" and was authored in the early 1990s by Mustafa Sheekh Cilmi.

The Somali diaspora in Scandinavia

The history of the Somalis in Scandinavian countries begins in the 1960s, at the dawn of national independence, when a first group of Somalis migrated to northern Europe: they were mainly diplomats sent out by the newly sovereign state and labor workers, coming alone or together with their families[82]. Towards the end of the 1970s, a more consistent group of Somalis would arrive as labor migrants[83]. Due to the deteriorating political environment in the homeland, more Somalis reached Scandinavian countries seeking asylum towards the end of the 1980s, although representing only a tiny percentage of all Somalis fleeing the homeland around that time: for example, in 1987, 359 Somalis sought asylum in Norway, and they were 548 the following year[84]. In the early 1990s, violence in Somalia erupted at the country-wide level and throughout the decade thousands of Somalis left their homeland behind, often through dangerous routes, to seek asylum in neighboring African countries; the Gulf States; the US and Canada; and last but not the least Europe. UNHCR estimates that almost 600,000 Somalis flew the homeland between 1992 and 2001 and below are reported the statistics related to asylum applications in Scandinavian countries, offered in comparison with the total applications received by those countries from all foreign national citizens.

Somali and other asylum applicants in Scandinavia 1992-2001			
	DENMARK	**SWEDEN**	**NORWAY**
Somali applicants 1992-1996	7,893	5,669	1,323
Somali applicants 1997-2001	3,763	1,666	4,820
Total Somali asylum applicants 1992-2001	11,656	7,335	6,143
Tot. as. appl. 1992-2001 (Somali + Other nationalities)	103,996	228,663	71,157

Fig. 2: Somali and other asylum applicants in Scandinavia 1992-2001. *Source*: UNHCR 2002

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[82] For some individual stories, see for example Kleist 2004.

[83] Especially seamen working in the Norwegian shipping industry (Horst 2008, 327).

[84] Østby 1990, 52.

The early 1990s set thus the beginning of considerable Somali migration to Scandinavia, and applications for both refugee status as well as family reunification would continue in the new millennium. Today, the Scandinavian region counts circa 140,000 Somalis, becoming the largest African community in all three societies (see Introduction). Their integration has been often described as problematic and, as a matter of fact, their rating in most indicators of living standards (including employment; house income; mental health) remains among the lowest, creating public concern[85]. However, the Somalis have become also increasingly stereotyped in political and everyday discourses and were repeatedly singled out as being "the least integrated" group for their education and employment rates[86]. Nauja Kleist, who has consistently dealt with issues surrounding the Somali diaspora in Denmark, accounts retrospectively for the Danish context with these words:

> In Denmark, the Somali group as a whole has been received rather ambiguously. While the Danish acceptance rate of asylum seekers was amongst the highest in the world in the 1990s (UNHCR 2003a), the Danish media, many politicians and social workers portrayed Somali asylum seekers as bogus and as 'very difficult to integrate'.[87]

The series of Open Society Foundation reports on the Somalis living in Oslo, Malmö and Copenhagen indicate that the media have had a crucial role in negative stories and stereotypes, piling up eventually a "collection of bad news"[88]. Consider this societal portrait realized by the Gothenburg daily *Göteborgs-Posten* in 2007:

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[85] Fangen 2006, 74.

[86] Cfr. *Jyllands-Posten*, May 27, 2012.

[87] Kleist 2007b, 13-14. "De Fremmede" (The Aliens), launched by the tabloid Ekstra Bladet in 1997, was perhaps the most iconic media campaign of the entire decade. A Somali man from Maribo, Ali, and his family got especially in the spotlight: granted asylum in 1992, he had received later the permission for family reunification. The family consisted of his two wives and eleven children and when they all got together again, Ali received a considerable amount in social welfare benefits. The emerging narrative was that Ali was exploiting the Danish welfare system and the article stressed that he and "his circumcised illiterate women" lived in "strict isolation according to Somali custom" and that they did not even know how to use the toilet because "the Somalis are nomads" and Ali himself had lived in seven different places before (Hervik 2011, 59-60).

[88] OSF 2014a, 122.

> A people with a thousand year history is on its way to perish. Right among us. In Gothenburg 2007. At the top of the list of those guilty are Somali dads who abandon their families. The Swedish welfare society and the closed labour market contribute to the disaster, which can be seen in serious crime, widespread drug abuse, welfare cheating, low grades from school, broken families and sky high unemployment.[89]

And the situation in Norway is all in all similar:

> Some immigrant groups get more media attention than others. There is no connection between the scope of coverage and the group's size. Somali immigrants, for example, get three times as much coverage as Polish immigrants, even though there are almost twice as many people with Polish background living in Norway than people with Somali background. Somalis are one of the most discussed groups, and they are also one of the groups that receive most negative attention. Immigrants from Somalia are used to illustrate how integration is failing, also in articles that discuss other completely different groups. (…). A systematic review of media coverage of Somalis from 1999 to 2008 shows that there are three issues especially associated with stories about Somalis: crime, cultural practices and 'lack of integration'. These issues 'function as explanations for each other, yet the relationship between these factors has never been systematically investigated or precisely defined'.[90]

Academia and research on a broader level (e.g. reports) have also showed considerable interest for the Somali case and we can distinguish a number of matters dealt with by these studies (although they are often overlapping). A branch of the research became interested in what are usually referred to as cultural practices[91]: female circumcision, arranged marriages, child welfare and aspects of transnational familyhood, like the sending of children to Somalia as part of their education, have been analyzed in relation to their contextual meaning. One of the emerging patterns is that cultural practices can be understood as a strategy to enhance the future prospects of younger generations, in a specific cultural form or horizon where ideas of wellbeing and security are placed (these themes will re-appear in Chapter Six and Seven).

Another theme of great scholarly interest is the one that we can sum up as "integration"[92]. Researchers have been looking into the consequences of the

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[89] As quoted in OSF 2014a, 122.

[90] The Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) 2010, 4.

[91] Johnsdotter 2002, 2015; Assal 2006; Kleist 2007b; Engebrigtsen 2011.

[92] Fangen 2006, 2007a, 2007b; Kallehave 2014.

Somali refugees' lack of language and cultural knowledge, as well as into their experiences of vulnerability, humiliation and the effects of the majority population's prejudices. Official reports have analyzed the question from the specific point of view of participation in the labor market in search of proposals to improve the situation of the Somalis[93].

Another important contribution to the studies on the Somali diaspora in Scandinavian countries is represented by explorative cases in the education field[94]. These ones focus on the interactional processes taking place in schools between Somali children, their parents, and school staff, and give back the picture of a "parenthood in transition" that is attempting at improving its supportive role in the educational process. As part of the general question of integration, a prevalent lack of knowledge about the new country's system is often reported as one of the issues.

Health studies are among the most prolific fields of publications concerned with the Somali diaspora[95]. It is indeed a very broad field that includes matters like the medical aspects of female circumcision; reproductive health; access to the health system and communication in hospitals; consume of drugs and chewing of the psychoactive plant's leaves known as *khat*; and possibly more. These studies represent a valuable addendum to this thesis, although of secondary relevance, to the extent that they recognize and engage with the assessment of both the experiences made by Somalis in the homeland as well as their expectations in the new country of residence in relation to health and wellbeing.

The most directly relevant branch for the purposes of this thesis is yet the one addressing questions of migration and transnationalism. To be sure, this area helps also defining the Somali diaspora as such, that is, in accordance to the criteria presented earlier. The Somalis are far from being 'passive' in Nordic countries and are actually fervent transnational actors. First of all, they are widely engaged

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[93] See for example Bjørn, Pedersen, and Rasmussen 2003; Engebrigtsen 2004; Arbeids- og inkluderingsdepartementet 2009.

[94] Mohme 2014; Matthiesen 2015, 2016; Osman 2016; Thomas 2016.

[95] Wiklund et al. 2000; Svenberg, Mattsson, and Skott 2009; Gele et al. 2012; Byrskog et al. 2014; Nordgren 2015; Binder-Finnema et al. 2016; Johansen 2016.

in sending remittances back home, something that is deeply embedded in the structure of the Somali safety net, as I will show[96]. This practice, an obligation under clan relations, serves a number of purposes, which Tharmalingam has specified in the categories of family, politics, welfare, network and investment remittances. This money flow is what has ensured the livelihood of the country in the long years of collapsed central government, in which no public provision of services existed. It has been noted that together with money, there is also a transfer of "ideas of political, social, and cultural change" that makes legitimate to see the Somali diaspora as an "agent of development" in the homeland[97].

Therefore, remittances are not just a lifeline for Somalia to support households in buying food or accessing education and health care, but are also an instrument to contribute to the rebuilding of their communities. This aim is particularly well reflected in the hundreds of associations established by Somalis (in my experience, almost everyone is committed to support one or more projects in the homeland through monthly donations), and also in the larger initiatives promoted by the Danish Refugee Council (through the Diaspora Programme, launched in 2010) and the Swedish International Development Authority, which has financed programs aimed at Swedish Somalis since 2012.

The intimate connections between the diaspora and the homeland are visible also at the political level, with the establishment of the Office for Diaspora Affairs (ODA), a department within Somalia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Investment Promotion, as well as with the diaspora provenience of many candidates and appointed political figures in the homeland. However, it has been noted that the diaspora's political engagement bypasses for most part the state, operating instead at sub-national levels through family transfers and humanitarian initiatives[98]. Does it mean that the diaspora is a depoliticized actor? Not necessarily so. Horst argues in fact that while relief agencies often construct diasporas as neutral and homogeneous actors of transnational aid, the Somali

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[96] Horst 2008; Horst and Gaas 2008; Tharmalingam 2011a; Tharmalingam 2011b; Carling, Erdal, and Horst 2012.

[97] Kleist 2008; Farah 2009, 2016; Cotter and Durner 2015.

[98] Horst 2008.

diaspora should be seen also as a form of civic participation that includes mobilization for political interests[99]. The reflections that I will provide in this thesis— about the role of the clan as non-state welfare provider with potential to reach its members in the diaspora, will corroborate this point. Nevertheless, political motivations of the diaspora, e.g. support to specific areas in the homeland, do not come only as a disadvantage, as long as civic participation happens in a constant dialogue between all parts concerned: in this case, the conciliatory approach promoted by diaspora organizations can be transmitted to local practitioners in the homeland with positive outcomes.

Somalis have also resorted to migration as an operative solution to the discrimination issues they are facing in Scandinavian countries: emigration from Scandinavia, a further attestation for their integration struggles if you will, is the latest chapter of the history of the Somalis in Scandinavia. There is indeed a remarkable movement of Somalis leaving Scandinavian countries for other destinations, even after having spent several years in one of the regional countries. In 2010 a research focusing on Somali refugees who wanted to start economic activities in Scandinavia, underlined:

> During the last twenty years, a large number of Somali refugees have found their way to countries providing a centralized and universal welfare system, including Sweden, Denmark, Norway and the Netherlands (…). However, it has since been shown that Somalis have had difficulty gaining a foothold in these environments, where room for private (or – from the perspective of those in the receiving country – strange) initiative is limited. The encounter between Somalis whose ambition is to build a life for themselves in their own way and authorities whose aim is to fit newcomers into an established pattern has created confusion on both sides. After gaining citizenship but not employment in the country to which they have moved, many Somalis have, quite simply, chosen to move on to an environment where they believe they might have the opportunity of creating a future for themselves. The country which more than any other in Europe has offered such an environment is the UK.[100]

Another research targeted precisely Somalis' migration patterns to the UK, explain the reason for preferring this country:

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[99] Horst 2013.

[100] Abdirahman et al. 2011, 2.

> Due to old colonial ties there exists in the U.K. a well established Somali community, especially in the cities of Leicester and Birmingham. These concentrations attract the Somalis from other West European countries who feel more at home among each other where the life is regulated by family and clan ties than in the strange world of the modern welfare states, where life is regulated by laws and bureaucratic rules.[101]

As we can grasp from the quotation above, several factors help explaining the decision to migrate besides mere economic motivations, especially when considering that the UK offers less generous welfare benefits. These migration flows reveal complex dynamics, responding also to cultural norms. For example, a 2004 research by Nielsen investigated the movement of Somali refugees who obtained Danish citizenship and subsequently migrated to Britain. The author concluded that:

> When acknowledging movement as essential to the life of a group of people, it calls into question assumptions of settlement as the natural state of being. What consequences does this have for the notion itself? For the Danish Somalis who have moved to Britain and perhaps onwards to yet another country, permanent settlement may not be the aim.[102]

Nielsen gives further insights on the question of permanent settlement, affirming that:

> To understand why so many Danish Somalis move to Britain without critically evaluating the information disseminated transnationally, it is important to understand how they consider movement as an integral but - due to experiences of civil war and discrimination - also necessary part of their life. (…) while nomadism cannot explain the secondary movement, the tendency has to be seen in relation to the nomadic cultural trajectory of the respondents.[103]

Therefore, migration should be interpreted as an immediate, but not necessarily definitive solution to a range of problems, which is diffusely practiced and, I will come back to that, culturally validated. Abdirahman and al. too sustain the thesis of nomadism's influence on migration from Scandinavia:

> Somalis are often regarded as being very mobile, a fact which can perhaps be explained by their long history of tradition as nomads and traders, and they have

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[101] Van Heelsum 2011, 19. See also Sporton and Valentine 2007.

[102] Nielsen 2004, 18.

[103] *Ivi*, 17.

chosen to a significant extent to vote with their feet in those countries where they have not succeeded (or not had the chance to succeed) in standing on those same feet.[104]

While the importance of the nomad lifestyle should always undergo a critical evaluation, not least because it is not representative for the whole society, it seems indeed able to impact on the behaviors of many Somali refugees[105]. The history of the Somalis in Scandinavia is thus still in the making, and at current stage is perhaps too early to predict whether they will stay, or where they will move next, or again if those who have left for other European countries will eventually come back to enjoy retirement in the Nordic area. Yet, this study attempts at digging into their life in Scandinavia, with the scope of bringing to light experiences and aspirations that can help revealing if migration is still conceptualized as a solution to constructed notions of security.

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[104] Abdirahman et al. 2011, 2.

[105] Van Heelsum 2011, 19.

CHAPTER II
Methodology

This section is devoted to the outline of the research method put in place to answer my research questions, and the description of the participants in my study. The qualitative methodology that I have applied consists, in sum, of four main components interconnected one with the other, which have the scope of facilitating the historical research of social phenomena revealing transnational implications (see below). I will start from few considerations that preceded, both chronologically and conceptually, the fieldwork interviews.

Preliminary methodological considerations
- Vulnerable groups and ethical concerns
- "Situated transnationalism"
- Biographical methods

Data collection
- Interviews and short fieldworks
- Observation and other activities

Data elaboration
- Temporalization of the notions of welfare and security

Data selection and presentation

Vulnerable groups and ethical concerns

Carrying out interviews may demand the researcher to deal with many types of vulnerable subjects that require specific ethical considerations: orphans; minors; incarcerated or institutionalized people; illegal migrants; as well as subjects that become vulnerable in specific research contexts, e.g. drug users in countries where drug consume is considered illegal[1]. Vulnerability emerges especially as a

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[1] For a discussion of vulnerability and subsequent ethical concerns in different cases, see for example: Pawluch, Shaffir, and Miall 2005; Drake, Earle, and Sloan 2015; Lecompte and Schensul 2015.

condition in which the interlocutor may have limitations in giving informed consent, or understanding the aims of the researcher, and more in general when some factors exist in limiting the respondent's control on his/her life. In all these cases, a degree of protection is clearly necessary in order to ensure anonymity when required, and to respect privacy on sensitive issues.

Ethical questions have been highly considered in this research, although they did not represent a challenge to the extent described above. Still, studies on refugees and immigrants are also traditional fields of moral concern for the researcher, both for the kind of experiences s/he will elicit from the interlocutor, and because the topics discussed can be often objects of hot debate in the society[2]. That, at least, seems to be valid for my cases study, since some of the view expressed could be sensitive both in relation to the interlocutor's job/life context in Scandinavia and to his/her clan affiliation. Therefore, I had always sought the interlocutor's permission to record the interview, which was usually granted, and I have used notes for the remaining few interviews were they preferred not to be on tape. Confidentiality and the need to avoid exposition for my interlocutors have markedly contributed to the way in which data are presented: to ensure anonymity, I have avoided the use of names when writing up the research and I have assigned a code for each individual. This code is composed of the capital letter signaling the country of residence of the interlocutor (D; S; N), followed by a subscript progressive number assigned for each interlocutor (e.g. D_4 or N_6). In a number of passages, some of these codes will be complemented by information about gender, age, or city of residence, when considered not harmful. Finally, in two cases the identity of the interlocutors is disclosed, following an agreement with the concerned individuals.

Situated transnationalism

Concepts such as that of diaspora involves reasoning in terms of simultaneous and mutual relations between homelands and host nations; between individuals who have moved to one or more places (voluntarily or not) and those who have stayed home; and between co-nationals in the recipient societies. The prospect of such

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[2] Birman 2005, 155.

extended networks poses relevant methodological challenges and demands the researcher to handle this spatial landscape purposefully. Based on my own experience, I wish to elaborate a bit on what does it mean for the researcher to find his research space embedded within such vast network of connections between people.

Historical studies of the diaspora in a transnational landscape can challenge conventional discipline methods and sense of chronological events. Time is increasingly acknowledged as a multi-layered phenomenon made of simultaneous discernible stories— *micro* history, *deep* history, *big* history, *world* history and so on. Moreover, global and transnational history emphasize categories of *space*, rather than time (e.g. flows, networks, regions, experiences)[3]. Finally, innovative disciplinary practices have been developed to respond to the new challenges, such as comparative, conceptual, global, entangled, and transfer history[4]. Since history has been liberated from the constraints of historicized time that have previously characterized it, the historian can choose today his/her instruments among different temporalities and spatial references.

The diaspora as *historical* space contains the stories of individuals that have migrated in different phases of their life; that have arrived to the receiving country at different points in time; that have undertook secondary migration before settling; that entertain different types of relation with the homeland. In terms of historical narrative, and of canonic sources one can access (e.g. statistics, reports, official documents of different sort), that means the risk of incorporating in the same group, people that have actually matured heterogeneous experiences, creating eventually a distorted image where stories overlap one with the other in a fictional synchrony. The complementary quest for retrieving continuity and change over time in diachronic fashion should thus help describing the conditions matured historically that affect the life of the actors in a given time.

By extension, following the movements of individuals across different regions in the world can be an exhausting and even unproductive method of

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[3] Conrad 2016, 141.

[4] Haupt and Kocka 2009; Middel and Roura i Aulinas 2013; Osterhammel 2014; Conrad 2016; Pernau and Sachsenmaier 2016.

research for those aiming at underlining changes in the practices of welfare in relation to a specific socio-political environment. The reason for arguing so is that while such research frame would perform well for describing choices, decisions and preferences of a subject, there may be fewer opportunities to examine those macro-processes involved besides and 'above' the individuals, which undeniably contribute in shaping their spaces of mobility and action. This pondering, in relation to the Somali case, led me to embrace Nauja Kleist's notion of "situated transnationalism", an expression that indeed captures quite nicely my intention with the present research[5]. Following a well-established tradition of anthropological research, Kleist first concedes that "ideally, studies of transnational practices require multi-sited fieldwork", in two or more poles of the "transnational social space"[6]. However, she goes on by affirming that there is also a need to locate transnational perspectives within national contexts, for example by including the study of immigration and refugee policies, because these measures impinges on the mobility of the people. Kleist is thus suggesting that the choices and the practices of the migrant should be understood within the concomitant work of socio-political structures, which are after all the ones often hampering the possibility for a transnational life in the first place. She further clarifies that:

> The importance of location is not an argument for a return to locally bounded community studies, but for an inclusion of the local and shifting contexts, which at least partly circumscribe the practices within the transnational social field. Not everything is fluid or flowing.[7]

Therefore, transnational practices are nevertheless contextually sensitive: that is, we need to explain what is specifically 'national', before endeavoring in exploring how national categories are eluded trans-nationally. By identifying the scope of

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[5] Kleist 2004b. Recently, Kilkey and Merla (2014, 211) have used the same expression for the analysis of two case studies involving transnational families in Belgium and the United Kingdom. Their aim was that of situating families' care-giving arrangements within "institutional contexts", through a framework or research that "captures culture insofar as it relates to institutional arrangements".

[6] *Ivi*, 141. Here, the reference is to the well-known research method of "multi-sited ethnography" elaborated by anthropologist Marcus (1995).

[7] *Ivi*, 139.

the research in the historical developments of individuals settled in a certain social environment, I argue that the researcher can't take the luxury of multiple sites, if s/he wishes to retrieve the specificity and the differentiated impact of the socio-cultural setting reflected in the findings. I follow Kleist in stressing that this is not a negation of mobility and transnational life: quite the opposite, it is a call for 'unpacking' transnational practices, whose recurrence and aims can be affected by circumstances of life in a given area (e.g. income, presence of other family members; possibility to travel abroad or to pursue education) and can change over time. The study of what happens across borders is thus still pursued, yet the study is projected within the horizon of how 'local' Scandinavian circumstances possibly impact on transnational dynamics[8]: these are the conditions of the history that I attempt at writing.

Biographical methods

In addition to the reflections pertaining to the spaces of research, the considerations coming from one specific methodological approach have been particularly useful to organize my work: biographical methods. This is largely borrowed from the work of Prue Chamberlayne, who in the opinion of the author has convincingly illustrated the merits of this methodology in "reconnecting welfare systems with lived experience and processes of social change"[9], a task embraced also by the author of this thesis. By means of biographies, the researcher can move from the general assumptions and procedures of social sciences and history, towards a mixed analytical structure that takes advantages also of what anthropology has to offer for the study of the individual's choices in a situation of social stress. If, on the one hand, the biographical study of

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[8] The media and the political debate comparing the Somali diaspora in the US and the Somalis in Scandinavia, which often highlights that the former are much more successful in running business and be on their own economically, than the latter, is a perfect example of the relevance of the 'local' context. Unless someone will embark in the unlikely enterprise of demonstrating qualitative differences between Somalis' business acumen in the two areas, socio-cultural structural differences will remain likely the most productive explanation for variances. This is why I argue that the positioning of the researcher at one ideal end of the transnational flow makes sense and is even, in many ways, a privileged point of research, since it allows a deeper contextualization of the issues faced by that specific segment of the diaspora vis-à-vis others located around the globe.

[9] Chamberlayne 2004, 19.

individual citizens suffering different kinds of exclusion may not be in itself a never-seen-before academic practice, on the other hand the attempt to extract sense out of these accounts in close relation to familiar and institutional dynamics can be very innovative. And *needed*, I feel like adding, in the context of rapidly changing societies.

Biographical methods are suitable not only for the social excluded, but can be expanded to include also the personal experiences of policy makers and professionals[10]. For my research, I have not contemplated the inclusion of these latter categories. Nevertheless, I will resort to secondary sources to analyze some aspects in the developments of integration policy in Scandinavia: this will serve the scope of reflecting on the relation between vulnerability among some categories within the population, like the Somalis, and policymaking. Statistics and official documents, therefore, will leave a larger space to a cultural approach to welfare dynamics, in which we recognize that the socio-cultural resources of some individuals are not assessed in a due manner. The biographical method inspired me to analyze source material for what it can tell about institutional dynamics, with a view from the people that on the one hand experience them, while on the other have little voice to oppose them. This method considers the struggles about being in a place and the effects on security, in order to evaluate the effects of social constructions, and to some extent of social policies, beyond reasoning only in terms of pre-set results to be achieved.

Interview design

The methodological design of my interviews reflects what Rubin and Rubin have defined the "life histories" approach to qualitative interviews[11]. This model suits researches about "the way people live", and is characterized as having a broad scope (as indeed welfare and security are) as well as concern for both "meaning" and "description" with reference to the subject of focus. In other words, my questions were thought as instruments to explore what is the meaning of welfare and security for the Somalis in the diaspora (where are state and family in relation

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[10] Chamberlayne 2004, 23.

[11] H. J. Rubin and I. Rubin 2012, 8.

to the definitions? How does one define the security net?). At the same time, I also asked my interlocutors (or they told me themselves) what are the daily practices connected to these beliefs: therefore, many of the topics entertained during the interviews ranged among different aspects of the interlocutors' life, such as education and family relations. The scope was dual: gaining a sense of what are the cultural norms and values that make up the ordinary and the 'expected' in matters of welfare and security, and understanding the departure from these meanings towards new understandings that emerge in the diaspora. In fact, the idea behind this approach is that "a collection of life histories of people of different ages can illustrate change over time"[12].

For the sake of clarity, it is useful to underline here that life histories separate themselves from other methodologies, like ethnography and in particular oral history. Rubin and Rubin set the difference with the latter in the scope of the questions, that is, the aim of the research itself: but this is not sufficient to draw the line[13]. The stress that oral history methodologies places on the rigorously control of the interview setting; or the systematic use of follow-up questions; or again the attention given to specific events are some of the major aspects differentiating my study from it[14]. I preferred a semi-structured approach that could give more space to the interlocutor and to the variety of life experiences, as I believe that issues of welfare and security have multiple ways and contexts to become visible and available for research.

The assumption that the vast majority of Somali individuals are engaged in collective forms of welfare, derived from the literature about the Somali diaspora, created an expectation that each interlocutor would be experienced and knowledgeable about the research problem. While I could largely validate it through my own work, the stories of individuals reveal different paths in dealing with welfare and security, including some that do not conform to the expectation set by the assumption above. Therefore, I highly valued the variety of perspectives

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[12] *Ibidem.*

[13] *Ivi*, 5.

[14] A thorough explanation of oral history methods cannot be dealt with here. See Vansina 1985; Sommer and Quinlan 2009; Ritchie 2015.

in the interview design that I have implemented through geographical and occupation criteria, as described in the next section. The sample that came out of the interviews thus reflects the heterogeneity of the Somali community in Scandinavian countries. The qualitative approach implies also limited possibility to generalize in terms of statistical representativity, as the sample may be hardly representative for the entire community; but it is believed to be fairly representative for the range of variety that is possible to find in the diaspora, in relation to the research matters. As such, the sample can be used for the examination of cases that are critical for the theories presented earlier in this thesis, and to reason comparatively on differences between settings or individuals.

Data collection #1: Interviews and short fieldworks

Interviews and fieldworks in selected Scandinavian cities compose the main sources of empirical information for my research. Interviewing one person at the time has been my preferred format, while circumstances had me putting together also one focus group session with three Somali women in Århus. I have organized four fieldworks in total: the first two in Århus, Denmark (June and December 2015, for a total of eight days); one in Oslo, Norway (five days in April 2016); and one in Stockholm, Sweden (four days in February 2017). All the other interviews were arranged within one day's time journey or, in two cases, via phone. Interviews were conducted in English and Italian. The main criteria adopted for the selection of my interlocutors was, obviously, that of being Somali or of Somali descendancy: neither gender nor age or whatever else were preferred at the time of organizing meetings. This has presented the research with a certain diversity in life experiences and assortment of jobs and careers among my interlocutors: I have privileged in fact the qualitative narratives of all the people I have managed to meet, reserving room later on, in my writing, for distinctions in terms of categories, when pertinent. In order to invite prospect interlocutors for an interview, I have resorted to emails and social networks (Facebook, LinkedIn) to which, however, direct conversation during public assemblies like conferences, seminars and other activities that I will describe in this section, revealed to be far more effective. Snowballing, namely new interlocutors presented by persons already interviewed, played a small role in my methodology.

There are two interesting aspects worth exploring in relation to data collection. On a general level, I noticed that my interlocutors at times perceived the topics of research themselves as threats, and welcomed them with reluctance and suspicion. That was especially the case of the "welfare" concept, for my interlocutors connected it with the question of access to welfare benefits, and thus also with the ongoing political debates and stigmatization of the Somali community. I believe that such sensitivity, which could be also the fruit of previous researches and reports, is a major reason that kept many from answering my invitation. In the second place, although I strove to maintain a gender balance on the invitation I have sent out, the outcome reveals that establishing contacts and doing interviews have been slightly easier with men, specifically in Denmark (Fig. 2 and Appendix). I can adduce the argumentation that this is for most part a reflection of the patriarchal structure of Somali society, which may have emphasized my "outsider" status as a white, non-Muslim, male researcher when inviting Somali women for interviews. The interview sessions started in March 2015 in a hotel's lounge in Copenhagen, and I have continuously met Somali interlocutors throughout the duration of my research, which ended in February 2017 in the same city. I eventually collected 34 individual interviews with 29 people, few of them I thus met more than once. They were so distributed:

COUNTRY	VISITED CITIES	INTERLOCUTORS
DENMARK	Copenhagen; Århus; Kolding	18 (12 men and 6 women)
SWEDEN	Stockholm, Malmö, Växjö	5 (2 men and 3 women)
NORWAY	Oslo	6 (3 men and 3 women)
	TOTAL	**29** interlocutors (17 M; 12 W)

Fig. 3: Summary of the interviews

In the course of participation to conferences and seminars, I was often asked about the country distribution of my interlocutors and the principles behind it. Moreover, I was regularly reminded of the national differences and alerted against making generalizations for the three countries. While the assortment (especially for what concerns Sweden) mainly reflects the availability and the readiness I have found among Somali interlocutors, I learned that the geographical factor was

potentially less normative than what thought of, in terms of gathering relevant information for my study.

In fact, the particular mixture of perspectives collected during the interviews, combined with the theories of methodological nationalism, instilled in my work a new understanding of the geographical landscape for at least three reasons. First of all, the Somali interlocutors themselves did not treat Denmark, Sweden and Norway as distinct and diverse entities: they were quite at ease with the notion of Scandinavia, and they seemed to retrieve more commonalities than differences in the area. Many times, however, the interlocutors also ignored the context of Somalis in other Scandinavian countries, and they would ask me for elucidations. Secondly, a large proportion of my interlocutors did move, mostly intranationally, and lived indeed in different cities, collecting thus experiences and personal stories from several, additional corners of Scandinavia, in respect to the actual location where they lived at the time of the interviews. Aalborg, Hammerfest, Kristiansad, Odense, Vejle, are some of the cities that emerged from the conversations with my interlocutors.

Finally, and perhaps most challenging for the understanding of space in my study, Somali extended families are scattered in several localities, and individuals make an active use of the opportunities offered by the stretched networks by visiting relatives here and there for different purposes. In a way, the mental map of the area that the Somalis design responds more to the extension of their network, rather than to the factual borders of the country they live in. For all the reasons presented above, which will surface again later, the reader will note that the geographical aspect in my dissertation becomes somewhat subordinated to the main aim I have traced: gathering experiences and expectations about welfare and security from the empirical perspectives of the Somalis.

Having clarified this point, I wish to continue the description of the interviews with the presentation of the occupational distribution of my interlocutors, including both their occupation at the time of the meeting as well as some of their most relevant former professions. The list looks like this:

Academic	Consultant	Development worker (NGOs)	Entrepreneur
Government sector	Maritime sector	Media (editor in chief/founder)	Municipality project employee/ leader
Nurse	Politician (in Somalia)	Remittance sector	Student/Trainee
Taxi driver	Teacher Assistant	Unemployed	Volunteer

Fig. 4: Occupational distribution of the interlocutors

Some of the interlocutors belong to more than one category among those presented in the table. Once more, I stress that the motivation to present the occupational distribution is primarily that of providing the reader with a glimpse of the *qualitative* range of the experiences of welfare and security I was able to assemble for my research. Interviews did not present a fixed scheme of questions, but each meeting typically began with a short presentation about my research and myself. After that, interlocutors usually reacted with comments and questions and from there, the conversation would kick off based on both additional questions from my side, and on themes picked by the interlocutors themselves[15]. It is possible to single out a number of themes or questions that emerged more frequently during my interviews: differences between the Somali and the Scandinavian mindset; strategies for better integration; impact of loss of security; family relations are all good examples here. I noticed that my interlocutors seldom mentioned a theme of potential relevance, that of religious welfare and Islam prescriptions relating to charity and assistance, for reasons that I have not explored directly in this study.

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[15] Kevin Robins, explaining his method of "transcultural research as encounter" occurring at the street level, specifies that there are several ways to approach migrants during a fieldwork; one consists in an official or policy-related perspective: however, he warns that it can have distancing outcomes. Alternatively, there is the value-free or uninvolved researcher but, again, the approach is defined sterile. He proposes then treating migrants as: "interlocutors, which means that one already has to be well informed, and able to enter the research on the basis of ongoing conversation and debate. If the interlocutor is aware that you are aware of the issues, and also engaged in what is going on, then the whole basis of the encounter can be different –and on a more equal and reciprocal basis" (Robins 2014, 30). This is, in my opinion, the most desirable approach to adopt and is reflected in the way I use the word "interlocutor", even if I concede that limits and benefits of the other two approaches could be discussed further. Transcultural encounters should thus take place, to quote again Kevin Robins, on "a more equal and reciprocal basis".

Data collection #2: Observation & other activities

During my three Ph.D. years, the attendance to relevant seminars and workshops as well as the participation to other activities were an integral part of my research efforts to collect additional data. In particular, observation and field notes were the principal instruments I have adopted during participation to two workshops organized by the Danish Refugee Council, the first in Copenhagen and the second in Århus. The same methodological strategies came extremely useful in occasions when Somalia or Somalis stood at the center of the debate, for example during public meetings organized at the academic level or by members of the diaspora themselves. As mentioned, these meetings represented also a great opportunity to establish new contacts with prospective interlocutors.

Among the other activities that I wish to mention as an active part of my methodology were the meetings with other scholars working at different levels with Somalia, diaspora and ethnic questions, and welfare states. There were in total nine meetings, of which five took place in Denmark; two in Sweden and two in Norway. These meetings represented unique opportunities to discuss preliminary findings as well as to have fresh insights of national political and academic debates. Another activity that I engaged myself with was the visit to an exhibition called *Somalisk Lejlighed* (The Somali Apartment) at *Den Gamle By* (The Old Town) museum in Århus. A description will follow in Chapter Six.

Data elaboration: temporalization of the concepts of welfare and security

I can now proceed with the explanation of the method put in place with the scope of extracting and elaborating useful data from my interviews. In this thesis, I treat the notions of welfare and security as having distinguishable temporal dimensions that is possible to investigate historically. In other words, I contend that people have different modalities to practice and understand welfare and security over time, and even to imagine the two in the future: I am interested in how the change in modalities comes about. This passage is not necessarily self-evident, and requires greater methodological refining. In order to temporalize the concepts of welfare and security, I was particularly inspired by two eminent scholars, Reinhart Koselleck (1923-2006) and Arjun Appadurai (1949-), one historian and the other

social anthropologist: apparently very far from each other, they present some converging understandings of the individual's actions.

I am referring in particular to the contents of the theory of historical time, as generally presented by the German historian in the book *Futures Past*, and to Appadurai's "capacity to aspire", from *The Future as Cultural Fact* (both volumes are a collection of essays). Koselleck, especially known for his use of conceptual history as historical method, and for his "Historik", the theory of the conditions of possible histories, has had a deep influence on historical scholarship. The studies of Appadurai contemplated here have been oriented especially at analyzing the impact of globalization and the interplay of culture and economy. His anthropological perspective is attentive to the individual's imaginative capacity, with the scope of investigating how the work of imagination can produce social and political change. There are specific strings attached in the way I argue that this methodology is 'inspired' by their works: I have pursued a flexible approach consisting in the incorporation of specific components that spoke directly to my research questions; this flexibility seems in fact to work best in order to address the multifarious social environment represented in my research. Therefore, while a part of my approach can be linked back to these inspiring traditions of thought and analysis, opening up for comparisons are reflections, I have not resorted to a thorough application of the methodology as laid out by the two scholars.

Koselleck's categories of "spaces of experience" and "horizons of expectation" are, fundamentally, the devices in the hands of the historian to investigate the "conditions of possible histories" (and not "history" in the singular) in modernity[16]. Experience is described as "present past" and expectation as "future made present": when we live new experiences, i.e. the same ones that previously were beyond our cognitive horizon, they generate hopes or disappointments in the measure in which they match, or not, with what by now are our "past" expectations[17]. These same new experiences, moreover, can have even potential retrospective effects, stretching in the past and altering the significance

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[16] Koselleck 2004, 257.

[17] *Ivi*, 259.

of experiences that we have already collected. In this sense, the two categories introduced by Koselleck are primarily metahistorical, because they seek to interrogate the conditions for alterations in historical time.

The pair holds also a cognitive dimension: "experiences" denote in fact how individuals remember and incorporate present past events. Different experiences are assembled over time into a totality where the chronological order of the 'before-after' type leaves ground to a simultaneous presence of all the events, which according to Koselleck creates thus a multilayered "space". The horizon conceals new spaces of experience that are not visible in the present historical time, but that are though imaginable precisely on the basis of past experiences: "expectations" indicate then that the present is tending towards the not-experienced yet. Koselleck's reasoning implies that every history contains the structures for its own conditions of possibility— the principles telling us why something has happened in a way or in the other, and we need to first define these conditions (the synchronic) metahistorically, and then practices them methodologically, in order to approach our histories[18].

The same applies to my conceptual pairs, welfare and security: in order to temporalize them, I have first established their historical dimension in the following manner. Many among the risks and uncertainties that we encounter are such because we lack sufficient information, and consequently in reason of our incapacity to exercise proper control over them[19]. Given the propensity of perceiving and portraying risk as tomorrow's uncertainty, I believe that 'welfare' necessarily contains an inner dimension of futurity[20]. Welfare represents the way in which we use the sum of past experiences concerning risk and its minimization to insure ourselves and the ones we love in the present, against the uncertainties of

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[18] See Koselleck 2002, 75.

[19] Some have even fascinatingly broadened the idea arguing that the limited possibility of reducing and managing risk nowadays is the basic conditions of all the aforementioned "risk societies" around the globalized world (Beck 2006).

[20] F. von Benda-Beckmann and K. von Benda-Beckmann (2007, 20) noted in their study of social security in Indonesia: "social security provisions are planned dealing with risks and uncertainties that lie in the more distant future".

the future[21]. As long as these practices are held legitimate in order to provide a feasible security arrangement, we may expect them to be maintained and perpetuated: that's how the idea of security is fixed in the long run, namely through a process involving the creation of ideals about what is best at protecting us. This is my interpretation of the temporal structure of welfare and security, which I believe becomes a useful instrument to frame the narratives of the Somalis in the diaspora.

I use the two categories with a remarkable element of innovation: I am applying Koselleck's ideas to a non-conventional field, namely that of diaspora, as an instrument to conduct historical research on the topic of security. The bridge between the historical framework designed by Koselleck and the challenge, mostly of an anthropological kind, of applying it in the context of diaspora studies is provided by the work of Arjun Appadurai. The social anthropologist offers a similar perspective of things: in his opinion, the making of the future relies on the individual's "capacity to aspire" to it, which is described as a cultural capacity, in the sense that wishes, needs, wants are expressed through in terms that are rooted in a given culture. Yet the act of aspiring is not conceived as a simple process of imaging, but it is thought as a more intriguing exercise or, to be more precise, "practice". In fact, the capacity to aspire aims at shaping a specific future and at persuading all relevant actors in the physical and social environment. Hence, while Koselleck argued that his two categories could provide "guidance to concrete agencies" for the historical analysis, Appadurai lays out the possibility for the agency of individuals in a group to change the social structures surrounding them[22]. Appadurai points out that different groups in the society as a whole have different stocks of available experiences to express their aspirations:

> The capacity to aspire is thus a navigational capacity. The more privileged in any society simply have used the map of its norms to explore the future more

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[21] Think about the semantic of 'risk': the term lacks a clear etymology, yet it has been suggested a root in the Italian *riscare*, "to dare", in a context where the future appears unpredictable and hazardous (See Bollig 2006, 9).

[22] Koselleck 2004, 258.

frequently and more realistically, and to share this knowledge with one another more routinely than their poorer and weaker neighbors.[23]

Wealthier people are then "more able to produce justifications, narratives, metaphors" while their less empowered, vulnerable neighbors get fewer opportunities to navigate practices of aspiration and consequently "have a more brittle horizon of aspirations"[24]. According to Appadurai, the capacity to aspire (which I link to Koselleck's expectations) is "recognizably universal", and "takes its force within local systems of value, meaning, communication, and dissent": therefore, it cannot be separated "from language, social values, histories, and institutional norms, which tend to be highly specific"[25].

Subsequently, I interpret Appadurai's writing as a call for attention to the plurality of cognitive and normative frameworks that define what is a situation of risk; who is entitled to receive support; and who is obliged to provide forms of social security. In fact, as long as these values and norms are preserved by the individual and put into use, also the imagination of the future will be responsive to culture-specific *stimuli*. It goes without saying that in a multicultural society, cultural imaginaries of the future can reach a considerable degree of diversity among different groups. And given that the migrated 'minority' lives within the social structures established by the 'majority', this circumstance can be exploited for political aims, namely to associate cultural difference with an alleged risk for the society.

However, we should refrain from thinking that we are in front of a static situation where dissimilar ideas are destined to perennially confront each other: migration changes in fact the potential resources availability for social security; the circles of support; and the quantity or quality of this support[26]. Given that under these new circumstances the future is no longer predictable (isn't it the unpredictable par excellence after all?), individuals and/or groups equip themselves

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[23] Appadurai 2013, 188.

[24] *Ibidem.*

[25] *Ivi*, 290.

[26] See for example F. von Benda-Beckmann and K. von Benda-Beckmann 2007.

in the present with those instruments that they consider most proper in order to secure their condition. What is most 'proper' is usually dictated by past occurrences, both as personal and as collective sets of experiences in relation to risk[27]. Nevertheless, since we imagine the future on the ground of the resources, risks and needs that we have in the present, if some among them are subject to alteration, so the future will be envisioned under a new light too.

As a matter of fact, former divergent ideas of the future might sooner or later align just as shared visions of the yet-to-come may at one point split into multiple concurrent imaginations. Welfare is truly then a "lived experience" arising from an initial sense of concern for the future that should be seen less as a static object of policymaking and more as a topic for historical research, since biographies, subjective experiences, reminiscences and so on may all convey messages of indisputable academic interest[28]. There is in fact a significant emotional component involved in these issues that we can't afford to ignore. What we are witnessing, in the era of globalization, is the enrichment of these biographies with elements of tension, mediation, integration and outright clash derived from all those dynamics we could practically group up as *experiences of transcultural encounters* typical of contemporary Europe. This methodology facilitates the task of framing constructions and aspirations, as well as their modification, in the aftermath of the exposure to the social structures of the hosting societies. Through this conceptualization, we are able to put in balance the weight of past experiences in the decisions that the individual refugee/migrant is confronted with in the present: we shall not forget in fact about the potential hindering effects of the past on some forms of participation in the hosting society, as this tends to be often overlooked[29]. I argue, therefore, that the historical present of many individuals is

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[27] Since 'risk' is often connected to environmental conditions, it is also intertwined with the notion of time as it involves precise experiences of past risks that we use in order to cope with similar issues in the present. Not surprisingly then, different environments generate equally different time-reckoning strategies and mechanisms. This is what Joseph K. Adjaye (1994) has illustrated in his edited book *Time in the Black Experience*, where different instances of temporal experience across Africa are taken into account.

[28] The expression is taken from Stubbs 2002, 321.

[29] For example, some scholars have suggested looking at "the particular historical context of state administrative power" to explain the emergence of non-state welfare measures in certain areas: in their opinion, non-state welfare emerges as direct consequence from the failure of the state (Cammett and MacLean 2014, 11). The impact of the civil war on the

suspended between the interiorized past of the homeland and the expectations to be carved out of the new experiences lived in the host country.

Since the incorporation of experiences in the intellectual thinking is essential to formulate predictable prognoses about the future, the modernity of the refuge/migrant is characterized rather by an increasing asymmetry between experiences and expectations. This implies that they are less and less able to put to use past knowledge to "navigate" successful expectations about the future[30]. The continuous going back and forth between experiences and expectations, as well as between aspirations and needs that I have described above, seems to be particularly appropriate to describe the dynamics of the Somali 'transnational household', which is indeed confronted with simultaneous and multiple varieties of these categories. Such emphasis on the synchronic, multilayered present of the diaspora is motivated by the belief that we need to reconnect around shared nodes the simultaneous experiences of people, for the purpose of investigating them. However, the diachronic dimension of historical analysis, concerned with continuities and change, is not set aside, but is pursued as a complementary task. In fact, we cannot understand the dynamics of Somalis' interaction with state institutions in Scandinavia, if we do not take into account the development of the Somali stateless society as well as the legacy of the civil war in undermining state-citizen relations. Similarly, the appeal of the welfare state in Scandinavian countries is rooted in specific historical process that reveals both continuations and ruptures in the span of more than one century. In these regards, I have proceeded by consulting secondary sources, integrating my findings with the information collected during the interviews with the Somali interlocutors, and the meetings with fellow researchers.

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relation of trust between the citizen and the state is a case in point for how the legacy of the past might still affect the individual, wherever s/he relocates. In the case of the Somalis, the common sentiment of mistrust towards state institutions is a *condicio sine qua non* for the analysis of their society (See note 73 in Chapter Four). Others even report that the Somalis in Denmark who are considering possible migration to other countries obtain the information about opportunities in the concerned destination "from other Somalis and not from authorities, social workers or professional advisers for refugees" (Nielsen 2004, 8).

[30] Jordheim 2012, 153.

In conclusion, in order to understand the present(s) and making conjecture about the future(s), we need to know more about the past(s) of the concerned individuals. At the same time, through the past we would also gain new opportunities both to reflect on the disappointments taking place in multicultural societies and to reason on their root causes: actions, disillusionment and fulfilled expectations are all guided by the capacity to interiorize the past and to aspire to a specific future. They manifest themselves in the forms of language, communication, values, emotions and memories, which thus become the instruments to assess changes over time and perform an archaeology of the future. For this scope, I have recognized in Koselleck a historian with penetrating anthropological insights, and in Appadurai an anthropologist incorporating a clear-cut idea of time and future especially: combined together, the two perfectly support the interdisciplinary ambitions of this research.

Data selection and presentation

The information provided by my interlocutors are presented in chapters Six and Seven. The criteria for the selection of excerpts from the interviews reflect the methodology illustrated above. Therefore, I have selected the quotations that best:

- describe the 'substance' of both spaces of experience and horizons of expectations in relation to security: "hope and fear, wishes and desires, cares and rational analysis, receptive display and curiosity"[31].

- demonstrate the ongoing tension between experiences and expectations (Koselleck's idea of historical time); aspirations and needs in matters of welfare and security (Appadurai's capacity to aspire), inclusive of all possible disappointments and resolutions coming out of it.

- reveal the inclusion/exclusion/transformation of welfare practices over time among diaspora members.

- suggest a change in the narratives or in the semantic of welfare and security.

The information collected in this way will be essential to respond to both research questions, because many of these tensions find their origin, or their catalyst, in the

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[31] Koselleck 2004, 259.

national categorizations that have permeated welfare provision in the nation-state. This method will not result in a chronologically-ordered account of events occurred in the life of the Somalis living in Scandinavian countries. Of course, particular dates and a minimal, logic of sequence will be retained; yet, I will be mainly concerned with the study of the relation of a given past to a given future, following Koselleck's hypothesis that "in differentiating past and future, or (in anthropological terms) experience and expectation, it is possible to grasp something like historical time"[32]. The excerpts from the interviews that will be reported in this thesis are thus a selected collection of accounts and memories, often of biographical nature, which altogether contribute in shaping the space of the historical time. In Chapter Six, I will provide the reader with information in the fashion of a narrative, with much space dedicated to direct quotations of my interlocutors. In Chapter Seven, quotations and reflections of the author will be presented into thematic sections that consider also academic discussions.

On interdisciplinarity

This study is thought and is operationalized as an interdisciplinary enterprise realizing synergies between history and other disciplines, primarily anthropology and social sciences. In a moment, I will explain that this approach has been fundamental in order to deal with the research questions, in respect to both the study object as well as the type of evidence I resorted to. But before looking into that, it is useful to place my research path into the now well-established interdisciplinary method in historical studies. History as a discipline is the art of making sense of past events and presenting them in a meaningful narrative to the historian's contemporaries. However, there are many ways in which the historian fashions the past into a history, and the different directions depend on factors like the choice of sources; their interpretation into evidence; the historian's narrative style; and even on his/her very understanding of the conditions of possible histories.

Interdisciplinarity in the work of the historian is a specific configuration of the above elements: the distinct characteristic of this approach is that it attempts at

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[32] *Ivi*, 3.

filling gaps in research, without the commitment to the discipline's own division of interests and methods. In other words, the research does not find its primarily intellectual starting point, and following drive, within the realm of already-existing knowledge, but is instead "problem-oriented", that is, the research puts stress on the actual problems identified in the society. A new set of analytical instruments or, rather, a new *interaction* of existing analytical instruments, is thus deemed essential by the researcher in order to solve the problem formulation.

We may trace the principal point of departure of interdisciplinarity in the historical discipline back to the critique of Eurocentrism, namely the imposition of analytical categories particular to the continent on non-European experiences, with the assumption that they represent "a model of universal development"[33]. Under this lens, whatever form of diversity is transformed into a deficiency in respect to the European/Western paradigmatic model, characterized by "thick" concepts like civilization, nation-state, civil society, development and so on— a whole "language with rules", that is, a language projecting a specific and normative horizon of subsumed societal dynamics[34]. Subaltern Studies and Postcolonial groups moved criticisms towards Eurocentrism with particular efficaciousness in the 1980s, and their legacy has been incorporated also in more recent approaches, such as transnational history, global history and by the proponents of the "multiple modernities" theory[35]. The increasing emphasis put on transnational social spaces, movements, languages, discourses and values requires, subsequently, the broadening of the methodological toolbox.

In fact, the intrinsic idea behind the adoption of interdisciplinary approaches is often that of addressing different kinds of limitations that are recognized in the field, problematizing therefore also the knowledge that emanates from it. Interdisciplinarity addresses in fact concerns for "excessive specialization, the lack of societal relevance, and the loss of the sense of the larger purpose of

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[33] Conrad 2016, 4.

[34] I owe the expression to Liakos 2013, 318.

[35] Chatterjee 1993; Chakrabarty 2000; Conrad 2016.

things"[36]. Few notable examples in the development of historiography will clarify this point. The UNESCO team of historians that in 1981 compiled the "Methodology and African Prehistory" volume of the *General History of Africa* series complemented the scarcity of available written sources through evidence from archaeology, linguistic, anthropology and oral history, among others. Radiocarbon dating, glottochronology, hearsays, memories are some of the methods and sources that allowed the team of historians to affirm, "Africa has a history" [37]. An obvious and yet a revolutionary claim, since for centuries the possibility of doing history in the African continent has been neglected by many intellectuals and historians, precisely for the inadequacy of conventional sources[38]. The use of evidence extrapolated from different disciplines has permitted to bring to light histories that mere 'canonic' sources could not grasp, while the revival of the complexity of the past through this method has eventually created a fruitful "interdisciplinary culture" among Africanist historians[39].

Another paradigmatic case are the approaches known under the rubric of the "linguistic" and "cultural" turn, which swept a branch of historical studies in the 1970s and 1980s and led to the emergence of new interdisciplinary researches. In fact, the historians promoting the turn recognized the importance of language, discourses and cultural aspects in the constitution of societies. Going beyond the "constraints of a commonsensical, usually materialist notion of the social", these historians have chosen to shed new light on previously neglected subjects of history (e.g. women) and processes, focusing on "symbols, rituals, discourse, and cultural practices rather than social structure or social class"[40]. Rumors; systems of representation; popular culture like theater and music, rather than histories distilled directly and only from official documents and economic data, were used to find new meanings and omissions in previous analyses of historical

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[36] Frodeman 2010, *xxxii*.

[37] Ki-Zerbo 1981, 1.

[38] Atieno-Odhiambo 2002, 14.

[39] Obenga 1981, 73; Vansina 1985.

[40] Bonnell and Hunt 1999, 8; see also Rose 1992; Biernacki 1997; Maza 2005.

phenomena. As Joyce reflected, "if the social world is at bottom a human construct, it is only by looking at the principles of its construction that headway will be made"[41].

Let us consider a final indicative example: in a similar fashion of the previous case, area studies like European studies can also benefit from critical humanistic approaches that are not bound to a specific methodology or discipline, but that bring more of them together "in a concerted approach to the object of study"[42]. In fact, the notion of Europe is both "elusive" (i.e. it depends on the perspective of the observer) and "mutable" (the definition of the whole and its parts changes at any given point of time). To put it differently, histories have the capacity to produce new geographies of relations between and within spaces, rather than the other way round: think about the idea of Eurafrica, namely the study of the multifaceted entanglement of the two continents, and the new conceptual field it opens up for[43]. Subsequently, the "openness of the epistemological field" represents a viable solution both to deal with the variety of definitions one can retrieve around the idea of Europe (or other areas, for that matters), and to create the conditions for boundary crossing, if not for their complete removal: the final aim is to "widen the expectation horizon", as Lindström puts it[44]. Although developed in different contexts, these three brief cases above all alluded to limitations in sources, evidence and objects of study in the historical discipline. Moving away from this general discussion, and thus with a much more limited scope, I present now some of the features of the interdisciplinarity approach that characterizes this thesis.

External vs. Internal limits: the first interesting issue to discuss is how we define the study object. If we rely solely on a discipline taken in itself, the object will be consequently limited, per se or "internally", by that tradition of study and the sources it draws on. In my case study, focusing only on Scandinavian welfare

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[41] Joyce 1997, 371.

[42] Lindström 2002, 6.

[43] Martin 1982; Adebajo and Whiteman 2012; Hansen and Jonsson 2015.

[44] Lindström 2002, 7.

structures in the terms defined by official documents, political speeches, and statistics in historical perspective, would have missed the important part of how these structures are experienced by certain individuals in the society. By defining the problem externally, namely for how it becomes visible publicly, the researcher can achieve two main results through interdisciplinarity: be more holistic in the research design, by drawing on and complementing existing knowledge generated in single fields; and be more 'responsive', selecting pertinent methodologies in relation to the problem.

Work with current issues: Koselleck specified that the tension between experiences and expectations of individuals is what generates historical time: more explicitly, these categories "indicate an anthropological condition without which history is neither possible nor conceivable"[45]. This idea has inspired my research, and I have identified the tension specifically in the relation between experiences and expectations about welfare and security. In Koselleck's terms, this tension is a phenomenon that we register in the present time, yet it contains also elements of the individual's processed pasts as well as future prognoses, and can be therefore explored for historical purposes. On this ground, it is possible to work historically on current issues, even on those ones where we observe a gap between historical events and the language used to represent them, to refer once again to Koselleck[46]. In fact, the elaboration on questions of welfare and security among the Somalis carried out in this thesis does not derive from language and related meanings encapsulated in contemporary policymaking and official reports. It is by looking anthropologically at the way these questions are experienced and expected by my interlocutors, that I have established them as the conditions for a possible history of their life in Scandinavia.

Navigate complexity: few doctors in Europe had ever visited a Somali circumcised woman before some years ago, and even fewer might have known that this practice is connected to cultural aspects[47]. This example shows that contemporary

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[45] Koselleck 2004, 257.

[46] Koselleck 2002, 27.

[47] See for example Johnsdotter 2002; Daahir, Cusmaan, and Osman 2011, 86.

European societies display increasing degrees of complexity, for the overlapping of different cultural practices and the application of dissimilar solutions to similar problems. Interdisciplinarity is an approach that can be used to bring together knowledge produced in several disciplinary fields— in the case above, these would be social and medical anthropology, to reason more accurately on the interconnection between phenomena and their manifestation over time. In relation to this aspect, we may understand interdisciplinarity as the academic response to shifting patterns in the definition of problems of societal relevance.

Practical implications: In practice, interdisciplinarity is realized by including theories and methods from other disciplines into one's own. In this thesis, this is evident in the choice of literature, which includes material from humanities and social sciences. A similar process happens with sources: the historical data of this thesis are extracted from conventional sources, like official documents, policies, political speeches, statistics; academic literature; and for a relevant part, from oral sources, namely the interviews I have conducted with Somali interlocutors.

There at least three advantages, and contributions, coming from the interdisciplinary approach adopted in this thesis. First of all, it provides evidence on the human side of contemporary history of the welfare state, in the interlocutor's own terms, experiences and significance. That is particularly relevant for the Somalis, if we consider the following points: they have escaped a war-torn homeland where also the education system collapsed; the Somali society is prevalently an oral society; in Scandinavia, they represent an ethnic minority of major social concern for the authorities. The overlapping factors, in fact, result in a relative lack of evidence material that can be analyzed directly in historical perspective (e.g. autobiographies, archival sources); even more so in areas of life like family relations, where written records are usually fewer. Against this background, the source material in this thesis attempts at providing information that can be used for future research. Secondly, emphasis is placed on instance of negotiations, dynamism, and eventually variety in questions of everyday life, avoiding the generalizing effects that may stem from the statistics office, and from homogenous treatments of the given community in formal and less formal parlance. Thirdly, in connection with the broader debates on historiography, this

thesis is an illustration of emancipation from the writing of history according to a canon that has for long time privileged certain subjects (big men, big events) and sources (written) over others.

Interdisciplinarity is thus critical about fields of knowledge production and subscribes to the idea that the reality of things is rarely divided up along disciplinary lines. It is, necessarily, also holistic (or displays holistic ambitions), because it deals with complex systems or issues through a wider range of methodologies. This comes necessarily with some limitations too. The main one is that of resulting superficial in some sub-themes of the research: such form of negligence can happen in reason of the lack of specific competences and of theoretical and methodological rigor; or again in reason of narrative strategies that force the researcher to make choices on what to prioritize[48]. To be sure, I have confronted one of more of these challenges at different stages during my research work. However, this is eventually a case of exchanging a set of limitations for another: on the one hand, the limitations in the field of study that find their origin precisely in the discipline that is summoned for the analytical task. On the other hand, the limitations springing from the attempt to gain a broader understanding of a single problem. These questions have been largely taken into consideration by the author: yet, even in the best of the hypotheses, the inherent tension is acknowledged but cannot be solved in this thesis.

Conclusion

The methodological section has provided the reader with more details about the design of my empirical research, which for a great extent is based on the interviews I have conducted in the three Scandinavian countries. I have illustrated the research methods that have influenced my approach to the fieldwork and, most important, I have described the combination realized between methods afferent to different disciplines, with the scope of achieving the goals set forward with the research questions. Methodological interdisciplinarity in the humanities, it is argued here, is made necessary by the need to engage with different traditions and practices of constructing and preserving histories, which is increasingly

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[48] See for example Petersson 2015.

characterizing our world of transnational dynamics. It thus allows the historian to reach, with his work, also those sources that otherwise, for several reasons, would succumb to the test of time or to other, prevailing narratives. At the same time, such methodology can reveal itself very relevant in order to account for the struggles of the vulnerable individuals handling the challenges of social change in the new country of migration, providing insights on current dynamics of societal change that describe both opportunities and obstacles to integration.

CHAPTER III

Ties that bind: the welfare group

The global experience of security and insecurity

Human life as part of *natural* environments is full of contingencies bringing threats to our perceived sense of security. In some cases, this is a matter of everyday life: unreliability of rainfall, plant and human diseases, soil erosion are some of the most frequent plagues of this kind. In other cases, insecurity is the result of more or less recurrent natural catastrophes: Somalia and the Horn of Africa have long been known for their exposure to severe cyclical droughts, the last occurred as recently as in the end of 2016, which have devastating consequences for their inhabitants[1]. Analyses of other realities in the African continent show that lack of security is part of the historical experience of many other communities, as ecological calamities have been a component of their life for centuries[2]. Perceptions of environmental risk have nevertheless gone global, even in those fortunate cases when it is not a direct or daily experience of the individual. *El Niño* is by now a familiar word for most people. Awareness campaigns on phenomena like pollution, global warming or endangered animal species as well as the broadcasting of the fury of natural disasters occurring around the world have reshaped the notion of environmental threat, with the suggestive effect of bringing the entire humankind in the same risk pool. *We are humans, the earth is our home*, declaims the World Environment Day Anthem.

On top of that, we need to count in also insecurities arising from the *social* environment: issues like poverty, vulnerability, inequality and the like have been held often responsible for bringing further malaise to our life. Debts, unemployment, criminality, are the daily concerns of millions of people and have degraded entire segments of world societies. According to the sociologists of the "risk society", the whole idea of modernization of Western societies as such

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[1] Zohrer 1956.

[2] See for example Mirjam de Bruijn and Han van Dijk (1995), who described the insecurity situation of the Fulbe society, a pastoral society inhabiting central Mali, part of the arid Sahel region.

comes at the price of the social production of new risk situations, and the same is becoming increasingly valid also for developing countries[3]: not surprisingly then, every society, group and individual on earth has to cope with lack of security. Human societies around the world are engaged accordingly in providing protection to their needy members in some form or the other, *à la* Friedman's "different ways of doing similar things"[4]. A wide array of human behaviors and actions, ranging from the building of a shelter, to the purchasing of life insurances or again to migration seems to suggest in fact that all human beings share an intrinsic propensity to take actions in order to achieve security in their life. This sense of 'security' is intended both in terms of physical safeness against natural environmental hazards and in terms of a psychological, existential desire to feel protected against certain sources of distress that find their origin in societal life[5].

These strategic conducts set the basis for viewing (in)security as a common existential human experience, yet they also call into question the sense of constructed notions of risk as well as the instruments we resort to in order to address, manage and minimize the impact of risk in our lives. In the light of their ultimate scope, these instruments have to do with our *welfare*, in the sense that they contribute remarkably in ensuring our physical and mental wellness in the face of multifaceted risks. Why introducing the concept of "welfare" in a discourse about security? I think that welfare is intimately connected with ontological security, as I understand it to be *the combination of the social, cultural and political instruments used by people to cope with uncertainty and economic weakness*[6]. In other words, welfare practices are the sum of instruments or strategies we use with the scope of achieving security for ourselves and the ones we care about (assuming, of course, that being ensured physically and psychologically against risk brings beneficial effects for the individual, which is usually the case). Security, then, is *a condition, primarily psychological,*

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[3] Beck 2006.

[4] Friedman 1994, 207.

[5] Cfr. Kinnvall 2004.

[6] Cfr. Simons 1997; Bevan 2004; Wood 2004; Maclean 2010.

*characterized by lack or strong reduction of uncertainty and weakness from the horizon. This condition is the result of effective welfare measures and of any other effort put in place by individuals (*or groups of individuals*) and organizations, to overcome the insecurities related to the individual's existence.*

At the heart of the definition above is the idea of security as a psychological question regarding the individual, which can be nevertheless achieved also through collective solutions[7]. In the latter sense, I prefer to talk about 'social security' to reference the broader scope of norms and institutions that are agreed by a community to ensure the security of the members, and that require also degrees of participation and exchanges between parts. The definition reveals also that deficits of security derive from the interruption, or the impossibility to perform welfare practices, for what these practices mean to the people that want to access them. The more the individual will be prevented from practicing forms of welfare, the more the sense of being not secure will likely grow. This sort of inverse proportion in the relation between welfare and security is what, I argue, we retrieve in my case study.

However, here is where we shall draw the line of commonalities, and begin to explore what differentiates instead humans as well as their decisions in matter of (social) security. In fact, if on the one hand it is true that we human beings are all filled with a longing for security, on the other hand it is undeniable that the instruments we put in place to reach security may be very diverse and sometimes even conflicting one with the other. Let us see it through an example: the migrant family composed of many children may be welcomed with sheer criticism in welfare states granting generous child benefits; however, it is useful to understand that the choice is not driven so much by a predetermined desire of multiplying social benefits, as it is rather an active measure of social insurance inherited from contexts where those same state benefits are absent, and their direct substitutes are left to the family's initiative[8]. Differences of this kind are likely to bring constant

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[7] Cfr. UNDP's definition of "human security" as "freedom from want and freedom for fear" (1994).

[8] "Why are children important?" Sara Johnsdotter (2002, 24) asked several Somali women in Sweden, obtaining exactly the picture of "children as a social insurance". I have also met similar answers, and this theme will recur in my dissertation.

tensions within societies that present multiple ways of organizing and performing welfare, as European societies increasingly do.

To be sure, this chapter asks the complex questions of why welfare provision assumes certain connotations or institutional frameworks instead of others, and why it matters for the study of present issues. More specifically, I will explore the factors accounting for the different historical paths of risk management and welfare provision, with reference to my case study, in which we observe the establishment of the state in Scandinavian countries, and the consolidation of extended familiar ties in Somalia. However, the questions I am posing are not so much related to the process of institutional development over time per se, something that I will look at in the next two chapters. Here, the focus is more generally placed on the individual and the community level, to clarify how the management of risk and the provision of welfare are imagined, experienced and narrated by individuals as a universal feature of human beings. Therefore, the proposed analysis incorporates the full temporal spectrum of past, present and future and operates through the temporalization of welfare and security that I have explained in the methodology.

The rest of the chapter is organized as follows: first of all, I will present my proposed unit of analysis, which I call 'welfare group'. As it will result, this unit operates at the intersection between past welfare experiences and expectations for social security in the future: I explain that the interplay between experiences of risk, normative principles and institutions sheds light on how a welfare group is founded[9]. Only a reasonable knowledge about the inter-relation of these three elements can further our understanding of welfare groups, and allows us to work with that in a global context. After that, I will indicate the ways in which solidarity influences the practices of welfare, in order to bring additional evidence to my argument and to pave the way for what will be analyzed in next chapters.

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[9] The identification of the three factors is partly inspired by Mary Douglas's description of culture, institutions and physical factors as elements for the analysis of social actors (cfr. Douglas 1994, 179).

The welfare group

We are acquainted with the fact that welfare provision in the West is a matter regulated by national legislation, although with different scopes and targeted groups identifiable from country to country. Different categorizations based on historical, economic, cultural and even linguistic patterns of public policy have been put in place to distinguish between the different trajectories of European welfare states: Esping-Andersen's "worlds of welfare", Castels' "families of nations" and what I call Cousins' 'developmental approach' are some of the most influential systems of categorization[10]. By the same token, we know that alternative welfare models do exist around the world and attempt at providing the very same goal of social security[11]. However, mindful of the previous discussion of methodological nationalism, it is not surprising that non-state security arrangements have been long defined 'informal', in a sort of linguistic convention that conveys though also the problematization of its effectiveness[12]. A review of the International Labor Organization's (ILO) definitions of social security over

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[10] Esping-Andersen 1990; Castels 1993; Cousins 2005. A substantial convergence is realized in pointing out the existence of a conservative/continental/Christian tradition (formed by Austria, Belgium, Germany, and recently by the Netherlands too) and of a social democratic/Nordic tradition (Scandinavia). Scholars also alluded to a Southern European family, as either a group per se or a variant of the continental one, inclusive of Italy, Greece, Spain and potentially France. Finally, many reported a liberal model to be the unique case of the UK or, in the rubric of "English-speaking family", of Ireland too (Castels 1993).

[11] Dean and Khan have for example shed light on the Zakat, the religious duty imposed on Muslims compelling them to redistribute wealth among those in need, not on the basis of national state's prescriptions but on religious ones with claim to universality (Dean and Khan 1997, 196). A large literature exists also on welfare in Asia, with interesting differences between those countries where welfare is predominantly a state affair, such as Japan and South Korea, some in which the influence of Confucianism is stronger determining a major focus on family and community and finally others where state-provided social security is poorly developed, such as Indonesia (for the first group of countries see Peng 2008; for the second refer to Jones 1993; for Indonesia, see F. von Benda-Beckmann and K. von-Benda-Beckmann 2007). In this respect, the African continent displays "the youngest and least developed social security programs" at the state level, yet it offers a vast complementary panorama of non-state welfare institutions. Non-state providers, as families, neighbors networks or faith-based organizations, have often deep historical roots and at times even predated the establishment of modern states (See Cammett and MacLean 2014, 10). Interesting enough, they also observe: "the role of diverse non-state providers in the provision of social welfare is becoming increasingly important over time throughout the developing world"). F. Von Benda-Beckmann and K. von Benda-Beckmann (2007, 35) propose understanding differences in terms of the following categories: "sources of regulation"; "sources of provision"; "scope of operation"; "potential of resources" and the "efficiency of social security relations and institutions".

[12] For example, Wood has written (2004, 50): "An informal security regime reflects a set of conditions where people cannot reasonably expect to meet their security needs via accessing services from the state or via participation in open labour markets. Thus they have to rely more heavily upon community and family relationships of various kinds".

time confirms that alternative, non-state practices have been only recently given more recognition[13]. Against this background, the reality we are confronted with in our time is quite fascinating, since diverse systems increasingly meet and co-exist, or even overlap one with the other, not the least for the effects of transnational dynamics. The following is a short illustrative anecdote: during a workshop organized by the Danish Refugee Council that I have attended, a Somali participant provoked general amusement when, raised in the room a question about the collection of Zakat among the Somalis, he murmured: "Ahh…*Skat*!"[14]. However, matters like the just evoked overlapping, or the existence of "parallel societies", seem to spark particular debates, and headaches, only when they occur in the nation-state's territory of "forced homogeneity"[15].

Why it is so in the nation-state? On the one hand, policies in the nation-states across Europe are chained to their own normative principles equaling 'good society' with homogenization[16]. On the other hand, literature underlines that migrants are usually inclined to retain some constructions or practices related to the security net in the diaspora: they may even reinvigorate certain elements, like for example faith-based welfare and belief[17]. In consideration of these two

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[13] The Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102) for example suggested "general responsibility of the state for the due provision of the benefits and the proper administration of the institutions" notwithstanding leaving "certain flexibility" in deciding to the member state. In the best known definition of social security issued in 1984, it was circumscribed as: "the protection which society provides for its members, through a series of public measures, against the economic and social distress that otherwise would be caused by the stoppage or substantial reduction of earnings resulting from sickness, maternity, employment injury, unemployment, invalidity, old age and death; the provision of medical care; and the provision of subsidies for families with children". This definition revealed once again the statutory conceptualization of social security. This view eventually changed in a document dated 2011, which says: "Irrespective of *whoever* assumes the ultimate responsibility for the exercise of the human right to social security, the principal objectives nevertheless aim at: – reducing income insecurity, including the eradication of poverty, and improving access to health services for all people, so as to ensure decent working and living conditions; – reducing inequality and inequity; – providing adequate benefits as a legal entitlement; while – ensuring the absence of discrimination on the basis of nationality, ethnicity or gender; and – ensuring fiscal affordability, efficiency and sustainability" (my italics).

[14] "Skat" is the name of Denmark's tax and custom administration agency.

[15] Baldwin 1990, 180.

[16] Breuilly 2009, 10.

[17] See Kinnvall 2004; Kokot, Tölölyan, and Alfonso 2004. My hypothesis here is that religion compensates for the migrant's lack of security in new and diverse social environments, providing a platform to seek the help and the solidarity that may not be easy to access in the dominant national culture.

coincidental aspects, we can articulate the problem we are presented with as the following: should we think of multicultural societies in terms of migrants that settle down "with a backpack of good and bad practices" that "they are supposed to maintain at any cost"?[18] Or, are migrants more or less forced to build extra-state solidarity/welfare networks to achieve that security otherwise denied by the nation-state? Little but sure, a short-sighted focus placed only on the state level would leave these alternative flows of solidarity excluded from the general, accepted national view on how risk should be redistributed among citizens. Another consequence would be that exogenous cultural practices are automatically transformed into suspicious actions, on the ground that they do not share the solidarity principles of the dominant national culture.

We are thus in need for a unit of analysis that can transcend this dichotomy. In doing so, however, this unit should not leave us behind in what concerns the understanding of how dynamics of cultural encounters affect the achievement of social security in the different communities inhabiting the legal space of the state. I believe that the 'welfare group' could be a suitable reference unit for achieving this purpose. In the light of what I have previously explicated for welfare and security, a welfare group is definable as *any group of individuals connected by the will/obligation to contribute to the reciprocal security in accordance with a shared set of welfare practices that is the result of consolidated historical as well as cultural processes*. Within such group, everyone is predictable to each other and this fact itself creates a space of secure sociality: the welfare group thus rejects the definition of 'informality', because it acknowledges that among members the "knowledge of the rules is open, visible and transparent"[19].

Moreover, by detaching the primary definition of welfare from the identification of its *provider* (e.g. the family or the state), the focus is placed on the final purpose of the group, rather than on the means to pursue it. In fact, if we analyze only the welfare provider as such, we may end up by overlooking the historical roots behind its establishment, and the whole explanation of welfare

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[18] Quotations from Johnsdotter 2002, 14.

[19] Maclean 2010, 24.

over time would be then as uncomfortable as trying to guess the entire content of a book by reading its sole last chapter. When turning to the purpose of welfare practices in a group, I believe that we gain much more attention to the significance of the act at the individual and community level, and we are thus offered a more useful frame to investigate the social structures within which people aspire to security over time.

Membership in a welfare group requires practical participation in risk redistribution, something that can be equally retrievable in the acts of paying taxes as much in that of helping out neighbors, say, with farm chores. Those who do not participate will end up by facing social exclusion, if not moral and/or legal sanctions from the other community's members or the recognized authority. Besides that, a welfare group finds itself unified in aspiring to the same future, given the commonalities of shared experiences, aspirations and thus expectations: welfare becomes a collective instrument allowing individuals to identify one another and forecast expected behaviors. The very expectation for reciprocity, namely the thought that the others will care about us as much as we do about them, is nothing else than a belief in a future behavior based on the experiences learned in the past: the more these experiences are shared and put into action in the present, the more the future of the group will tend to coincide.

The provided definition of the welfare group partly resembles Peter Baldwin's proposition of "risk categories" but with two substantial differences: in his work, the concept of social insurance is hardly separated by that of national policy, and the role of transnational solidarity bounds is downplayed to an unsatisfactory level[20]. It overlaps only moderately with Beck's description of "risk society", given that in my study it is not assumed that typical Western ideologies and phenomena like liberalism and industrialization (and their consequences) are necessarily the prevalent condition experienced by people over time. My definition has perhaps more in common with Bauman's "ethical community", in which I retrieve the same ideas of long-term commitments to a future vision, and

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[20] Risk categories are so defined: "actors identified and given interests in common by their shared relations to the means of security, by their stake in or against the redistribution of risk promised by social insurance" (Baldwin 1990, 12).

obligations meant to help anticipating and even guaranteeing that future[21]. Thinking transnationally, I find similarities with the approach brought forward by Victoria Bernal to explain the Eritrean diaspora's digital engagement with the homeland: she affirms that nations work increasingly "as a network", in reason of people's technological experiences of citizenship and sovereignty in the contemporary context of migration[22].

The main feature of the welfare group is that of ensuring ontological security (as defined by Giddens) in the present through practices that are based on the simultaneous sharing of past experiences as well as the alignment of future expectations among its members. The idea of using the welfare group is clearly motivated by the intent to move beyond the analytical category of the state, not so much as the result of an intellectual urge as for the practical need to study a phenomenon which is indeed, in the case of the Somalis, a daily transnational act. Against this backdrop, the state appears to be at times even an obstacle, a span in the works of the solidarity's chain that transcends national borders. Secondly, the welfare group as analytical concept may reveal itself to be more useful and just in dealing with some non-European communities, given that while they are all engaged in welfare practices, few do so through exclusive recourse to host state's institutions[23]: in fact, the nation-state remains ultimately a *mean*, not an *end* of welfare practices. Therefore, welfare and social security in non-European communities have to be observed and studied as distinct historical products of their own environments rather than as aberrant forms of Western models, as some would have it. In other words, the aim of making the process of welfare and its temporalization more intelligible requires the singling out of the experiences and the expectations therein connected. This approach permits in fact to conduct a debate on a more equal and reciprocally intelligible basis, because it starts from the assumption that security is a universal value towards which all human beings can be said to move to.

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[21] Bauman 2000, 72.

[22] Bernal 2014, 3.

[23] See Cammett and MacLean 2014, 8-10.

In life histories of the diaspora, the considerations above reveal a tension between the individual's decisions and the community's expectations. Both notions have in fact a dual dimension, one that addresses the individual's current concerns and another one that reflects collective solutions to social questions. In order to unravel the relation between the two dimensions, the method I unfold here consists of examining specific factors that help creating similarities in the collective welfare group: in turn, these can be associated each with one of the three-layered temporal structure of welfare and security presented earlier. The following sections will illustrate my way to connect the theoretical aspects of the model with the empirical analysis, through separate descriptions dealing with the past, present and future.

Risk management as a space of experience

When we focus on past experiences related to welfare and security, the mode of economic production can be quite revealing, for it tells us about what is experienced as a risk and what represents a hazardous situation in collective narratives. Think about my case study: in Somali-speaking areas, livestock and animal production are a relevant mode of economic production as well as stability, and they account for around 40% of total GDP and more than 50% of export earnings[24]. Subsequently, indulging on this task turns out to be helpful in order to place the experiences and the narratives of pastoralism and droughts among Somalis in a context of enduring relevance of agro-pastoral system in the homeland, with social consequences that yet are felt also in the diaspora. We may expand the argument on the mode of economic production further with the inclusion of the natural environment[25].

The environment, considered as the place where human communities live yet also as the metaphysical place where cultural practices have been formulated in

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[24] Data from UNDP's "Empowering Pastoralist communities to manage climate change" (2015).

[25] Anthropological researches, and increasingly the activities of other disciplines and relative sub-disciplines like cultural ecology, evolutionary biology and ecology, economic theory and political economy have in fact dealt for long time now with risk and environment. Bollig (2006, 4) offers a literature review of studies concerning risk and security, especially among pastoral communities, appeared since the late 1970s.

response to historical experiences of risk, are never neutral for human beings, and are instead integral part of human behaviors. We need to remind this notion in the face of processes of consolidation of the environment in classic "ethnographic maps", where space "becomes a kind of neutral grid on which cultural difference, historical memory, and societal organization are inscribed"[26]. The natural environment ideally represents the past, not so much because we no longer live in the same place, but rather because our strategies to cope with risk bear traces of past experiences that ourselves and our ancestors have accumulated over time in connection to that specific environment. Therefore, the idea of pastness of certain experiences is derived directly from the counter-'presentness' of new security concerns, and the two should be always conceptualized together. In the diaspora, the said coexistence stands out even more prominently, since the extension of transnational families constantly forces diaspora members to interact with the welfare past through the solidarity bounds linking them with the section of the family living in the homeland.

Somalia, and especially its northern part, is subject to cyclical droughts in a context that is already exacerbated by land resource scarcity[27]. Enduring these conditions has historically transformed nomadic life into a necessary socio-economic strategy for survival, while climate, access to basic resources and even wild animals became the major sources of risks. Certainly, nomadic economies do not pertain to Somalia and Africa only (something that cannot be dealt with here)[28]. Yet what matters the most for the aim of this research is noting that 'ordinary' contemporary Europeans can hardly relate *today,* with the *same* concern, to any of the risk sources mentioned above. In Scandinavian countries, for example, agriculture generates only a tiny part of the respective national GDP, less than 2%, while the high-tech standards in the same sector (incl. animal

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[26] Gupta and Ferguson 1992, 7.

[27] Citing climatological records, Abdi Ismail Samatar (1989, 24) lists 19 severe droughts in the period 1925-1983. Considering only the last two decades, Somalia was hit by El Nino (1997), causing floods near the rivers Jubba and Shabeele; the same happened the year after and crops gone destroyed, resulting in starvation; in 1999 a severe drought hit the entire Horn of Africa and the famine in 2011-2012 was recorded as the worst in 25 years, resulting in the death of more than 260,000 people in all East Africa.

[28] For an interesting account of the Europe's clanic past, see for example the recent work of Mark S. Weiner.

farming) provide a large output. Through this first stage of the model, we can thus shed light on the interconnections between the economic structure, the environment and the formulation of experiences of welfare and security within.

Normative principles and the tension between past and future

Following the proposed reasoning, the model posits the enduring influence of past experiences in the current narratives of insecurity and risk circulating in a given community. Somalis in the diaspora provide indeed a good example of that, since the nomadic heritage is still felt vividly, even among those living in urbanized areas and thus not relying anymore on livestock and cattle for economic stability. One academic reading of this continuity explains it in terms of "culture" as the framework for the elaboration of strategies to react to challenges and risks of different kinds: culture contains the instruments to respond to any risk situation, providing the source for the acts and the repertoire for the narratives about security[29]. Rodger has associated culture directly with the notions of welfare and social security:

> It is now acknowledged that culture, particularly its effects on lifestyle and emotional choices about caring and the welfare of others, frames the way societies organise their welfare provision and the meaning they attach to it.[30]

Appadurai too has talked about "cultural systems, as combination of norms, dispositions, practices, and histories, [which] frame the good life as a landscape of

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[29] Anthropologists like Elisabeth Croll, David Parkin, Adam Kuper or again economists such as Vijayendra Rao and Michael Walton have understood culture as "a system of strategies" reinforcing people's sense of (collective) identity while shaping their capability to aspire as well as their structure to value what is well-being and good life (Croll and Parkin 1992, 13. See also Kuper 2000, 3; Rao and Walton 2004, 4). Quite famous is also Geertz's definition (2006, 312): "Culture, here, is not cults and customs, but the structures of meaning through which men give shape to their experience; and politics is not coups and constitutions, but one of the principal arenas in which such structures publicly unfold". Anthropologist Sara Johnsdotter, analyzing the meaning that Somalis in Sweden attach to the practice of female circumcision, made the point that circumcision is best understood as a "strategy" which mothers choose in order "to optimize their daughters' future prospects" given that the practice is supposed to be positively welcomed by men (Johnsdotter 2002, 10. The author however finds poor evidence to affirm that Somali men, especially those in Sweden, are in favor of female circumcision). De Bruijn and van Dijk (1995, 11) retrieved that the cultural means used to counter insecurities provide the individuals with "a sense of purpose, with a frame to understand 'the hostile' world around them, and a sense of identity". Therefore, culture is also a mean to stress common identity, through the repetition of determinate risk management strategies or the sharing of certain ideas about what is a good society.

[30] Rodger 2000, 14-15.

discernible ends and of practical paths to the achievement of these ends"[31]. He noted himself, though, that the use of the concept of culture can be misleading, not the least because it has been viewed for long time "as a matter of one or other kind of pastness", tied to keywords like custom and tradition[32].

The intricacies of the debate over the use of the culture concept are beyond the scope of this study, and I have found in 'normative principles' a more suitable object to refer to the logic that guides the current welfare practices of the members of the welfare group. This expression reduces also ambiguity, since it keeps at bay potential allusions to the cultural actor being "a person from the past", as Appadurai would have it, emphasizing instead the tension occurring between moral norms inscribed in past experiences of common risk distribution and the changing needs arising from new expectations. To put it differently, the analysis of influential historical discourses about welfare and security is functional to underline the agency of the individual in relation to rules and requirements that s/he faces in specific situations. In this fashion, the identification of normative principles (e.g. "universalism" in Scandinavia or "contract" in Somalia) helps shedding light on the *interpretation* given by different individuals in the society to the norms regulating the safety net, and on the ways in which the 'newness' is absorbed into it. The second component of the model, centered on the present, is meant thus to provide a framework to section the essence of the tensions and negotiations involving the individuals, together with the potential sources of insecurity that arise from their condition.

We might be tempted to affirm that security and past experiences go hand in hand. However, we should not 'freeze' behaviors and practices relating to risk once and for all, in the same manner as a picture of ourselves in baby age does not physically represent us for the rest of our life[33]. In fact, when applying the categories offered by Koselleck, we can interpret the historical present as a place of continuous tension, where previous experiences confront the sum of predicted

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[31] Appadurai 2013, 292.

[32] *Ivi*, 180.

[33] According to Wikan (2002, 80), "In reality, culture is always changing, for humans learn as long as they live".

expectations according to the formula: the biggest the gap between the former and the latter, the biggest the tension. One possible outcome is that new interpretations of the past emerge, including revisions on how welfare and security were achieved in the past. As a matter of fact, I have met Somalis with different views concerning the future, and I deduce that these differences signal that the aforementioned normative principles are in the process of losing part of their strength.

Institutions: policymaking for the future

Individuals engage in interpretations of rules that are imposed by institutions. Mary Douglas has been one of the first academics stressing that perceptions of risk are encoded in social institutions. In particular, she has researched people's reaction to misfortune, identifying a link between the types of social organization and blaming praxis[34]. A similar kind of argument could be built to underline also that institutions were developed as a response to issues of risk management. Institutions embody in fact the formalization of procedures and norms that have proved to be successful for the specific group that uses them: institutions, thus, set general rules and regulate actions in the society through a mix of legal and social coercion, as well as systems of socialization (e.g. education).

In Western systems, "institutions" are primarily the entire machinery of government including its legislative, administrative and judicial bodies, as well as the laws, procedures and norms by which they operate. They are thus necessarily conglomerates of normative practices and values that are thought to best react to the environment where they operate, and are part to what is usually referred to as the social contract. Their inclusion in the social contract is of paramount importance, since this is the necessary element ensuring the legitimacy as well as the commitment to respect over time the norms within a given society.

We are reminded once again that different historical experiences of risk will lead to different types of institutions, from where derives the need to move

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[34] She mentions three typologies of blame: one moralistic; one attributable to the work of individual adversaries; and finally one linkable to an external enemy. Douglas claimed eventually: "These three types of blaming influence the system of justice. Or rather, the influence goes both ways, the blaming and the system of justice together are symptoms of the way the society is organized" (Douglas 1994, 5-6).

between diachronic and synchronic dimensions in order to explain change in the present: considering this last point, it appears quite rational to agree with the acclaimed Swedish political scientist Bo Rothstein, who contends that:

> [E]xporting a formal institution from one setting to another usually fails to have the expected positive effects. Institutions as such do not automatically change values and behavior, because they do not operate in a history or context free environment.[35]

Neither is the adoption of alien institutions a process that can be accomplished easily, due to political or ideological reasons that usually overlap in such process. Institutions are far more than just repositories of past norms to be applied in the present; they are also the entities entitled with the task of elaborating policies and rules to deal with unprecedented risks in order to solve disputes and preserve peace[36]. One more interesting thing about institutions is their ability to project specific ideas and aspirations in the future: think about pension funds, which are supposed to pay back in the future the lifetime work of the individual. Or again, the yearly economic planning which usually represents a theme of animated discussions in Western parliaments. When risks are institutionalized, strategies for risk reduction are expected to work on a broader scale, for more people. Institutions are— not intuitively, the locus of future within my temporal structure, and I explain in more detail why: institutionalization brings welfare practices into the social contract that formally establishes the state of relations between community members, and also between the member and the entitled authority. Therefore, the social contract draws on past experiences to delineate how things should be in the future, especially when circumstances resemble the ones already occurred in the past. However, not all institutions work on the same long-term basis and the function of the model here presented is that of underlining differences in a comparative manner.

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[35] Rothstein 2000, 484.

[36] In Somalia, this happened with urbanization, when traditional norms defining compensations for caused harms had to be expanded to include, for example, harms caused by car accidents, a type of circumstance that was rare before and not formally contemplated. Another pertinent example could be the approval of cybercrime laws, which has now become a major concern of all governments. In all these respects, institutions have the valuable power of favoring and regulating the dynamics between otherwise unknown individuals.

These three elements— risk management, normative principles and institutions linked to welfare, are altogether responsible for the creation of similarities in the understandings and practices within welfare groups, and I have emphasized accordingly the way in which they are attributable to the past, present and future dimension. When the experiences and the expectations of the individual are reflected in three components of the welfare group, the same individual is integral part of the safety net. When the opposite situation realizes (what I have called 'asymmetry' earlier), security deficits arise as a consequence. In this peculiar view, the condition of diasporas in the nation-state can be seen as asymmetrical, because they are requested by government policies to align their behaviors and practices to the expectations set by the dominant culture, while they are still connected to the communities of origin. The picture is thus significantly more complicated for those welfare communities that stretch to encompass also the section of the (extended) family still living in the homeland. The continuity (or symmetry) that realizes when individuals share experiences and expectations of welfare and security in the present is what creates, I believe, 'solidarity' within a given system.

Conclusion: insecurity in the 'global', security in the 'national'

This chapter has introduced insecurity as a global phenomenon characterizing modernity: new experiences of technological innovations, neoliberalism and globalization are forcing in fact human beings into a position from where they have less capacity of controlling what they used to have in control before. We may thus agree with Beck, when he depicts a global scenario of "social dependency upon institutions and actors who may well be − and arguably are increasingly − alien, obscure and inaccessible to most people affected by the risks in question"[37]. Against this background, some have claimed that the welfare state is the last bastion left to compensate the citizens for the failures of the globalized market, and there seems to be indeed an inner tension between the uncertainty of the global and the security granted by the national space.

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[37] Beck 2006, 4.

The 'welfare group', which I have described in this chapter, allows to reason precisely in both national and global directions, by giving analytical priority to matters of security and welfare, which for many people are proving today to be indeed an everyday transnational practice rather than a national-defined criteria for economic redistribution. This is also the case of the Somalis in Scandinavia, who are in many ways connected to their families in the homeland, and participate and even influence its social dynamics. The welfare group provides an instrument to realize what types of asymmetries are affecting the temporal axis of welfare and security of the Somalis, by comparing and reflecting about past experiences and the management of 'new' risks, in the light of their exposition to different social environments, values and systems. By doing so, the welfare group can also help us understanding where two welfare systems are likely to converge or clash one with the other. If it is true that common vulnerability and universally shared risk both foster solidarity in a community, at the same time, this provides us with a hint to study the causes for a perceived lack of solidarity in the society[38].

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[38] Baldwin 1990, 34.

CHAPTER IV
Welfare on the move: the Somali stateless safety net

Introduction

This chapter shifts the attention to Somalia and its system of socio-political organization with the intention of exploring origins and contexts of welfare practices. The idea of exploring some of the peculiarities of Somali society descends from the evidence about the persistence of traditions in the diaspora retrieved in both my interviews as well as previous researches, yet also from the scarce degree of analysis that these practices are usually given in Western societies. Criticism of methodological nationalism suggests that a desirable result, when dealing with non-European societies, can be achieved by pointing to the blind spots left by Western forms of knowledge, which have been inclined to treat many domains of the life of the "others" as irrational and thus difficult to interpret[1]. The existing literature pertaining to Somali studies is fortunately of great help in filling these gaps[2]. In Koselleckean terms, the task we are presented

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[1] As Feierman (1999, 186) notes for the African case.

[2] The study of Somali society is not a novel field, whether in history, anthropology or other disciplines. Scholars have initiated academic research in the first decades of the 20th century, in conjunction with the establishment of the first European occupants. Before that, Somalia and its coastal cities especially, figured in several accounts of Arab and European travelers and merchants, and these sources have proved to be indeed crucial for recreating the early history of the entire Horn of Africa. The ethnographic works of two Italians would provide the basis for future studies of Somalia: the linguist, diplomat and governor of colonial provinces Enrico Cerulli wrote three volumes (1957-1964) focusing on historical narratives and cultural aspects of specific clans including religion, genealogy, customary law and linguistics. His research draws on oral traditions, as he admits in the introduction, and is permeated by an evident unilinear evolutional spirit through which he sees Somalia moving towards "a more advanced organization". Massimo Colucci, a judge by training, privileged instead the analysis of customary laws in southern Somalia, publishing in 1924 his *Principi di Diritto Consuetudinario della Somalia Italiana Meridionale*, a volume that became an influential reference for the study of pre-colonial/early-colonial indigenous practices. The scholarship on Somali studies had then a major breakthrough with the work of the British anthropologist Ioan M. Lewis: "the best-known scholar to examine Somali society in English" (Choi Ahmed 1995, 162). His 1961 book titled *A Pastoral Democracy* is still one of the main references on the subject today: the volume contains an accurate social anthropological analysis of northern Somalis' traditions as they appeared in the late 1950s, from the study of the encampment to that of the clan, and from there to nationalism and party politics. The development of anthropological studies was matched by linguistic and literary studies in the Somali-speaking territories, and the most prominent academics in this field are Bogumil Witalis Andrzejewski, Annarita Puglielli, John William Johnson and Martin Orwin. Thanks to their valuable contributions, much more is known and available today about traditional poetry, which in an oral culture such as the Somali carries out way more social functions than simple aesthetic enjoyment. Besides works on poetry, like Andrzejewski's

with is thus that of making sense of a present that looks like a 'chaotic synchrony', namely a space where all the different instances of tension between experiences and expectations exist altogether, as one could describe the diaspora. To make the chaotic somehow intelligible, it is suggested here, we must come back to the three definitional components of the welfare group, which I have identified in experiences of risk; normative principles; institutions. Their exploration is the aim of the chapter.

A tale of camels

It is possibly thought-provoking to start with some reflections about an "animal from the past", the camel[3]. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization, those found in Africa are some 23 million, representing the 85% of the world

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Anthology of Somali Poetry, these researchers compiled also several bilingual dictionaries as well as Somali monolingual volumes such as the *Qaamuuska Af–Soomaaliga*. In the discipline of history, Lee Cassanelli is one of the most influential names: he has looked extensively at issues of slavery, Islam, land and minorities. His experience teaches that the reconstruction of Somalia's past requires the "examination of three distinct traditions of intellectual production: the Western secular tradition, the Islamic religious tradition, and the indigenous Somali poetic tradition" (Cassanelli 2011, 4). The late Said Sheikh Samatar is another key scholar to mention: he devoted his academic efforts to both the discipline of history and literary studies, realizing an excellent combination of the two in his 1982 *Oral Poetry and Somali Nationalism*. Other important contributions came from Mohamed Haji Mukhtar, who was the author of a *Historical Dictionary of Somalia*; and from anthropologist Virginia Luling, who focused on a number of issues ranging from the social structures of Somali communities, the role of genealogy, to minorities and political developments. Similar interests characterize the scholarly activity of another well-known anthropologist, Catherine Besteman. Political science analyses of Somalia's dynamics found major representatives in Kenneth Menkhaus; the two brothers Ahmed and Abdi Ismail Samatar; David D. Laitin; and Hussein M. Adam, founder and president of the Somali Studies International Association (SSIA), all of them writing since the late 1970s. Lidwien Kapteijns and Francesca Declich can be singled out for their systematic study of gender questions, often in historical perspective. In the wake of the so-called "third wave of democratization", many scholars in the early 1990s made of governance, nation-state and democracy the key concepts to illustrate the Somali debacle, and in doing so, they largely reflected on the Western experience of institutional building. These were the years of the "failed state" discourse, which extended also to other (especially) Africa countries. The outbreak of the civil war in 1991 encouraged though Somali scholarship to take the necessary measures to confront with the new challenges arisen from the rapidly changing social context, and new paradigms emerged to explain the reasons for the escalation towards the civil war. Edited volumes like *The Invention of Somalia* (1995), *Southern Somalia: the war behind the war* (1996) *Mending Rips in the Sky* (1997) contain information that people with an interest for Somalia cannot afford to miss. I believe that we can identify since the mid-1990s the beginning of what I call two 'decades of deconstruction' in Somali studies, a season of renewed analyses, still characterizing the scholarship today, that approaches old and new issues in traditional disciplines with criticism towards their direct conceptual application to Somali socio-political phenomena. Markus Hoehne, Tobias Hagmann and the Bantu scholars and activists Mohamed and Omar Eno are some of the most influential representatives.

[3] Faye 2005, 3. The biological family Camelidae is divided into: *Old World Camelids*, where the one-humped Dromedary and two-humped Bactrian and wild camels are found; and *New World Camelids* (Llamas, Alpacas, Vicuñas, and Guanacos).

total[4]: more than five million are the ones grazing in the Horn of Africa alone, where they highly contribute not just to households' income, but to their survival. Three features appear among the most appreciated assets of the camel: its role in human transportation and trade across the desert; the various products it provides (milk, meat, wool and leather above all); finally, its very famous adaptation to dehydration and, consequently, low demand of water. Camels, however, are not among the African native domestic species, for they were introduced in the continent from Arabia by the Romans, under the guidance of Septimius Severus, himself born in Leptis Magna, on the Libyan coast. The endurance capacity of the *Camelus dromedarius* in harsh conditions soon made of this 'imported' animal the best ally for nomadic populations inhabiting African arid and desert areas. From Western Sahara (think of the Tuareg in Niger and Mali or the Tubu in Chad) all the way towards Eastern Africa, to end up in Somalia, where it is estimated an average of 11 camels per km^2 (only five points below human density)[5].

Somali society has historically developed a pastoral economy in response to the region's meager natural resources and has made of livestock and camel especially its mainstay. Over time, thriving camel breeding has evolved also into a remunerative commercial activity, oriented primarily towards buyers in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Kuwait Qatar and United Arab Emirates, through spectacular cargo loading procedures livening up Somali harbors. How can the camel enhance the understanding of the thematic under discussion here? Camels have long shared the destiny of their herders, the nomadic pastors: a destiny of marginalization and even repression, since both are considered a reminiscence of the past, somewhat neither functional nor adequate for contemporary modern societies. Therefore, camels too can be numbered among the 'victims' of methodological nationalism, and I believe that this statement is not to be intended as any sort of hyperbole. For example, following national independences in the

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[4] Fao Stat 2013.

[5] Quite interestingly, not even Arabia is in reality the native region of either one- or two-humped camels. Around 40 million years ago, in fact, Camelid ancestors used to roam in the North American continent and upper north in the Arctic Circle, where they lived for several million years, and from where they spread according to two main directions: South America and Asia, the latter through the then traversable Bering Strait (Burger 2016, 907).

mid-twentieth century, a number of African countries forbidden caravan trades on their territory, while they enhanced instead transportation on lorries, in reason of a mixture of economic and political factors, such as the "modernization" urge and the desired exclusion of certain groups from public spaces, like in the case of Tuareg nomads[6]. Moreover, for many years camel breeding has suffered from a lack of development policies in several countries interested by pastoral activities, and academia too has been rather avaricious in camel studies[7]. These elements contributed to marginalize at once an animal, a human activity, a mode of economic production and a type of social organization, relegating it to its 'exotic' counterpart, cherished by many tourists. Despite all that, nomads pose though a formidable challenge to the conceptualization of today's societies, making precisely of mobility and adaptation their major strength, as one can clearly deduce from the Somali case that will unfold below.

Environment and nomad life

With an arid or semi-arid climate and temperatures that can be as high as 45 °C, Somalia is one of the most food-insecure lands in the world. Permanent pastures constitute almost 70% of its terrain, while less than 2% accounts for arable land. The environmental conditions are harsher in the north, where lands are dry for most of the time during the year: in physiographic terms, highlands and mountains as high as 1,800 meters above sea level characterize the inner areas, but leave ground to a maritime plain. The environment is more profitable for farming in the central-southern region: dominated by the country's only two permanent rivers, the Jubba and the Shabeelle, and endowed with a higher rainfall rate, the soil of the plateau accommodates farming and agro-pastoral activities. The majority of the Somalis developed pastoral and semi-pastoral modes of subsistence in the past, and today nearly 60% of the population practices nomad pastoralism or

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[6] Brey and Faye 2005, 24.

[7] Faye 2005, 3. Even the fact that the European Union has recognized camel milk and its nutritional properties only in March 2013, may suggest something about the relegation surrounding the camel. The importation of camel milk was authorized by EU only after several years of negotiations, and the authorization from the sole United Arab Emirates.

keeps certain cultural features of nomadic affiliation, even among those living in the growing urban centers[8].

Within the pastoral society, the nuclear family is considered the smallest group of people: it usually consists of the husband, his wife or wives, young children and unmarried girls. Since the pastoral family is not self-sufficient in respect to labor needs, a number of families cohabit together and join forces in a larger household (*reer*), sharing food, resources and carrying on common duties like watching flocks and fetching water[9]. A nomadic grazing hamlet is thus formed, and is characterized by a rigorous division of labor. Van Notten has written:

> Men care for the bulk of the family's livestock and crops, maintain the water wells, settle conflicts, defend their family and belongings against enemies, and participate in the meetings of their community. Women build the family's habitat, cook its dinners, fetch its water and wood, look after its domestic animals, milk its livestock.[10]

Similarly, the historian Lidwien Kapteijns writes that the nomad mode of subsistence and economic production is organized according to the two principles of gender and age: women are assigned the husbandry of sheep and goats while men take care of grazing camels (the prestige wealth). Moreover, the oldest men in age are normally the head of the hamlet while those younger help digging water wells, water animals and erect external fences[11].

In order to meet the alimentary needs of their camels, sheep and goats, these families move around seasonally, searching for the necessary water ponds and grazing lands for their animals. During the perilous seasonal quest for water and grass, the nomad favors light wood and grass mats to erect huts, and only cooking pots and few other necessary items are made of iron or clay. For its premium on

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[8] See Mansur 1995, 108. Hesse raises the figure up to 75% (2010, 249). Van Notten (2006, 23) noted for example that almost every boy under twenty years of age treks to herd his father's camels.

[9] Lewis 1961, 60.

[10] Van Notten 2006, 25.

[11] Kapteijns 1995, 244.

the portability of belongings, "generally speaking a nomadic village gives an impression of austere simplicity"[12].

Grazing lands are treated as commons according to the rule of "first come, first served". It means that a group occupying a territory can claim rights on it until it leaves for a new destination; another group can only use the same land, or the same well, if invited to do so by the one who came first, otherwise the recourse to violence may be one of the possible outcomes. The access to scarce resources is indeed the main reason for quarrels in the pastoral society, and may end up not infrequently in the murder of rivals; ergo, the *corpus* of indigenous rules address substantially the settlement of disputes and the payment of compensations for these and other crimes.

Nomad-*ism*

Samatar has argued that the logic of conglomerated and mobile units of production as the reer is ultimately the minimization of risk and the preservation of the families in the Somali environment[13]. This interpretation reveals the type of connection between the economic system and the experiences of welfare and security that I have explored in Chapter Three in the description of the first component of the welfare group. However, what at a first glance may appear to be a condition of socio-economic destitution, due to an arid environment posing many challenges to the Somali society, in reality does not engender systematic negative implications.

Consider that a single camel can be worth 1,500 USD and that pastoral life, despite being developed out of necessity, became an out-and-out lifestyle that nomads proudly defend and consider being the highest social status in Somalia against semi-nomads, cultivators and other occupational minorities, whose professions they consider or used to consider in lower regard[14]. The connection

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[12] Van Notten 2006, 23.

[13] Samatar (1989, 24) has also specified four components of the pastoral production's "risk-avoidance" strategy: these are diverse herds; large herd size; reciprocal stock exchange between families, and geographical dispersal.

[14] See for example Lewis 1961, 2008; Menkhaus 2003, 327.

between nomadism and identity is evoked in a renowned poem by Sayd Mohamed Abdule Hassan, which goes like:

> He who has goats has a garment full of corn; / A milch [sic] cow is a temporary vanity; / A he-camel is the muscle that sustains life,/ A she-Camel- whoever may have her- is the mother of men.[15]

For pastors, nomadic camel herding is thus the only activity that ensures economic subsistence in the face of the provisional and unreliable yield of corn; nomadism as a lifestyle, again, allows to go beyond "temporary vanities" to provide instead the pastor with a permanent support to life. This attitude is the result of complex socio-political dynamics, which range from myth-making to more recent historical events. Ali Jimale Ahmed is one of those Somali scholars who recently reevaluated "myths and half-truths" about Somalia, and among these he includes the belief according to which Somalis would be "Arabs with a tan", namely of Arab origin, in virtue of a combination of genealogy, physical appearance as well as cultural features such as Islam belief[16].

This claimed Arabic descendent has served specific purposes in different historical periods, but its main continual function seemed to have been that of constructing a different ethnicity, of which nomadism is a part, from the inhabitants of southerner regions. For example, when in nineteenth century Somalis used to capture slaves during wars and raids in southern regions, they did so with the pledge of converting these pagan infidels to Islam, and a similar motivation underpinned also the maritime human beings trade in the Indian

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[15] As quoted in Samatar 1982, 12.

[16] Ahmed 1995, 140. The path-breaking work was Ali Abdirahman Hersi's PhD thesis titled *The Arab Factor in Somali History: The Origins and the Development of Arab Enterprise and Cultural Influence in the Somali Peninsula*. In his broad analysis of trade, cultural influence, politics and migration of Arabs to Somalia, he affirms that "anthropologically and linguistically the Somalis could be hardly be said to be different from the neighboring Oromo, fellow Cushites who unlikely the Somalis make no claims to Arab ancestry" (Hersi 1977, 41). In the concluding passage he recognizes though that the "contact with the Arabs may be said to be responsible for the birth of the modern Somali ethnic consciousness and its formulation around Arab-Islamic values" (*ivi*, 305). Moreover, recent studies on migration in early Somalia points towards an initial process of migration from south to north, followed then by a remigration of a group of "nomadized" Somalis to the south in consequence of droughts (Kusow 1995, 100).

Ocean, which brought slaves from farther places like current Tanzania and Mozambique[17]. Besteman notes, however, that once slaves converted to Islam:

> A transition from equating "slave" with "infidel" to equating "slave" with "black" occurred, with "black" being negatively valued for its association with slavery and its real or purported connection with paganism.[18]

This new ideological development was likely needed to preserve the previously established hegemony of the nomads. In their eyes, southern Somalia became the land of non-Somali pagan populations of slave origin that they called *jareer* (hard hair), an epithet indicating precisely their different, and supposedly more African origin: Somalis who wished to emphasize the difference in fact call themselves *jileec* which means "soft" hair, alluding instead to their equally supposed nobility. Since nineteenth century, being Muslim was then also a question of group identity and social hierarchy, and a way to emphasize differentiations between "us and them"[19].

Another example comes from the account of the failure of a project of forced sedentarization targeting nomads, undertaken by Siad Barre's socialist regime in the aftermath of the severe 1974 drought. Out of the initial 250,000 people concerned by the relocation program, only 120,000 accepted, and even fewer (15,000) were those eventually transferred on the southerner coast: at least 15% of the relocated population would however leave the coastal area shortly after, to pursue their former nomad life in the north, while many farmers were

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[17] This was not peculiar to the Somalis. In the 1600s, at the time of intense commerce in the Indian Ocean, Muslim merchants and slave traders were concerned with tracing their 'legitimate' right to enslave people. Lovejoy (2012, 86) has recounted the preoccupation with the issue of learned Muslim scholars of the time, and reports the final verdict of one of them: "the cause of slavery is nonbelief".

[18] Besteman 1996, 48.

[19] Consider this other example, a letter written in 1922 by a Somali elder inhabiting northern regions to the British commissioners: "The government officials who have visited our country know we are descendants from Arabia, and this we have already proved and we can prove we assure you we cannot accept to be equaled and compared with those pagan tribes either with our consent or by force even if the government orders this we cannot comply with, but we prefer death than to be treated equally with these tribes for as the government knows well these tribes are inferior to us and according to our religion they were slaves who we used to trade during past years" (as quoted in Besteman 1996, 50). I find the letter very telling for the process of identity-making. Moreover, it brings into the picture the role of colonial powers, whose crucial addition to the social cleavage in Somalia has been well described in the literature (Hess 1966; Declich 2000).

dispossessed of their land to make way for the national program[20]. In a way, these examples subvert the idea of a unilinear societal development from-tradition-to-modernity, a way of thinking that represented "the standard orthodoxy" in European milieus during the 1950s and 1960s[21]. Here, Appadurai's reflections about the Eurocentrism of the prevailing vision of modernization and development are useful: while the contemporary form of capitalism expresses itself through a specific "machinery for measuring, modeling, managing, predicting, commoditizing, and exploiting risk", the study of how humans construct the future outside this scheme can bring to the surface new elements previously ignored[22].

What said so far for the nomadic life of Somali pastors does not extend to cover the entire country. According to Abdi Kusow, the water shortages that regularly affect entire Somalia have determinant social implications, forcing segments of the extended family to move to new lands, either because the water is not enough for their survival, or because the dominant familiar group seize wells in the time of drought[23]. When they settle in a new area, a new relation of power can be established, and clan structures as well as agreements are reformulated to accommodate the occurred changes. Communities in southern regions present slightly different organizational characteristics, which seem to be rooted chiefly in the different means of livelihood and modes of adaptation to the environment. Kusow explains that in southern regions, the relative abundance of water and farming land permits to accept more "incoming immigrants" and realize therefore a less "totalizing" clanship sociability that is capable of welcoming strangers into solidarity systems[24]. In fact, clan-based solidarity is still relevant for security issues, yet individuals 'outsource' their identity at the village level, and have developed a propensity for more territory-based criteria of affiliation. This

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[20] Forni 1981, 23.

[21] Smith 1998, 24. See also Appadurai 2013, 219.

[22] Appadurai 2013, 238.

[23] Kusow 1995.

[24] See also Helander 1996, 2003.

provides yet another example of how the natural environment and human adaptations to it can eventually influence social structures: later in this chapter, will analyze what it means for the organization of the welfare group specially.

The pastoral-nomadic section of society became nevertheless representative for the entire Somali nation, and the cultural differences between nomads, semi-pastoralists and farmers have been long downplayed, if not ignored, in many academic and non-academic circles[25]. The tragic events of the early 1990s would provide the gruesome context to reassess Somali society and to discover even more categorizations of its members. In fact, with the escalation of the civil war and the consequent famine, international observers and those engaged in humanitarian missions started to note that certain groups were more vulnerable than others to banditry, assaults and lootings, while intended aids could only hardly reach them, as food was intercepted by other Somalis: Western relief agencies failed to understand how some people could allow other "co-nationals" starving to death. It emerged that these groups had long been discriminated in relation to their occupational, ethnical and lineage status, criteria that were

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[25] Hoehne 2015, 792. According to Lewis (2008, 4), it was first of all the demographic majority that explains why pastoralist groups came to provide the stereotype of pre-colonial Somali socio-political organization. However, there are also other reasons that accounts for a certain nomad prominence in the society: Lewis himself (1961, 3) had already suggested earlier that segmentary lineage societies inscribe the institution of feud, which in a context of low availability of resources transforms fighting in a "political institution of every-day life". Building on this idea, other scholars added that the aggressive attitude aimed at survival has often implied incursions and looting in southern territories, whose population were rather weak militarily speaking: a pattern repeated in the harsh years of the civil war (Menkhaus 2003, 326; Besteman 2012, 291). Hence, the long history of conflict of pastoral clans was an advantage compared to the less belligerent populations of southern Somalia, and this military gap represented certainly a determinant for nomad's political status. Another reason lies in the Somali elites' ability to convey the fictional image of a homogeneous nomadic society: nomadism, for example, was instrumental to the Pan-Somali struggle which aimed at realizing the much dreamed of Greater Somalia. At the 1963 inaugural session of the Organization of African Union, the then President Aden Abdoulla Osman contested the inherited colonial borders with these words: "unlike any other border problem in Africa, the entire length of the existing boundaries, as imposed by the colonialists, cut across the traditional pastures of our nomadic population. The problem becomes unique when it is realized that no other nation in Africa finds itself totally divided along the whole length of its borders from its own people". In that speech, the pastoral component of Somali society becomes even an ideology that serves the political aim of the government: the revision of the borders with an eye open on the inclusion of the other Somali-speaking territories. Whether or not the claim was legitimate, the main point is that the narrative there implied has the side effect of depicting Somalia as a land of nomads through the generalization of an aspect, that of nomadism, which instead was only accounting for a part of the society. In other words, pastoral traditions were manipulated by those Somali elites interested both in promoting the idea of a homogeneous and indivisible nation, and in ensuring themselves privileged political positions within the same nation they were shaping; the re-invention of the tradition became also a weapon of domination over other cultural traditions, which eventually ceased to be considered even of Somali origin, consequently enjoying less legitimacy and power.

established from within the Somali cultural context. The civil war would exacerbate this discrimination. The account of Menkhaus, who worked with the UN peacekeeping in Somalia in the early 1990s, is revealing:

> Jereer were often looted by their own Somali clan members, and were denied access to emergency relief by clan elders and leaders who apportioned food to "noble" lineages instead. Aid agencies which tried to circumvent militia theft of food aid by cooking it on the spot (so that grain could not be stolen and resold) faced immediate death threats. Food aid had become a principal target of looting, and those who were starving - of which Bantu were a greatly disproportionate number - were the bait which attracted the emergency relief[26].

"Somali Bantu" are perhaps the groups that attracted most of the international attention, as they were the object of a vast resettlement program started in 2002 that brought circa 12,000 refugees to USA[27]. Other groups had suffered similar atrocities, and they all quickly came to be known as "minorities"[28]. Interestingly enough, these discriminated communities "had little knowledge of one another and hence non common sense of identity" before that[29]. The penetration of the human rights discourse carried by external, together with the special humanitarian

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[26] Menkhaus 2003, 334.

[27] As seen previously, in pre-colonial times slaves were imported to Somalia from other Eastern Africa's countries like Tanzania to work in plantations along the Shebelle and Jubba rivers, where cash crops (grain, cotton) existed, while other groups of alleged Bantu had lived already there before. With the arrival of the Italians, some were freed while others were coerced to work in the same plantations under the new colonial rule: in both cases, many remained in the interriverine region and acquired affiliation with a Somali clan, usually through a client relation. Anthropologist Declich (2000, 31) noted that Italian colonizers strengthened the discriminative attitude, since they called all black-skinned people living in the inter-riverine area *liberti*, "freed slaves", de facto corroborating the Somali common view. In perfect colonial *divide et impera* style, the Bantu then "were viewed as industrious laborers, while the Somalis were seen as useless for manual labor but were excellent fighters. The colonial state thus ended up reinforcing the military strength of the ethnic Somali over the jereer, while dispossessing some Bantu communities of both their land and labor" (Menkhaus 2003, 332).

[28] The coastal commercial populations of the Barawan and Benadiri, in southern Somalia, are examples of non-ethnic Somalis (they claim direct origin back to Arab and Persian sea-faring people) who have no blood affiliation in the Somali lineage system. Given their relatively economic prosperity and military weakness, they became target of looting during the civil war. A little better fortune concerned the Bajuni communities living in the same area, since they resorted to maritime mobility to escape violence. The Yibir, Midgaan, Bon, and Tumal are occupational minorities who enjoy membership in a clan, but occupy only a low status position within it. These "caste groups", often named sab in northern regions, are in fact considered "ritually polluted" due to their works such as metalworking, tanning and midwifery; nevertheless their occupational services are requested by clans and they live side by side. During the war they encountered a vacillating destiny, often connected to the fortune of the other clans in the area (Cassanelli 1995, 15-16).

[29] Menkhaus 2003, 324.

assistance they received, would produce in these discriminated groups a brand new consciousness about belonging to a stigmatized minority. At the same time, it prompted a debate about the established view of Somalia as one of the few ethno-culturally homogeneous countries in Africa[30].

The imagery of the competition between camels and lorries and the ideological traits of nomadism have spoken for the importance of historical analyses focusing on the socio-economic environment and its effects on the society. I will provide now a description of some of the features of the second component of the welfare group, which later on will help the explanation of diaspora dynamics.

Kinship and contract

Two normative principles are the quintessential ingredients of socio-political life in Somalia: kinship (*tol*) and contract (*xeer*)[31]. Kinship consists in the lineage system under which Somalis trace their descent to common male ancestors: essentially, lineage genealogies are used to define friend and foe and that depends literally on the number of ancestors counted apart[32]. Such system is crucial for the organization of the society, since it eventually gathers Somalis into distinct social agglomerates known as clan families and "validates one's membership in a group"[33]. Internally, these clan families break down in a vertical organization that incorporates increasingly smaller social units, according to the segmentation in different levels known as clan, sub-clan, primary lineage and mag-paying group[34]. The vertical structure reflects also the hierarchical structure of power therein, since the extent of what is at stake inevitably changes at each subdivision of the lineage, corresponding to different political interest levels that can be mobilized in case of need. The clan though marks always "the upper limit of corporate political

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[30] Asiwaju 1985; Besteman 1995; Mukhtar 1995; Ahmed 1999; Menkhaus 2003; Mansur 2009; Hoehne 2014.

[31] Mohamed 2007.

[32] Lewis 2010, 49. For this reason, the majority of Somalis are able to recite their genealogy up to the clan-family ancestor, including kids of young age.

[33] Luling 2006, 471.

[34] It is said that these social units can count even up to 30 generations to a common ancestor (Lewis 1961, 4).

action", its call to take action being in fact the the most pervasive[35]. New alliances are sought instead at the horizontal level, between primary lineage groups, and are established with exogamous marriages, which are then also instruments of diplomatic relations.

Through the segmented lineage system, the appeal to blood affiliation manages to influence the behaviors of the kin, both when taken individually and as member of the said families[36]. These bonds define in fact the primary declination of solidarity in the society: the easiest and most immediate way to divide up among "us and them" for various scopes. Therefore, genealogy is also a relevant tool circumscribing attempts at securing one's future: this is done through the past and the myth about the communal ancestral origins of the population, which decide who is a resource for security and who may not be trusted or granted assistance[37].

While the system of patriarchal lineages so described may sound unalterable for the human beings that are part of it, in reality it is mutable, for "no Somali can be certain that the genealogy he claims links him to his real ancestor"[38]. Moreover, breaking up and rebuilding along kinship lines occur relatively often, for example following diverging political interests, since these are internal mechanisms that avoid conflicts by opposing segments of equal strength within the same clan and through the realization of a stalemate between parts.

Yet, in the light of the above, it derives also that the principle of common ancestry is exposed to phenomena of politicization, because it can be constantly used to aggregate and disaggregate the variety of interests existing in the Somali society to achieve political purposes, almost in the fashion of political parties. Given its delicate and vital function, a degree of flexibility has been congenial for

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[35] Lewis 1961, 5. Cassanelli (1982, 21) notes that: "The effective unit of social and political cooperation in precolonial Somalia varied according to circumstances. A man might identify with his entire clan when its wells or grazing land were threatened by another clan but act on behalf of his own lineage or dia-paying group in a feud within the clan over access to dry season grazing reserves".

[36] Mohamed 1997, 146. Not differently from other cultural contexts where kinship prevails (Ayittey 2006).

[37] Simons 1997, 285.

[38] Mohamed 1997, 152. Luling (2006, 479) has provided examples of genealogy adjustments.

kinship, while its fixation is detrimental. The backlash of the protracted political exploitation of lineages and of the misinterpretation of their role, occurred since colonialism and strengthened by the civil war and by part of the following international attention, has been that of making access to resources contingent upon this or that clan affiliation, crystallizing kin relations and distorting them in static roots behind the unresolvable "tribalization" of Somali politics. This has transformed the previous understanding of kinship into a rigid system of sole exclusion, non-functional for the purpose of effective social negotiations.

One way to rectify this fabrication consists in recalling that the foundation of the kinship is the social contract, the xeer[39]: it means, firstly, that there is a hierarchy between tol and xeer. Secondly, that the agreements sanctioned in the xeer are the ones that specifically create political groups as well as sense of community belonging, while common ancestry provides rather an appeal for their mobilization, in the same guise of Anderson's imagined comradeship within national spaces. Xeer literally translates as "custom" or "treaty" in a bilateral sense, but is a vast concept that can incorporate customary laws as well as culture and proverbs[40]; moreover, even when intended solely for its legal acceptation, it can still refer ambiguously to law in general; or to the law of a particular clan, or again to procedural law[41]. First of all, xeer agreements define customary procedures for the clan's internal questions, including the common strategy to be adopted towards external groups: the privileged aspects touched by xeer agreements concern thus collective defense, access to land and solidarity obligations[42]. As it emerges, these kinds of agreement establish internal relations

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[39] In fact, while "the genealogical tree in the traditional Somali political system has no meaning in itself" (Mohamed 2007, 227), it provides a useful ideology or as a substance for the creation of communities that perceive to belong to the same social space.

[40] Lewis 1961, 161.

[41] Van Notten 2006, 19.

[42] Since several of these contracts started to be recorded in writing after the advent of colonial powers, it is possible to provide an excerpt as reported by Lewis (1961, 177): "When a man of the Hassan Ugaas is murdered by an external group twenty camels of his blood-wealth (100) will be taken by his 'next of kin' (i.e. his sons, brothers, father, and possibly uncles) and the remaining eighty camels shared amongst all the Hassan Ugaas" (…) If one man of the Hassan Ugaas insults another at a Hassan Ugaas council (shir) he shall pay 150 Shs. [*schillings*] to the offended party".

between communities that retrieve a common ancestor, specifying their reciprocal status as well as their collective responsibility to each other. But the xeer regulates also direct external relations with other groups, through provisions that are very similar to what seen above, and also through sorts of good practices that shall inhibit conflict situations[43]. Xeer expresses thus the commitment of groups to agreed rules, and not blood, and is applied in solving around 90% of all disputes and criminal cases in both rural and urban areas, being the first recourse choice in case of disputes[44]. Consequently, kinship without xeer application is clannism, namely a political manipulation of the social contract[45].

The description of the two normative principles reveals an important, subsequent implication in societal dynamics: the application of the xeer has recently faced more problems in the south-central parts of Somalia, because the chaotic events of the civil war and the indiscriminate killings have altered the context of its usage. Specifically, the consequences of the war have imposed enormous compensations for the victims that "virtually no group is willing or able to pay"[46]. In order to cope with the issues derived from the civil war, elders have applied customary laws in compromise with practical needs, undermining the overall functions and efficacy of the law. This provides an example of the tensions that may occur within the welfare group, between past experiences of risk management and the normative principles derived thereof.

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[43] The Puntland Development Research Centre (PDRC 2003) has collected many of these covenants and the following are few examples taken from the grazing xeer section: "Pasture is free for all pastoralists irrespective of clan affiliation in time of need", or "commercial camps can't be established on grazing lands", or again "a group shall leave a mark to reserve an old pen". What provided above is clearly oriented at preventing conflicts over resources among clans, in a context where, evidently, the latter are scarce.

[44] Gundel 2006, *iii*.

[45] Simons 1995, 138. The overall impression is that it is not so much the desire of preserving blood links that spurs the recourse to contract, but it is rather the convenience of maintaining an agreed set of rules that promotes the formation of alliances, resulted over time in clans equipped with myths about their origin and history: this relation is clearly the one envisaged by scholars like Abdalla Oman Mansur, who claims that the memorized genealogy is not the crucial element leading to clan identity (Mansur 1995, 121). He retrieves the origin of clans in the necessity of defence in nomadic pastoral life, and to a very similar conclusion arrives also the historian Jama Mohamed, who underlines the primacy of the social contract (*wazic*) on the alliance of close agnates (Mohammed 2007, 242). On the same line, Luling (2006, 471) has written that clanship alone "does not explain the conflict; it does not even explain the various line ups; it does, however, define the possibilities for lining up".

[46] Gundel 2006, 47.

Clan system and society

Customary laws are not static, since contracts can be abrogated or rescinded to leave space for new ones, and this has implications also for power relations between and within clans. My analysis moves on with the third and last component of the welfare group, providing an overview of key Somali institutions. All the decisions concerning the development of the customary laws or the relations between clans are taken in an open council (*shir*), a lineage-group meeting often summoned *ad hoc* for the occasion. During the shir, matters arisen in preceding months are analyzed, and future policies are agreed upon together with the agreement on the share of compensation that everyone will pay or receive in case of internal disputes. But shir are also summoned to decide on peace and war, or to comment on general political affairs. In other words, the shir is a critical political event and a fundamental institution of governance, in which the xeer is established or amended, practically in the guise of a constitution for all those concerned[47]. Since adult males only have the right to participate and to speak in shir councils, Lewis' account of these male gatherings as being "democratic" shall be re-defined. Their definition as something egalitarian has been criticized for being androcentric, and for downplaying the role of the women while taking for granted male domination in the Somali society, a fact that can be challenged with the inclusion of more social histories of women[48].

The shir is thus an assembly, a social and political conference that brings together men of the same clan, the institution which is perhaps most often flagged as the main obstacle towards the achievement of peace, and that yet is so important for the organization of welfare. As seen in the previous paragraph, two or more people, to identify their reciprocal social position, compare their lineage. By naming the genealogy, they seek a common male ancestor: the sooner they find him, the closer they are in terms of cooperative relations[49]. Quite

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[47] *Ivi*, 12.

[48] Choi Ahmed 1995, 160.

[49] One line of a traditional *gabay,* a genre of Somali classic poetry, says: "If a girl is married [into] my clan, my relatives [always] check her ancestry" (as quoted in Johnson 1996, 5).

interestingly, geographical proximity is therefore not a sufficient criterion to assume peaceful relations between communities, but it is the genealogical closeness that is instead the key determinant of political (imaginary) solidarity in the society, even when same-kin groups are scattered all over Somalia. Young members of the community learn by heart their agnatic line, and everyone in the household is able to express it when required. They *have to*, since Somali genealogy is linked to politics, in the measure that it controls social relations and aggregates political interests of different groups in a way that is still significant today, whatever the form of socio-political organization where Somalis live.

Most Somalis are born and raised, according to their genealogy, as members of one of the six major clans populating the Somali-speaking territories. Four of these clans, the Darod, the Dir, the Hawiye and the Isaq pursue nomadic lifestyles while the other two clans, the Digil and the Reewin/Rahanweyn have developed a semi-pastoral or agricultural mode of economic production[50]. In virtue of traditional tenets, Somalis have no centralized instituted authority. Their society can be essentially described as "acephalus", in the sense of a social order lacking a monopolistic use of force, an administrative hierarchy of officials, defined borders and other typical structures of the westphalian state. Somali society is also "stateless", because in pre-colonial Somalia no institution resembling those of the state was in place[51]. But the intriguing part of the story is that Somalis returned to their customary law in 1991. In fact, the absence of the state in the period 1991-2012 has not meant a condition of unruly anarchy: the evoked return to customary law is essentially not even a return, but the re-affirmation of indigenous

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[50] According to traditional studies on Somali clans, the Reewin/Rahanweyn derive their name from the words "raxan" and "weyn", literally "big crowd", an allusion to their practice of adopting foreign members. In a recent, concurrent view it was underlined that this interpretation of the name reflects the northern Somali dialect, and it shall not deemed correct since it is applied to populations living in the interriverine area. In alternative, scholars like Kusow (1995) and Helander (1996) note that the origin of the name could be in the compound "reer" and "win", namely "the old family", or again in the name of an old ancestor. The Digil and the Reewin/Rahanweyn are also known by the collective name Digil-Mirifle. Even if there is not a perfect uniform geographical distribution, it is fair to say that the large majority of nomads live in northern Somalia while the Digil-Mirifle inhabit the central-southerner areas of Somalia, the only suitable land for cultivation (Lewis 2008, 3).

[51] In comparative view, the absence of the nation-state in pre-colonial time is a common feature that Somalia shares with large parts of Africa, where other types of polity emerged. For an overview of state and governance in Africa, I recommend the reading of Herbst 2000; A.I. Samatar and A.I. Samatar 2002; Bayart 2009; Cooper 2014.

governance principles that never disappeared from Somali society, and that do not find in the revival of the state their goal. Somali governance, in fact, is based on polycentric systems of law among clans: in historical perspective, we should thus realize that focusing the attention only at the state level has been and still would be thus a serious limitation for the understanding of Somali society and of the concepts that define it.

If we do not extend the meaning of the concepts usually adopted in Western context, to include also this kind of decentralized, multipolar social orders, the result of our semantic equation will always terminate with a judgment on anarchical, chaotic statelessness. An unreflective conceptual transfer will necessarily lead to a vocabulary of failed expectations[52]. Conversely, the stateless condition is not a disempowering situation that has materialized by accident, it is argued here; neither is it the result of a compromise, or of sole poor leadership: Somalis are reportedly unimpressed by foreign political systems, and even suspicious of those ones that may limit their independence in a way or the other[53]. The experience of state-based democratic systems infiltrated by clan governance has proved the capacity of the state to break the Somali idea of acephalus society at its very basis, dividing the society in rulers and ruled and distributing resources unequally. These considerations give the idea of what constitutes the spaces of experience of many Somalis in relation to lack of security, namely of what is being negotiated with the new experiences acquired in the diaspora.

Clan welfare

We can now consider the welfare group as a whole. The core component of clan welfare is what is called *mag*-paying group (the Somali word for "blood"), which I have presented earlier as the basic and smallest component of the clan structure[54]. A mag-paying group is a group of families that unite to safeguard

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[52] Here, I am referring especially to the tendency of academic and political discourses to portray "post-colonial African states in virtually pathological categories", e.g. as "failed" states (Hagmann and Hohene 2009, 43). This reductionist approach realizes when the idea of European state and democracy are taken as benchmarks for assessing other communities' achievements, in lieu of the indigenous principles of governance and their constitutive elements.

[53] Van Notten 2006, 31.

[54] Or alternatively called *diya*-paying (the Arabic for "blood").

matters of common interest collectively, and their alliance is "based on the security needs of the member families"[55]. Through the application of the xeer, mag-paying groups are bound to pay or receive blood compensation, if one of their members commits or is victim of a crime. Notwithstanding its delicate role, and perhaps exactly in reason of it, many noted that the mag-paying group is the most stable political entity in the Somali institutional landscape.

Compensation agreements detail the way in which a group of kin evaluates, protects and eventually demands for the life and property of their members when harms are perpetrated[56]. The payment of compensations ensures, on the side of the offender clan, that retaliation is avoided, and on the side of the harmed clan that the loss of human capital is fairly compensated for: clan members are in fact a valuable asset, and the demographic balance is one important element to determinate the equilibrium of power among clans. Demands for compensations (paid in camels, cattle or currency) can differ from clan to clan, according to several factors (status of the person killed; size of the clan and so on), and also contributions paid internally by the members of the mag-paying group can vary (some pays more than others). What is common for all, though, is that the system is perceived as a collective obligation, since it is only through the membership in one of these paying groups that an individual has political and jural status[57]. In the pre-colonial era, this was the only way that one had to see his rights recognized in the society and, at the same time, blood wealth was the only system ensuring that no household was left alone in the incapacity of paying for the infractions to the xeer caused by one of its members. In other words, it worked as nation-wide insurance.

There are a number of considerations to make about welfare and security within Somali clans. First of all, the traditional Somali system of welfare

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[55] Samatar 1989, 25. Lewis (1961, 5-6) defines it concisely: "Members united in payment of blood-wealth", and indicates that it has a membership ranging from few hundred to a few thousand men.

[56] Homicide, wounding, defamation, adultery are among the most common (Lewis 1961, 162).

[57] Lewis 1961, 170. Even though it is decided upon birth through lineage, one can withdraw from one mag-paying group to join others; however, mag-paying groups are usually "designed" over clan lineages and so they strongly tie security to individual's identity.

provision does not contemplate the state, because it is not part to the social pact developed historically, and in its absence the extended family and the network of clan relations became the units in charge of providing people with physical protection and social security[58]. In this regard, A.I. Samatar has listed three specific social functions of the clan: "mediate petty conflicts within the clan, and between its members and those of other clans"; serving as a "forum" to decide upon and organize the exploitation of nature in order to limit conflict; and lastly, "mitigate the effects of natural and personal tragedies" through social support[59].

Secondly, physical mobility on the territory is an attribute of the welfare system, for it represents an 'exit' solution to promote personal and collective security when lacking. Before colonialism, no stigmatization was attached to pastoral forms of economic production, and rules existed to prevent related conflicts[60]. Thirdly, the characteristics of the Somali welfare system have led, in line with many other African societies, towards a strong emphasis on collective responsibility rather than atomistic conceptions of the society, in reason of experiences of risk that have been managed more successfully cooperatively[61]. It means that the principle of the extended family has been interiorized by the individual and reproduced by the collectivity as a matter of surviving, minimizing risk and eventually achieving wellbeing, or more simply: as *the* mode of existence. The concept of solidarity developed then from a 'practical kinship', drawing on everyday social intercourses that put always the welfare of the individual in relation to that of the community.

Fourthly, the blood principle emerged as an immediate and more responsive instrument to address disputes in the society, compared to other possibly time-consuming set of rules and procedures that life necessities as well as environment conditions would not permit. In conditions of perceived permanent environmental threat and high mobility, trade-offs are in fact necessary between present needs or

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[58] Renders 2007, 48.

[59] Samatar 1989, 16.

[60] cfr. PDRC 2003.

[61] Ilmi 2015, 101.

short-term social security arrangements, and investments in new forms of welfare. The compensatory, rather than punitive-oriented nature of Somali laws thus can be taken as a further example for the influence of the natural environment on the welfare group, since environmental volatility requires responsiveness and fast solutions for conflicting parts. Fifthly, there are important internal differences within the welfare group. The most striking one is that women, both in northern and southern regions, lacked control of basic productive resources, especially prior to the civil war[62]. As for pastoralist women, the division of labor attributes the care of camels, the main source of wealth, to men and cattle to women: in old age, grown sons become their "primary source of security"[63].

Similarly, minorities are not allowed to have camels, although they may become relatively wealthy through commercial activities (e.g. tailoring, leather working). For this reason, some of my interlocutors mentioned "skills" as the best social insurance measure to pass down to younger generations. Those minorities affiliated with Somali genealogy, like the Bantu, were required to contribute to lineage-group compensation payments (*mag*) but only rarely assisted back by Somali kinsmen when in need[64]. Among farmers and semi-pastors, few women own farms and fewer women farm more than one type of plot as risk-minimizing strategy, while they are reported to spend more time than men in agricultural and housework, therefore with constrained opportunity to participate in independent economic activities[65]. Here, the narrative of the camel as a welfare and insurance instrument is replaced by the following:

> (D₁). Our social insurance, welfare, like did my father, is mango and coconut trees. If you have a hundred coconut trees, and a hundred mango trees, you and your following fifty generations will be secure. Because with the palm tree, they sell the leaves because they use them for shelters; the trunk, which holds the leaves, are sold also, because they make columns to build houses; the water of the coconut is itself money; inside the coconut, when you break it, there's white meat: also this can be sold, to make coconut oil. The nut itself, when you take it out and you make

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[62] Paradoxically, state collapse would provide new spaces for women's participation to the political sphere and the economic reconstruction (Ingiriis and Hoehne 2013).

[63] Merryman 2003, 186.

[64] Besteman 2012, 288.

[65] Longstreth 1985.

like this [he imitates the action of stretching something out], they make mattress for the bed. So the whole thing is huge (…) my father had (…) coconut trees, so up to now my brothers and sisters, and those who live in that area, still they are wealthy.

To sum up, the analysis of welfare structures in Somalia forces us to think twice about the cultural dimension of what is considered an institutionalized welfare provider. It justifies the theoretical distinction made in Chapter Three between means and aims of welfare practices. Similarly, it prompts reflections on the definition of the society; the family; the individual and their mutual relation. It even opens up for the investigation of short-and long-time perspectives and preference in relation to welfare and security, and of mobility as a strategy to achieve them. All these themes will indeed come back in Chapter Six.

While all these features of Somali welfare do not exist in the exact same fashion today, there is reason to consider that they still hold validity for interpreting contemporary affairs, both within and outside Somalia, as one can presume from research on the transnational engagements of the diaspora[66]. The ability to maintain and reproduce such solidarity ties also at distance is surely one interesting phenomenon to look at. According to Cindy Horst, this is possible because most Somalis have retained a certain "nomadic heritage", explicable as the combination of: "a mentality of looking for greener pastures"; "a strong social network that entails the obligation to assist each other in surviving"; and "risk-reduction" through the dispersal of family members and activities[67]. In other

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[66] In this sense, remittances have been a typical field of interest for many scholars in the last decade. Horst (2008; 2012), Tharmalingam (2011a; 2011b), Carling and Erdal (2012) have researched for example the transnational economic engagements of Somalis in Norway. Other scholars have focused on the moral and social obligations towards the homeland of Somalis living in the diaspora, to which remittances are part: one example is retrieved in Al-Sharmani's investigation of Somalis' livelihood in Egypt (2003). Another example is Anna Lindley's (2009) paper (and later book) emblematically titled "The early morning phone call" with reference to the money requests from relatives and friends that many Somalis experience in the diaspora. The same topic shapes the work of Laura Hammond (2010) with a focus on the Somali community in the US. Stephanie Bjork (2007) has analyzed the shaping of clan identity in Helsinki, explaining the habitual efforts put in place to cultivate clan networks. In the same year, Fangen published a paper on the sense of belonging and citizenship among the Somalis in Norway, concluding that many were involved in organizations operating transnationally in reason of a concern for the wellbeing of others of the same background. Another branch of research is concerned with the theme 'diaspora and development', which more than the others creates overlapping areas with the already mentioned topics. Some of its representatives are Päivi Pirkkalainen who has studied the Somali associations based in Finland engaged with development back in the homeland; Osman Farah at Aalborg University, whose works have been oriented primarily to transnational engagements with Somalia through NGOs and development assistance; and the aforementioned Kleist and Horst.

[67] Horst 2006, 2.

words, the household is transnational and extends its solidarity also beyond national borders. People living in different societies and belonging to different social classes retrieve themselves in the same space of solidarity, while the cultural heritage seems to best equip them to approach life in the globalization era.

Oral tradition

When speaking of cultural heritage and traditions, it becomes quite central to account for how information is exchanged between people. This is done via orality, which serves multiple purposes in Somali society: oral communication ensures for example the transmission of social rules of conduct down from one generation to the other; or again, it permits the identification of people through the declaim of the ancestors. In the form of poetry, oral communication represents the medium for conveying Somalis' great passion and entertainment, but also for spreading news, information and political opinions in the whole society. The use of a written form for the Somali language was prescribed by law only in 1972, when the Socialist regime first decided to adopt the Latin script in public offices[68]. As noted by Ali Ahad:

> Although the Somali has been a written language since 1972, 'orality' continues to prevail in Somali culture, particularly in poetry. During the almost two decades between 1972 and 1991, written language and oral literature continued to develop in parallel. Political instability, including civil war, then impeded the wide circulation of both literacy and written literature. Somali culture thus remains fundamentally oral and poetry still represents the medium for artistic representation of Somali culture.[69]

In fact, poetry should be conceived broadly, as the medium for shaping opinions and actions; an instrument to spread the latest news, to participate to the political debate, to publish grievances, to make peace or to mark a special occasion[70]:

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[68] Although a Latin, Arabic and even a Somali script existed and were in use already prior to 1972, simply tailored on the Somali phonetics. Two of the reasons for the absence of an official orthography are the absolute relevance that the oral expression had for Somalis, and the clans' fear for the cultural predominance that the inventor of the sanctioned orthography would achieve (Ahad 2007, 51). Given the rivalry and the interchangeable use of the three mentioned scripts, the ultimate adoption of the Latin one decided by the Somali government was not so much of a predictable choice (Abokor 1993, 5).

[69] Ahad 2007, 51.

[70] Andrzejewski 2011, 6; Johnson 1996, 1.

much of the cultural knowledge is thus stored in the memories of the individuals, and not on paper. In all aspects, poetry classifies as an oral source of history so as described by Vansina[71]; in other words, poetry is a living historical archive. Poetry is also recorded on cassette tapes to be circulated more widely and, in the last decades, is archived online. Considering the importance of oral communication delineated above, it derives that a good poet in Somalia holds an influential position which can fulfill the role that the fine journalist, novelist or academic have in the West[72].

Far from being a romanticized account of a cultural feature, there are some practical implications that orality entails for Somalis, especially among those living in one of the diaspora. For instance, Emma Brinkhurst has observed that the Somalis in London, despite living in the vicinity of the British Library, were not aware of the resources pertaining to Somali heritage therein archived. Nor had they a positive attitude about getting access to the services and materials of the library once they knew about it. She distinguishes three intertwining reasons to explain this dynamic: first of all, "[a]s an oral society the concept of a physical archive is alien" and memories are still the main reference for conveying a certain kind of emotions or accounts of the past. In the second place, the attitude towards national institutions is the direct result of the experience of a corrupted and violent state in Somalia, which has taught Somalis to be generically suspicious towards everything of direct national emanation. Lastly, the British library and other institutions are still associated by Somalis with colonialism, from where derives a consequential lack of engagement[73].

Again, it is the poetry of pastoral nomad that has structured for most part the notion of Somali poetry, including its modern branch. One way to explain the great development of oral communication could reside in fact in the harsh conditions of the environment, a situation that rendered many material items

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[71] Vansina 1985, 12.

[72] Abokor 1993, 1.

[73] Brinkhurst 2012, 245.

superfluous as well as unwieldy to be carried around[74]. Records of poetry, dances and oral accounts widely exist though also for the inter-riverine region, as collected for example by Declich[75].

Brief notes on the history of the Somali state (1960-2016)

Now that a number of concepts of paramount importance for the understanding of Somali society have been described for their historical development, I incorporate an excursus of the independent Somali state. This focus is motivated on the fact that the welfare group has interacted with different types of institution, with direct consequences for the current relation between experiences and expectations. Above all, the historical account brings light on experiences of state-provided governance, which have implications for today's level of trust that Somalis grant to state institutions.

The Somali flag is a good starting point: it features a white five-pointed star on a light blue background; each point of the flag represents one of the Somali-speaking regions that, it is claimed, compose the ideal Somali nation referred to as *Greater Somalia*[76]. The flag design was approved with a decree of the Italian president issued in 1954, since Rome had been granted the Trust Administration of Somalia under the mandate of the United Nations (AFIS). Through the ten-year mandate (1950-1960), the delicate mission of fostering and supervising the developing of the institutions required for the establishment of a full, democratic self-government in Somalia was entrusted to Italy, the former colonial power of

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[74] Johnson 1996, 12.

[75] Declich 1995.

[76] Two of these regions are the former Italian and British colonies, known respectively as Somalia Italiana and British Somaliland: the first encompassed all the coastline facing the Indian Ocean, from the southern Juba and Gedo regions up north to Bari region, which also touches the water of the Gulf of Aden, passing through the capital city Mogadishu. Today, the same area contains also Puntland, an autonomous state member of the Federal Republic of Somalia. The former British Somaliland faces the Gulf of Aden north, and it is bordered by Ethiopia in the south and west, Djibouti in the northwest and Puntland to the east. In the aftermath of the 1991 civil war, this territory has split from the central government to form the self-declared independent republic of Somaliland. The other three points of the star lie beyond current Somali borders: one would be the Republic of Djibouti (former French Somaliland); another one corresponds to the present Ogaden region (named also Somali region) in Ethiopia while the last one overlaps the former Northern Frontier District (NFD) of Kenya (now reorganized administratively in the Kenyan north-eastern countries of Mandera, Wajir and Garissa).

the southern part of the neo-independent African country. Quite astonishingly, Italy qualified for the task, despite its previous direct involvement as colonial power in Somalia, a period of governance during which "the colonial regime had obviously never considered the national administrative development in view of the future independence of the country"[77].

What possibly shaped even more the story with the contours of a paradox was that many officers working for AFIS were selected, for practical reasons, from the former colonial machinery. In the final AFIS report presented in 1961 to the Italian Parliament, it was noted that Somalis "used to solve their issues, including disputes, through their tribal and inter-tribal assemblies", and that even the encouraged formation of political parties was still founded on a tribal premise[78]. In the assessment of the decade given by Morone, AFIS' efforts aiming at establishing democratic institutions were counter-balanced by its continuous resorting to compromise with Somali elders, a process that allowed indigenous political practices to find their space in the changing society; another limit he recognizes is AFIS's tendency to favor certain clanic groups in public employment[79]. Robert L. Hesse had already expressed very similar concerns in his historical assessment of Italy's "sorry history of failures" in Somalia, and Anthony S. Reyner in 1960 claimed that "Independent Somalia presents a distressing picture"[80].

The main issue left unsolved at the final moment of independence (in July 1960) was the heterogeneity of Somalia Italiana and British Somaliland, which worked on different judicial, administrative, taxation and custom systems and, last but not least, on two different official colonial languages. The fate of the newborn Somali state was marked by these conflicting differences between north and south, brought about by the diverse colonial past they experienced. The first tangible sign of mounting tensions came from the national referendum on the

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[77] Ministero degli Affari Esteri 1961, 21.

[78] *Ibidem.*

[79] Morone 2011, 163.

[80] Hesse 1966, 196; Reyner 1960, 255.

constitution held in June 1961; in northern regions, the majority voted against the text, which was approved anyway due to the overall votes cast in the whole country. Even worse for national cohesion, in December of the same year northern military officers staged a coup, with no success. In less than a decade, expectations of prosperity and democratic advancement left ground to dissatisfaction, and the much awaited union increasingly resembled a simple duplication of competition for state power. The leaders of northern regions perceived in fact an increased alienation from the capital Mogadishu, which had become the political and economic center of Somalia, reducing Berbera and Hargeisa to secondary areas. After few years of encouraging political developments, in the last multiparty democratic elections held in 1969, the enormous number of 1002 candidates representing 62 parties competed for the 123 seats of the National Assembly: however, they competed mainly in the name of clan interests[81].

Notwithstanding this internal context of fragmentation, Somali elites found a common, compacting ground of action in the struggle for the nationalist aspiration of realizing Greater Somalia: the five stars imprinted in the Somali flag were a constant reminder for the struggle to reunite the dispersed nation in one state. In a way, the nationalist struggle seemed to be able to raise a trans-clanic consensus, pushing the reasons for internal fragmentation temporarily into the background. At one of the first prestigious international stages attended by newly independent Somalia, the 1963 summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the then president Aden Abdoulla Osman spoke the language of self-determination for the Somali-speaking territories[82]. However, the revisionist claim went against the

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[81] Lewis 2008, 37; In his recent book, A. I. Samatar (2016) has challenged though the conventional understanding of the North-South divide or clans as the major political watersheds, suggesting that the key factor explaining the decaying of Somalia's democracy towards the end of the 1960s was primarily the quality and the commitment of political leadership.

[82] At the summit, Aden Abdoulla Osman brought forward the government claims on the extra-boundary territories. Addressing the hosting country of the Pan-African meeting, he said: "We shall simply summarize our stand on this matter by saying that Ethiopia has taken possession of a large portion of Somali territory without the consent and against the wishes of the inhabitants". In regards to Kenya, the President affirmed on the same line: "The Somali area administered by Britain is known as the Northern Frontier District. Last October when an impartial commission was charged with ascertaining the view of the inhabitants living there, it found that 87% of them were in favour of union with the Somali Republic. (…) the people of that region have demonstrated that they emphatically do not consent to be

leading Pan-Africanist spirit of the Assembly that in the same meeting decided to renounce to territorial demands between African states, while sanctioning the inherited borders of colonialism in order to avoid any forms of "black imperialism".

When Abdirashid Ali Shermarke was elected as second Somali President in 1967, his main point for the political agenda was the distention of relations with neighboring countries Ethiopia and Kenya. His détente agenda, interpreted by many as a symbolic surrender of the nationalist cause, seems to be connected to the president's assassination that took place on 15th October 1969 at the hand of one of his bodyguards: that event marked the end of the short-lived experience of multiparty democracy in Somalia. The political vacuum as well as the prospect for a continuation of the détente policy by Shermarke's successors would create in fact the prelude for the bloodless military coup led by Major General Siad Barre on 21st October of the same year.

Siad Barre launched a Marxist-influenced program named "Scientific socialism" (*Haniwadaagga Cilmiga ku Dhisan*), which made of agricultural reform, education and nationalism its main components. The regime was initially very popular among Somalis, also in reason of the previous nine years of only apparent democracy, which had left the memory of inefficient civilian governments among Somali population[83]. Barre endeavored in a proclaimed war against corruption and tribalism that "had destroyed all sense of morality among the men whose task it was to preserve the sanctity of law", namely public officers. He intended to do so through the application of socialist policies to transform Somalia into a "developed and economic advanced nation" of citizens[84]. However, Siad Barre would be eventually challenged exactly on the question of

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governed by the authorities in Nairobi". Finally, Somalia's President expressed his hope that the people of French Somaliland would be given "an opportunity to determine their own future freely, without pressure or intimidation".

[83] In an official document, the socialist government so described those years: "A sense of lethargy, despondency and gloom gradually settled on the Somali people in the years following independence in 1960 when it was realised that the country's leaders were anxious to serve their own interests rather than those of the nation" (Somali Democratic Republic, Ministry of Information and National Guidance 1974, 8).

[84] *Ivi*, 96.

clan loyalty and, as a matter of fact, his clan's share of cabinet positions went up from 35% (1960-1969) to 50% recorded in 1975[85].

Barre's legitimacy as leader rested heavily on nationalism, both in its internal and external dimension. This contributes to explain why he launched Somalia at war with Ethiopia for the contended Ogaden region in 1977, taking advantage of the political turmoil in the neighboring country. The outcome of the conflict was influenced by the intervention of the Soviet Union, which withdrew its military support to Somalia to change side and back up the communist Derg regime in Ethiopia. After an initial expansion in the Ogaden, the Somali troops were forced to retreat and Siad Barre failed to realize the then very popular nationalist mission. This event marks a shift in Somali political life, as it became evident that the General had lost consensus at the nation-wide level: Barre became obsessed with questions of security and political control, and his one-party rule regime increasingly repressive.

The military crash in Ethiopia led to a radicalization of political opposition, and even to what Lewis has described like "an upsurge of 'tribalism' (i.e. clan loyalties) as different groups sought scapegoats to explain the debacle"[86]. Siad Barre's perceived favoritism to central-southerner clans led to precarious relations with the northern ones, in turn seen by the government as a threat for the regime's survival. Subsequently to an attempted coup against Barre in 1978, the internal stability was definitely undermined and destined to get only worse during the 1980s. So much for national unity, at the end of the decade Barre ordered tortures, extra-judicial detentions, summary executions, and ultimately bombardments of northern cities. According to Kapteijns, the use of large-scale violence against civilians, on the ground of clan belonging, seen during the civil war became a common practice exactly during Barre's last years of military regime[87].

The military repression initiated in the late 1980s would evolve into a civil war in 1991, making of Mogadishu the center of the struggle. The intricate

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[85] Ssereo 2003, 38.

[86] Lewis 2008, 67.

[87] Kapteijns 2012, 3.

dynamics of the war will not be analyzed here; however, it is useful to recall that for the rest of the 1990s and even further Somalia came to be portrayed extensively in the media in terms of anarchy and failure. This is also the decade during which the Somalia's "missing million" originated, when considerable flows of refugees directed towards Kenya, Gulf countries, Europe (especially Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands and the Nordic countries) and North America.

In the period of time included between 1991 and 2012 at least a dozen reconciliatory processes and nation-building efforts were attempted, yet with no lasting solutions, and often even in competition one with the other. Conferences were held in Baidoa, Cairo, Arta, Nairobi; internal attempts alternate with the initiatives of the United Nations and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD); ceasefires were interrupted by new escalations of violence, while Somaliland declared its unilateral independence (not recognized internationally) from the rest of Somalia. In those years, state-building attempts in Western style were confronted by the centrifugal force of indigenous law as well as by shari'a, and another axis of the debate contended between top-down imposed solutions (such were those of international actors like the UN) and bottom-up mediated proposals (like some of the reconciliatory conferences). Secular, indigenous and Islamic laws interacted, creating mixed local forms of conflict resolutions. Eventually, either the Transitional Federal Government or the Union of Islamic Courts, the two prevailing structures of governance acting in the post-civil war period, was immune from clanpolitics, revealing the enduring importance of the clan in the survival strategies of the Somalis.

In 2012, a Federal Government has been established as the latest attempt at reviving a Western-looking, functioning government in Somalia: ideally, the devolution of power to the governments of the federal states sanctioned in the new constitutional text shall suit better the centrifugal tendency of Somali indigenous governance. Nonetheless, in last years the federal scheme has not prevented the government from falling into political conflicts with the federal states due to a certain difficulty in applying many provisions of the constitution, like for example the appointment of a national commission charged with the task of defining the borders of federal states. At the time of writing this research, Somalia lives a time

of renewed hopes after the election of Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed as president (February 2017), following delays and parliamentary elections that have been widely contested for accusations of intimidation and corruption.

It becomes interesting to read now the same story through the conceptual clash based on the tension between "tradition" and "modern" described, among others, by Appadurai. I will provide selected accounts of some key historical passages concerning changes occurred in this relation. Since the 1960 unification, Lewis reports that the difference between the pastoral north and the urban outlook of the south suggested the idea of the latter being more "modern"[88]. This idea was strengthened by the fact that southern Somalia had developed, throughout the United Nations trusteeship mandate, democratic institutions like elected representation while the British did not put in place any similar efforts in Somaliland, contributing to the antagonism between parts in a sort of 'divergence of destinies' discourse. Less than ten years later, the definition of "tradition" was enriched by new connotations: Siad Barre came to power with a clear-cut nationalist plan that confined clan affiliation into the sphere of traditional practices, as something from the past, to be banished. We take, for example, an excerpt from a speech delivered by Siad Barre in 1969, the year of the military coup bringing him to the presidency of Somalia. In this address, "tribalism" is exposed as an evil to be necessarily eradicated from the society, in the light of the new nation-building challenges waiting ahead:

> I am sure there are many people who are talking to you in the same language in which they managed to divide the Somalis into factions. What was that language? It was a "RER X[89]" how many soldiers do we have in the Armed Forces? How many offices do we have? How many people do we have in the Revolutionary Council? Let us divide it according to tribalism. How many men does each tribe have in this and that? (…) Government progress, sophistication, national interest, raising the educational standards, and the level of production of the economy, are incompatible with groupings on tribal lines. The incompatibility of nationhood and tribal allegiance makes a marked contrast, and the vivid manifestation of the incompatibility was very easily seen in our situation before the Revolution.[90]

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[88] Lewis 2010, 26.

[89] Rer or reer is the Somali for "people", indicating a specific group and not the national population in its entirety.

[90] Somali Democratic Republic, Ministry of Information and National Guidance 1979, 9.

The speech, visibly, sets up a division between a *before*, characterized by tribalism, and the intention to establish a new nation for the future, a political project that moreover was the ultimate claim that ensured legitimacy to the 1969 coup. The outbreak of the civil war in 1991 would render manifest the tension, not just political, but also conceptual, of the pair modern-tradition. The tragic events of 1991 set a new beginning and called for a reassembly of historical narratives: traditions, to which clanship is obviously a relevant part, would now become a determinant aspect realizing good governance. To illustrate this development, let us consider the following official statement released in 2001 by the Somaliland Government:

> The lesson was that the modern sector, armed and apparently omniscient, could not do without the support of the traditional sector (…) This succeeded and developed into a new concept unpracticed by previous Somali governments (…) meaning an elected civilian government working in parallel with elders of the traditional sector.[91]

The role of tradition (elders rule specifically, therefore xeer and tol) is now seen at least as important as the development of state institutions, implying a remarkable shift motivated by the new positive light shed on traditional norms and practices as keys to peace building. Nevertheless, any historical analysis would be incomplete without acknowledging the political context in which both declarations were made and in which concepts find their application. When reading Barre's speech, for instance, we shall not jump to the hasty conclusion that tribalism (whatever that meant exactly) was successfully abolished in the Somali Democratic Republic. Many scholars agree in indicating that disguised clanpolitics in fact structured the regime of Siad Barre all through its duration, representing moreover an exacerbating political factor distressing the relation between state and citizens till the point of no return. Therefore, the prohibition and the sanctioning of references to clan made in public, meant to sustain the nationalistic project in the making, was not reflected in a change of political and welfare practices revolving around the clan.

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[91] Somaliland Government 2001.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been that of introducing some relevant concepts that explain the socio-economic development of welfare and security structures in the Somali context. Through the analysis of the welfare group, it has emerged that the standard categories of the nation lose much of their appeal in explaining Somali social dynamics. In the light of what I have discussed in the theoretical framework, a number of questions have reveals also a tension between tradition and modernity. All the information contained in this chapter are a necessarily background that will come useful when approaching the stories of the Somalis in Scandinavia, as the memories and the narratives of welfare and security in the present past are still powerful instruments to shape their present and future version.
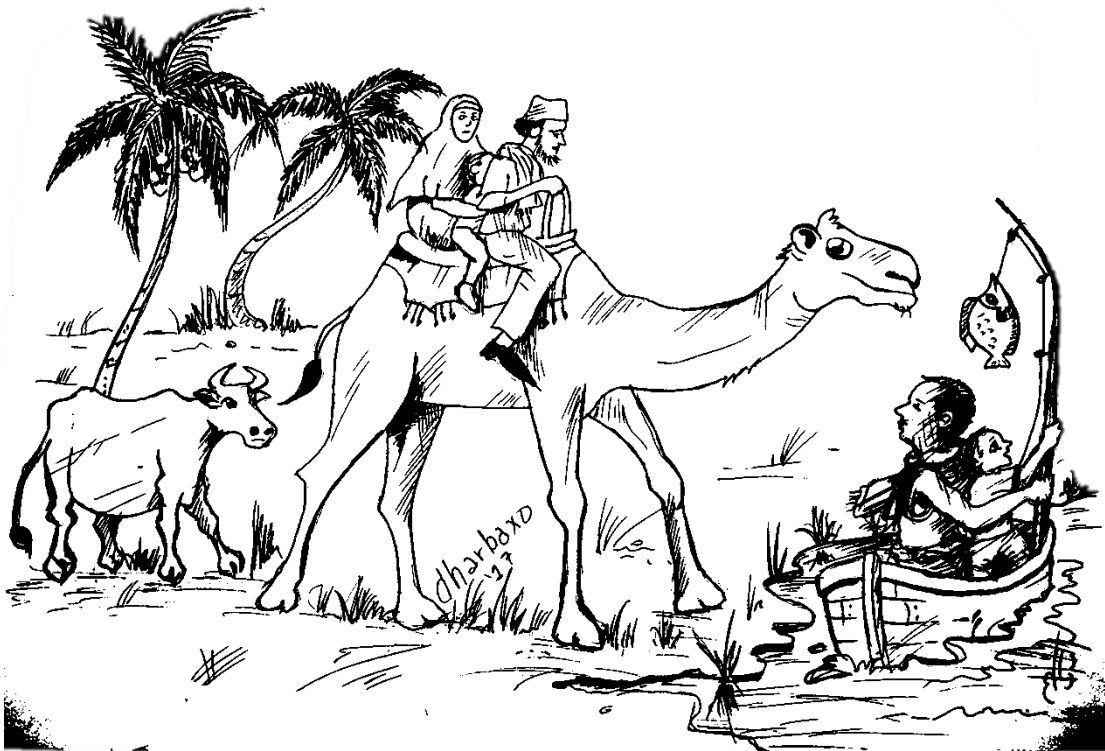
Fig. 5: Some of the modes of economic production in Somali-speaking areas

CHAPTER V

The welfare state: from standardization of risk, to personalization of responsibilities

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Introduction

Welfare states have emerged in Western countries as the political institutions appointed with the task of insuring citizens against the risks that may threaten their livelihood. While this mandate to deal with misfortunes has been a fairly stable feature of the welfare state for the last fifty years, the nature and the magnitude of these misfortunes have been transforming throughout the same arch of time. In fact, the structural changes that took place in Western societies have entailed substantial mutations in the fields of working life as well as in socio-demographics, compared to the era in which welfare states moved their first steps in matters of public assistance. In this chapter, I will endeavor in a historical analysis of the meaning of social assistance and its provision in the three Scandinavian countries object of this study.

However, I shall point out at once that I am not concerned with an exhaustive description of these much-celebrated welfare states or, for that matters, their structural changes and reforms over time. Such goal would in fact confront the author with a demanding and far too ambitious task to be contemplated in this chapter. My efforts have been oriented instead at researching definite components of contemporary welfare systems, following the concept of the welfare group presented in Chapter Three. For the aforementioned scope, I surveyed the abundant literature available on the topic, which allowed me to reflect on the different factors as well as events that have been significant for the developments that took place in Europe and Scandinavia.

While there is space for generalizations, for the nation-state is indeed the common governance institution in Europe, national forces were eventually responsible in each country for both "timing" and "specifics" concerning the adoption of social insurance schemes, as explained by Hu and Manning (2010). On this ground, an overview of the developments in Scandinavia will be necessary in order to contextualize and account for the specificities of this area

vis-à-vis the rest of Europe. This chapter will start thus with an outline of the so-called Nordic model of welfare state, to point out what is usually meant with this popular expression within the many disciplines that use it regularly. The chapter will continue with the description of the welfare system in accordance with the model of the welfare group, underlining in particular the tensions realizing in regards of the normative principles.

A preliminary description of the "Nordic Model" of welfare provision

The "Nordic Model" has grown famous as a label to refer to the type of welfare state retrievable in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, with the intent of signaling their "exceptional" pattern of development in international politics. The expression is employed extensively in the academia as in public debates and has impressed itself at worldwide level as a benchmark to indicate top levels of social services provision and socio-economic indicators, which for most other non-Nordic governments, and their citizens, remain a chimera[1]. The identification of such model is based on the idea that the five countries share a number of characteristics that seem to justify altogether the existence of a distinct 'Nordic way' of providing welfare. In a nutshell, the welfare system in the countries of the model is oftentimes described as[2]:

- *Comprehensive*, in terms of the welfare needs it covers and the services it offers to the citizen. These services are usually regrouped in social insurance (programs that provide protection against economic risks, such as sickness and unemployment through beneficiary's contributions); and social assistance (for citizens without means to afford basic needs). Services are provided publicly and financed by comparatively high taxation;

- *Universalistic*. Social measures target the entire population promoting equality of status;

- *Institutionalized*, via well-defined social rights ensuring a decent standard of living. Scholars like Esping-Andersen and Korpi attribute to welfare states also a

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[1] Andersen et al. 2007.

[2] Esping-Andersen 1990; Eitrheim and Kuhnle 2000; Andersen et al. 2007; Brochmann and Hagelund 2012; Strang 2016.

process of "de-commodification", which occurs when "a person can maintain a livelihood without reliance on the market", that is thanks to public assistance from state institutions[3]: this helps preserving the income and the status of the citizen, meanwhile it strengthens also the role of the state in their everyday life;

- *State-centric*, in the sense that the family is relieved of the vast majority of risks and care obligations, while they are allocated to the state (although decentralized municipalities carry on parts of the task);

- Citizens of these states are said to uphold high levels of *trust* and confidence in government action aimed at meeting social needs.

- Other conventional descriptions of the Nordic welfare states usually refer to their expensive public sectors, women-friendly policies and the consensual political system in which policies are elaborated[4].

- For what concerns the *external face* of the Nordic model, researches have often emphasized peacefulness, international solidarism and the hospitality given to refugees and immigrants as markers of the model[5].

The historical roots of the model have been retrieved in the hegemony of Lutheran religion as well as relief structures; in the small size of the countries; in the state capacity of integrating citizens through a common set of political structures and principles[6]. As I will analyze in the following pages, this agglomeration of commonalities eventually led to a similar regional understanding of social issues and of the state role for their solution. The conception of a Nordic model in academic literature and journalism started circulating during the 1930s, with the publication of the book *Sweden: the Middle* way by an American reporter, Marquis Childs, in 1936[7]. Sweden held for much of the first half of the twentieth

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[3] Cfr. Esping-Andersen 1990, 22.

[4] Einhorn and Logue 2003, 244. Christiansen and Markkola 2006, 11-12.

[5] See Mouritzen 1995; Browning 2007.

[6] Christiansen and Petersen 2001a.

[7] Childs' production includes also the previous *Sweden: where capitalism is controlled* (1934) as well as *This is democracy: collective bargaining in Scandinavia* (1938). His works inspired other publications addressing international audiences, as Hudson Strode's 1949 *Sweden: a model for the world*. The author, an American citizen, towards the end of the book, presents a list of "symbols and manifestations of Swedish thoughts and ideals" revealing "the amenities and

century the leading role as representative of the Scandinavian as well as Nordic countries, especially for what mattered welfare and social achievements in general[8]. The internal debate in the "Norden" was also very prolific and displayed, instead, a definite Pan-Nordic approach, reverting around the questions of democracy and welfare and disclosing a desire for regional collaboration in the economic, political and cultural spheres. The thick volume *Freedom and Welfare: Social Patterns in the Northern Countries of Europe*, written in 1953 and sponsored by the Ministries of Social Affairs of the five Nordic countries represents the decisive step for the establishment of a Norden consciousness[9].

After World War II, when democracies entered the so-called Golden Age of welfare and researchers became much interested in comparisons among countries, the Nordic model could consolidate itself as a distinct theoretical and empirical object of study, also in relation to other European states. These were also the years of the Cold War, during which the model came to be seen as the social democratic "third way" between US capitalist liberalism and Soviet state socialism, finding in this dichotomy a vital source for its identity that moreover well matched with the pursued anti-militaristic spirit[10].

As with all models and definitions that attempt to fix something that is not fixed at all, many of the points above today have become problematic[11]. However,

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the virtues of the Swedish heart and the Swedish mind". Among other things, he includes in the list: cleanliness; old-age pensions; politeness; control of alcoholic consumption; art galleries; scientific achievements; respect for the individual; cordiality between capital and labor; community singing: pride in workmanship; obedience to law (Strode 1949, *foreword*, xxii). Childs writes also the foreword of A. H. Rosenthal's *The Social Programs of Sweden* (1967).

[8] Cfr. Mouritzen 1995. The reception of the book titled *The Challenge of Scandinavia: Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland in Our Time* by William Shirer (1956) is quite interesting for the understanding of the notion of Scandinavia of the time. One book reviewer commented: "The inclusion of Finland in a book seemingly devoted to Scandinavia is at first disturbing, since the Finns proper are not Scandinavians, but the author soon puts his reader at rest on that score, explaining that the Finns do not belong to Scandinavia racially, but that they do belong to it economically, politically and socially" (Williams 1956, 35).

[9] For a deeper analysis about the internal debate before and during WWII, see Kurunmäki and Strang 2010.

[10] According to international relations scholars like Ole Wæver (1992, 77), the end of the Cold War would instead contribute to disintegrate the identity of Norden, suddenly relegating it to a "threat of being periphery" in the new Europe in the making.

[11] The concept of being universally provided has been challenged by privatization trends in some services (Lehto, Moss, and Rostgaard 2002). The idea of institutionalized rights confronts the discretionary power to assess and deciding on eligibility to social assistance given to social workers and bureaucrats (Ervik and Kildal 2016; Panican and Ulmestig

notwithstanding turbulent decades in which the assumed stability of welfare states has been probed in many respects, the concept of a Nordic model is standing solid still[12]. It does not seem as if the time to put away the Nordic Model has come either: quite the opposite, the expression is still in vogue and is perhaps even expanding to new sectors[13]. After all, the Nordic welfare states and especially Sweden and Finland have handled the dire financial crisis of the early 1990s by managing their high unemployment rate as well as rising public deficit[14]. And it was again the "Nordic way" to led the five countries out of the 2007-2008 global financial crisis, as claimed in a report presented at the 2011 World Economic Forum in Davos: the positive administration of the economy gave a renewed impulse to treat the fate of the Nordic countries and that of the European ones separately[15]. Key to the success of the Nordic recipe for the welfare state, and perhaps for its success in the future, has been its ability to reform itself in order to adapt to the new challenges and social risks coming from inside (ageing population; slackening economic growth; erosion of collective bargaining structures) as well as from outside (globalization; EU integration; immigration).

But what makes the Nordic welfare states, and specifically the Scandinavian trio so effective in realizing a cross-class agreement on a high taxation burden to finance universal welfare? According to many scholars, one of the pillars of the welfare 'moral' structure is solidarity, which has allowed the incorporation of all classes of society into a national community, even beyond the direct economic interests of this or that group of individuals. Solidarity stretches back to the guild

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2016). Finally, the increasing responsibility for welfare asked to families and individuals provokes second thoughts on state centrism of welfare provision (later in this chapter).

[12] Van Kersbergen (2000, 19) has explicitly talked about a "vocabulary of emergency" that became associated with the study of the welfare state since the 1970s.

[13] A cursory search for this expression reveals its use in different sectors or disciplines, like for example corporate governance, legal handling of prostitution, environmental preservation and international aid. There seem to be an increasing, overlapping Nordic *forma mentis* behind many practices dealing with everyday problems.

[14] Magnusson 2000, 265; Kiander 2005, 235; Fredriksson and Topel 2010, 84-85.

[15] Economist Klas Eklund and historians Henrik Berggren and Lars Trägårdh wrote the report. It can be accessed here: https://www.globalutmaning.se/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2011/01/Davos-The-nordic-way-final.pdf. For similar arguments, see also the article appeared in 2012 with the title "A case for the Nordic Way". It can be accessed at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/andras-simonyi/a-case-for-the-nordic-way_b_3490766.html

system and the poor relief provided by the church, yet such concern for mutual well-being has originated also from the idea of living in homogeneous societies sharing language, values and norms[16]. The concept of homogeneity, whether ethnical or cultural, is a part of the underpinnings of the Nordic model, especially in its 'empirical' and rhetorical face[17]. However, more recently the notion of homogeneity has been questioned from different fronts, as I will touch on later in this chapter. Therefore, the reiteration of discourse of homogeneity should be interpreted rather as "the political will to treat the population as homogeneous", and thus it brings the attention back to the authority of the welfare state and its effect on the society[18].

The experience of risk from the industrial to the post-industrial society

In 1976, Daniel Bell wrote that a number of countries in the West were passing from an industrial into a post-industrial phase of societal life[19]. The Harvard sociologist observed that previously, in pre-industrial societies, life was primarily a "game against nature" in which extended households were engaged in low-productive activities. During the industrial era, socio-economic dynamics developed into a "game against fabricated nature", with reference to the tangible mechanization of production backed up by a strong belief in rationalization. The then incipient post-industrial society, Bell pointed out, was based instead on services, making of it a "game between persons" where professionalization and information held a central role.

In agreement with Bell's general analysis, a number of scholars argue that new social risks have emerged in Nordic countries since the 1970s, triggering significant structural changes: "flexible and knowledge-intensive labour markets, individualized families and a more heterogeneous population" became in fact the

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[16] Baldwin 1990; Esping-Andersen 1990; Stjernø 2009.

[17] Rosenthal 1967; Baldwin 1990; Kurunmäki and Strang 2010.

[18] Ryymin and Andresen 2009, 96.

[19] Bell 1976, 127.

new features of these societies[20]. The 1973 oil shock caused economic crisis and mass unemployment: it was but one of a series of events that were altogether responsible for the economic crisis, alongside the demise of the Bretton Woods system in 1971 and "stagflation" (i.e. rise in inflation and unemployment), a phenomenon that contradicted the prophecies of the economic doctrines of the time. Like elsewhere in Europe, the economic situation in Scandinavia in the mid-1970s was quickly deteriorating and the interplay between the social and the economic sector managed by the state was questioned. Old paradigms originated in the Industrialization era began to vacillate, while the novel experiences of risk (individual and collective) required the elaboration of corresponding insurance solutions that could match the expectations of both society and government. Since growth predictions were not fulfilled, the problem formulation pertaining to the social sphere shifted to new actors capable of projecting a viable idea for the future, with immediate electoral repercussions as well as tightened immigration regulations and migrant laborers' access[21].

A new hegemonic way of economic thinking at the international level, neoliberalism, accelerated the undermining of previous paradigms. In one of the definitions given to the concept, neoliberalism is "a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade"[22]. This shift and its implication for social expenditures are the key to understand much of the present context in which discourses on welfare are framed. For around 25 years after the end of WWII, national economic activity was subsumed under Keynes' principles, which represented a fundamental partner for state

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[20] Harsløf and Ulmestig 2013, 2.

[21] In Denmark, the 1973 vote became known as the landslide election (*jordskredsvalget*) since several new parties gained seats and more than 40% of electors flipped their vote, while the Social Democrats lost one third of the seats. In Sweden, general elections held in the same year produced a draw between the socialist and liberal-conservative blocs, while three years a center-conservative coalition would form the government. Sweden, Denmark and Norway shut the door to labor immigration respectively in 1972, 1973 and 1975.

[22] Harvey 2005, 2.

'welfarism'[23]. However, after the economic downturn in the mid-1970s, economic theories of the state were persuaded by neoliberalism. In such vision, the role of the state is limited to providing and guaranteeing appropriate institutions for the correct functioning of the market. Institutional changes connected to the welfare group, which I will analyze later, are placed within this general framework.

The *same* for *all*: two political statements

The concept of homogeneity (whether historical, ethnical or cultural) is part of the normative underpinnings of Scandinavian societies and it applies at different rhetorical levels[24]. For example, it is used to evoke the common ethnical belonging of their populations, or to emphasize isolation and exceptionalism of some of the societal features. In conjunction with the notion of equality, it has shaped the principle that national citizens should be entitled to the identical rights, as member of the same community: being equal, citizens have *same* social rights and should receive the *same* provision of assistance and insurance. In this latter sense, it has been said that in order to pursue such scope, the welfare state operates through "standardized" ideas of risk for the citizens, as well as through a "normalization" process, which means through the imposition of certain norms on the population[25]. This regulatory intervention ensures that the welfare state is able to pursue its goals: we can see, therefore, standardization as an expectation on the part of state institutions that citizens will follow a determinate common path in the definition of their own individual preferences and scales of values.

The standardization of procedures has served in different historical periods the ideological battle against diverse and opposite ideas: for example, the need for

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[23] Keynesianism vested the government with the function of regulating capitalism, by managing the aggregated demand in order to ensure high levels of consumption: unemployment, Keynes believed, derived mainly from inadequate demand. Therefore, spending money on public works and on welfare benefits were both part of his economic cure, as long as they stimulated demand and consumption (Skousen 2007, 136). Keynesianism had its Scandinavian focal center at the Stockholm School of Economics: Gunnar Myrdal, Bertil Ohlin and Erik Lindahl were some of the most influential names (see Carlson 1993; Lundahl 2015).

[24] For some of the different declinations of the term, see Rosenthal 1967; Baldwin 1990; Kurunmäki and Strang 2010; Brochmann and Hagelund 2012.

[25] Kildal 2003; Kananen 2014.

standard treatment has upheld the state's takeover on welfare provision against the particularistic approaches of private and religious organizations in the nineteenth century. Or again, it was a response to societal divisive tensions, like the class cleavages at the time of industrialization. The concept has also contained, though with more difficulties, the challenges and threats connected to globalization and migration after WWII[26]. It is acknowledged that recently the ideal of ethnical homogeneity has been questioned from at least two fronts: first of all, scholars have shown great interest for the countries' past as multiethnical kingdoms, and for the dynamics between the nascent welfare state and the minorities living in Scandinavia[27]. Secondly, the effects of migration phenomena are challenging the vision of an ethno-cultural uniformity; to the point that it seems more legitimate to affirm that multiculturalism itself is today the newest common feature one can retrieve in the Nordic model[28]. Nevertheless, when it is suggested that homogeneity is an important concept in the Scandinavian political landscape, the question is not much about whether it is based or not on any factual ethnic groupness. The most important aspect I wish to emphasize is that homogeneity has been consolidated as the foundation for the welfare state's proper functioning and governance of individuals, alluding to the necessary complementarity of citizen's needs and the solutions offered by the state. It is in this sense a normative principle, developed together with the welfare state, which expresses the governments' aspiration to create and maintain stable preferences for state-provided welfare among citizens.

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[26] Kaspersen 2006.

[27] See Ryymin and Andresen (2009) for the case of Norwegian authorities in Finnmark, home for Sami and Kven minorities; Persson and Arvidsson (2011) for reflections about migration and integration in Denmark and Sweden. Cfr. also "The Dark Unknown History: White Paper on Abuses and Rights Violations against Roma in the 20th Century", by Swedish Ministry of Culture (2015).

[28] Of course, not everyone agrees with that societal vision. At the time of the writing of this chapter, such debate was particularly reinvigorated by King Harald of Norway's speech embracing diversity and acceptance in early September 2016 ("Norwegians come from the north of the country, from the middle, from the south and all the other regions. Norwegians are also immigrants from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Poland, Sweden, Somalia and Syria", the king said). In Denmark, a more intense debate on "who is a Dane" arose few weeks later and in the same month, Queen Margrethe told *Der Spiegel*: "I would not say we are a multicultural country", recognizing inclusiveness for all while stressing the role of Reformation for Danish culture.

Similarly, the *universal* granting of social rights reflects the consensus that was established around a statutory welfare policy enabling all citizens (including children, mothers, unemployed, pensioners) to access social benefits without prior means-testing for eligibility, that is, without admission criteria. 'Universalism' designates thus the credo that social programs in a number of sectors should be all-encompassing and have not only specific target groups. At the political level, the incomparable success of the welfare state has been that of nurturing an idea of imaginary solidarity (as from Chapter Three) capable of bringing the whole society, constructed as homogeneous, in the same 'risk pool', ensuring redistribution and social rights for all social classes.

Some have seen in the combined action of homogeneity and universalism necessary preconditions for the development and maintainment of welfare states. In fact, the concepts have motivated state's politics of standardization in welfare provision, with different strategies put in place over time for this purpose. Similarly, the dual action can be used to motivate claims that individuals not belonging to the national homogeneous group are disrupting the 'normal' life of the community. Kildal illuminates on standardization and deviance:

> [I]t is important to call attention to the fact that although strong paternalism, that is, *legal coercion*, is potentially challenging from a normative point of view, the *social coercion* exercised by civil society is no less problematic with regard to individual freedom. Moral pressure, social avoidance and humiliation; forms of coercion and punishment that is frequently used towards people who choose a divergent way of life, may far outdo welfare-state paternalism.[29] (original italic)

The aim of defining homogeneity and universalism as concepts is illustrating that they both tend to acquire a precise interpretation within the Nordic model of welfare provision, emphasizing respectively sameness and inclusiveness ('the same for all'), and that they are the fruit of specific governance experiences as well as political confrontations matured over the years.

By the same token, the two principles project also a specific horizon in which social problems are perceived and solutions suggested. In other words, they represent clear political stands on social issues, which contain in themselves both the history of their struggle to prevail over other alternatives, as well as the future

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[29] Both quotations in Kildal 2003, 14.

of yet-to-be-fought ideological battles. For the multiple meanings they concentrate, the ambiguity that characterize them, and the diverse socio-political language they have generated, I understand these principles as "concepts" within a Koselleckean-inspired framework. The two principles encompass in fact a strong ideological appeal, which has been indeed evocated at different points in time during the development and evolution of Scandinavian welfare states, and as such they not just descriptive of the model, but hold also a 'discursive' as well as mobilizing force at the political level. Let us consider a remarkable example below.

Mobilizing Folk

The direct mobilization of the 'people' has revealed itself to be instrumental for the ambitious goals of welfare states. Slogans such as *Folkhemmet* (the People's home) in Sweden and *Danmark*/*Norge for Folket* (Denmark/Norway for the People) in the early 1930s summarize the Social Democratic parties' aspiration to broaden the social basis and implement the universalistic principles they were pursuing. More specifically, through this mobilization Scandinavia countries abandoned the class-based rhetoric that had characterized many European societies in the industrial phase, in favor of a politics centered on the unity of the nation, the government, and its people: the government was *itself* society[30]. The "folk" concept, moreover, was not a prerogative of Social democrats, but it contained also elements of conservative and liberal extraction, even more so since they were the product of crises settlements achieved by red-green alliances[31].

Therefore, the sense of national solidarity could strengthen around the folk concept, as the latter had condensate both the subordination of the class struggle

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[30] Levine (1978, 57) has illustrated that since the 1880s, in the legislative debates in Denmark terms like "society (*samfund*), "the public" (*det offentlige*) and "national and local governments" (*staten og kommunerne*) were often used as synonyms.

[31] In Denmark, political parties came together to guarantee democracy through times of unemployment, crisis of the international economy and an internal restructuration from an agrarian to an industrial society (Jespersen 2004, 169). In more industrialized Sweden, the universalism of folkhem and the metaphor of the society as a family, mobilized traditional values as instruments for the modernization of peasants. As state- and nation-building were increasingly overlapping, the class struggle faded into the all-embracing national welfare structure. In Norway, it marked the alliance between the Labor and Farmers' party.

to the national welfare, as well as the cooperation between political parties: within this framework, social problems were considered through the lens of identical risks affecting the nation as a single class. In the face of the growing military competition and spreading radical political ideologies in the European continent during the late 1920s, Scandinavian countries found in domestic political developments the best available counter-strategy to defend democracy— also as a part of the rhetoric of "Nordic democracy"[32]. The tension between internal expectations and international threats in the decades prior to WWII, help in fact to explain the unprecedented convergence realized in discourses based on homogeneity and universalism[33]. The national "all", which through the rhetoric of folk was then seen intrinsically democratic and "freedom-loving", needed to be preserved and kept healthy[34].

Moreover, since the turn of the twentieth century, the emergence of new scientific disciplines in Europe help diffusing a modernist idea of controlling and eradicating poverty and deviance by the application of systematic measures to shape social behaviors[35]. With the concomitant advancement of efficient state institutions, authorities engaged in expansive social engineering: "Bad habits must be put right. Consumption needs to be directed (…). People must be accustomed to brushing their teeth and eating tomatoes" claimed Gunnar Myrdal, the influential Swedish economist, politician and Nobel laureate[36]. The need to conform to the standard patterns of socialization established at the government level favored the distinction between deserving/worthy poor and undeserving/unworthy individuals, that is to say, those individuals in indisputable need (the former), from those who sought public assistance even if they were deemed capable of working (the latter). While the assistance for the former group

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[32] Kurunmäki and Strang 2010, 23.

[33] The international political scenario amplified in many ways internal questions. As Stråth maintains: "The rivalry between nations required strong and healthy populations serving and benefitting from a strong economy. The competition with other nations could not afford a domestic social conflict" (Stråth 2016, 165).

[34] Trägårdh 2002, 77.

[35] Rodger 2000, 143.

[36] As quoted in Brochmann 2015.

of people attempted also at limiting societal stigmatization, the latter category had to undergo state's coercive power in exchange of the support received[37]. A threat, in the guise of personal determinism, was in fact subsumed in the idea of risk and social problems, and the prevailing credo in social policy of the time was that of transforming perceived deviant individuals into beneficial members through medical treatments, thus responding to the diffused anxiety of a declining population quality[38].

Ideas of homogeneity as conformity to the requirement of the state found application in the sterilization laws, enacted around the late 1920s and practiced until the 1970s, under the government of the Social Democratic parties. The statistical investigation of Danish sterilizations carried out by Lene Koch over a period of more than thirty years divided the motivations for sterilizations in three groups. Beside the "purely eugenic" and the "partially eugenic", concerned with illness in the potential offspring (e.g. mentally retarded), there were also non-eugenic motivations: that is, "too many pregnancies, poverty, exhaustion, amoral or asocial behaviour, etc."[39] Equally interesting is the case of the Swedish *tattare* (tinkers), who suffered different derogatory categorization before becoming eventually a possible target for sterilization in the 1940s[40]. Norwegian authorities reserved a similar treatment to Romá (Gypsies)[41]. It is worth reporting what Broberg and Roll-Hansen say about the motivation for sterilization in Denmark:

> The cost of maintaining the unproductive segment of the population became a favorite topic. Supporters of the new social legislation, a group which included

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[37] The division of the beneficiaries of public assistance in the two categories traces back to Poor law, when social behaviors deviant from the norm were made unattractive by all means and punished, for example through coercion in correction houses and the criminalization of begging and vagrancy (for Denmark, see Ladewig Petersen 2003; Riis 2003. For the Norwegian case, see Seip 2007. For Sweden, cfr. Kouri 2003).

[38] This anxiety was felt also by Scandinavian governments, as reported in Wessel 2015, 596.

[39] As quoted in Broberg and Roll-Hansen 2005, *xiii*.

[40] Cfr. Rogers' and Nelson's 2003 paper with the emblematic title: "Lapps, Finns, gypsies, Jews, and idiots" modernity and the use of statistical categories in Sweden".

[41] In 1927, Norway passed even a law with a special clause forbidding Gypsies to enter the country. The so-called "Gypsy-paragraph" was removed by the 1956 Norwegian Act, and in 1999 Norwegian authorities recognized as one of the five national minorities (information collected by the author at the exhibition "Norvegiska Romá - Norwegian Gypsies". 2016. Intercultural Museum, Oslo).

most of the eugenicists, did in many cases accept the argument that such people imposed a heavy burden on society, but argued that the social legislation actually represented a more rational management and control of the marginal members of society, and that eugenics was needed to ensure that the problem and the burden did not increase with time[42].

The brief glimpse of eugenics in Scandinavia does not suggest that sterilization had an end in itself, but considers it within the horizon opened up by the homogenization and standardization ideals, for which people with similar needs were deemed more governable and thus instrumental in ensuring the stability of the national community and the state. Eugenics was not characteristic of Scandinavian countries only, but its specificity lied in the connection it established with pre-existing assumptions and with comparatively efficient state structures. Eugenics became a means for the achievement of a notion of good society that rested upon ideas of conformity of collective behaviors and the correction of diversity[43].

The development of welfare statism

After the discussion of the normative principles, I deal now with the third component of the welfare group: the institutionalization of welfare in state structures. The origin of publicly provided welfare benefits in Scandinavia traces back to the mid-nineteenth century, when state authorities took direct part in the task of ensuring social assistance, in the form of cooperation with ecclesiastic and philanthropic institutions carrying out poor relief[44]. The Industrial Revolution initiated a concrete debate about social insurance, the other tier (together with the said social assistance) of the future full-fledged welfare state: throughout Europe, workers amassed in expanding or even newly built cities, living often in miserable housing and working conditions. Due to the intensifying urbanization, cities became a hotbed for sickness of various kinds and were marked by higher

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[42] Broberg and Roll-Hansen 2005, 46.

[43] Wessel 2015; Wickström 2015.

[44] Sørensen 1998; Kaspersen and Lindvall 2008; J.H. Petersen, K. Petersen and Kolstrup 2014; Borioni 2014.

mortality rates than rural villages[45]. The backlash of this societal change was made particularly manifest with the rise of a new phenomenon, that of unemployment among the working class. What to do with this unoccupied mass of people?

Given that a considerable industrialization process in Scandinavia had started later if compared to other European countries, these societies were not the first to confront the large-scale issues just described: state-administered assistance, in particular, was already being experimented in neighboring Prussia, and it served thus as a source of inspiration[46]. However, Bismarck's policies had limited influence in Scandinavia, as the three countries had taken initial steps towards a universal welfare system, targeting not just the working class, but aiming at covering larger segments of the society[47]. To explain the Scandinavian orientation for universalism, several scholars have pointed the attention to the economic and political power retained by the farmers at the time when social security debates kicked off[48]. Baldwin, in particular, has underlined that the universalist legislation that was developed at the turn of the century was rooted in the farmers' pressure on governments to extend their social concerns for security and statutory

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[45] Berend 2012, 273. Between 1840 and 1901, Denmark's urban population grew from 21% to 39% (Kananen 2014, 48).

[46] Bruland (1989, 2) indicates 1845 as the beginning of industrialization in the smaller economies of Europe. With a similar tone, Berend (2012, 239) has written: "until 1870, the Scandinavian region experienced typical slow, pre-industrial economic growth. During the half-century between 1820 and 1870, its per capita GDP increased by only 18% compared with Western Europe's 54% growth. Per capita income in the three Scandinavian countries was only 63% that of Western Europe. Until 1870, Sweden had a typical one-dimensional agricultural character, with 72% of its active population working in agriculture and forestry, and only 15% in industry. Norway presented a similar situation, with 60% of employment in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, and 16% in industry".

[47] In matters of accident and sickness insurance, Denmark and Sweden adopted voluntary schemes supported by the state, incorporating wide-ranging solidarity as well as egalitarian flat-rate benefits. That went in the opposite direction of Bismarck's measures, which were compulsory and focused only on the workers, differentiating benefits according to wages with no real social equalization effort. Norway, which retained a fair autonomy in social legislation throughout the union with Sweden, followed the Bismarckian compulsory approach for both insurance schemes. In all three countries, unemployment insurance was voluntary. While all early social policies were limited in terms of coverage (e.g. means-testing and criteria of deservingness would remain until the post-WWII period), they moved in the direction of universalism as explained in the text.

[48] Koblik 1975; Baldwin 1989; Bjørnson 2001.

generosity beyond the urban working class[49]. Even so, the preference for a citizen-oriented policy, rather than a worker-oriented one in the fashion of Bismarck, was not achieved without reservations being voiced[50].

Yet, by the first decade of the twentieth century, governments of different colors had decided to take on the financial burden of social reforms, managing to find an agreement between the diverse positions expressed by liberals, conservatives and the increasingly prominent social democratic labor movements. Governments wanted to transfer more groups of people previously considered undeserving, among the ranks of the deserving ones, in order to find appropriate solutions to the changing social risks brought by industrialization, and overcome at once both non-state charity as well as the harsh poor laws, which were facing increasing criticism[51]. Thus spoke in 1920 K.K. Steinke, one of the main architects of the Danish welfare state:

> So forward with the view that the public authorities themselves must order, lead, and control welfare for the disadvantaged members of society, that public charity must be restrained and as far as possible be made superfluous, and that it is ten times better to spend 200 kroner of taxpayers' money on a truly planned and rational public welfare than throw away 100 kroner on a score of different associations that work without any overall perspective, cooperation or control.[52]

The discursive power centered on the need for the state's takeover on welfare provision, had served also the purpose of universalism, as farmers, workers and employers were all part of the parliamentarian dispute to decide reforms and the repartition of its costs. The first wave of social policy was only a prelude of the crucial developments that followed WWI. The period between 1920 and 1933 was

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[49] Baldwin 1989, 11.

[50] In Sweden, the years between 1889 and 1913, namely the span from the first report of the first Workers' Insurance Commission to the world's first universal public pension system, were characterized by concerns for public costs on the one hand, and for exclusion on segments of the population on the other. In Denmark, the Conservative People's Party in 1915 and the Liberals in 1918 argued that the incipient social legislation should have emphasized the principles of self-help, responsibility and duties, fearing a drift towards the establishment of an unproductive system (J.H. Petersen 2016, 142-143). Very similar dynamics were characterizing Norway, where farmers' demands for equity were though met by the dual political parties' belief that: factory workers were particularly vulnerable to new risks; and too much or too generous insurance would undermine people's inclination to work (Bjørnson 2001, 199-200).

[51] Flora 1986.

[52] As quoted in J.H. Petersen, K. Petersen, and Kolstrup 2014, 90.

however marked by the absence of far-reaching programs of social reform, since political parties throughout Scandinavia failed to obtain the majority in their respective chambers. The turning point arrived though in the mid-1930s, when the Social Democrats' electoral success in the three countries (Labor party in Norway), and their capacity to navigate through coalitions and build up broad alliances, accelerated the speed of social reforms and established the supremacy of political parties and governments as the platform to administrate welfare. These were the years of the "social democratic order", as the political project to organize society and overcome the crisis would be termed. According to Berman, the interwar period was characterized first and foremost by the "primacy of politics" over the economy, in which states balanced the discord caused by capitalism and modernity while taking care and protecting the needs of the citizens[53].

Social policies, however, do not exist in a vacuum. The global economic crises of late 1920s/early 1930s had undermined in Scandinavia also the traditional political and discursive strategies to gain power: laissez faire was simply leading to more unemployment and in such circumstances strikes, better yet class struggle, were no longer effective means. New ideas were thus required to satisfy popular demands for stability and social protection, but confronted with the challenge of reinventing a narrative for the crisis time, political parties at first seemed to lack an explanation[54]. The reform proposals brought to Scandinavian Parliaments in the 1930s contained elements that we can re-conduct to a Keynesian way of thinking. Keynesianism vested the government with the function of regulating capitalism, in particular by managing the aggregated demand in order to ensure high levels of consumption: unemployment, he claimed, derived mainly from inadequate demand.

Therefore, spending money on public works and on welfare benefits were both part of his economic cure, as long as they stimulated demand and consumption. In turn, this created new opportunities for economic participation for all citizens, including married women who thus joined the labor market in

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[53] Berman 2006.

[54] Magnusson 2000, 241. See also Kjeldstadli and Helle 2016.

higher numbers. These new economic ideas challenged the pre-existent and dominant classical economics recommending free trade and free markets, and illuminated on the role envisaged for governmental fiscal policy interventions in the economy, especially during recessions, with the aim of correcting inefficient macroeconomic outcomes produced by the private sector. The pledge to control unemployment through the state, among other things, became the politically agreed vision to bring societies out of the economic crisis.

In Sweden, the proposals of the Social Democratic party in 1930 and 1933 entailed the spending of million kronor in programs of "productive public works at market wages" in place of old relief work[55]. Moreover, the party negotiated the new crisis policy with political groups with different perspectives on the matter, including the blue-collar workers' trade union confederation (LO), which had criticized the government control through rationalization. Two fundamental agreements in 1933 and 1938 manifested the commitment of state, workers, industrialists and rural groups to the new political direction, which would ensure stability up to the post-WWII period. The Swedish historian Bo Stråth further clarifies the scope of change in these words:

> One important precondition of the centralisation of industrial relations in 1938 was that the state took responsibility for unemployment through the insurance of 1935 under union administration. This construction was a clear break with existing labour market theories about state neutrality in this respect.[56]

Social democracy came to power in Norway in 1935 with a very similar political program aiming at modernizing the nation through class collaboration and "a strong state with ambitions and means to plan and direct the development of society", namely with a goal of visionary "social democratic order"[57]. New bills in the area of social policy would secure until WWII a much larger group of citizens in vulnerable conditions and made of Norway a leading welfare nation, although

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[55] Carlson 1993, 166.

[56] Stråth 1996, 90.

[57] Kjeldstadli and Helle 2016, 48.

emphasis on self-help and concerns on the financial feasibility of more universalism had not left parliamentarian debates[58].

The 1933 Social Reform in Denmark generated clamor as it simplified existing legislation, but the ground-breaking effects often recognized in the conventional narrative of the welfare state have been questioned, at least when compared to neighbors' counterparts. Johansen, for example, affirmed that for the effects of the late-1920s crisis, the efforts of the Social Democratic-Radical Liberal government were "not primarily on social but on economic policy". Among other things, he points to the fact that the "reform contained paternalistic and comprehensive rules against its abuse – which could be hardly be described as an expression of solidarity"[59]. Others have indicated that while the introduction of social rights predated 1933, the attention to this reform stem from the Social Democratic party's will to use it rhetorically, since it came out of a crisis red-green compromise that ensure the nation a bright future[60].

As Stråth reminds us, however, these historical passages were experienced far less as clear-cut moments that we tend to recount *ex post*: they entailed a transformative process, and therefore the simultaneous existence of old and new, continuities and discontinuities. The identification of the 1930s as a watershed was a construct elaborated two decades later, within an interpretative framework aiming at legitimizing what were crisis solutions into economic policy for the ever growing welfare state[61]. Sejersted suggests that "the realization of the Social Democratic order was the result of conscious policy based on a shared idea of what a modern society should look like"[62]. And this modern society resembled

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[58] Bjørnson 2001, 208-209.

[59] Johansen 1986, 300; Derry 2015, 324. The direction impressed in Denmark was toward a dual security system, composed of social insurance schemes for the deserving individuals, and social assistance for the undeserving claimants. The former could thus access public assistance without stigma, while the system retained some of the harsh effects reserved for "the weak character without energy, will or self-esteem" (K. K. Steincke, as quoted in Petersen 2016, 143).

[60] J.H Petersen and K. Petersen 2007, 178.

[61] Cfr. Stråth 1996, 12.

[62] Sejersted 2011, 3.

closely the horizon of rationalistic society proposed in those years by Fordism through the belief in the possibility for the scientific management of industrial production in order to improve outcomes[63].

Through the application of the new economic principles to politics, state institutions were understood as the locus to address needs, elaborate solutions for citizens' security and control the macro-conditions of the economy. In the logic of the welfare group, the institutions of the welfare state projected new horizons of security that could match the changing experiences of risk that the societal developments were bringing to the citizenry, presenting the state as a fundamental actor in the provision of welfare to the society.

During the Second World War, domestic solidarity had showed its full potential for national defense, the countering of foreign threats and, ultimately, the preservation of democracy[64]. Moreover, both modernism and economic theory in the 1950s and 1960s confirmed the faith in nation-building, institutional expansion, industrial growth as well as in the political control of market forces. In these years, the "golden years of the welfare state", homogenization and universalism were the closest to each other and new reforms could be implemented. An iconic legislation in Denmark was the Pensions Act in 1956/57, which removed the distinction between deserving and non-deserving, promoting a new conceptualization of universalism grounded on a conciliatory language between the different segments of the population[65]. Social care expanded to include more groups (e.g. the blind and the deaf) and to cover the few gaps left in social security systems (e.g. kindergartens, elderly care), while critic voices of state expansion did not produce tangible results. In Sweden, the expansion of social legislation concerning pensions was more problematic, notably for the stronger role of LO. The union advocated for a universal and obligatory pension reform encompassing all citizens and that could eliminate potential comparative

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[63] As claimed by Esping-Andersen (2002, 87), "the 'Fordist' era working-class male epitomizes the standardized, homogeneous, linear life cycle".

[64] Einhorn and Logue (2003, 198) affirmed that "although destruction and losses temporarily reduced resources for social programs, wartime patriotism, solidarity, and common hardships broadened support for social security".

[65] Petersen 2016, 145.

advantages for other categories, such as civil servants[66]. Economic modernization— in many ways a key word in post-1945 Norway, was pursued within a political style in which "most elements are predetermined", such as "*who* will be making a decision", and "*why* outcomes should be accepted and considered legitimate"[67]. The state held of course the rein of regulatory power and initiatives in post-war reconstruction, and that was made clear in the 1954 amendment to the constitution, affirming: "it shall be the duty of the State authorities to create conditions which ensure that every able-bodied person can earn a living by his labour"[68]. The 1960s saw the enactment of several social security programs with universal appliance, of which the most important were the National Insurance scheme and the general pension system; the Social Care Act of 1964 replaced poor relief and gave priority to social work, as preached also by economic theories. The characteristic of post war Scandinavian societies, Kananen argues, was that "the positions of individuals and the motives of their actions were defined from above"[69]. Welfare systems had become so specialized and penetrating in aspects of social life (education; health, social insurance and so on), that they could define and take for granted— in a standardizing and homogenizing fashion, the position of the individual and the modalities of his contribution to the society.

Re-negotiating principles? Post-1970s developments

As explained earlier, the mid-1970s were years ripe with developments in Scandinavia and in the world. The neoliberal doctrine initiated a deep global reconsideration of the role of the state, and soon later was embraced by top political leaders like Margaret Tatcher in Britain, Ronald Raegan in the USA, and Helmut Kohl in Germany. Neoliberal thinking built on the works of the Austrian/British economist Friedrich von Hayek and his American colleague

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[66] For example, the rule of the best paid years for calculating pension. See Petersen and Åmark 2006, 171.

[67] Olsen, Roness, and Sætren 1982, 47.

[68] As quoted in Bjørnson 2001, 210.

[69] Kananen 2014, 89.

Milton Friedman[70]. During one of his lectures at Stanford University, when he was asked about government's role and responsibility in taking care of the poor, Friedman replied:

> What is government's role? First of all, the government doesn't have any responsibility. People have responsibility. This building doesn't have responsibility. You and I have responsibility. People have responsibility. Second, the question is how can we as people exercise our responsibility to our fellow man most effectively? That is the problem. So far as poverty is concerned, there has never in history been a more effective machine for eliminating poverty than the free enterprise system and the free-market.[71]

By redesigning the relation between the state and the market and the responsibility for the vulnerable, this shift has had profound implications for the then existing form of welfare group. The "omnipresent" state, which had been ever expanding since the mid-nineteenth century, attracting people's trust and realizing a consensus around welfare building, began to draw back[72]. Market solutions and competition among privates, which in the late 1970s were a mere projection on the horizon, have become today a future made present. Taking the cue from Polanyi's ideas of political economy, Blyth has described this historical conjuncture in terms of a passage from "embedded" liberalism, namely an inclusive coalition between state, labor and business, to a "disembedded" version, which reacted to the former claiming that economic dislocations were generated precisely by the former governance credo[73]. More market and less state— that was instead the new diagnosis as well as recipe for institutional reforms: a remarkable departure from the norms for reciprocal security enshrined until then in the welfare group's structure. In the analysis provided by Kananen, Nordic welfare states have moved towards the "international competition state paradigm", reversing their primary inclination to emancipate and liberate human creative

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[70] The former criticized in the 1940s the interventionist state and advocated for a society governed by market mechanisms, with the state focusing on fiscal and monetary discipline (Saad-Filho and Johnston 2005). The latter fathered the theory of monetarism, which stressed the maintenance of macroeconomic stability and supply-side solutions for stagflation (see Steger and Roy 2010).

[71] See the text and the original clip here: http://www.slobodaiprosperitet.tv/en/node/504.

[72] Sejersted 2011, 9.

[73] Blyth 2012.

potential, to adopt "disciplinary mechanisms that are designed to affect the behaviour of individuals and increase their conformity towards existing power relations"[74]. These dynamics involving the economic and institutional structures are the bedrock on which the recent transformations of Scandinavian welfare states ultimately occurred.

An intense debate has developed, especially since the 1990s, around the question of welfare states' alleged retreat or crisis, but it will not be reported here at length. In lieu of that, I wish to set forward four argumentative themes that illuminate on the historical trajectories of welfare provision in Scandinavian states, through the lens of the 'same-for-all' discourse. While the analysis is by no means exhaustive, it will provide evidence to suggest an intense transformative process, to some extent reciprocal, involving welfare states, citizens and the service market: a re-negotiation of the normative principles of Scandinavian welfare states.

Do they all want the same? Individualism and Privatization

Magnusson points out that since WWII, the pattern of individual consumption changed towards preferences for more and more leisure activities and processed products (such as travels and industrial goods), compared to previous expenditures concentrating on basic needs[75]. In other words, people's needs diversified as the economic growth had just increased the chance for the average household to buy goods and services in the market, while the consumer mind values positively the possibility to choose from a variety of items. In the long run, these experiences and behaviors connected to the expanding market have produced a shift, which today manifests in the form of a tension between "welfare-state people" and "economic men", who calculate their action on the basis of the return they get[76]. In other words, it can be argued that principles of individual economic rationality cherished by the market are now orientating also

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[74] Kananen 2014, 167.

[75] Magnusson 2000, 222.

[76] Petersen 2016, 140.

citizens' attitudes to welfare provision. Welfare recipients have been integrated into consumer culture: subsequently, certain degrees of utility-maximizing and self-interested attitudes have become criteria to evaluate also the experiences—and the dissatisfaction especially, of publicly provided welfare[77].

State institutions, too, have promoted individualized behaviors among the citizens, for example through diversification of the offer and by expecting them to assume active roles in promoting their own welfare, that is, by taking more responsibility over risks. The individualization of social security is evident in a number of measures, like the pension reforms enacted in the 1980s, which in Denmark and Sweden established assessment criteria based on individual contributions, while family situation played no role; or in the elimination of spousal supplements. Similar developments would characterize also Norway in the 1990s, when income testing was introduced in substitution of spousal supplements paid out on universal basis. Individualization occurs also in social assistance, through "activation" measures, as we shall see later. By favoring negotiations of social services between provider and users, in contrast to 'one-size-fits-all' provision, governments themselves contribute to foster the citizen's expectation and demand for individualized solutions. Rothstein gives an interesting bird's eye view of this process:

> Many parents are not content with sending their children to a "high quality standard school." Instead, demand has increased for schools specializing in art, music, science, Montessori teaching, sports, and so on. (…). One significant change towards individualized treatment can be seen in childbirth services, where almost 100% obtain public service. Fifteen years ago, parents/women in this situation were, so to speak, processed and dealt with according to the ideas of the personnel. Since then, a revolution has occurred in this area. Now, hospitals have to adapt to demands from women who wish to give birth under water, hanging in ropes, with or without anesthesia, with or without music, and so on. The slogan is "giving birth on the woman's terms" (Johansson et al. 1986). Since 99.9% of Swedish children are still born in public hospitals, these hospitals must now meet demands for individual variation or they must simply close down their delivery clinics due to lack of demand.[78]

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[77] Cfr. Rothstein 1993, 502; Macleavy 2010, 134.

[78] Rothstein 1993, 508.

One of the urges behind these developments was that high public costs (connected to high-quality service provision) and increasing demand in the early 1980s determined a situation where the state was at a serious risk of not keeping up to its welfare promises: in order to preserve the commitment to universalism, privates were allowed to enter care and other sectors. This is a crucial innovation in itself, as the ideal of standardization entertained for decades by state institutions had not contemplated any private provision of publicly financed service. Private delivery of provision, occurred in relatively few years and without much political fuss, marked the beginning of what for some is the "silent surrender of public responsibility"[79].

Despite this transformation, surveys from the 1980s to the 2000s reveal one thing: the societal support for the welfare state does not come out weakened by these developments— trust is substantially still there[80]. On the other hand, when we compare this data with the growing rates of private welfare (children care; health insurance; education), we may interpret the result as a demise of the old adagio "we are all on the same boat", since more individuals are today willing to pay extras to get personalized services[81]. And since those who can afford to pay more are usually the richer strata of the population, the specter of class divisions is recast within the welfare society. Therefore, citizens themselves, in their daily choices, are dismissing the principle of all people having same needs, and it has become problematic to see the nation as a single welfare group facing identical risks and committed to identical insurance solutions. The individual determination of needs poses notable challenges to the welfare state, which if on the one hand remain committed to the goal of universal provision, on the other hand has lost to the market part of its social persuasion power in normalizing citizens' needs.

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[79] Gilbert 2002; see also Torfing 2004.

[80] Svallfors 1991; 2011. Some variation though exists, as workers and low income wage-earners support the welfare state more than white-collar employees and high income groups do.

[81] In Denmark, 18% of children are in private primary schools, and those in private day-care centers have tripled in the last decade (See Berlingske's article *Den "stille revolution" er i gang: Velfærd er noget, vi køber*).

Do they all get the same? The limits of sameness

Standardization of welfare provision implies that citizens are entitled to the same standard of service on a national scale. But to what extent is it thinkable that such a thing as "same" provision of services exist? Experts in the field noted that politicians and inspectors are limited in their capacity to ensure the homogeneous delivery of services, and evidence shows that street-level personnel holds relevant discretionary power in its everyday meetings with welfare service recipients[82]. In the case of Norway, Nillsen has explained that compared to the old social insurance service, there is now a more "tailor-made" approach between public welfare employees and beneficiaries, which however leaves also enough reason to believe that practices may vary "between social workers and offices" and therefore that "equal cases are treated differently"[83]. A similar problematic has emerged also in Denmark and Sweden and, for that matters, in other European countries that have similar provision systems[84]. On the one hand, caseworkers need in fact to strike a balance between the mandate of assessing the needs of the participants and the scarce resources available; on the other hand, they must ensure that participants remain active and responsible, promoting thus the behaviors auspicated by governments. While caseworkers and other professionals in the field are primary implementers of standardized welfare provision, for a number of reasons, including competition over increasing scarce resources, they may end up by performing non-standard treatments on clients.

This argument is not equal to say that contemporary welfare states mark a break with an effective 'sameness' that might have existed in the past: the idea of same provision across the country rests and will rest ultimately in the realm of welfare state's utopic realizations and imaginary solidarity. What is at stake in present circumstances is the citizen's willingness to accept degrees of deviation from the standard of other citizens while upholding trust in state institutions, spirit of sacrifice and solidarity, which have been often considered central features in

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[82] See Hanssen and Helgesen 2011.

[83] Nilssen 2015, 88. See also Hagelund 2016.

[84] See Handler and Babcock 2006; Jewell 2007; Fernandes 2015; Panican and Ulmestig 2016.

Nordic social democracies. This question of legitimacy, in turn, affects also the state's discursive power based on standardization, since the consolidated formula of providing "the same everywhere and for everyone" cannot be taken for granted anymore[85]. State institutions, in fact, cannot always control efficaciously phenomena of discrimination occurring at the private level, or at the level of the services that have been privatized (e.g. job market; housing). An intertwined question concerns the perceived 'sameness' of the 'all', namely universalism in a context of diminishing standardization: many studies confirm in fact that insurance systems are becoming less universal and more selective[86]. In other words, even if the circle of people that can apply for support remains broad, the amounts granted by the authorities vary, and require previous assessment. Once again, while a nominal commitment to the principle universalism is still strongly upheld, its degree and form (as known from previous decades) have changed, and are now challenged by the increased awareness of differences between individuals and groups.

Do they all deserve the same? The return of coercion

"If a Christian Somali educated at the Sorbonne would like to move to Denmark, it should obviously be possible", recently declared current Denmark's Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen[87]. At the time of maximum expansion of the welfare state, in the 1960s, universal welfare policy eliminated mean-test procedures (i.e. barriers to universalism, as seen earlier) with the scope of reducing the stigmatization connected to social assistance[88]. This marked the realization of the political project that had been anticipated by the benign rhetoric of the "people's home". The cumulative effects of the post-war renegotiation of societal dynamics created instead the conditions for reducing state's responsibility in managing the wellbeing of the citizens. Welfare states have sought in fact to

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[85] Cfr. Rothstein 1998, 195.

[86] Kautto et al. 2001; Schierup, Hansen, and Castles 2006; Brochmann and Hagelund 2012.

[87] As quoted in Bak Jørgensen and Thomsen 2016, 2.

[88] Rothstein and Stolle 2003, 196.

contain the costs of social insurance and assistance against recurrent economic instability on international markets. However, social expenditures increased, while privatization, marketization and immigration (for the latter see next paragraph) simultaneously brought a dramatic rise of perceived societal diversity[89]. Weakened in its capacity to apply social persuasion to conform on the citizens, the state has instead regained much of the disciplinary scope that had been toned down in the recent past: a revival of control over personal behaviors, though in accordance with the new requirements of post-industrial societies.

Following the general trend of "workfare" ("work for your welfare") measures in social policy in the EU and OECD countries, the contemporary manifestations of paternalism in Scandinavian welfare states take the form of "activation policies". These policies are enacted to provide work incentives and increase the labor supply in the market, in the new fashion of reciprocal contracts state-citizen[90]. Through contractualism, moral and factual shares of responsibility for one's own welfare and security have been transferred from the state to the citizen. As part of the contract, authorities have the right to demand participation in the "work line" from the recipients of social assistance, who are thus obliged to accept work (even on terms inferior to comparative work in the labor market), if they want to retain their entitlement to benefits[91]. For this reason, it is often said that a discourse over *duties* now precedes the one on *rights*. Petersen, who speaks about a change in the normative basis of the Danish welfare system, affirms:

> The unilateral nature of the classic welfare state, its entitlements resulting from the individual's status as citizen and its de-commodification, were broken by the activation line. Public obligations were determined by a desire that the potential recipient should strengthen personal moral responsibility and that the legitimacy of the system of transfer incomes should be ensured.[92]

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[89] In terms of welfare expenditures as share of GDP, the aggregated average for Denmark, Norway and Sweden in 1980 was 20.4%; 23.6% in both 1990 and 2000; and 25.7% in 2010 (OECD data 2017). See also note 119.

[90] Drøpping, Hvinden, and Vik 2002; Bengtsson 2014.

[91] Kildal 2000; Drøpping, Hvinden, and Vik 2002.

[92] Petersen 2015, 150.

Besides incentives, training, and a shift of discourses to flexibility, "flexicurity", and duties, state institutions have also adopted coercive and control measures: reduction of welfare benefits; public stigmatization; home surveillance; conditionality of different types[93]. Others have explicitly talked about a process of criminalization of social policy:

> when it is suggested that social policy is being criminalised there is an assumption that there is an ongoing process of redefinition of the aims and purposes of the welfare state: an abandonment of concern for the alleviation of poverty, disadvantage and the meeting of human need as ends in themselves in favour of focusing policy on criminality and criminals in order to maintain a disciplined and orderly society. Increasingly, social policies are forced to address explicitly what historically was left implicit: the thrust of social welfare is to provide care and social support but only on the condition that citizens lead orderly lives.[94]

According to the renowned welfare historian Jørn Henrik Petersen, "the disadvantaged have become scapegoats", and solidarity circles today do not extent beyond those with a proven record of being hard working[95].

Do they all are the same? Ideological discourse and political action

Olwig contends that the 1970s is crucial period to trace the roots of contemporary developments of immigration policy: she distinguishes between the Swedish multicultural ideology; Denmark's rejection of multiculturalism; and finally the hesitant, "ambivalent multiculturalism" characterizing Norway[96]. While

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[93] Remarkable are those cases in which municipalities discipline how many times per week a single mother can have her boyfriend sleeping over without losing the entitlements connected to her status, or if she can have sex with her ex-husband (as quoted in Bak Jørgensen 2012).

[94] Rodger 2008, 6.

[95] See Information's article: "Velfærdsstaten – en ideologisk katastrofe".

[96] Olwig 2013, 4. The endorsement of multiculturalism in Sweden had its antecedent exactly in a public debate about the neglected social and cultural needs of the immigrants, sparked by the Polish-Jewish Holocaust survivor David Schwarz in an article appeared in 1964 on the leading *Dagens Nyhetere* with the title: "Utlänningsproblemet i Sverige" (As quoted in Wickström 2015, 518). One year after a group of activists introduced the concept of multicultural society (*det flerkulturella samhället*), while a further debate about primary education of immigrant Children in 1968 and the appointment of a Commission of Immigration contributed to keep high the attention on the issue (Tawat 2011, 12) . The final acceptance of multiculturalism was triggered by the support of the Swedish academic community in the early 1970s. The experts stressed in particular the psychological and pedagogical impact of "semi-lingualism" which in their opinion could manifest when children were not given the chance to develop their mother tongue besides the language of the new country of destination (see Wickström 2015, 519).

immigration policies have been extensively described elsewhere, I will limit myself to few symbolic passages that illustrate how, since the mid-1970s, migrants became a new social group within Scandinavian societies, with specific needs and, consequentially, specific political answers expected[97]. This directly challenged the notion that Scandinavian societies were homogeneous, not just in their population background, but also in the needs and everyday aspects that had backed up universalistic policies[98].

Swedish multicultural policies are an interesting case in point. In 1975, the Swedish parliament officially approved a new immigrant and minority policy, aimed at ensuring three pillars, "equality", "freedom of choice" and "cooperation" for immigrants and minorities, in both a socio-economic sense and with reference to cultural rights, as for example the right to develop the original linguistic identity. The three concepts were set to be the Swedish recipe for integration. The new policy hid a potential tension between the need to incorporate all immigrants into the universal welfare system and the promotion (or at least preservation) of certain cultural dissimilarities between groups[99]. A new immigrant bill in 1986 made explicit that the government was not supporting though the formation of ethnic minorities in Swedish society through multiculturalism, and that the focus of political actions lied on individuals and not on collective entities. The need to reformulate the previous policy indicates that the freedom of choice pillar especially was undergoing different interpretations[100]. Further policy changes in mid-1990s reassessed multiculturalism and led to its redefinition as diversity (*mångfald*), the new goal of integration policy. The government would in fact clarify in 1997 the limits of the previous policy:

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[97] See in particular Brochmann and Hagelund 2012.

[98] Wickström 2015.

[99] Brochmann and Hagelund 2012, 44.

[100] As suggested by Ålund and Schierup (1991, 6). The government specified that immigrants could develop their cultural heritage "within the framework of the basic norms that are valid for human coexistence in our society" (as quoted in Runblom 1995, 317) Although presented only as a matter of clarification, this change was a de facto retreat from multiculturalism as it would become more evident some years afterward.

> Immigrant policy, along with the particular administration that has been established to implement it, has unfortunately come to reinforce a division of the population into 'us' and 'them' and thus reinforced the emergence of 'outsider feeling' [*utanförskap*] that many immigrants and their children experience in Swedish society. (Government Bill 1997/8: 16, 17).[101]

The ambition of the new integration policy was instead that of enlarging the concept of "Swedishness", basing the sense of national solidarity exactly on diversity, on present realities of Sweden rather than only on past achievements.

The debate over immigrants in Denmark had quite another tone. In the 1970s, the question lied on welfare benefits in relation to temporary or permanent immigration[102]. When the latter became a reality, much of the political discourse was concerned about the social conditions and the challenges that immigrants had to face, from education, to housing, to the job market. The solution was that of extending the available social security measures to immigrants, regulated though on factors like years of residence and work permit status. At the same time, the focus shifted from the shortcomings of the Danish welfare system to immigrants themselves and demands made on them to comply with criteria of successful assimilation increased; the social gap that existed with indigenous families and its consequences in public expenditures terms was a key issue of the debate[103].

The formation of the Danish People Party (DF) in 1995 from a rib of the Danish Progressive Party signaled the evolution of welfare nationalism narratives at the meso level, in the background of increasing refugee applications and social expenditures: the more liberal view about immigration gave ground to ideas of restrictions and opposition to multiculturalism[104]. The political line of the government emphasized once more the principle of normalization of people's need, as expressed for example in the words of Poul Nyrup Rasmussen (former Social Democrat Prime Minister):

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[101] Citation retrieved in Taras 2012, 148. Original italics. Cfr. also Tawat 2014, 212 on the same theme of diversity.

[102] The Elkær-Hansen committee appointed by the Minister of Labor asserted (1971, 42): "A young foreign worker who arrives here alone and leaves the country before retirement age will not need public benefits to the same extent as the foreign family with children and those foreign workers who stay here".

[103] See Brochmann and Hagelund 2012, 108.

[104] Bjørklund and Andersen 1999; Schmidt 2013, 203.

> The government's policy is that there is only one group in Danish society, and that is people. The inhabitants [of Denmark] cannot be separated into different classes. All members of society have rights and duties…All people in Denmark must be treated according to the same humane understanding of what it means to be human. That, however, also implies that people living in the Denmark face the same demands.[105]

Norway's immigration policy in its early phase was a "non-policy", in the sense that regulations were not part to any systematic strategy, and the first comprehensive legislative approach to the question coincided with the immigration stop in 1975, closing the experience of guest workers hiring[106]. The white paper n. 39 (1973-1974) decided both the suspension of access, on the basis of anxieties linked to immigrant's social conditions and adaptations, as well as the new political line: newcomers to Norway were given the possibility to pursue either assimilation or integration, grounded on personal choices and motivations. Under the influence of Sweden's dealing with the same question, in 1979-1980, the white paper n. 74 would indicate integration as preferred strategy. The following developments of legislation reflect the mounting pressures on matters of migration: Norway responded to the challenges of the 1980s and 1990s with a "two-track course" policy, which accorded temporary protection for refugees, with a view on their return to their home countries[107]. The 1997 white paper named "Concerning immigration and the multicultural Norway" made clear that immigrants were over-represented among social assistance recipients and were exposed at high risks of welfare dependency and clientification[108]; the document retrieved in work and education two fundamental arenas for participation, illuminating the path that the government was suggest to walk.

Yet, for the purpose of this chapter, the "introductory programs" represent the most relevant political measures implemented in the three countries. Sweden

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[105] As quoted in Schmidt 2013, 204.

[106] If one follows the line of argumentation offered by Brochmann and Hagelund, the idea is that (welfare) policies for immigrants in Norway did not exist and the country was rather unprepared to host labor workers, while doing comparatively better in the welcoming of refugees, for which structures had been delineated in advance (Brochmann and Hagelund 2012, 160).

[107] Kosovo Albanians were those that were prominently granted temporary protection before being sent back.

[108] Cfr. Breidahl 2011.

was the first to implement the welcoming of refugees in facilities spread in the entire country, the "All Sweden Strategy", as the attempted solution to the housing problem and in order to favor integration. The 1998 Integration Act enacted in Denmark also the dispersion of refugees in structures placed throughout the national territory. In 2004, Norway joined its neighbors by establishing special introductory programs for refugees and their reunified families, designed to facilitate the integration of vulnerable groups into the labor market and the society at large. The 2005-6 reform establishing NAV, the "Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration", introduces a workfare-inspired orientation to integration issues. A remarkable difference among the three countries is that the introductory programs are mandatory in Denmark and Norway, while voluntary in Sweden, although the benefits remain in all cases connected to participation[109].

These programs have come to dominate since the policy approach and the integration structure of the three Scandinavian countries, and in Chapter Six I recount some of the stories from the refugees who experienced them. In her analysis of the introductory programs, Fernandes provides evidence for how the power of definition of vulnerable foreigners is a prerogative in the hands of politicians, and underlines accordingly the punitive character assumed by the latest policy developments[110]. Since lack of motivation and "non-normal" behaviors are unilaterally assumed to be attributes of the immigrant's mind, authorities operate such programs in a manner that has the generalized consequence of producing, in Fernandes' words, an "ethnification" of risks for the welfare state. Larsen (2013) provides another critical judgment of these programs, underlining that local communities of implementation turn into a place to assess if refugee families are adapting to "expectations of proper family life", modelled around Scandinavian notions. The type of evidence I have retrieved in field interviews links up to a similar conclusion.

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[109] Only Denmark though stated explicitly in the policy documents the additional need for refugees to conform "to an understanding of the values and norms of Danish society" (Fernandes 2013, 196).

[110] Fernandes 2013.

Moreover, the policy framework operates on the basis of a renewed distinction of welfare recipients in categories of active and passive, the latter group being on social assistance as well as special programs. Bak Jørgensen and Thomsen have provided examples for recent political narratives promoting the view of migrants and asylum seekers as scroungers, unwanted burdens that "will never (…) contribute to the welfare state recovery", vis-à-vis needy nationals that are deprived of resources[111]. Ethnicity has thus entered decisively the horizon of perceived problems for the welfare state, while the role of experiences of welfare and security is often overlooked. As anticipated, the introductory programs are part to a general policy reorientation that since the late 1980s contributed to the shift of the public discourse about integration from a question of rights to one of duties. The declared aims were to turn immigrants and refugees into active participants in the labor market and to ensure their economic self-reliance. This was meant to be achieved through vocational rehabilitation, counseling and training, besides language courses (usually making up for a fulltime set of activities). The most recent developments in the immigration policy of Scandinavian states registered the tightening of the asylum regime in Norway and Denmark (November 2015), and Sweden (June 2016), and the controversial bill in Denmark allowing police to seize cash and valuables of refugees upon their arrival, to compensate for their stay[112]. A more relevant innovation in Denmark's integration policy is the "Tripartite agreement on integration" signed in March 2016 by the Government, the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions and the Confederation of Danish Employers (DA). The main breakthrough of the agreement consists in the recognition of internship and training activities as priorities as well as catalysts for refugee integration— rather than prioritizing language skills over the others as before. This represents indeed an important step that somehow appears as a compromise between the need for a 'cultural'

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[111] Bak Jørgensen and Thomsen 2013, 9. The quote is from Peter Skaarup, Danish People's Party.

[112] The law came into effect in February 2016 and was first applied in June of the same year. "The controversial legislation allows police to confiscate cash and valuables above 10,000 kroner from arriving migrants and asylum seekers." Cfr. *The Local Denmark* 2016.

integration expressed since 1998 and the necessity to help people accessing the labor market.

The agreement, so as it looks, has significant implications for the welfare and social security of refugees, because a faster labor integration means the possibility of contributing more efficaciously to the welfare practices of their own community: a condition that usually fosters motivation and existential security in the concerned individuals, as I will show in next chapters. At the same time, the agreement does not necessarily represent a change in the substance of political discourses about welfare and recipients. Consider how the Prime Minister, Lars Løkke Rasmussen (Venstre), welcomed the agreement his government had just signed: "A job is the key to integration. Therefore it is vital that we get refugees into jobs faster, so they become a resource – instead of a burden – for our society"[113].

Trajectories of change in the welfare state

Welfare is the field of political action in which both equality and well-being for the society are realized. However, it is often based on the assumption that the needs of the population look alike. This consideration is not accidental, but is rooted in a process of political standardization of risk situations achieved by the state over time. Economic planning has become in fact a vital activity for the welfare state, that in order to function properly and be sustainable over time requires not just a law-abiding society, but also a community of citizens with long-term and stable preferences for state provision of welfare from cradle to the grave.

In this specific form of welfare group, therefore, state institutions and state assistance have developed into the fully legitimized means of welfare provision to achieve the goal of social security, by eroding the space for alternative arrangements of solidarity and by promoting individualized entitlement to social rights. In order to ensure their own goal of surviving, mature Scandinavian welfare states displayed a preference for different levels of persuasion towards

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[113] As quoted in Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark's website. See:
(http://um.dk/en/news/newsdisplaypage/?newsid=9ede0041-f303-42db-8f52-a4556ff3e96a).

those who deviated from the established norms of the good citizen, often influenced by the prevailing discourses of the time[114]. By the same token, the population has grown increasingly attached to a system that indeed is successful in ensuring high levels of social security and reducing socio-economic vulnerability. However, the long-term experience of such benefits tied to life in the national space and the threat to lose them contributes to make of welfare "scroungers" an opportunistic theme for political campaigns.

Against this background, my interviews will provide evidence to argue against the idea of existing standard risk constructions for all individuals; the examples will highlight how different needs can be within the society, precisely for the diverse, even if not necessarily incompatible, understandings of welfare, rooted in historical and cultural mechanisms of insurance. I will show that as standardizing social policies of the dominant society are extended to refugees, there are mixed consequences for both the factual wellbeing of these individuals and the pejorative categorizations these same individuals undergo in the society.

Moreover, I have indicated above that Scandinavian societies are per se facing tensions, due to the asymmetry between citizens' experiences and expectations connected to welfare, which are *de facto* challenging the normative principles established in the golden years of the welfare state. A polyphony of shifting semantic evokes the historical phase of change in question: from passive to active social policies; from rights to duties; from public to private provision; from short-term social support to permanent source of revenue; from stability to vulnerability; from unconditional to conditional benefits; from clients to users; from ethical demands to economic incentives; from sympathy to scapegoating. As a matter of fact, the lexicon of the welfare state changed strikingly and today reminds closely of that of financial markets:

> Management by objectives, management by outcomes, total quality management and other management 'schools' have become familiar to service providers. Plans to create a split between purchasers and providers of the services, to encourage competition between providers and to build contract-based relationships between

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[114] Harsløf and Ulmestig 2013, 7.

provider units and purchasing public authorities have been presented in all Nordic countries.[115]

As Petersen contends, while Social Democrats attempted at demonstrating that the new economic thinking of the 1970s-1980s conformed to the party's consolidated ideology, it was instead a "genuine change" that altered the existing relation state-citizen[116]. Because of these reforms, the old division of deserving and undeserving groups is revived, this time in economic terms, based on who contributes to society and who does not. Social democracy faced the ascendancy of economic strategies, and the focus on structural and global reasons for inequality has lost ground to blaming the poor individual's behavior instead. The changing understanding of the economy, in fact, is increasingly transforming the (global) market from the place where inequality is created, to the place where solutions are found. Therefore, the blame for people's economic destitution becomes a question of having or not having the skills required in the market, as well as the efforts put to acquire them: social rights have become inseparable from work.

According to some, the picture of change provided above represents nothing less than the "disintegration of the traditional principles of social solidarity", substituted by the contractual establishment of social bonds[117]. Others have pinpointed the contemporary lack of a narrative about the good society that could address the occurred changes and suggest new forms of solidarity[118]. In the light of the historical analysis, I believe that the aspiration to standardization remains an important locomotive for current governmental action, as well as a rule of thumb for consensus-making. For the same reason, however, political games benefit from identifying potential 'weakest links' in the society, i.e. those who behave differently from expectations, in order to legitimate their action (including coercive measures), and to justify welfare retrenchments[119].

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[115] Lehto, Moss, and Rostgaard 2002, 112.

[116] Petersen 2015, 140.

[117] Rosanvallon 2000, 4.

[118] See Jørn Henrik Petersen's interview in a *Politiken* article on February 15, 2014.

[119] As a matter of fact, social expenditure (both as share of GDP and at constant prices) has grown in the last twenty-five years in Scandinavian and OECD countries (OECD 2017). Denmark: from 20.3 in 1980 to 28.7 in 2016; Norway:

In this logic, the influx of refugees and migrants has made evident that standardization processes set precise cultural boundaries: the constructed ideas of the family, the understanding of fixed abode and mobility, the definition of working age, among other things, reflect both successes and limits of the welfare state's development, and both opportunities and obstacles for integration within. The transfer of responsibility from the state to the citizen remains incomplete, as it takes place in accordance with rules, procedures, and expectations set by the welfare state, because these are linked to the state's own economic viability. Similarly, the cultural normativity of welfare provision is overall retained, with the risk that what is actually transferred to non-national citizens is the mere blame for shortcomings in integration processes: the singling out of specific problematic, if not 'deviant' groups in the society, should be thus treated as a 'chronic' condition characterizing the mechanisms of the welfare state.

This same dynamic has prompted the ethnicization of welfare and social security issues. Poor, nomads, prostitutes and unemployed workers offered for long time in the history of welfare states the prioritized classes targeted by state social intervention. With the institutional strengthening of nation-states, the ethnic criterion has largely substituted or fused with the previous categorizations in the definition of who represents a "burden" for the society, consequently justifying the pressure put on refugees and immigrants for their contribution to the welfare state. While this may be seen as a legitimate request, I argue that this political development overlooks a number of factors undermining people's security that will be presented in the next two chapters.

Conclusion: standardizing the nation

The presence of vulnerable categories has been a recurrent societal feature in the last centuries throughout Europe: what has changed remarkably is the sum of explanations and solutions that have been applied to deal with them[120]. "Poor"

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from 16.1 to 25.1 in the same period; Sweden: from 24.8 to 27.1. OECD average increased from 14.9 to 21. Welfare cost containment, if not expansion, have thus been more popular than retrenchment, and are more in line with the established normative principle of welfare from cradle to the grave.

[120] Jones and Novak 2012, 3.

since the Middle Age were characterized by specific moral and medical understandings of their condition; the 'underclass' emerged from industrialization indicated in its very name the key economic dimension of the problem and the necessary medicine, social insurance. Yet, in the use of recent linguistic formulations— such as "immigrant" or "refugee", all previous definitions seem to have condensed, and are at the same time reconnected primarily to the alien origin of these people; there is little or no recognition at all of the social factors that had them primarily falling and remaining in more or less vulnerable conditions. Since welfare policies, practices and understandings in Scandinavia are highly shaped by ideals of place-bound social membership, politics has consequently found in the recipients' foreign background a pervasive and dialectic means for reproduction. I stress though that this political manipulation reflects the unavoidable friction embedded in the conceptualization of welfare provision as a national project, through appeal to a past set of values and ideals of good society that can be hardly reproduced in the same fashion[121].

In nationalism theory, "banal nationalism" is the notion stating the existence of collections of ideological habits that reproduce the nation-state in the mundane. We have to expand the same concept also in the field of welfare legislation and enactment, to underline how certain policies contain undetected structures that reflect the state's experiences of societal intervention described in this chapter. Within welfare policy, the "banal" is represented by the occurred process of standardization of risks that strove to transform every potential element of societal dysfunction in a predictable, organized one. This analytical passage is deemed essential by the author for a thorough understanding the premises of the 'encounter' that I will describe in Chapter Six.

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[121] Wickström 2015.

CHAPTER VI
Social security and welfare among the Somalis in Scandinavia

Introduction: from Somali-Somali to Danish-Danish

The time is ripe for shifting the focus from theoretical elaborations to the examination of the subjective insights that I have gathered regarding how Somalis recollect their views about welfare and security in Scandinavian countries. I will be concerned with tracing instances of negotiation, reshaping and reformulation of welfare practices occurring in everyday life; similarly, I will also reflect on the role of individual stories and collective constructions in determining people's idea of what is good for them and the rest of the society. In fact, beyond what we can establish empirically, it is important to note that also people's specific perceptions around these issues can concur in realizing certain behaviors and understandings in relation to matters of public relevance. My argument is that among Somalis, past experiences directly connected to welfare and security can exercise only a little impact on the motivation of security-oriented actions in the present, as well as on determining future expectations, leaving thus a vacuum in the present that is consequently experienced as a loss of what I have called ontological security.

Yet, this is not just a Somali intra-community issue whose origin and termination coincide with the need to integrate. As the quotations I provide in this chapter clearly suggest, these internal developments are trigged also by the interaction with the welfare state, and the latter thus must become an integrant part of the discussion: even more so, since this interplay often resembles more of a game of perceptions between the parts. With specific reference to welfare, it seems that both media and politics have forged a public opinion that is prone to expect welfare abuse and misuse on the part of the Somalis, stereotyping the negative cases, while becoming consequently shortsighted in appreciating instances of change. By the same token, some Somalis have developed a discouraging level of distrust towards Scandinavian welfare institutions, looking for possible alternatives to go about their needs.

We have to concede that the post-war 'new' life into a well-oiled welfare state brings about incredible challenges for the Somalis, as they slowly learn to replace the negative visions of state institutions accumulated in the past with a reframed space of interaction where mutual collaboration is seen instead as possible and fruitful. This process requires an amount of time that most likely exceeds the individual's lifespan, and should be perhaps measured in terms of generations, in order for us to discern some visible effects. In very truth, however, some changes that we may well consider positive are in effect already noticeable, but they seem to fall off the radar, either because we only adopt 'canonic' research methods or because, when we detect them, these cases result less appealing to our audience. "Positive stories", in other words, "don't sell", to say it in the exact way many interlocutors put it to me: this lack of attention reinforces the negative impressions already nourished in everyday public discourses.

There is a particular efficacious way to summarize the vitality in the welfare dynamics that are object of this study, and it was formulated neither in a university room nor in a government department, but during a meeting in a quite bar in the city of Copenhagen. According to one young Somali man I met there, the entire issue of his community integration in the society has a specific temporal dimension that can be framed in the following fashion:

> (D_5): My dad is Somali-Somali. I am Somali-Danish because I am still more Somali than I am Danish. My son is Danish-Somali. But his son will be Danish-Danish: it's just four generations. Then all these links with Somalia and Africa will disappear.

This captivating way of disentangling the whole question brought together the experiences of many among my interlocutors, and I believe that it is of great interest for several reasons. In particular, I like the way it hints at a sense of identity on the move across both *time* (the passing of the four generations) and *space* (from having links with Africa/Somalia, to only Denmark or possibly narrower-defined areas): in other words, identity is best understood as a 'process' one performs and reinforces through practice, rather than being something fixed and unchangeable over time. In addition to that, I find his idea to conform to what Kristin Langellier has retrieved for the Somalis in the US, where it is said that narrative performances related to identity help pushing back societal dominant

discourses, while creating "a space of possibilities in the confluence of contradiction and ambivalence"[1]. Categorizations become thus increasingly a slippery ground.

Finally, the same quotation opens the way to postulate an existing relation between the quantity/quality of the interaction with the homeland and the degree to which one feels 'Danish', 'Somali' or a combination of both. This latter point brings me back to the argument made earlier about the saliency of participation into the traditional safety net for the shaping notions of belonging: geographical, or for that matter national criteria do not exercise instead the same influence. Therefore, the passage from one of the aforementioned four hyphenated stages of belonging to the next one should be reflected, if not motivated by, a similar and gradual change in welfare practices as well as in constructions of security. This chapter will try to shed light on this process.

Welfare à la Somali in Scandinavia

To start with, one could wonder how the picture of welfare practices among the Somalis in Scandinavian countries looks like; after all, it makes sense to pose such question prior to talk about whatever is changing. Hence, I propose here an overview of the welfare practices that I was able to delineate through my fieldwork, integrating my findings with the existing literature where considered more pertinent. It must be noted that these practices are influencing the constructed and the more or less factual sense of security of the individuals that choose to resort to them. In most cases, they overlap with state provision of welfare: sometimes, they do so by coming up besides state-granted assistance and, at other times, by creating disadvantageous interferences between the two. For the sake of clarity, a first, general division of Somali welfare practices can be operated between the provision of 'immaterial' and 'material' services.

IMMATERIAL SERVICES. This first group comprises principally the circulation of information that requires specific knowledge of the Scandinavian welfare system

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[1] Presenting the case of a Somali young woman refugee, Langellier (2010, 89) so illustrates the said confluence: "Somali *and* American, feminist *and* Muslim, black *and* not-African American". She criticizes thus the dominant narratives about immigrants that still favour an "or" rather than an "and" type of relation (original italics).

and its bureaucracy. Ever since their massive arrivals in the 1990s, Somalis have shown a preference for mouth-to-mouth communication between family members rather than for the direct interaction with state authorities, whether embodied by social workers, medical staff or migration office's representatives[2]. Asking relatives about a vast range of things is not a complementary activity that an average Somali does besides the use of other, somehow 'conventional' channels: the words of the relatives hold absolute priority over a range of sources like the internet; national statistics; accounts of non-Somali individuals; or over the information provided by the appointed office on a given matter, and make up for a crucial part of the decision making of the one who is asking. Therefore, more experienced individuals (usually those who have been living for long time in the concerned country) provide the new arrived ones with general information about the new culture. They support them in matters of interaction with bureaucracy and institutions through their linguistic skills and other acquired competencies and they also accompany other Somalis to meetings with the authorities. Somalis resort to exchanges of information also to receive first-hand experiences from trusted family members about the quality of life in other places, and this has been important for the recent movements to the UK: the essential characteristic behind this circulation of knowledge is that the information spread by family members are considered *trustworthy* sources. In this group shall be counted also a number of activities that are motivated by the sense of belonging to the collectiveness: babysitting and children care by grandparents are typical examples of that; yet also hosting a travelling relative for the night or, in some cases, for much longer periods of time represents one of these cases. Finally, the care of the elderly, mainly of one's own parent/s, belongs to this category too (one interlocutor told me of an old woman who had received in-home assistance for ten years from her daughter). I find it useful to remind that in Western societies these in-kind resources are usually purchased outside the immediate family circle, rather than being exchanged within it in return of other services. This fact qualifies them even more as immaterial, and suggests that Somalis perform also *low-priced*, if not free, forms of reciprocal assistance.

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[2] Nielsen 2004, 8.

MATERIAL SERVICES. This second cluster of welfare practices involves the actual circulation of money around the world-spread extended family and contains a number of activities that emphasize, notwithstanding their variety, the interdependency of people and families. A first sub-type includes *unidirectional flows*, namely transfers on more regular basis, usually from the segments of the family living in richer countries towards those staying in the homeland or neighbor countries. Unidirectional flows are:

- **Remittances**: This is the most evident as well as studied area of research, which in the case of the Somalis in Scandinavia has gone as far as exploring the frequency, the amounts and the reasons for people to remit. We know, for example, that 74% of Somalis in Norway send remittances monthly, few times yearly, or occasionally[3]. We also know from recent surveys that over 40% of people in northern Somalia rely on remittances to meet their basic daily needs, such as food, health and education: data show quite significantly that the money received are being spent primarily on food; basic non-food; education, while less than 5% each on business and services[4]. Contrary to what is often thought, remittances are not primarily configured as a form of investment in the homeland but remain for their major part a full-scale expression of transnational welfare by means of income sustenance. Remittances fall then into the scope of my research through this precise dimension, namely in the way they are used to curb the insecurities faced by the household.

- **Humanitarian and development assistance**: Several respondents pointed out that the Somalis are increasingly resorting to planned money collection to ensure humanitarian assistance in the case of emergencies, such as the frequent droughts that afflict the homeland, as well as to engage in development projects. In this case, they agree on the sum to be collected monthly, usually inferior to 200 DKK (circa 30 US dollars), and on the target areas, which typically are their areas of origin. This type of assistance has grown even bigger in importance since organizations like the Danish Refugee Council and the Swedish International

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[3] Tharmalingam 2011a; 2011b.

[4] FSNAU 2013, 12.

Development Cooperation Agency have opened specific "Diaspora Programs" to assist young Somali-Danish NGOs in developing skills and applying for funds to finance their projects in Somalia. The scope of these projects ranges from interventions in the education sector (e.g. building of schools; vocational training) to health or water provision. Interestingly enough, in this modality of help the focus is not placed on the household or the family, but enjoys a wider breadth. Hence, even if family members tend to live very close one with the other, with this type of projects it is not the single clan that access or enjoy the benefits of the given assistance: chances are that also those residing in the surrounding area, or the neighbors, can have positive returns. Ideally, there is potentiality for these projects to be a social laboratory for extra-clan solidarity, yet not without issues, as I will mention in Chapter Seven.

I have called the second sub-types of material services *circular flows*, because in these cases we see more diverse, yet interactional transfers between family members.

- **Religious welfare collection:** As part of their Islamic faith, Somalis collect the zakat, the obligatory alms destined primarily to the poor and the needy in the community. Religion provides also the fundamental moral basis for practices of welfare, care and solidarity.

- **Other forms of planned, traditional assistance**: In the diaspora, Somalis engage in several other forms of money collection for welfare purposes, and some of these practices are being adjusted to fit in the new environment. The most frequent welfare collection instruments are money pool known with the names of *ayuuto* (from the Italian 'aiuto', help), *hagbad* and *shalongo* and involve principally women, while men are kept away from it to the point of evening denying the practice when asked[5]. Gathered in credit groups, they would ideally contribute the same amount to a common savings fund on a monthly basis, at the end of which the person who is most in need would present her case to the group and collect all the money, which she can spent autonomously thereafter. It is not unusual to agree on a monthly investment that in sum corresponds to several hundred US dollars: in the United Kingdom, it is said that a shalongo group can

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[5] The multiple names reflect the different ways in which these activities are known across Somalia.

raise between £5,000 and £12,000 annually for women in need[6]. The idea behind these practices is to get together those who are not able to save money, to build up a sort of saving fund that is interest-free (as interests are *haram*, forbidden) and versatile for micro-financing or even larger purposes[7]. Contrary to the manner in which the practice of sending remittances is habitually intended, these funds can be instead used also for needy people in the diaspora.

- Emergencies, special events and non-planned collections: money can be donated also in case of unexpected circumstances, like for example health issues (travels to the hospital and consequent expenditures for medical treatments). Events like marriages or school graduation typically require the extended family members to donate a gift, even in the case they are not attending the wedding or the ceremony. Finally, monetary transfers within the extended family can be used for other less ordinary needs, such as buying house furniture or cars, or again with the purpose of helping a kin completing education (also from parents to sons/daughters).

We move on to the last set of functions that have a say in welfare, and most notably in the security of the Somalis in the diaspora. These are elements pertinent to Somali *traditional governance* and perhaps the most contented matters among the Somalis today.

- Xeer. As seen before, this term refers to the laws that regulate many aspects of social life between Somalis. In Somalia as much as in the diaspora, they have never been codified, remaining thus oral law passed down from one generation to the other. For families, knowing that 'there is an agreement' between them (this is a typical formula for indicating the stipulation of xeer agreements) has been a traditional source of security. Although the scope of the xeer has reduced dramatically in Scandinavian countries, in some cases it is still a primary tool to

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[6] Hassan, Harun. 2002. "'Not housekeepers any more': Somali women of the diaspora." *Open Democracy*, November 7. https://www.opendemocracy.net/people-africa_democracy/article_692.jsp

[7] On Somalinet.com, I have retrieved this interest post by user Lamagoodle: "If you see someone constructing a new home overseas, If you see a new immigrant who has risked high seas to come to Europe, If you see a Somali driving a new car, If you see a Somali going back home to brag about overseas life, If you have witnessed an increase in charitable enterprises amongst Somalis in recent years, If you meet a woman spot a new set of dahab, a new dirac, yes, even a new husband. If someone you knew back home has in recent years amassed some wealth, if you see the above and more… Chances are that there is Ayuuto/Hagbad involved".

seek dispute settlements, for which it also legislates the type and amount of compensation to be paid.

- Mag payments. These payments are the compensation that the extended family of the offending clan pays to the offended clan, and follow the decision taken by the clan elders on both sides summoned for the occasion. The entity of the reparation is valued in terms of camels or cattle, but it is paid in cash for more than obvious reasons. Mag payments ensure thus that physical or moral harm are compensated for without resorting to retaliation, and the certainty of the compensation contributes to the preservation of the safety net.

- Authority structure. The observance of traditional norms requires also the respect for the elder's (men) traditional authority. However, especially the young Somalis of the diaspora increasingly erode their authority, therefore jeopardizing the whole application of the body of rules, and creating a sort of generational fault line that I will explore in this chapter.

In the end of this overview of the organization of the safety net among the Somalis in Scandinavian societies, I find it worthwhile to highlight some of its attributes: the structure is *transnational*, because it involves family members wherever they are; it is *inexpensive*, because many times it does not even require the monetary purchasing of services. What I can anticipate from the analysis that will follow, is that welfare practices are perceived less and less as *trustworthy*, in consequence of which their *obligatory* nature is also being questioned.

Lack of security upon arrival and the safety net

Certainly, the refugees that came during the 1990s are examples of those "Somali-Somalis" that my interlocutor alluded to. The direct experience of the cruelest part of the war at home has marked their life with long-term psychological consequences, and the more or less intense manifestations of post-migration traumas deriving from violence and loss of family members have been given a fair degree of attention in academic research[8]. Forced to flee brusquely their native land because the civil war came knocking on their door, the social environment

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[8] See for example Bhui et al. (2003); Byrskog and al. (2014) for a specific account of women's exposure to violence before migration.

that surrounded them changed deeply once they arrived in Scandinavia. The lack of footing, acculturation difficulties and loneliness have been the most considerable reasons for the persisting feelings of existential uncertainty they had to endure and I was surprised in realizing the several forms that insecurity took since the time of their arrival.

Threats to security upon arrival were manifest for example in the lack of information about potential transfers to new camps and about the procedures and the processes necessary for the granting of the residence permit. It was not just a question of waiting until the decision was taken, but also of understanding where to get information in the first place: back in the homeland, Somalis used a consistent amount of time daily for getting the latest news or gathering the information they need by visiting the neighbors in their house, or by meeting people in the streets, or again at café shops, restaurants and local markets. But there was no way to apply the same to any of the Scandinavian countries, either because such 'Somali' places did not exist yet in the 1990s or because people did not have the kind of information they were looking for anyway. One Somali man so recounted the sources of insecurity that haunted him after that he came to Sweden and was first assigned to a camp, in 2007:

> (S_2). There was insecurity because, first, you don't know when this movement will stop. It can take you anywhere, unless you have someone you know to take an address: I know Marco so he is my address. But if you have no friends, then they [Migrationsverket] just take you anywhere they want. That was one thing and the other thing is that you don't know whether you'll get the papers or not. And that was another confusion that you didn't know about...so it was fear also, so much of insecurity.

The lack of information about the procedures adopted by institutions is not confined to the early time of their stay, and it actually traces an important element of continuity in the stories I have listened to. The same interlocutor pointed out another source of insecurity, this time concerning the fate of the other family members.

> (S_2). There was insecurity about it because one fear was coming from within, one from outside: everything happening in the camp, between you and the officials, between you and the other Somalis, that was internal. There is another fear coming from outside that you would get through phone calls: that a rocket landed on your house and nobody knows where your family is; people drowned in the sea and

maybe members of your family are among them because they were in Libya last time they talked to me. So, this is the confusion that you have. You live between these two fears: whether you will get the papers or not; whether the family becomes safe or not; and whether the economy will allow you to help them from here. So, you have also economic problems.

As it emerges, the challenges of integration in the new societies stand against the backdrop of continued unrest in the native land, a concern that becomes even more palpable in the diaspora through the constant thoughts and frequent communication with their siblings: the phone ringing to bring distressful news of all sorts has become an iconic image to describe a consistent portion of the life of the Somali generations in the diaspora[9]. Unfortunately, the overall situation at home has not changed much in recent years, because the comparatively less violent residues of the civil war have been negatively compensated by the rise of al-Shabaab and its terroristic attacks, as well as by the occupation of the country by foreign troops. Somalis reported to me that these two facts are indeed perpetuators of insecurity as they still force many people to systematic relocations in order to avoid fights and abuses connected with their presence on the territory. One of my interlocutors affirmed to have survived himself a terroristic attack in a hotel, simply by not moving at all from his chair in the inner yard of the building, until the bullets that were flying around, and just few meters from him, stopped. Given such considerations, we evince that many among the Somalis in the diaspora never really abandoned a state of mental distress, and had no chance to transform the memories of their own experience of violence into a somehow distant and less painful past. Many would still travel to Somalia for vacation, family visits or business purposes, but even when they do not do that, the members of the extended family continuously remind them about the atrocities of violence, and death, wherever they are.

When we apply this more accurate interpretative framework to our context, we are in the position to figure out that the arrival to destination, the asylum application and even the final granting of the residence permit do not represent for

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[9] Overseas phone calls are the most common instrument to get in contact with the diaspora and are also used to announce in the painful event of the death of a sibling, or to request financial support. Several studies about the Somali diasporas around the world indicate that many Somalis have developed anxiety and stress towards the potential calls coming from Somalia (see for example Lindley 2007; Gabowduale 2010).

the Somalis the idealized ultimate stage of their personal journey to stability. Instead, the achievement of these goals represents a mere step further in the execution of that strategy of risk reduction pursued through relocation and spreading of family members in different places. Families in Somalia, I have explained before, send in fact their members abroad with the specific purpose of establishing a new channel for financial assistance and getting more members sponsored to the country where the first has managed to obtain asylum. Consider for example this conversation:

> (N$_2$). My family: we are five children and my mum and father. I got help from my uncle's son, my cousin; he helped me financially to come to Norway. So, I could provide for my family.
>
> Me: from which country was he helping?
>
> (N$_2$). From England. He provided us money so I could travel to Norway, get educated and start to support my family. His main goal is that he has got off me, because he has responsibility to my father, because he is his uncle. So, he had to provide money for us every month. So, if I am here now, I am helping my family, so he is out. (…). So the system goes. All the families, everybody is stable in life; (…) for example: my older brothers are now in Malaysia and Kenya. I support them every month sending 300 dollars, just to live and 2400 dollars for student fees. Because, I am hoping that once he is done, he can just help others.

Therefore, we have to think welfare practices always within the broader picture of the transnational web of obligations entangling the household. And in this sense, we see how the arrival of a Somali individual to one of the Scandinavian countries corresponds in reality to an escalation of increasing responsibilities, expectations as well as obligations to fulfil, in which internal and external sources of stress and anxiety often overlap. We derive also that the urgency to better their own economic situation is another aspect to take in careful consideration when describing the life of the Somalis in Scandinavia, in reason of the far-reaching implications that stretch well beyond the most obvious reasons. In fact, besides fulfilling personal needs in the diaspora, economic disposition is also necessary if one wants to participate in that transnational net of social obligations and thus avoid isolation. Especially since the expectations of the branch of the family in Somalia (which has often contributed its own resources for arranging the journey to Europe) are now high and put a constant pressure on the sender.

Two additional factors add up to this mixture of economic pressure and lack of information: first, the troubled relation individual/state inherited from recent history inhibits communication with government institutions. For those Somalis beginning their new life in Scandinavia, whatever the time of their arrival, trust is a scarce item which they decide to put on the safety net of the clan, in place of the state, whose failing in the homeland represents after all the exact reason why they fled. While it does not mean that this relation of suspicion is destined to crystallize over time, without possibilities of development, it seems to be diffuse among newcomers.

Secondly, upon arrival the Somalis are cut off from their safety net of family members, who can play instead a potential positive role as cultural brokers in facilitating communication and mutual understanding with state institutions. In response to this danger for ontological security, it is useful to recall here that the Somalis reaching northern Europe would go or try to go in cities where they know they would find other members of their clan, with the purpose of accessing the safety net it offered. In fact, they expect these members to be already acquainted with local bureaucracy and trust them to a much higher level than any institutional representative. When I asked one of my interlocutors, whose family moved to Denmark well before the civil war, about the role of the clan, she recalled:

> (D$_{14}$). I think it can help you with security or something like that, because I remember, when I was younger (…) we lived in Copenhagen: my mother, she had a lot of women coming over because they had nowhere to go. But they knew that she was from the same clan, so people were like when they came to Copenhagen, people were like: "which clan are you from? Oh I know this lady living there; go to her, she will help you". And then my mum couldn't say anything else than "welcome". She couldn't say "get out of my house" and then they came and they lived there [laughs]. She helped them a lot because it was her clan. But I don't think now it is an issue, because everybody knows someone because there are more Somalis, but back then, in the 1980s and 1990s she opened the door for a lot of women because they were from our clan. So, there was like this community and this...they would stick together.

Decades after (the following interlocutor came to Sweden in 2007), the clan's functions of providing information and collecting welfare for the safety net emerges overtly still:

> (S$_2$). When a person comes to Sweden he needs help, he needs help. The first place he's trying to go is to where he thinks his clan is more predominant because they

have been for quite some time before so they show the way. As at times they are able to speak Swedish, so they read the papers. It's information, that's the first thing the clan can provide. Information, because they can't read the paper and they don't know where to go for certain offices (…). So information is number one. And number two is the welfare collection: we still do this welfare collection within the family. You are supposed to be part of the clan: when you are paying this tribal collection, it's an extended system from the Somali rule from Somalia to Sweden because the person still needs to be connected to the country, so they send this money back to the country. It's a way of protecting your identity, your role, your place in the community.

However, moving to different places to get closer to family members and reweave the safety net is not an easy thing for Somali refugees, as we shall see now.

"I thought I came to the end of the world": introductory programs

In the late 1980s, the total number of Somalis in the Scandinavian region was still limited when Swedish authorities decided to disperse refugees countrywide in accordance with the strategy that came to be known as the "All Sweden" policy, which was later applied in a similar fashion in Denmark and Norway too. This specific measure was supposed to favor integration by locating the refugees in small, local urban and rural contexts, considered to provide conductive environments for cross-cultural interactions. In terms of contents, these programs include a mix of language courses, civic guidance, and labor market as well as vocational training, and follow in all three countries the policy shift to activation, emphasizing immigrants' duties[10]. In their aims of empowerment and increased participation in the labor market, these policies collided with some essential tenets of Somali welfare, eventually hampering the attempts to reconstitute a safety net. In particular, they reproduce national categories in at least two senses: through the concept of the individual citizen and the understanding of physical mobility. The former is assured by the elaboration of "individual plans" in collaboration with a caseworker, which defines the participant's aims and requirements through activities tailored to the resources and needs of each client.

As for the latter, the policies at that time had based their strategy on the assumption that a refugee would stay in place while not maintaining social obligations that could possibly require traveling around. An assumption that is

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[10] Fernandes 2015.

also rooted in the tradition of national authorities' intervention and control in the area of people's mobility, as underlined in the previous chapter. Therefore, authorities did not contemplate independent mobility in the list of what they considered the refugee's priorities. However, Somalis have instead obligations extending beyond the nuclear family and stretching across national borders, which require them to reduce those very distances created by the national repartition plans. A Somali man who works as freelance interpreter recounted:

> (D_{15}). There was a phone interpretation: the person, a lady, was on the phone. And I was sitting with people from the Kommune or something like that, and she was on the phone: she was living in another part in the country, Denmark, she was saying to that person, she wanted to leave to help her in-mother in Somalia. (…). That officer, or the social worker said to her: "no, you can't: your mother is your mother and she is now with you, so you don't have to think about her". And she [the Somali lady] said: "even if I am losing all my privileges, I am leaving. So you have to know that". She went there.

The incapability of performing certain welfare practices that would require frequent movements or relocations, in reason of the consequent allowance reduction applied by authorities, added up to the said psychological distress that accompany the escape from war and the following resettlement in a peaceful yet still stranger place. As predictable as it may appear, this led many to feel isolated. One interlocutor, recalling to mind the time at the refugee camp in Sweden, told me:

> (S_2). I just felt lost in the beginning with no footing anywhere. I had no people I knew; I had no friends; and I had no social contacts and then I was in the hand of the Migrationsverket and then I had to follow their instructions: I was put in a camp and then that is where I was spending my time not knowing when I would move out of the camp...and the time was too long, and people were waiting...and even if it was few weeks, it is very exhausting. You eat three times a day and have nothing to do. You just go around the camp. I had even volunteered to work in the kitchen in my camp. They refused, because they said we have to go through the employment office so we cannot ask a refugee to work here

And his was a common refrain I could hear throughout my interviews; the following, for example, is the similar experience of a Somali woman in Norway:

> (N_3). When I came to Norway first, in 2008, they sent me to a camp which is almost 24 hours train from here [Oslo]. And then they told me when I was going there: "It's just here, in the middle of Norway". And then the place...the people who lives there is only 500, and in the camp we were almost 200, from different

places: Somalis, Eritreans, Arabs (…). We slept in eight people in this room: two Arabs, two Eritreans,… (…). There is sun there the whole day, there is only one shop. There is anywhere to go, and there is only one bus coming, and after one hour comes another one. And if you want to go on that bus, you to have book it two weeks in advance. And then, it's only one boat which comes also...but we are not allowed to go on that boat, because it's a tourist boat which comes from Germany and goes to Norway. I am like...it was like isolation. When I went there, I was crying eight days, because I thought I came to the end of the world.

The welfare nationalism enshrined in the introductory programs found thus a primary terrain of confrontation with Somali expectations on the question of physical mobility, analyzed here especially for its underlying dimension of being a solution to problems of exclusion from the family safety net and related welfare practices. The excerpt below illustrates the experiences of disappointment:

(N₂). They just want to start working, they have high hopes you know... [but] they can't leave the camp: if they do, just for...vacation, you know, you have to sign and they have to know where you are, something like that. People feel trapped (…). Most of them are here to get a life, to start over, and they don't feel that.

Insecurity came also under less predictable forms: for example, not because it was triggered by violence threats, but "because of peace", as the memory of another Somali had it. The quiet and silent neighborhoods of Northern Europe in fact reminded some about the time that in Somalia used to precede a military clash between armed groups: silence was a sign of preparation for war. This reflection, anyway, should not be interpreted as if Somalis were fearing for their physical security in Scandinavia: it provides though a tangible example to illustrate the extent to which memories and post-trauma conditions were taking a psychological toll on their new lives. It shows, I believe, that the past is continuously used to make sense of the present[11].

"From the Camel to the Chicken": changing dynamics in the nuclear family

The general process of integration in Scandinavia, that transition from the initial "Somali-Somali" to the other hyphenated identities, does not realize without struggles: the vicissitudes attributable to the cultural transition in Scandinavian

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[11] A process that persists over time: in their studies on the health of the Somalis in exile Svenberg, Mattsson and Skott (2009, 282) retrieved that the "memories of the native country served as a background and a contrast to their [the Somalis participating in the study] experiences in Sweden. Their identities were still basically influenced by their past, even after many years of becoming Swedish citizens".

countries are indeed well perceptible and my respondents can be at times extremely amusing and simultaneously sharp in voicing their opinions about it. One of interlocutors found a particular efficacious bucolic allegory to convey his idea of the transition from Somalia to Sweden:

> (S2). How do you fit in Scandinavian countries when you come from Somalia, with a nomadic background, with a nomadic mentality? The mindset is different. (…) the pride you had....the scope of vision was much bigger as if you could even take the whole world by yourself. That's what we think as Somalis. That nothing is difficult. And then, you immediately come to a situation where you have to think very small things, you have to worry about very small things...about the train: when is leaving? [laughs] about the car: check yourself if you have the keys of the car [laughs again]. Things that we delegated to the kids and wives while we took care of the camel, the big thing, and how to defend in case of other people came to attack us; and how to sharp our tools; and make poetry (…). It's almost like coming from a camel raiser....because the camel is big and pride....now I feel like someone who has been put in charge to take care of the chicken. Where the chicken goes, you follow...the herder of chicken. So you have to look every chicken, every herd will go somewhere. So you cannot control herds! [laughs]. *From the camel to the chicken*. Big things...you worried about big things...about the water, about the cattle, and defending and that is where your pride came from. You would better take care of the camel, but here the better is to take care of the chicken: the better you take care of the chicken, the more progress you make. [my italics]

This quotation gives a sense of the cultural challenges awaiting the Somali man upon his arrival to Scandinavia, with a clear reference to the profound proudness deriving from certain traditional economic and gender-specific activities such as camel raising that I have explored in Chapter Four. But what precisely are these chickens with regards to life in Nordic countries? Essentially, they represent all those things that if on the one hand are apparently of little significance, on the other hand Somali men find difficult to put under control, forcing one to eventually strive quite a lot in order to catch up with them, in the fashion of the unpredictable run of a chicken in the farmyard. They may include various dimensions of the life experiences of the Somalis in Scandinavia such as all bureaucratic procedures; requirements; rules that often are poorly understood or little considered by the Somalis, and came as obstacles in respect to what they are trying to achieve. They may also be gendered activities like house chores.

In fact, for the Somali man in Scandinavia there is also something specific about pride and masculinity in connection with these responsibilities, as other examples in this chapter will illustrate. Therefore, the allegory quoted above may

well be considered the liberating as well as playful account of a Somali who made quite a considerable way in the society, as my interlocutor did indeed. But he only managed to reach that social position after passing himself through times of considerable existential uncertainty, economic distress and cultural negotiation with the values of the hosting society. It is time, thus, to unpack familiar dynamics in order to discover the different aspects responsible for change, and resistance to change, over time.

What is exactly happening in the domestic space of Somali houses, and how do forms of welfare nationalism affect Somali parents? There is one unfortunate phenomenon that Somali families in the three Scandinavian countries seem to have in common: the crisis of parenthood, characterized on top of other things by the rise of mono-parental families with divorced mothers and many children. To have an idea of the scope of the phenomenon, consider that a mentorship project in Copenhagen retrieved in 2011 that as many as the 80% of the women contacted were single mothers[12]. However, a specification is needed to distinguish between continuities and ruptures with the past in family questions and divorce. Divorce and remarriage are in fact rather common in Somali culture and, at least before the civil war, their rate were among the highest in Africa and also quite similar to those experienced in Western countries[13]. It is precisely for its incidence that a young male interlocutor recounted:

> (D13). Back then, it was not the end of the world if a couple got divorce because all the things were already taken care of. Like, before they got married, they would make a paper, a document saying if we get divorced, then the man has to provide financially (…). This is a protocol and everybody knows the rule.

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[12] Personal communication with the project leader (D7). In addition to that, a study on the health of Somali refugees in Sweden reported that out of the 13 Somali participants: five were divorced; three were married; two were youngsters with divorced parents; one was living alone; one was a 70-year old widow while one more was staying with friends at the time of the research. Therefore, slightly more than 50% of the participants were either divorcé/e or had divorced parents (Svenberg, Mattsson, and Skott 2009, 281). In the more recent study by Osman et al. (2016), in central Sweden, the divorce rate drops to 20% of the participants. In his investigation of Somali families in Norway, Gabowduale (2010) interviewed nine women aged between 29 and 61: five of them were divorced.

[13] A study conducted in 1986 in Southern Somalia and titled *Female Education in Somalia: a survey to Assess the Situation and Needs of Women*, involving 859 women, retrieved that 41% were divorced (2 of them had divorced as many as five times). None of the women had never married during her life (Ntiri 1989, 5). See also McFerson 1987, 10.

For this reason, even if certain inequalities exist and persist in the way men and women could access the institution of divorce (which certainly favored the former)[14], circumscribing the phenomenon in the diaspora to the sole question of emancipation of supposedly "oppressed" women do not represent a satisfying explanation alone, and reminds of Suszycki's narratives of welfare nationalism.

It is sufficient to consult the ample literature produced on the woman's role within Somalia's livelihood system since the explosion of the civil war, to get a different glimpse about the origin of their increasing socio-economic participation. In fact, ever since the war engaged men for protracted time away from home, women have taken the lead in ensuring family livelihood: as part of their survival strategies, they have in fact assumed heavier economic responsibilities for themselves, their children, their parents and in many instances for their spouses[15]. A young Somali woman in Oslo gave her impression on this question:

> (N2). In Somalia, the father and the mother are almost equal, but mostly is the father who is providing income to the family, and mums are always, most of them, at home. After the civil war, 1991, things changed. So, many men didn't have job to go; mothers went out to find a job that was suitable for them.

The economy of war thus started already a process that made of women the predominant breadwinners of the household in Somalia, although it has not been matched by a significant ascending political role in the homeland society[16]. Yet, the developments in the diaspora may have something to say also for this latter aspect in the future. A lot is happening also on the men's side. In the first place, the high unemployment rates among men are furthering the erosion of the

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[14] For example, "According to Islam, a woman is entitled to divorce her husband if he has left her without support and contact for more than 90 days" (Ibrahim 2004, 49), whereas if a man wants a divorce, all he has to do is repeat: "I divorce you" three times to his wife. After that, a three-month period of waiting will be necessary in order to make sure that the divorced woman is not pregnant.

[15] Unicef 2002.

[16] See Gardner and El Bushra 2004. Today, 70% of women in Somalia are believed to be breadwinners of their respective household (UNDP 2014).

breadwinner status that is traditionally expected of them and that is also profoundly rewarding in terms of social recognition[17].

In an interesting piece on gender roles in Somalia, Hassan Keynan explains that pastoral nomadism (as source of income); the clan system; and the state system have been three central factors for the making of the masculinized order in the Somali society, because they were all characterized among others by strong militarism, endless conflict, and perception of threat, which glorified the traits associated with the macho male[18]. Intuitively, their life in Scandinavia entails now the decline of practiced nomadism as well as the negotiation of their relations with the other two factors, leading to a consequent redefinition of the traditional male role associated with them: no more camels but chickens, a lot of chickens indeed, as seen before. Therefore, the man's privilege to be the head of the family comes under threat, with no immediate remedy, and he experiences a loss of pride and respect often leading to the abdication of familial responsibilities. Much more research is certainly needed on the processes of long-term reformulation of masculinity among the Somali men in the diaspora, and it will be very interesting to look at the way a sense of 'maleness' will be redefined in order to work out the relation between the self, the nuclear family and the transnational family in the diaspora.

Things are made more complicated by transnational obligations. In fact, in the meantime of the re-visitation of traditional gender roles two extended families (those of both spouses) call from Somalia and/or from its neighboring countries to ask for financial support for the household, whether for the medical treatment of one sibling, or the education of another and so on. The scarce financial capacity to respond to these call and the need to balance between the husband' and the wife's

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[17] The loss of economic power and its annexed masculinity is a problem afflicting an incredibly vast number of Somalis that have survived the war in Somalia or by finding refuge abroad. The erosion of their breadwinner status is something one can retrieve basically everywhere in the diaspora, and at least in Canada (Carrier 2007), Finland (Degni, Pöntinen, and Mölsä 2006), the United States (Abukar 2015) and Yemen (de Regt 2010). The crisis of the Somali man is often connected to the incidence of youth committing crimes, to drug consumptions and, of course, to the disintegration of the family. See for example the doctoral dissertation by Vinodh Kutty (2010) for the American case; the Master thesis by Kassim Gabowduale for the Norwegian case (2010); Kleist (2010) has written about masculinity and gender recognition in the cases of Denmark, Somaliland and the United Kingdom.

[18] Keynan 2000, 191.

family, make the nuclear family, not equipped with enough experiences on how to deal with such circumstances, more unstable and susceptible to implode:

> (N3). That's why they divorce, because me I help my family. My husband helps his family. If somebody tell us to send some money, who's first?

In this search for compromise in family budget allocation, Somali women enjoy quite a lot more influence over their husbands: in a sort of continuation of the post-civil war development that started in the native land, Somali families in the diaspora depend economically on women to a far greater extent than before. Women receive cash either because they work for paid employment or because they are supported by the welfare state. That support from the state, as well as from the society, is an element of innovation for family dynamics. One that puts the once gender-specific roles on the verge of change in the diaspora: welfare measures and gender equality legislations exemplify quite well the primary type of governmental support women receive, while at the social level empathy stems precisely from the idea that women in Somalia may have been oppressed by their men. However, some of my interlocutors reported that also divorcee Somali women are increasingly encouraging other women to do the same.

Given the new circumstances, the married couple is forced to a negotiation about the respective allocation of the time to spend on house chores and other responsibilities, such as disciplining and raising children, since the wife has fewer free hours and sometime even fewer than her husband. My research has not investigated specifically this aspect of the problem, which I reckon could be a topic of doctoral research in itself, but it seems nevertheless that the destiny of the marriage is often decided by the very outcome of this negotiation. One woman in Copenhagen explained to me the kernel of the issue in these terms:

> (D7). Women can overtake many tasks simultaneously and many tasks lay on both sides. If the man is not helping, a woman may ask: what can I use him for? His identity is taken away by the system.

Another woman I met in Århus echoed her:

> (D8). If they live in Somalia, it's not so much problem, because Somali women stay at home while Somali men go out to work. But here in Denmark is another life, another situation, something like that, and it takes both men and women to help each other. If they don't do that it will be so much problem: women go out to work,

come home, cook and do all the stuff alone; men sleep....she will become jealous and think: I am doing this, I am doing that, and he is not. She thinks more about her children and does not want to discuss all the time in front of them, so she prefers to leave alone with her children, without her husband.

Men's perspectives on the same topic convey even more resentment: several among them have been reported becoming addicted to khat, drugs and alcohol, and remained often homeless after that they are thrown out of the house, while no corresponding stories exist for women. This has turned to be one of the most conversed matters within the Somali community, and I was able to collect some stories about men's experiences. One interlocutor commented on what could happen in the aftermath of a divorce:

(D$_1$). The man lives alone; if there is conflict, he is not even allowed to visit his children, so he becomes distressed and he will start drugs, khat, or hash, or beer, or pills. He will forget about religion (…). And this guy maybe will suicide himself. So, that's why the family part of the father will miss that money [remittances], and there are several in that situation.

This is the account given to me by a Somali father living in southern Sweden:

(S$_2$). In Somalia, its welfare system does not destroy the family structure; here, it destroys the family structure, especially for the Somalis. When we came here, it was quite a shock. When we see putting the label with the names of all the family members on the letterbox, and everyone is receiving his own money and his own letters from the doctor, from the school, from everything then the social values we had before, the family's values have been broken apart, torn apart immediately. The father was the authority in charge, and that authority has been taken away. It happens that we lost respect of each other; because respect used to come from some kind of an authority in the house. That authority is gone.

It is interesting to note that in the man's view, the role of the welfare system becomes central in order to explain the challenges faced by Somali families. In the words of this divorcee man living in Denmark, masculinity and the authority that is supposed to go with it are threatened not just by the welfare state, but also by the society:

(D$_{11}$). We have big problems with that, single mothers: we have many single mothers here in Denmark. So the family is not in a good way, they are not a team anymore. The interesting thing is that when it is about a woman from Somalia, Danish people would say she is strong; she gets many positive sides: you are integrated, you speak Danish, you are beautiful, you are like this, you are like that. But when they talk about the Somali man, he's a very down man: he cannot speak Danish, we don't need him anymore, he must help you; he cannot sleep while you go out.

I consider one element quite decisive in determining the chances of the family to stay together or eventually break apart, and that is the intermediary role played by the extended family in ensuring welfare and security of its members. In fact, in the Somali community it is known that parents, relatives and friends are traditionally not strangers to a couple's spousal affairs and can intervene to help resolve serious marital disputes. Actually, they become actively involved even before the marriage, by providing the still unmarried man with opportunities to meet his prospective wife in this or that relative's house, and by advising him. First of all, because marriage is still expected to be an instrument to harmonize inter-clan, lineage relations:

> (N_4). When it comes to real issues, like starting a family, marriages and so on, then you will always, (…) have the family trying to make sure that you used that same direction and the same direction is, someone they could trust, and who can they trust? They can only trust those who are from this clan, so it's very complicated.

The same network of people can then intervene likewise when a divorce is on the way: in this case, members of both families and friends will to try to solve the issues that caused the split before the divorce becomes final. This positive account of a young Somali man clarifies what role is envisaged for the family:

> (D_{12}). The issue with single mothers: I know all these divorce problems, but I think it is also dropping now because people have seen all the relatives who went into marriage very quickly and then they went out, and maybe they are reflecting more before going to marriage. I think that in the old days, when young people was going to marriage, they had consultations with their parents. I think that is what is missing now. Maybe, if you are a youngster and you come to Denmark with your relatives (…) you want to be independent and you soon go away from the family and create your own family. So, in that case maybe you are not reflecting when you are going to a new family or a new marriage. (…) Many Somalis are getting married to Danish or other groups, but they are also getting married to Somalis living in other, far places. So, if they would make more consultations like in the old days, with experienced people like their mothers...I think that's normal, not because I am conservative, but because (…) it [the marriage] will be stronger when your family is included. You make reflections about practical things, because if you are getting married to a Somali guy from Australia, maybe it's difficult to make it work out, but if you are happy for it and your love is bigger, it's okay. So, I think that...I miss some of the Somali older women and men to be more in communication with their kids in that way, so they will be stronger and that's why we used to do in Somalia. You choose the person you want to marry, but you also talk to your mother and work it out somehow, instead of being alone.

The intercessor role of members of the extended family in sorting out marital issues seems to be still appreciated in the diaspora, even by those Somalis who for

other aspects have shown instead adversity towards clan dynamics and forms of authority. Take for example this quotation from a young single-mother who could count also on her direct experience on the matter:

> (D$_8$). We only use it [the elderly] in marital problems: we use elders and the families to make…to judge. It's easier and faster, and it's most likely the husband and wife will stay together; but if they go to the court, even with the kids and stuff like that, if they go to the court it will always be most likely they will leave each other. Most likely. Especially for the man, if the lady goes to the court and then gets a restraining order, he will feel humiliated, exactly. But if his own uncle tells him not to go near her, than he would say "I have to listen to my uncle" and he would not feel bad about it.

As we read above, resorting to the elders in such situations is "easier and faster", more effective in keeping the family together and less humiliating for the man; but what is she comparing the authority of the extended family to? The item of comparison emerges to be the structure that in the hosting countries gravitates around the family, starting with welfare authorities to end up with the court system. The participation of the members of the family however is not always synonymous with easing up the situation. In the following case, the wedding party of a Somali woman who was born in Denmark and never visited the homeland, we can image that the negotiation between the spouse and the members of the family has in all likelihood required more efforts to reach a compromise:

> (D$_{14}$). My husband is Danish and we were planning out wedding. I had a conflict with my mother, because she wanted a big Somali wedding with 500 people, a lot of people and I wanted it as a more private wedding, with only people I knew and he knew, and that was a conflict. And then my sister was: "what's wrong with you? This wedding is a family wedding, is not your wedding. It is a family wedding and you have to let mum decide how many people and she has to invite all these women, it has to be like a big event".

From the stories I have collected, it appears that the disintegration of the Somali extended family in the diaspora may have implications also for those devices firmly rooted in the cultural mores. Among these practices are also the ones meant to prevent marriage break-ups. The conjugal dimension, just as other parts of their life, becomes thus exposed to onotological security shortcomings, because what was done 'in the old days' is less and less applicable to the new context, to which they are not fully adapted yet. Moreover, when listening to the respondents, I

could also figure out that the trend in family support in marriage as well as divorce is thought to be now declining in the diaspora.

"They think is a compulsory thing": changing dynamics in the extended family

In the middle of such dynamics that are transforming the Somali family in Scandinavia, it is also imaginable that the relations with the extended family in Somalia as much as elsewhere are affected in a very similar way. Let us start from a representative quotation that points up the ordinary mechanism of transnational clan welfare:

> (D_1). We [the interlocutor and his wife] send 500 dollars every month to support our parents. She sends 250 USD to her family, and I send 250 dollars. So, this 500 dollars are obligatory, we don't touch that. Whatever comes, we have to allocate 500: 250, 250. When both my mother and father will die, I will send this 250 to my sisters and cousins (…). This 500 is regular.

However, my research has allowed me to trace out also a change in the very definition of solidarity and of the people who are entitled to receive it. In the stories of the individuals I have met, in fact, it emerges that the moral obligation to participate to community welfare is not a dogma anymore in the diasporic community, and therefore practices are now subjected to sentiments, beliefs and negotiations that eventually decide in each case for either their reproduction or termination. While only few Somalis claimed to have already reduced or interrupted traditional forms of social assistance to their families in Somalia, many asserted to know at least one nuclear family, or simply one member of the nuclear family that has done so in the Scandinavian end of the diaspora. Subsequently, Somalis in the diaspora are nowadays exposed to discourses and experiences of concrete solidarity shrinking and are also presented with enhanced opportunities to confront on the thorny issue with peers. The impression is that while the principle of kinship maintains its role in ensuring security, it is at the same time moving from being a commanding structure to one of negotiation, discussion and, of course, tension. We can see how this works in practice through few examples.

When I was able to inquire about the reasons behind the decision of withdrawing assistance, I found out that at the origin there was usually a

contention, or more precisely a disappointment arisen in the diaspora: being kept voluntarily unaware or not updated on certain family affairs by respective kinsfolk living elsewhere, for example, would predictably trigger discontent. In these regards, one male individual told me how disappointed he was when he finally came to know, out of the blue, that two nieces in the family whose education he was supporting had eventually moved from Somalia to Europe. His surprise developed into irritation when he discovered that another male member of the family, he living in Europe too, had become in the meanwhile the key financial provider for the two girls. When asked about him, the mother of the two girls explained that the preference derived from the fact that this other male relative was "wealthier". This episode marked the end of the man's monetary support to the two girls. Yet diaspora individuals lamented also disappointment over the protracted lack of expressed gratitude as well as from the missed recognition of their efforts by the kin receiving remittances in Somalia. For this reason, some are now losing motivation and think twice about their monetary support. This is how an interlocutor phrased his view on the changing patterns of solidarity dynamics:

> (S_2). You need some kind of "thank you" in Scandinavia. The provider of the service needs to be thanked because that is what he expects from you. But in our case, is very rare to say "please" when you ask and "thank you" when you get. That is for two things. Because it is something that is obligatory for a person to provide. And because they could give you back; there is no need to say thank you, it is interdependency. But here, even if you are going to get payed back by tax when you get the job, still you have to say...it's a cultural thing. And it is really respectful, and is very very good to say please and to say thank you and that has to change. And is changing now in fact. You say *tack* [thanks] many times. So it's "tack" moving and flying all over. The definition of welfare is not defined…the way we perceive it is as something obligatory. If you are in need you have to get it; and if you get it you don't have to say anything, or be grateful to that person, because you are going to pay back next time.

This quote, I believe, gives once again a good sense of the negotiation of solidarity and normative principles occurring within the transnational family. Even more, it calls into question the element of obligation that, if on the one hand seems to be so central for the Somali notion of welfare, on the other hand becomes now questionable, even in the course of one individual's lifetime. Quite interestingly, the two examples above show also that budgetary constraint in the family are not necessarily the main reason for cutting support in the first place. In

fact, the two individuals did not call in any unexpected deterioration of the private economy to explain the change in their attitudes on matters of solidarity. The available literature is also quite clear on this point: general household finances do not affect significantly the diaspora Somali's propensity to remit, but is the emotional dimension that matters in the act of sending money or in the practices of other forms of welfare assistance[19]. It is useful to consider that the dynamics just described, including discontent, may not be isolated phenomena within a welfare group that values positively the dispersion in different locations of its members, and that does so under reciprocity schemes that do not necessarily entail the manifestations of thankfulness all the times[20]. The provision of assistance needs in fact to be understood within the contexts of the cultural meanings of provider, gift and recipient, and of the perceptions and narratives that are formulated around actors:

> (N$_2$). They [the family in Somalia] used to get money and everything and for them it becomes a normal thing psychologically, I think, you know. Once you stop, they sense the difference between before and now (…). If I stop sending money now and don't send anything, and after four months I decide to send something just for my own, they are shocked: "thank you for that", because they sense the difference; all is about...it's not that they are unthankful, but they get used to. I send you money every month; you don't need to thank me every single month, to me.

Still, for some of my interlocutors, gratitude has become more relevant than in the past. I am inclined to think that this is the result of changes in the interpretation of these acts realized on the side of diaspora givers, who may have been credibly influenced by the novel experiences acquired in the new countries where they came to live. Nonetheless, it is also plausible that what used to be reciprocity is leaving ground now to a one-directional kind of flows of assistance, since the Somalia-based end of the extended family has fewer chances and means to "pay back" at distance through non-material contributions. For these reasons, acts of concrete solidarity like the regular sending of money to a family member have transformed the practice into a sort of 'disinterested' solidarity rather than the sole product of social obligations, this meaning that they are performed also in the

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[19] Cfr. Carling, Erdal, and Horst 2012, 296; Kubai 2013, 183.

[20] Cindy Horst (2006, 93) retrieves that in many circumstances "Somalis take assistance for granted".

protracted absence of reciprocity or reward from the receiving side. But not everyone is up to do that, namely supporting segments of the family for an indefinite period of time without any gain, especially if s/he feels that there is not enough gratitude from the receivers, who are more or less unaware of the changes going on among their Scandinavian kin:

> (N_2). They don't know that the system in Norway or in Europe is difficult; they don't know how we get the money: they think just that every month they are used to get money from us. This about helping the family members becomes like a compulsory thing, something you have to do. "Thank you very much" is less there, because they think is a compulsory thing.

In other cases, those ones sending money back cannot see any perspective for ameliorating life condition for those they are supporting, as pointed out by this Somali man who also made an interesting parallel with the condition of the Somalis in Norway:

> (N_1). I have brothers and sisters back home (…). When I didn't have a family I sent 600 dollars. But I send 300 dollars now, but that's more than enough, that is luxury. The thing I see is that they are not creative anymore, because they know money will come every month, and it is just like what we were talking about [about Somalis in Norway]: government housing, you will get everything, so we have that issue too, now. They don't want to go to school maybe…, well there a lot that go to school, but we see the signs now, I actually noticed it, you have to look at everything, every way and corner. We see that at some point the good intention to help people may be bad for them. Maybe it's best to withdraw and not sending anymore, and they will try in a creative area. But then, the immigration will come. Like last week, we had 400 Somalis who died with the ship.

And these reconsiderations are most likely to occur, I argue, when people trust and nurture the idea that other institutions like the state should take over in the assistance of those in need who are outside one's narrower family: "is that my responsibility?" (D_5), one of the interviewed observed referring to the practices of remittances sending taking place in his family. He simply did not wish to 'inherit' the duty of supporting the extended family in Somalia once his parents would pass away or would not be in the position to help anymore. I think that his question about responsibility is the same one that many other Somalis are currently posing themselves, and that is what the aforementioned negotiation is ultimately all about.

"You know you will never be a lawyer": the education system

There is at least another exemplary context where the tensions that are internal to the family get exposed to a further dose of stress, and this context is education in Scandinavian school systems. I argue that education totally relates to the overall discourse on constructions of security and practices of welfare and I shortly illustrate why, before looking at the findings of this research. Many studies on schooling in multicultural environments underline that education is essential for the children to build social capital and to interiorize manners, expectations and, if you will, the rules of the cultural game. In this sense, education is best seen as assisting people's integration and enabling children to access many other rights throughout their lives[21]. However, education also affects children's home-school relation, in connection with what Bourdieu has called the "cultural capital", namely that sum of codes and practices transmitted by the parents to the children via family socialization[22]. In fact, the process of socialization, meant to instill and reproduce the different components of the parents' cultural capital in the younger generations, in the diaspora finds itself competing with what is learned and practiced at school.

We should thus conceptualize schools as the welfare institution where the expectations of the Somali parents, based on the experiences collected in the homeland, meet the goals set by national educational parameters, through the mediation of teachers. Very often, their experiences are in reality non-experiences, in the sense that the education system collapsed due to the civil war and, consequently, many refugees have little if no educational background at all to compare with[23]. Borrowing from some interesting studies done on the matter, we evince that Somalis parents generally expect teachers to be the sole experts in the field of education and they therefore see them as expressions of authority to be respected, this convincement explaining why parents tend to take only little

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[21] Gesemann 2006.

[22] Beatrice Akua-Sakyiwah (2016) has investigated the cultural capital of the Somali women in the UK-based diaspora; Bouakaz (2007) conducted a study about parental involvement in school based in Malmö where questions of both social capital and the more specific cultural capital can be retrieved.

[23] Osman and Månsson 2015, 37.

initiative to discuss potential issues while waiting for the teacher's input[24]. The structure and the environment of schools often reinforce the perceptions of teachers as owners of the everyday knowledge and the educational process in general and it can create faults in the communication with the parents[25]: an unfortunate outcome for the children could be the "double loneliness" at school and at home, which generates when expectations are not met[26].

We deduce from statistics that the average education level among Somalis is rather low, but increasing: higher school dropout rates, compared to both national and other foreigner groups, are a reality Somalis still face[27]. Several angles exist to investigate the phenomenon. In the first place, we may be tempted to relate it to a variety of factors that go under the rubric of socio-economical background: the hardship of migration and further relocation; parental education level and linguistic competence; intra-family relations and the like, partly as just seen above. But this nexus is becoming increasingly weaker in providing, alone, trustable variables to explain different academic performances because the correlation of the variables is not always proved[28]. A second way to approach the issue consists in singling out the cultural differences concerning the value that is placed on education: but we should be careful in drawing our conclusions, since

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[24] See Osman and Månsson (2015) for a case study in Sweden.

[25] Noomi Christine Linde Matthiesen (2015) has addressed in her paper the reasons for Somali parents' silence in the conference with teachers in Danish public schools. She concludes that "these parents are not silent as a result of top-down cultural forces, but rather they *become* silent through institutional structures and practices where they are positioned as the teachers "assistant" that must listen rather than speak. The teachers, on the other hand, are positioned as "experts" with the knowledge worth conveying with both the duty and the right to speak" (original italic). The author provides also examples of the different reasons for which silence often characterizes the parent-teacher conferences.

[26] Bouakaz (2007, 299) has coined this term in his study of Arabic-speaking families in Malmö. He writes: "According to the parents, what their children learn at home is given little value once the children are at school. What the child is being taught at school does not seem to make sense to him/her, a fact that in this case negatively influences the child's success at school, and if in addition what is being taught at school doesn't make sense to the child's family. The latter may be isolated in relations to its environment, its having few close relations with the school, other families in the neighbourhood, on the network of relationships and not managing to establish them".

[27] OSF 2013, 56. For example, 70% of Somalis in Sweden have only primary or unknown education (OSF 2014, 74).

[28] See for example the study by Støren and Helland (2009).

we run the risk of falling into the trap of cultural fixation, in which ongoing processes are overlooked in favor of static categorizations of people's actions[29].

We can see the education system as another of those space were welfare nationalism is functioning. As a matter of fact, we do recognize it quickly in specific debates, as was in Denmark for the *frikadellekrig* in Randers, which even gained the city a new work of art— a giant meatball monument, or for the "ethnic quotas" concerns in Langkær[30]. Considering the available literature, I believe though that more research should be conducted on the encounters in the field of education from the perspective of Scandinavian teacher preparation as well as schools' consolidated educational procedures, in order to highlight possible faults within with long-term implications. Assessing student's experiences in class is of paramount importance since the school system can participate in reproducing certain social orders, and even discrimination; in stigmatizing diverging behaviors; in limiting the capacity to aspire to certain ideas of the future (e.g. a specific career); and in driving expectations towards pre-given directions. In other words, it can participate in creating vulnerability in non-national pupils, who more than others may lack the capacity to navigate through different systems of values and meanings.

One interview with a Somali mother in Denmark was particularly illuminating, because her personal story with education has influenced the future decisions about her own son's education, who was indeed enrolled in a private school as a direct consequence of the treatment she felt to have received. She provides thus a very relevant case to appreciate the role of experiences in shaping future expectations, in the fashion of Koselleck's categories. In addition, it represents also a good argument for the theories of everyday welfare nationalism, because the obstacles she had to face that are not linked to any special

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[29] Matthiesen (2016) has recently stressed this point in a case study of Somali parents in Denmark.

[30] The "meatball war" in Randers regarded the inclusion (or not) of pork meat in the menu of public institutions, in deference to Muslim children. One of the latest acts of the issue, in January 2016, was the approval of a motion ensuring that pork meat would stay in menus. The second debate stems from the decision of a school headmaster to limit the ethnic composition of some classes of his institute, motivating his decision with the aim of preserving an encouraging environment of integration with 'ethnic' Danes, or to put the way he put it, pupils with "Danish-sounding names". See *DR*'s article on 7 September 2016.

circumstance or condition, apparently. In the course of her primary school (during the 1990s), my interlocutor recalled to have spent much time in remedial classes, although she didn't feel she was in need of that and that made her upset[31].

> (D8). I was made kind of a special-need child even though I thought that I was not special. Why do I have to sit with those special-need children? Why do I have to be extracted from my classroom to get taught? It could be afterward or in other days, something like that. I didn't like the idea: I didn't like to be extracted from my normal class to be in the special need class because I didn't feel I belonged there.

Later on in her primary school years, my interlocutor had the opportunity to choose a period of apprenticeship, a step in the school curriculum that, in the words of the Ministry for Children, Education and Gender Equality has "a perspective of further education"[32]. Her personal choices narrowed to orthopedics or legal apprenticeships. However the school supervisor, who had an influential word on it, tried to dissuade her from contemplating those two:

> (D8). I was fourteen years old, or thirteen, then this supervisor comes: "you know you can never be a lawyer; you now you can never be an orthopedist; why don't you try something you can be?" I asked her what did she think I could be. She said: "maybe those social-health assistants or something else near to that".

The then young Somali girl was also offered one more option— to be a secretary in a local company, which she would eventually accept, although she felt it fell far out from her initial thoughts. That was not at all the end of her peculiar journey through education in Denmark, which is worth keep reporting here. Once completed the ninth grade, she expressed her will to continue studying in the gymnasium (upper secondary school), but that desire was denied on the ground that she had been sick in the hospital for one month during her ninth grade and had therefore missed part of the program. Notwithstanding the good final mark obtained, she had to take the extra (tenth) year, which she subsequently finished only to hear a further objection made to her application for the gymnasium, this time coming from a new supervisor:

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[31] This seems to be a common pattern also for other Danish-Somalis: a recent study found that for the Somali parents these classes are "a waste of time and a way for the school to get funded by the local government at the expense of their children's educational needs" (Al-Sharmani and Horst 2016, 114).

[32] From the Ministry's webpage: see http://eng.uvm.dk/Education/Primary-and-lower-secondary-education/The-Folkeskole/Additional-Information.

> (D$_8$). The other supervisor said: "you can't go to the gymnasium" and if they say no, you cannot apply. Yes, you can appeal, but as at fifteen, sixteen years old, you don't think about it. She didn't even give me a reason: she said that I just couldn't: "why don't you apply for other things?".

That unmotivated negation was a serious blow for the girl and her father felt he had to intervene. He went straight to the gymnasium's principal office to present his daughter's case, bypassing thus the supervisor of the school. The principal, who until that visit had been totally unaware of the situation, was positively impressed by the young student's curriculum, and therefore:

> (D$_8$). He [the principal] wrote a letter to the supervisor saying that no matter what she thinks, he wants this girl in his gymnasium. And then she couldn't say anything...She was the one who was supposed to just bring him the ones she thought could finish the school; but if he thinks you can finish, she can't do anything. She wrote my name there and that's how I came there, because of my strong will and my dad's ability to think new, to think innovative. Then I think my dad used his Somali sense, and thought: "okay, we will ask him and see what happens".

This story narrates a case where the encounter between the Somalis and the welfare state, in the form of education institutions, is made more complicated by false assumptions. This encounter, according to the first-hand account I reported, was close to fail an individual for no other evident specific reason than the expectations connected to the ethnic background. It is all the more interesting because these false assumptions come from the institutions, and thus may lead one to wonder about the overall assessment capacity of the system, if fairly good candidates among minorities are discouraged from undertaking higher education, and are pushed instead towards vocational training, even against their expressed inclination. This prospect left us with an open question about the rate of recurrence of potential similar stories, which might have gone unreported in the past in reason of the Somali community's scarce capacity to have its voices being heard. That is, due to their comparatively vulnerable position within the society. And yet according to my interlocutor, the reason why many Somalis did not go further into studies in the course of the 1990s was exactly these supervisors (*vejledere*) that may have used a sort of categorization to sort children based on ethnicity. I compared her case with today's experiences of younger Danish-Somalis who are testing themselves with education, in order to delineate potential

continuities or developments. Although with different intensity, the perception of representing a group targeted by the special attention in educational environments, both as specific Somali or more in general as of African descendant, was still common to the majority of my interlocutors[33]. In Norway, I discussed this issue with a Somali girl who used to work as a volunteer teacher in a school in Tøyen, the famous multicultural area in Oslo. And she said:

> (N₂). Of course, not all the advisers do that, but I remember one girl insisted: "why I can't be...I got good grades like math, I got that grade". She became angry. "You know what?" she [the teacher] said, "okay, if you are going to be a teacher or a lawyer or something like that, who's going to clean and who's going to take care of elder people?".

In Sweden also, the theme surfaced with the same modality:

> (S₃). Especially at the high school level, people are discouraged in the schools when they want to pursue something that they are passionate about. And they say: "No, maybe that's not something [good for you], maybe this one...". I remember the story of a woman, she wanted to become a nurse, and the lady said to her in the school: "you know what? You are covered up, you know, you have the scarf, it's not...maybe you should apply for this job: cleaning job. This would be too much difficult for you (…). And the [Somali] lady said: "I thought about it (…) and I started to believe that I actually couldn't".

Nevertheless, while in the early years Somali parents had very limited capability to interact and intervene in school dynamics, it was pointed out to me that young pupils can now count on a vaster number of family members that have completed educational programs. In the old days, the supervisor was always granted the final word about the pupil's school career; today, older siblings become a precious source of practical advises, which can be particular valuable as additional input to make their decisions concerning education. Besides that, young Somalis have developed groups of extra-family educational help or are active as tutors or mentors, and the value of these activities are certainly not secondary in limiting similar cases of students being pulled down by some of their teachers. The availability of these external resources of student help in fact can be still crucial for those arrived more recently to Scandinavian countries, whose parents are basically in the situation described earlier.

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[33] Some parents also expressed the same concern. See for example what reported in Osman et al. 2016, 7.

"Network is the key": the lack of role models

There is one major consequence emerging from the combined effect of living in mono-parental families and experiencing difficulties in the educational process: a general lack of role models among the Somalis in Scandinavian societies, especially male ones. Several interlocutors have in fact explained to me how inspiring is for the community to have some members who made it into the society as reference for all the others, whether s/he is employed in prestigious jobs, or showed great entrepreneurial skills, or again works for the good of the community. To put it very simply, as a Somali man once did: "you cannot say to the people that they can become doctors if you don't show them that this or that guy has become a doctor" (D_5). I was not surprised to hear Somali interlocutors bringing up this issue, as it is indeed a key concern that was also aired also before in the literature, for example in the three Open Society Foundation's reports about the Somalis living in Oslo, Malmö and Copenhagen. Young Somalis can hardly identify the elders as a model for the community, for the reason explored before, and some consequently face less motivation because they feel that notwithstanding their efforts, "all Somalis are unemployed anyway"[34].

However, I found myself struggling to conciliate this grim view with the information that I have collected during my research. According to my interlocutors, and to other fellow researchers I had the chance to meet along the way, this picture is in fact gradually fading away to leave space to a more positive and realistic situation. Many of them could in fact think of other Somalis who did complete education in disciplines that are usually considered prestigious and well-paid, like engineering and law, and that obtained also a job in this or that high-status sector. This development did not happen by chance, but was the result of both time and problem-oriented strategies in which the Somalis are playing active roles themselves, conforming thus to the shifting emphasis on the citizen's duties rather than rights, which has characterized the welfare state in recent years. This is the case of the several bridge builders programs, which the Somalis run now in many cities across Scandinavia. However, this does not automatically solve all problems, because "one thing is to complete education and another is to get a job"

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[34] OSF 2014a, 71.

(D₁₂). Therefore, in an attempt to sharpen my mind on this question, I had a talk with a project leader for such bridge builders programs in Nørrebro, the most multicultural neighborhood one can find in whole Denmark.

Making my way through a bunch of energetic kids playing in the hall, I reached her office where I was acquainted with some of the projects that she worked on. They started out by running a project (2011-2014) focused on Somali mothers during which a problem with young boys lacking a positive role model and leaving prematurely school had become all the more evident. Based on this need, they inaugurated a new mentoring project for young Somali boys financed by private foundations as well as by the then Ministry of Social Affairs, Children and Integration and by Copenhagen Municipality. The program consists in providing mentorship to Somalis in their twenties and thirties; the selected mentors are ethnic Danes and they are asked to help with homework, give advices to those doing apprenticeship, but also to participate in leisure activities like sport. The scope of the program, which afterward was expanded to young Somali women too, is that of establishing network while giving youngster more opportunities to follow their aspirations, rather than doing "what your parents want for you". In order to do so, the project leader told me, "Somalis need someone that knows the society better than they do. Network is the key" (D₇).

"Why are you coming with your system?" Elders, xeer and mag

A last set of practices to study with the aim of tracing the trajectory of welfare practices over time comprises the application of the xeer, the use of mag payments and the respect of the traditional role of the elders among the Somalis of the Scandinavian diaspora. They are interdependent— the *elders* collect and pay *mag* blood compensations because of the agreed *xeer* between clans, and therefore the weakening of one of them will correspond in an equal decline in the others. As seen in Chapter Four, the xeer does not indicate only the norms and contracts regulating the relations between clans, but it also refers to the ways of social conduct, of treating guests and of dealing with assistance. Hence, the xeer is a necessary requirement, which one needs to know, in order to entertain certain types of relations and to be part of certain networks. Together with the

compensation payments and the council of clans' elders (shir), the xeer ensures the provision of the Somali-constructed idea of security. In fact, when I asked one interlocutor what the clan was good for, he gave me this reply:

> (S$_2$). For security: because we still have our own ways of settling disputes. So, if something happens between the Somalis we settle it in more traditional ways and we have to know which clan has done this. This is the xeer, the customary law: is still working.

Another interlocutor clarifies the transnational functioning of the xeer:

> (D$_1$). When one of our brothers and sisters in Somalia in our sub-, sub-clan makes accident, kills somebody for example, the compensation, the mag, is very high in Somalia. So, our clan members in Somalia cannot afford to cover it all, so they call us: "we have this problem, and if we don't pay this compensation, your brother will be killed". So again we make fundraising, and we contribute for that.

My interviews have revealed nonetheless that only *some* among Somalis in the diaspora apply *some* of the norms contained in the xeer as if they were in Somalia, while many others, especially young ones, "haven't experienced it" (D$_{13}$). One category of application includes marriage, divorce and inheritance, as mentioned in the section about the nuclear family; however, it seems that the xeer in the diaspora is limited now to work more like a moral code, rather than as legal norms capable of shaping social actions. After all, there is possibly no way in which its decisions and sanctions could be fully enforced without clashing with the Scandinavian legal systems. Still, one could also argue that there is a connection between the application of Somali norms and the knowledge of state laws in force in the given Scandinavian country, which can turn out quite crucial in the period of early resettlement. This following is a telling case reported to me by a Somali woman in Oslo:

> (N$_3$). I know a lady, she was like…a man wanted to rape her, and then she went to the police and said: "this man wants to rape me" and then the police took the man, he is Somali also, to the jail. After some time, the community came to her and say "please forgive him, he's your brother; don't do that", and then she said: "okay, I will forgive him". But she didn't understand that in Norway, if you report somebody, and they say "forgive him", that means you are false, juridical false. And she never knew what would come up. After she forgave him, the man went to the police again, and said: "the thing she was saying is false"; the woman was put into jail.

Even if limited to few cases, I find still quite fascinating that the xeer has managed its way to work in parallel with national legal systems. Of course, I was less surprised though to hear that the value of the compensation is always converted into *kroner* and I would not be surprised if new adaptations to the current socio-economic environment would come out. In historical perspective, I think that the crux of the matter, when talking about the xeer, lies ultimately in its application in the diaspora: is it on the rise or is the opposite true? There is reason to believe that the use of xeer rules and mag compensations in Scandinavia may have numbered days for at least three motives. Firstly, the majority of young Somalis showed dissatisfaction with the protracted usage of the xeer, because these practices re-empower the traditional role of the elders and are thus less and less appealing to those ones whose upbringing took place mostly outside Somalia. Young Somalis especially, do not understand why they should resort to the intermediation of the clan when they have state institutions and civic jurisdiction entitled to do the same job. To solve disputes such as minor physical harm, they prefer to call for police intervention rather than summoning a council of elders from the two involved clans. The following is an exemplary quotation:

> (D₅). They are old people, not young people. They sit together and they say: this guy has boxed Marco. They discuss and then they come with the decision. This decision I have to apply. If the say I have to pay compensation to you, I have to pay; not me, they [the mag group] will pay for me. And the people in Europe apply the Somali xeer in Europe. But I say: okay, you have slapped me? I go to the police. There is a system in this government: why are you fucking the system? Why are you coming with your system and the nomadic? That's the problem. The transition between the nomadic to the modern society has fallen down in Somalia, you see the point? Even the people who are living here, they apply the Somali contract.

Given that, on the one hand, the youth does not show interest about the xeer, and on the other hand there is no real way to impose it on them in the diaspora, one may conclude that the long-term chances for the survival of traditional norms are very few. Another interesting aspect is that the norms agreed in the xeer apparently have not gone through sufficient development or revision in view of their application in the new context. Vinodh Kutty, who has investigated the social organization of the Somali community in Minnesota, retrieved a "failure to establish and agree upon new modalities of xeer", even if relationships based on

kinship ties have not necessarily vanished[35]. The issue that some of my interlocutors had with the xeer was in fact not so much its application per se, but rather its application without adjustment or even reform to fit in what they called "modern" or "technology age". Even more so, for another reason: the xeer empowers men over the women, as they are not allowed to participate in the gatherings; this is a serious limitation that, predictably, no one seems to be interested in replicating in the diaspora as such. Not women, for sure.

Lastly, the application of the xeer could soon face extinction also for the direct initiative of some of the eldest in the families themselves, who are voluntarily not passing the norms to their children, convinced as they are that, anyway, "the xeer will not work after we have passed away" (S_2). Confirming this, some of the people I talked to, had not even heard of anyone still using it in their family and network of acquaintances. Undoubtedly, the new life in the welfare state and the inevitable exposure to Western ideas that follows here are the reasons behind both the current negotiation among young people, and the disconsolate resignation of their parents, who realize how the mutated context of things is reducing space to exert authority on some legitimate grounds. For Somali men, this process becomes even harsher because it overlaps with the loss of the breadwinner status, as I have showed. And yet, this section cannot end without taking into account also the transnational dimension of xeer application: the fact that the social organization of the Somali diasporas in Scandinavia increasingly emancipate itself from the xeer does not imply that Somalis do not confront with these rules anymore. Quite the opposite, they are still bound by the concept of xeer because it is practiced in the native land, and they often remit with the scope of honoring pending mag payments. For the same reason, the transnational linkages will exist in the present form only as long as those in the diaspora will have sufficient knowledge and appreciation of the xeer, otherwise the support will either disappear or reorganize itself on new principles. I have provided already some hints about the transformation of the support to the homeland, and I will come back to it in the next chapter to add important information.

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[35] Kutty 2010, 189.

"Other people's stories": national media representations and Somali initiatives

Evidence suggests both that certain groups receive much more media attention than others, and that besides bare information and facts, media also channels a lot of sensationalism, misrepresentation as well as authentic processes of stereotype manufacturing, for which foreigners often represent a favorite target[36]. For these reasons, I became interested in understanding the connections between media and issues of self-representation as well as consciousness among the Somalis. Those I have interviewed proved to be well aware of the predominant media representations aired about their community, and they responded vigorously against them; not surprisingly, considering the latest developments of the political climate, media was particularly felt to be an issue in Denmark[37]. Many agreed that "there is a lot of negative media around the Somalis and it is the only group that is kind of okay to single out. We have no protection" (D9), as a Somali woman told me in Århus. In the same city, a man studying and working as taxi driver added to the same idea:

> (D10). The most important thing is that media and the political are using Somalis as a fragile group and are using us negatively, because the more they use the Somali name, the more they gain in terms of votes. In my opinion, I believe also that the Danish society is good; but, telling negative stories of Somalis and other immigrants causes votes to go to the right wing...on the other hand, we Somalis are doing well and we are part of the society, even though it is difficult regarding to jobs.

These two exemplary quotations above speak for many others and advance the case for a closer scrutiny of two intertwined processes: the manufacturing of minority stereotypes by the media and welfare nationalism. If is there something that it is possible to grasp when applying the historical perspective to both the

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[36] See Petersson 2006. According to IMDI (2009, 4), in Norway "Somali immigrants get three times as much coverage as Polish immigrants, even though there are almost twice as many people with Polish background living in Norway than people with Somali background".

[37] Moreover, since 2017 the question of sending Somalis home has gained once again the spotlight of public debates in Denmark. A similar debate about revoking the refugee status to hundreds of Somalis and send them back home had taken place in Norway towards the end of 2016. Available literature reports high criticism of the media also in Sweden (see for example OSF 2014a, 125: "The younger participants were particularly critical of Swedish media. One young woman claimed that 'everything they write about immigrants is negative' and even that everything is negative about anyone not being 'blonde and blue-eyed'").

information collected during the interviews and the literature available, is that the Somalis are only now emerging from a condition of vulnerability, which has afflicted them for the first two decades of their new life in Scandinavia. This condition manifested itself in the incapacity for the Somalis to respond efficaciously to accusations made in the public sphere, where they stood prominently as petty criminals and welfare abusers. The vulnerability was caused primarily by contextual factors, such as psychosocial problems connected to war experiences; poor linguistic competence and knowledge of the rules of the new country; or again scarce presence at the different levels of the society in the early years upon migration.

But there were also some structural elements from where the said vulnerability originated, the Somali preference for oral communication being the most prominent one. This weakness has prevented them from gaining the space they needed in the public arena in order to correct the stereotypes that others were creating in their absence: this has contributed in creating a lack of security and exclusion among the Somalis. In the light of what argued so far, it becomes then beneficial for my research delineating also the ongoing developments of this specific face of vulnerability. Realizing what national traditional media are saying about them is a harsh experience for the Somalis, and this quotation collected in Växjö describes the feeling:

> (S2). It's all negative; the media is all negative; everything they write about us... I have been trying to get myself some kind of information (…). I couldn't read it, I stopped reading. It is absolutely discouraging, depressing to read some of these newspapers.

And this was the perception of a Somali man interviewed in Oslo:

> (N1). I have never ever seen a little little bit of hope in media. When they use, they use the worst worst topics; of course, they have the statistics with them, they want to sell. Obviously, people sell more when you have…but that makes, generally, ethnic Norwegians more hateful with us. The people that lives in north have never seen Somalis, but they hear in both media or journalist and they probably hate me because they can only read it. So they are thinking that I am taking their taxes.

A first decisive development, mentioned also before, has consisted in acquiring awareness about the portrayal that media were offering of them: whether or not media claims are justified by data, none of the Somalis I met had a positive

perception of the information reported by newspaper and national broadcasters. Moreover, they were also able to point at some of the vices of the media and communication sector:

> (D$_{10}$). They go to the wrong place asking people and, say, sometimes they interview mental-sick people and say that's how all Somalis look like (…). We have a lack of channels to talk, because media support politicians and media gain a lot of money if they say negative things. No one can gain in this media side money for saying positive things.

As anticipated, the complicity between media and politics, in the way the Somalis see it, is another question that deserves more thoughts here. The same student/taxi driver just quoted above introduces this aspect very concisely:

> (D$_{10}$). We have a problem with media and politicians. But we are happy, we are integrated, we are doing all our best and we know where we are going and we know where our future is. We know what we are doing and why we are here. But the difficulty is that some people are trying to give us a nickname, and we don't accept it because we have already our own names. We can't have place for nicknames.

The problem that all these quotations enlighten us about is a well-known one: media, by means of disproportionate references to supposed deviance, are prone to distort and sensationalize it[38]. Even more so, since it has been noted the existence of an outright "Media Welfare State" which, according to the researchers who coined the expression, consists in the resemblance between the organization of media and communication and the "socioeconomic and political institutions that usually define the Nordic welfare states"[39]. In the vocabulary that I have used, this convergence would be then a further form along those isomorphisms that I described to be so important in order to define how methodological nationalism works. If media, especially the traditional or the 'old' ones if you will (press and national broadcasting services) are thus essential to grasp how welfare states are interpreted and sustained, we can derive that the same media are instrumental to reproduce the welfare state to its audience. They are also relevant to make the

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[38] Alia and Bull 2006, 31.

[39] Syvertsen et al. 2014, 2. In the original definition, Nordic media are said to operate with a combination of four "principles": universal services, editorial freedom, a cultural policy for the media and a preference for consensual solutions that involve the main stakeholders. In their opinion, this is the framework within which continuity and change in the Media welfare state can be explained.

welfare state look constantly legitimate in its distinction between those who contribute to the system and those who do not. To sum up, I think that a great deal of change in self-representations and consciousness among the Somalis living in Scandinavia will have to pass first through the same instruments, old and new media, in order to be effective. The media will thus provide a great dose of the ink, both literally and figuratively, to write the next chapter of Somali life in Scandinavia: younger generations and Scandinavian-born Somalis in general will have a prominent role in guaranteeing the penetration of media by their community, since they will be most likely great media consumers/producers themselves.

There are few examples that can support this argument further. The first one I wish to propose stems from the fervid campaign for the 2015 general elections in Denmark, in which Somalis were featured as the worst case of integration. Among the voices heard ahead of the vote, was that of the business tycoon Asger Aamund, who claimed that "Denmark has under no circumstances use for a deluge of goat herders from Somalia" in reference to the country's needs to attract skilled people to compete on international markets[40]. Among the reactions that followed the controversial statement, there was an article appeared on *Information* with the emblematic title: "Danish Somalis are not only goatherds"[41]. A collective of students wrote the article and I got in contact with one of them, Abdirahman Awad, graduating in medicinal chemistry at the University of Southern Denmark, to discuss the reasons behind the initiative. These were explained to me as follows:

> The reason we did it is (…) the stigma, the bad and negative picture of the Somali communities in Denmark. So, the reason we wrote this article is because when we see the media, and all this negative things about the Somalis, we don't see the same picture. Like, in every group of course there are some troublemakers, some bad sheep but that doesn't mean that the entire community is bad. So, every time we hear something negative in the media, we don't see our reflections, so that is one of the main reasons why we wrote this article. To say that, first of all, for every bad Somali you see, there are maybe hundreds, or thousands good Somalis out here.

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[40] As quoted in Berlingske's article on 13 August 2015.

[41] The article appeared on Information on 16 October 2015.

In this case too, we see a hint at the vices of media reporting. In other passages of the conversation, he voiced the need for both stop telling only bad stories and creating more opportunities for intra-societal dialogue, because "[i]f you don't know a Somali person, if you have not encountered a Somali, then of course you will believe in what you see in the media". Abdirahman's personal engagement in the cause yearned some fruits, as in the aftermath of the newspaper article he participated in the organization of a workshop named *Mød en somalier* (Meet a Somali), which received also the attention from the national broadcaster DR.

A second example consists in the establishment of Somali media in Scandinavia, which can critically scrutinize what is being said in the respective national public debates. It is a rather recent development, which proves that the reduction of community vulnerability requires specific involvement on an even footing in media production, intended as participation in the nation reproduction. Instances of Somali-run mass communication tools include blogs, social networks, radio, online websites and local printed newspapers[42]. Having positive stories being aired as well reveals to be an incredibly powerful instrument to boost confidence across the community, to provide stories of the once missing role models and, obviously, to spread relevant information for the Somalis and whoever else is interested. Hence, one interesting effect to note is that these media outlets become the new points of reference to write news stories. Consider the answer of this man asked about media:

(D$_{11}$). I think that Somali people in Denmark are now in control of the media. Before, it was that the media controlled us; but now it is us the ones who control the media.

Similarly, media activism is also a remedy for the vulnerability experienced in the past: the last example is perhaps the most palpable illustration of what turn things may take in the near future. During an interview for TV2 Østjylland on 12 April 2015, Århus' mayor Jacob Bundsgaard used two times the expression "an illiterate Somali" in a discourse where he was referring to refugees and their capability to contribute to the community. In an open letter that came soon after,

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[42] Some of the most popular ones are: AarhuSomali.dk; Det Somaliske Kultur & Medie Forening (skmf.dk); Radio Maqal; the blog "Bak rosa burkaer og gule mullahskjegg".

two representatives of the organization called "AarhuSomali" addressed directly the mayor, denouncing that his "opinions confirm old and ingrained prejudices about Somalis as some who are exclusively a burden for the society, which is not correct"[43]. The day after, the mayor replied in another letter, calling his wording a "mistake" as well as "an unfortunate designation", inviting the two representatives to a meeting to strengthen the institutional cooperation. Beyond the facts, which of course are interesting and offer an image of the good intentions and constructive spirit on both sides, I signaled this episode with the more specific intent of underlining what it means for the perceptions of the Somalis. For those in Århus especially, I think it taught a lesson in how effective media can be in influencing the surrounding socio-political environment:

> (D11). We got also our mayor's view talking about a lot of bad things but he said "excuse me" after we talked to him. So, that's why we are very strong. I think the Somali people are very integrated now to understand what media is for, job, education. We close our eyes and we continue: that's our advice.

Some major challenges though remain, and I discussed them with Ayan Mouhoumed, the editor in Chief of Ethniqa Magazine, a media outlet that has a specific focus on women with ethnic background in Denmark. According to her, there are two orders of problem: on the one hand, young Somalis are not doing enough to "*create* their own stories in the media" (my emphasis); on the other, there is still a problem with media production:

> I never see a Somali person that gets interviewed on national TV, not about being a Somali, but about the environment, about other things (…). We seldom see people with ethnic background talking about this stuff. So, it's not only a Somali issue: it's an ethnic issue.

This excursus about media alone has completed neither the discussion on how consciousness is built and preserved among the Somalis, nor the one concerning the instruments being used for that scope. There are also other emerging opportunities, associated by the firm initiative of the Somalis themselves, which deserves attention when discussing memory and consciousness: a museum perhaps offers the best setting for this, especially when the museum in question is

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[43] My translation from "Åbent brev til Aarhus' borgmester Jacob Bundsgaard". See the full letter at: aarhusomali.dk/uf/40000_49999/41562/59b28e3246635f844d5ea73f54a015bd.pdf

not very conventional but presents already peculiar characteristics for itself. I am talking about *Den Gamle By* (The Old Town), founded in Århus in 1909 as "the world's first open-air museum of urban history and culture"[44]. In a way, the living museum has become a sort of a temple of traditional Danish lifestyle and architecture. Yet, it has been also sensible to the changed times, counting among its exhibition also an apartment of Turkish guest workers, in the way it looked in the mid-1970s. At the time of my research, the Museum was getting ready to open a new exhibition, called "Somalisk lejlighed" (The Somali apartment), with the intention of showing the ordinary life (and house) of a Somali family in Denmark. Intrigued by this project for many reasons, I had the privileged opportunity to talk to some of the members of the organizing team before the opening, in order to gain a better understanding of how memory, heritage and consciousness interacted. As the name suggests, the exhibition consists of the reproduction of few rooms belonging to an ordinary apartment inhabited by a Somali family in Denmark.

The idea for this exhibition came originally from a Somali woman, and was formalized afterward in the actual team made up of six Somali women (5 refugees and one who got married to a Somali man living already in Denmark) and the museum-based project leader. When we spoke for the first time, they were in the process of collecting pictures, pieces of furniture and any other ornament (e.g. curtains) that would recreate the atmosphere of a Somali apartment. Curiosity brought me to ask whether the project was meant to specifically preserve the fading Somali heritage in Denmark, and I was told that it was not so much about that, but rather "about getting the space in the society"; to "tell", in a society that perhaps is more prone to raise eyebrows than to listen, "what we are, where we come from" (D$_9$). In a way, then, their aim was much more 'simpler', immediate and responsive to a felt need, than what I was supposing. I got further confirmation for that when I inquired about the reception of the soon-to-be realized exhibition: the project was not spared from criticisms, and although the team leader was not allowed to tell me more at that stage, some negative opinions

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[44] Official Website. With more than 75 historical buildings, most of which accessible, and a team of people working in the roles of town figures, the visitors can experience the life of their fellow countrymen in the 1700s, 1800s and 1900s.

came from certain nationalist environments, which questioned the Somali women's belonging to the nation and therefore the museum. The point of view of the team leader on this question was plain and at the same time incontrovertible:

> This is not a gender project; this is not an ethnic project; this is about showing the people living in the city (…). In Gamle By it's our duty to cover Arhus' story also, and since 20% of the people living in Arhus have non-European background, the museum should be for everybody, because everybody is paying taxes.

But still, one of the Somali women in the team added:

> (D$_9$). For Danish people, traditional Danish people, this area, Gamle By is a very important area. Therefore, it is a harm to accept foreigners to come in Gamle By; people think this is their traditional Danish museum, it's not alright telling other people's stories.

The museum exhibition is, just as media, a way for the Somalis to gain visibility in the society by playing the rules of the game, namely by using and accessing those same instruments that the Danish society is also using; even, one could argue, with the purpose of correcting the negative views nurtured in the society from within. I realized then that is not the Somali consciousness or sense of belonging to be at stake here. It is rather the reaction of those individuals in the majoritarian part of the society, who looked at the project with criticism, which signals something: they read the event according to an ethnic key that hampers the very idea of spatial coexistence in the society and reproduce exclusion.

Conclusion: a dual provision in the present

This chapter has started out by proposing a description of the practices of welfare used to re-create a safety net, as recounted by the Somali interlocutors I have met during my research period. I believe that within the Somali community, things are transforming at a faster rate than what we are able to portray. In some cases, society fails to notice the progress made by the Somalis and certain negative views are thus reproduced. The youngest ones have a remarkable capacity to adapt, even more when mentored or inserted in network that includes native Scandinavians. The elders of the families are not always able to fully participate in the life of the youth and understand the good part of this development, because they are still resorting to previous experiences, rooted in the homeland, to measure and value facts of everyday life. In these circumstances, the more a young Somali

is considered 'integrated' in the new society, the more s/he is likely to be far from what the elders consider to be the traditional values.

Yet, while the crumbling role of the male elders might suggest for a quick and troublesome vanishing of traditional norms, the Somali welfare structure has its strike back on the Scandinavian system as well. In fact, almost never during my talks were the two systems depicted as incompatible one with the other. What emerges from the voice of the Somalis that I have interviewed, is that the state welfare provision is complemented by further interventions that draw on their bequeathed traditions. It was the case of the parents supporting financially their unemployed kids; of the single mother who was given a car by the extended family; or again of the exchange of information about bureaucratic procedures. What is peculiar about these cases is not so much the act of provision itself, but the way money, goods and services are collected and distributed afterwards: these two actions are still driven by kinship criteria of solidarity, and therefore the resources are mobilized in the diaspora itself but also across Europe and everywhere the extended families has reached.

The historical continuity I retrieve consists in the influence of the Somali heritage that emphasizes the endless quest for security across time and space: guided by this ultimate goal, they attempt at seizing the chances as they manifest themselves, in full accordance with the adagio encouraging to always "seek for greener pastures". That explains why there may be scarce correspondence between the state in which they were born or firstly arrived; the one where they completed secondary education; the one where they obtained their undergraduate degree or higher; and, finally, the country where their nuclear family lives. Life has a pronounced transnational flavor and is intended like a nomadic transhumance, where each of its stages is carried out in a specific place, which is supposed to bring more opportunities than the others. And among 'postnomadic' Somalis, the appealing attributes of a place over one other take the appearance of migration policies; state support; freedom of retaining cultural practices and, last but not the least, the cover of a passport. Besides continuity with the past, there are also important breaks: the interviews instructed me about the continuous processes of negotiations in the diaspora, which in the long run seem to direct to a

reduction of the number of those people considered to be family members. For this reason, in the next and final chapter I will describe how social security is affected by change in the long-term and to do so I will plunge myself into the analysis of solidarity.
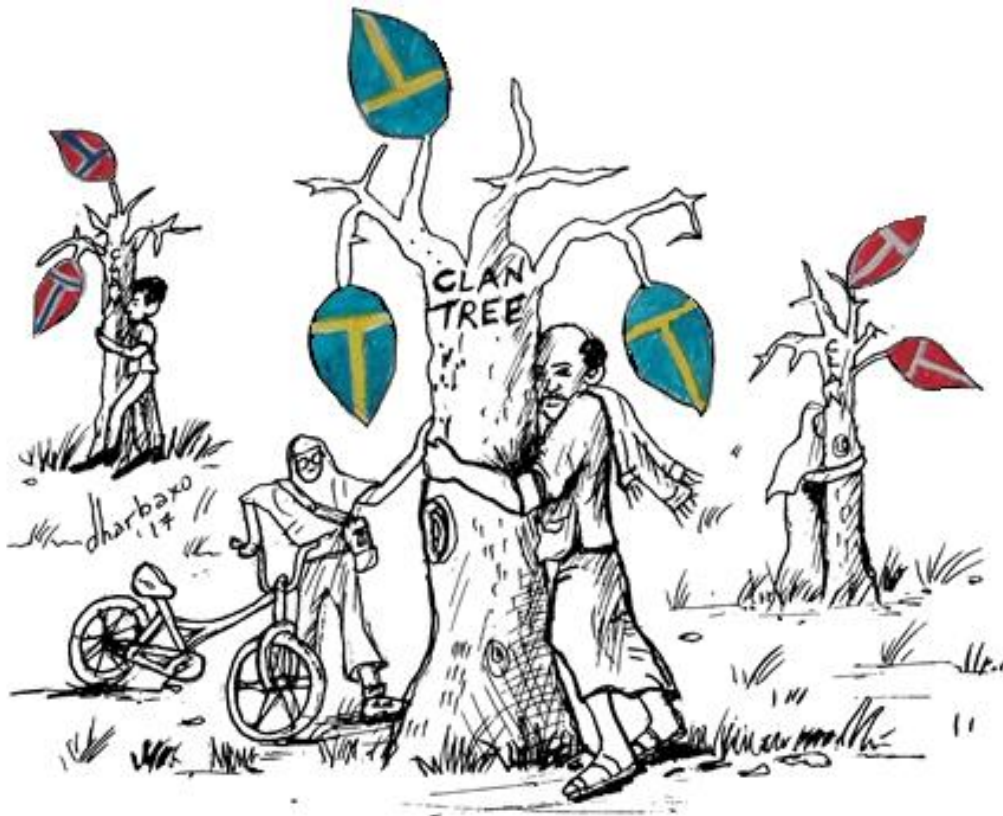

Fig. 6: The clan tree in the diaspora

Artist's comment:

"Traditional Somalis stick to the clan. This traditional system is very powerful in Somalia, and even here, Somalis still support each other on clan basis. They also seek traditional protection under the clan. However, younger generations are less attached to the clan"

CHAPTER VII
Horizons of security

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In the previous chapter, I have explored the scope of change in constructions of security and welfare with voices coming from the Somali diaspora in Scandinavia. I have reflected on the huge challenges facing the nuclear family; on the ties with the extended family as well as on education and other relevant aspects that emerged during my interviews. Now, I want to illustrate the transformations of welfare in a broader perspective that responds more specifically to the inputs coming from the Theoretical Framework and the available literature. Under this new light, we shall have another look at the concept of solidarity.

Experienced solidarity under the welfare state

In the Theoretical Framework (Chapter One), I have established the difference between 'concrete' and 'abstract' solidarity, defining the former as the one stemming from practices of welfare in which the benefactor and the recipient know or can trace each other. Concrete solidarity requires thus close moral connections, and the network of trusted individuals it brings together turns out to be necessarily limited, since it is not conceivable, and perhaps feasible, to extend such close interactions to many people. I described abstract solidarity as the sum of practices that instead take place between people that have none or scarce direct knowledge one of the other. In this case, there is an institution acting as arbitrator, and the number of people involved in welfare can grow potentially larger. These differences are echoed in some of my interlocutors' accounts:

> (S_2). In Somalia (…) people know where this money comes from, and the people know who they expect the welfare from. And the people who are giving, who do they give; so it is clan-based. Maybe [there are] some people that are worse in this group and should deserve this money, but they don't give it. So it's not distributarian, it is interest-oriented, clan-based oriented. If I were asked how to develop the Somali welfare state, I would have brought it up to the gratuity level of the Scandinavian ones, because in Scandinavia everyone is paying tax not because this money will go to his brother or his sister.

(D[18]). In the Somali way (...) you are very dependent on your close relatives. The Danes have managed to make this very communal way of thinking that we have, that you have to take care of each other, they just managed to do it on a really large scale, like this is the whole state. (…). They have taken everybody into account.

In order for abstract solidarity to work, it seems that both certain institutions and imaginations, or myths if you will, are needed. In fact, these two elements are key factors that allow solidarity to flow, because they create expectations and ideals of good society, where the individual do not desire only the wellbeing of the fellow kinsman, but of all *citizens*. In other words, institutions, through the societal imaginations they propagate, permit the building of trust at a much more inclusive level, becoming the actual guarantor of the system they have established. In the West, it is the state that holds the regulatory power to deal with social conflicts, distribution of resources and welfare, while individuals, at least theoretically, are exempted from doing so themselves. In this thesis, I discussed what these institutions and these myths consist of on both sides of my research object,

Fig. 7: Trust, individualization and clan
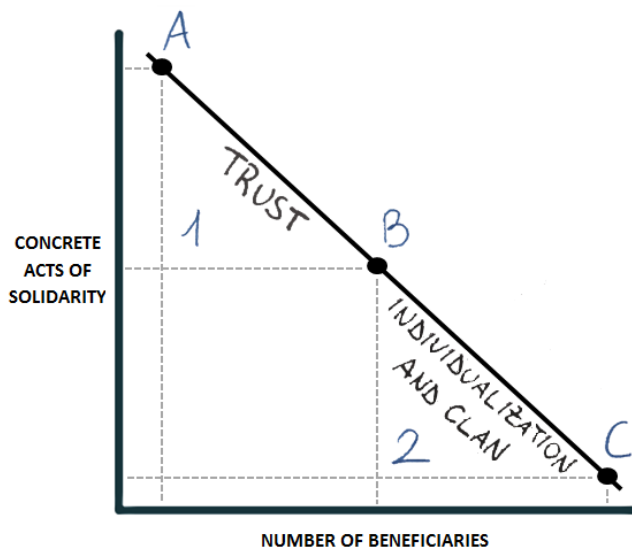
namely the Scandinavian and the Somali societies; but I have likewise argued for their unfixed nature, which means that they can, and do transform indeed under certain circumstances (think about the malleable structure of kinship that in Somali society can produce new alliances). What happens when we connect the processes described so far with the graph presented in the Theoretical Framework? In the case of the Somalis in Scandinavia, we can point up to relevant transformations pertaining to solidarity. To put it simply, I have observed Somalis whose narratives and acts are sliding from the position I have indicated as A to somewhere between A and C. Let me elaborate on the meaning of this passage. Firstly, changes take the form of a negotiation of trust (triangle 1): increasing bits of welfare tasks are now seen as best when performed by state institutions, which

are consequently considered legitimate in their social programming. Everyday practices of state-citizen relation are thus fading some of the welfare tasks enshrined in the clan, since the latter is not as efficient as the state in providing for the needs of the Somalis in Scandinavia. That is, experiences are coming to terms with the historical present and release new prognoses for the future. Two distinct sub-themes are used here to describe the historical development of trust among the Somalis in Scandinavia: relation state-citizen and relation private-public.

Relation state-citizen

I have already tried to underscore in Chapter Four what fills the space of experiences of many Somalis in this regard: during the democratic years 1960-1969 and the subsequent Siad Barre's regime, state institutions had to contend against clans the trust of the citizens in order to gain ground in people's security arrangements. At the same time, politicians and government officials themselves were not alien to clan-based practices of clientelism[1]: power dynamics at the state level were eventually transformed into an extension of clan politics, both at the time of the multi-party democracy and in the following regime[2]. The state became a machinery to further the position of one's own clan; differently from pre-colonial clan feuds, the clan could count on larger internal economic means, on the monopoly of the external aid and on the control of advanced military equipment— via the state, overturning the then extant equilibria of power. In this way, welfare and security arrangements became politicized in the sense that they depended on the political will backed up by the threat of the use of force: therefore, having no representation at the institutional level happened to be a disgrace for those who wanted to access resources. This created expectations that the state would work on biased mechanisms and inclined even more the population towards the security net provided by the clan.

But what has been usually labeled as "tribalism" or "clannism" can be given second thoughts in the light of the approaches centered on welfare, solidarity and

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[1] As recalled among the others by former Ambassador Mohammed Osman Omar (1992, 69).

[2] Ahmed 1996, 106.

security: understood in this background, genealogy and lineage reveal themselves to have been more reliable than the state in mapping trustworthiness and reducing uncertainties in the perilous Somali context. This reduction was made possible, Simons notes, by "charting who has trusted who in the past"[3]. In other words, Somalis fell back on the networks they already knew how to use to produce predictable results, while they did not feel enough attachment to the nation-state, let alone a sense of security stemming from it. It could have not been otherwise, since the state became in the end synonymous with corruption, coercion and a decrease of wellbeing for all those excluded from the circles of power. For many Somalis, the traditional errant life as nomads has represented the best antidote to the cruel novelty of the state, offering the brave ones who decided to pursue it a deep sense of self-sufficiency as well as a source of pride: this is how nomadism built up to become an idealistic and even mythical goal for many, especially men[4]. But even nomadic life could not protect one from the brutal escalation of the civil war, and nomads just as other groups in the Somali society were forced to flee to have their lives saved. Therefore, as it has been concluded also for other parts of Africa, the continued participation in the clan is based on present economic and social needs, and tends to be emphasized in case of declining control over life and means of economic production, which brings anxiety[5].

Those Somalis arriving in Scandinavia had to face once again state institutions, yet with the difference that this time there was no chance to resort to mobility to opt out. On top of that, even physical mobility intended as a welfare practice witnessed forms of restrictions in connection with the refugee status. This hits negatively newcomers, more than those already established; and more the elders, rather than of the young ones. For many "Somali-Somalis" arrived to Scandinavia, state provision of welfare does not curb life insecurities right away,

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[3] Simons 1995, 139.

[4] The described mind-set about welfare and security would be put to test also by the circumstances of the civil war, which definitely strengthened the kinship tradition vis-à-vis the crumbling state. The most notably lesson learned from that period was to fear and escape the state because it would try its best to steal one's resources, also by recurring to indiscriminate violence (Samatar 1992, 637).

[5] Cf. Max Gluckman (1960) on British Central Africa and Vail (1989) on South Africa.

but it takes trust to become a common feature of the relation between the Somali individual and the state first. Among them, the predominant narrative about the state and its welfare system describes it as "intrusive" (S_1) of the private life of individuals and, in their opinion, state authorities are obsessed with controls of various nature. When trust is absent, interactions with state representatives remain a major problem, notwithstanding the years of residence one has spent in the new country:

> (D_{10}). We are proud people and we cannot accept [anyone] to dictate us. We have our own culture, our own religion, our own color and we don't want to change it, but we are trying to do the best to integrate. (…) If they don't respect us, they cannot expect us to respect them because respecting is not only one sided, is two sided. That's my input.

This I was told by a Somali who has lived for more than seven years in Denmark where, at the time of the interview, he was working and completing his Master. There is also a literal fear of authorities and social workers that is particularly widespread among the Somalis, even among those who have more experience with the welfare state. Before looking in more detail into some examples, it is worth anticipating that in the last two decades there has been a bloom of intermediate bodies working with the scope of facilitating the communication between families and authorities. It is also thanks to the support of these bridge builders, associations, advisers and so on that Somali parents can enjoy today an easier access to information, compared to what their predecessors experienced in the 1990s. Nevertheless, much gap is still in place and I wish to focus now on the issue of mistrust toward welfare authorities, especially for what concerns children care. Without beating around the bush, many Somali mothers fear to lose custody of their children, an aspect that for Johnsdotter was already deeply rooted among Somali women in 2002[6]. This perception stems primarily from cultural differences and mouth-to-mouth accounts inviting mothers to use caution and discretion:

> (D_8). If you do treat your children bad in Somalia, then your neighbors will come and tell you upfront; or your family will come and tell you; or your husband or your wife or whoever is there. They'll tell you are treating this child improperly.

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[6] Johnsdotter 2002, 130.

> But here, nobody is going to tell you: they look at you, write it down and they would have 20 pages about how many bad things you did to this child and therefore they will come to take your child away.

It is interesting to compare this experience with another one I have collected in Oslo, where the interlocutor explains the condition of vulnerability of a woman she helped through her volunteer organization:

> (N[3]). You know what happened? A lady from Somalia (…) she had lived in Norway 20 years, since she was five. She gave birth to a baby boy. Her husband was not in Norway, he was in another country in Europe (…). In Somalia, if a baby smiles, we say: "oh, he sees the angels" and the lady talked like that, and they [child welfare authorities] said: "Oh, this lady is insane". (…) they took the baby from her. So, I tried to help and one, two times, I followed...I was there, you know, when they took the baby: she called me and I went to the hospital. So, they said: "we have a meeting with you, then the lady sit there, I sit here, (…). They stole the baby! They stole the baby! they told us: "we have a meeting", and when she came in the meeting, they took the baby. That's not good. I felt so bad, the lady fainted there. The doctor said: "I want to give her injection". I said: "You can't". He said: "No, she's mad. She will kill the child". I said: "No, I will help her". I took her home, we found somebody to help us, a lawyer. I explained to the lawyer: "this lady, she has never got, you know, education on how to hold the baby, because this is her first child and she doesn't have a mother who would help her".

I argue that this generalized anxiety, confirmed also elsewhere[7], derives from different understandings of welfare practices and care, yet also from the specific ways in which institutions work and approach the issue. Some mothers reported to me that they had received neither courses nor general information about child upbringing practices by state authorities, while they were only informed that yelling and especially corporal punishment (accepted within certain limits in Somalia), were forbidden by law in Scandinavia. The two quotations show distinctly that Somalis go back and forth to compare and reconnect experiences from the homeland with current situations, and that insecurity, fear especially, enter the horizon of expectations in result of present tensions. There is then a gap between families and the welfare state: before resorting to state intervention against mothers' misconduct, Somalis believe that other members of the family, and especially older women, should be given more chances to offer guidance in matters of childcare, education and health.

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[7] See for example OSF 2014a.
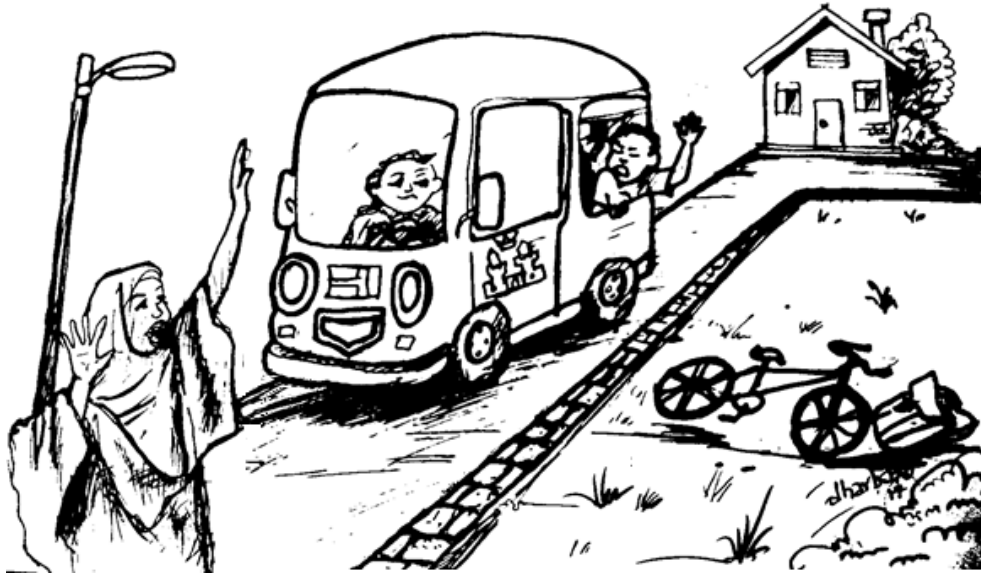
Fig. 8: Child authorities

Artist's comment:

"Whenever authorities find that the wellbeing of the child is at risk, they just take the child without the consent of the parents, and that has a psychological impact on the parents, especially mothers"

In fact, single mothers and couples can become isolated for different reasons and it is important to note that isolation has a specific negative connotation in a traditional collective group as the Somali, which is used to rely on the community as a whole, even in the upbringing of children. Uprooted from the traditional safety net and stimulated to think individually in a context never experienced before, women do not want other women to see their weakness. It comes into view that the Somali sense of own pride becomes a double-edged sword in the diaspora: "there is this kind of paranoia of people knowing about you, especially the Somali people knowing about you and your whereabouts and the way you teach your children" (D8). However, in doing so they are also missing out on the sharing of that precious "know-how" about many practical things, or on mutual moral support, as reported by one interlocutor (D7). On the other hand, when they familiarize with welfare institutions, and their children are socialized in Scandinavian societies, the Somalis can see the benefits of welfare state provision against the vicissitudes of life in Western societies. Housing, (un-)employment, education, sickness and pension schemes become the ground of interaction with

the state, which gradually transforms their socio-economic needs and enhances the establishment of trust. The young Somalis of the diaspora that I have interviewed show to have more capacity as well as determination to adapt to the new environment: and as they become critical of the traditional elders' authority, they find in the welfare state a natural ally for backing up their intra-family claims or independence aspirations. In this sense, we give credit to Trägårdh's description of the "anti-family" culture that the welfare state displays in long-term perspective[8]. I also recognize this process to be one milestone on the way that brings the "Somali-Somali" closer to become a "Danish-Danish".

Private vs. public

In Chapter Five, I explored the historical roots of 'standardization' in the welfare state: Scandinavian welfare states are authorized to intervene in the sphere of family and private life in order to make sure that individuals embrace norms and values of the system, from where a sound economic planning can be derived for the entire society[9]. Western governments feel legitimate by popular mandate to legislate for the national-constructed idea of private sphere, and consistently do so with the influence of both normative principles, as equality, and specific narratives relating to welfare (as explained by Suszycki). Unfortunately, we are rather far from having a single definition for what can be referred to as a private concern and what instead belongs to the public domain, and so we have comprehensible difficulties in drawing the relative (and somehow appropriate) boundary in everyday life. For many Somalis, the private sphere is chiefly the secure space of the extended family, where experiences and knowledge are passed down by one generation to the other, starting precisely from the family genealogy, which we have seen being so important for the socio-political position of the clan within the community. But once in the diaspora, the private space is subject to erosion by the force of the welfare state, which penetrates it through intervention in education, health and other aspects of everyday life. The existing literature

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[8] Trägårdh 1990, 579.

[9] Rothstein 1998; Kildal 2003, 13; Hedetoft 2006, 419.

provides at least two very pertinent examples of state interference in the private sphere, to which we may extend the methodology pursued in this thesis.

The two examples are commonly referred to as the "dumped children"[10] and the "female circumcision"[11] practices, whose in-depth analysis however lies outside the scope of my research. Quite interestingly, these questions challenges the concept of "social security" also from a semantic point of view: in fact, these are practices rooted in Somali experience that in Western states are hardly regarded as having a social function, and receive therefore pejorative word designations and meanings. We can use the findings of this research to underline that children too are part to a social security arrangement, connecting the past (parents and their experiences) with the present (cultural practices of children upbringing) and the future (children's reciprocity once they become adults). As a result, many Somali families have performed foster children care as a cultural

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[10] In 2005, the Swedish National Broadcasting company aired the documentary *Dumpad i Afrika* (dumped in Africa), about two Swedish Somali teenagers left in Somalia who struggled to find a way to return to Sweden. A similar story came out in 2007, when *Aftonbladet* reported the story of a Swedish Somali boy who travelled with his mother to visit some relatives in Somalia and was subsequently left alone by her when she returned to Sweden. The "dumped Somali children" debate elicited fierce reactions for what seemed to be an injustice against the children. Swedish anthropologist Johnsdotter (2015) has investigated cases of dumped Swedish Somali children, revealing that mobility among children in transnational families is not an exception, and what we are witnessing is thus only the replication on a broader scale of what is happening continuously in Somalia according to traditional norms of children upbringing. Interestingly enough, Johnsdotter reports that according to one Somali respondent, the Swedish way of rearing children can be sometimes even harmful, while "the day care system is reprehensible, since leaving the children to outsiders does not create any bonds between parents and children (...) Such an upbringing makes family bonding weak" . A need to focus, respect and mediate cultural differences in relation to children upbringing was expressed by my women interlocutors, while the topic came out rarely when discussing with men. One clear example of clash between the systems is represented by the fact that in Somalia there are general expectations that boys and girls would start working and helping the family in earlier age than what usually happens in Europe. Yet, even other questions, such as at what age should the family let their kids walk to school alone, or what behaviors parents should tolerate, offered ground to remarkable cultural differences.

[11] As reported also in Chapter Three, Johnsdotter (2002, 10) has indicated in her doctoral dissertation that circumcision as a religious practice is undergoing a process of reassessment in the Somali diaspora in Sweden, in the light of Islam's ban against any form of harm inflicted on God's creation. Consequently, more and more people including imam are reassessing circumcision as a practice of non-Islamic origin. In the course of my research, I had only few opportunities to talk or to hear the topic being discussed among Somalis, but I was able to observe that the potential non-Islamic origin of the practice is still far from be an agreed point among people. However, is not my intention here to dig into female circumcision practices as such for which the reader should refer to the other valuable works that have been mentioned. What is of paramount importance for the points discussed here is though the understanding of female circumcision as a strategy to optimize their daughters' future prospects: there are, then, specific expectations to be fulfilled and some girls would be even sent secretly to Somalia to undertake circumcision.

welfare practice aiming at ensuring reciprocity as well as solidarity with both relatives and neighbors. Since the state in not contemplated at the traditional level, I was told that children are their pension, because they are expected to support and care for the parents and the extended family wherever they are going to be in the world once grown up.

In this view, threats to remove children from their homes represent a direct invasion of what it is considered private life, and undermine the building of trust between Somali citizens and the state[12]. In fact, for many Somalis such threat represents not just an emotional anxiety or moral disgrace, but also a serious security concern that we tend to underestimate under the current definition of social security. Therefore, cross-cultural dialogue about practices as female circumcision or educational sojourns in Somalia should not be reduced to a pro-con modernization conversation, but should be mindful of what they represent in relation to culturally constructed notions of security, in order to propose solutions of compromise. Current attitudes tend to criminalize Somali practices grounded on their understanding of mobility, jeopardizing the reciprocity within the transnational welfare group. Sending children to foster families in Somalia, whether for few months or years, is an equipoise to preserve the safety net and to keep kids away from some aspects of Western lifestyle (including drinking and drug consumption). Or again, is a way to recover the values of Somali culture and, finally, to resist changes imposed from above: in other words, it's a strategy used to counter mounting threats to the family structure. Several Somalis in fact experience that there is a "loss of authority" and "control" on children and teenagers[13]. Quite in contrast with that, Western governments and Scandinavian ones ensure individuality and autonomy within the family structure, and both policies and societies are structured pretty much around the notion of individual entitlement to rights. Understood in these terms, children upbringing reveals itself for a large part a question of social control shifting from one welfare provider to

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[12] Pia Kjærsgaard has for example suggested to remove circumcised Somali girls from their families (See "Pigeomskæring - Vanvid I Dansk Flygtningepolitik" at: http://www.danskfolkeparti.dk/Pigeomsk%C3%A6ring_-_vanvid_i_dansk_flygtningepolitik).

[13] Johnsdotter 2015, 90.

the other, with all the security implications that follow: to say it all, it shows a clash between the two systems[14].

Individualization and clan

Now, I will illustrate what happens on the way from B to C, with reference to the triangle 2 in the graph that I have presented earlier. Two issues acquire particular relevance in the second triangle: the process of individualization and the restructuring of the clan as welfare provider. Individualization is a dear concept for scholars of welfare states and public policy and it usually indicates the situation in which people can enjoy substantial freedom in making choices guided by a sense of independence and 'right to have rights', without being restricted by the coercive power of old traditions[15]. Nevertheless, it is a concept that also sociologists have extensively used and turned into a fundamental condition of modernity, characterized by an imbalance between the individual's scarce capability to exercise control on things and events, or to take them for granted, and the global problems in a global risk society[16]. The common thread in both definitions is that state institutions become fundamental partners for the individual, in order to provide support and insurance against risks and against dependence on family or community. In fact, great and symbolic value is attached to personal choice in the handling of opportunities and dangers. The Norwegian social anthropologist Gullestad explained:

> Individualization implies that the discourse of individual rights and liberties has become hegemonic, and that there is a foregrounding of specific value concepts

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[14] A further element of complication arises when Somali teenagers resist these practices and would like instead to pursue their lives in the societies where they have born or have been raised for most of the time. For example, in a story featured by Aftonbladet, upon his arrival to Somalia Ahmed considered the members of his extended families as strangers and longed to go back to Sweden, although afterward accomplishing his goal of coming back home he would maintain good connections with them. Where should the boundary between private decisions and public scrutiny be placed then, in order to guarantee enough freedom while at the same time avoid the imposition of certain decisions on teenagers? No mediation has been conducted to soften this discussion, and different ways of seeing the same thing exist one besides the other: however, socialization matters and traditional welfare practices may not work anymore as experienced before once put in transnational environments. This is, I argue, another evidence of change.

[15] De Beer and Koster 2009, 19.

[16] Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2001, *xxii*.

such as freedom, rights, choice, independence, individuality, uniqueness and achievement, at the expense of concepts such as dependence, obedience, duty, togetherness and community.[17]

The "individual plans", which the target groups in the Scandinavian welfare states have to present to the authorities through the help of caseworkers, well embody the ideal of individualization. In this sense, the welfare state is perhaps the most advanced apparatus supporting individuality, providing the majority of rights and entitlements to individuals rather than to families, better yet communities. I have not retrieved any systematic study of individualization in the Somali diaspora in Scandinavia: so, this is where I draw the line between existing studies and my own contribution to the subject[18]. In my understanding, individualization indicates the personalization of needs together with the acquisition of material means and moral rights to pursue them, even in case of disagreement with others. That is how I have interpreted the tensions occurring between family members, especially between parents and children, in the Somali diaspora in Scandinavia.

In other words, I was trying to answer the following question: is the ordinary Somali living in Scandinavia becoming more of a self-centered individual or is s/he still caught in a web of moral duties and expected participation at the community level? Very few interlocutors categorically dismissed the hypothesis of individualization as something happening among them, affirming that it had a limited impact on the Somalis because security remained firmly a clan collective issue. Others seemed instead to confirm the pertinence of my definition, quickly appropriating the concept and stressing that personal needs are growing fast and require resources to be untied from the clan's claims, in order to divert them for the scope of satisfying the new necessities, to the detriment of communitarian participation. Consider the following fragments from interviews conducted in Växjö, Oslo and Århus:

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[17] Gullestad 2003, 51.

[18] Anna Simons (1997, 278) was the first scholar to talk about a very similar concept in the specific case of Somalia, which she named "individuation". In her opinion, it consisted in the capacity to choose one's own political identity without depending on the other: a condition which was lacking in Somalia, where the clan rather than the state was able the one able to provide a "secure future" and therefore also the political identity. Her anthropological investigation, although being very inspiring, has a limited use here as it is based on the case of Somalia only.

(S_2). This individualism is built on the welfare because the welfare will try its best to make the person free from other people, to make the person enjoying his life on his own individual basis. But there [Somalia], the person is made to be part of the collective community; even if the welfare is reaching that person, within the clan system, that person cannot get out, cannot live the way he wants. He has anyway to operate within the framework of clan rules.

(N_4). We're responsible to a share, and here you have, you come to a society where everything is very individualistic, and you have to be on your own, and that is very tiresome for many households here in Norway, I think.

(D_8). If you a strongly individualized, then you are seen as a wrong person, or you are doing something wrong, you are doing something bad. You have to think about the collective, or the extended family.

In the discourse about individualization, it becomes relevant to reflect on what a Somali in the diaspora aspires to (mindful of Appadurai's insights). This discourse is likely to present unique features for every concerned individual: nevertheless, I will use the evidence that I have collected to provide qualitative hints about the variety of possible developments. Individuals in the diaspora seem to have still many needs that they would address through the clan. However, as described above, the clan cannot meet these requests in the host society easily, and this failure leads to different outcomes. I was told by one interlocutor:

(D_5). The fundamental question for the Somali is *what you want*. Do you want what the clan can offer? That's my question. If you want what the clan could provide, then you have it. If you want more that the clan can do, you don't have it. [my emphasis]

When asked about his personal choice on the matter, the same interlocutor added: "I don't care about what my clan will offer me. Of course I know my region in Somalia…I am a Somali guy, but my clan cannot satisfy me. You understand? I *need* a *government*" (D_5) (my emphasis). These passages are extremely evocative of the questions of good life and cultural aspiration posed by Appadurai. They also convey degrees of "dissent", one of the forces behind the capacity to aspire recognized by the anthropologist. This dissent goes both ways: in the direction of the clan, considered to be too demanding of their members; and in the direction of the state, whose individualism is seen as excessive. Moreover, interlocutors bring to light also another question: living in Western urban contexts is associated with higher material and immaterial costs, for which security net members based in the homeland can be of little help. One interlocutor expressed his concern in these

terms: "you become more educated, more self-reliant and your needs will grow. Not because you are greedy, but because expenses are growing"[19]. Inasmuch as clans are less effective in performing their welfare tasks, they lose also part of their identity appeal for their members: this helps explaining why the hyphenated-identity theme emerged is particular relevant. Consider this other excerpt from the interlocutor quoted above:

> (D5). We are the first generation who came to Denmark...so, I have a problem with Somalia, I have a problem with Denmark. I cannot identify myself. Where I belong to? I have my leg here and the other leg there. So the problem is to identify who I am. (...) here, you need to be either like the Danes or you need to be 100% Somali. There is no space for people who are in the middle.

In these quotations, individualization is disclosed also as a process imposed from above, through the socialization into the hosting welfare system, rather than being only a personal development of the self. Caught between a clan that strives to provide collective security and a pervasive state individualism, we understand how the ability of navigating the two systems becomes utterly relevant. Those who know the norms and the values existing on both sides, are more able to discern between positive and negative aspects, and use this knowledge to guide the other members of the community.

Changes in the function of the clan

Discussing individualization implies also a reflection on the function of the clan in the Scandinavian context. The encounter between the two systems of welfare provision, in fact, puts clan solidarity in contrast with individualization and reliance on government support. Seen from the perspective of welfare and security, I have argued that clans encapsulate the Somali community-based traditional providers of security, which work within a set of defined norms and obligations. As I have explained in Chapter Four, they are essentially a form of binding social capital providing non-state connections through networks based on economic, cultural and symbolic affects, in Somalia as much as among Somalis abroad: turning to the clan in order to satisfy his/her needs is then 'natural' for a

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[19] Fieldnote taken in Århus, June 12, 2015.

Somali, when socialized within this system. This informs us also about the clan's capability to satisfy people's needs more efficaciously than state institutions, providing even security *against* the state, as many Somalis have experienced in their recent past.

However, in the diasporic social environment, the clan can offer only a limited amount of services, because it has lost its connection to traditional modes of economic (re-)production and also because it does not have solid linkages to the host state's networks. One Somali told me quite straightforwardly that the extended family members in Denmark "cannot give me work, they cannot give me school (…) No clan can provide that" (D$_5$), indicating thus how traditional institutions are less effective in performing their tasks. There may be thus a need to establish solidarity beyond the clan, but in the time between, experiences of absent or reduced security come again to pervade their lives. The changes in the function of the clan that I have derived from the analysis of my interviews are described below.

ECONOMIC FUNCTION: nothing perhaps says it better about changes than the economic level. Extensive reliance on agricultural and pastoral activities for economic production in the homeland has left ground to secondary, tertiary and quaternary sector occupations in the diaspora. More Somalis are now working in the industry, business, education, information sectors and in the government. Income is therefore extracted from less mobile and volatile activities: it is generated by financially plannable, market-integrated and technology-intensive jobs. Somali women, in a continuation of a process started already in Somalia in the early 1990s, are participating actively in the job market, and have become actors and owners of modes of economic production, consequently acquiring new roles and responsibilities in the family. The traditionally expected man's role as breadwinner in the family is thus challenged, and can be bypassed either by women's initiative or by public welfare, which becomes a competitor actor (or an ally, according to the point of view) for the family. These findings lead to the consideration of the family structure as an economic expression of the system in which it is embedded. In other words, what we have seen in terms of diversification of family forms, single-motherhood and undermining of family

obligations in Chapter Six, represents a Somali phenomenon as much as it is a condition experienced also by many European families living in post-industrial societies. Extended-familism and collectivism are considered incompatible with an increasingly modern society, while nuclear families untied from the rest of the household worked in the direction of maximizing the economic vitality of the nation. Anthropologist Tina Kallehave confirms that "[i]ncoming Somalis were met with initiatives that acknowledged and required a nuclear family"[20]. Besides describing a situation of fragmentation of the safety net, the stories of the Somalis recount then also of a process of alignment to the 'typical' Scandinavian family influenced by the surrounding welfare society, which can be thus summarized:

> In Scandinavia, the insecurity of private maintenance in childcare increases the demands for the state's family policy-making. Meanwhile, Scandinavians tend to see childcare as bringing up a new generation of citizens rather than bringing up the lineage of inheritors. (…) children should be treated as individual citizens rather than as family 'assets', with the right to welfare whatever the family situation might be. Legitimated on these grounds, the state should thus subsidise the care and maintenance of children.[21]

Already twenty years ago, Popenoe analyzed Sweden's move away from the nuclear family form, confronted, among other things, by high women participation in the labor market; and in the last decades the number of households in Scandinavian countries has increased, although they are smaller in size[22]. In other words, the *modus operandi* of the welfare state works from different socio-economic premises: it ensures high levels of security but it is yet also potentially blind to what foreign welfare recipients have acquired throughout their life experiences. This has demonstrated to be particular problematic since many of these recipients came as adult. Hence, the historical comparative analysis seems to point to a general convergence of familiar dynamics, with Somali households struggling more to negotiate the restructuring of their families.

SOCIAL FUNCTION: The remodeling of the economic base and the increasing geographical stretching of the welfare group is triggering alterations in the clan's

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[20] Kallehave 2014, 182.

[21] Lin and Rantalaiho 2003, 10.

[22] Popenoe, 1987; see also Kautto 1999, 72; Ellingsæter and Leira 2006.

security functions. Traditional understandings show the environmental derivation of risks as well as the role of the community in assessing and supporting needy members. Below is one exemplary quotation:

> (S_2). In the community, they have some kind of welfare for people who are poor: they just give them. Because some people can't have milk because they have no cows; or there is famine; or they have small farms so they cannot reach the rain season, so they need something to survive in the dry season. They are small families and they are very poor. So the community will organize some kind of welfare, and then they give grain, maize or whatever it is, a cow to milk until the rain season comes; so, they will be covered by the community. It is welfare. But the community has nothing to do with what they do with these things.

In the diaspora, new risks become prominent and the clan is in many ways a less extended and less powerful security provider. There is rather little that the institution of the clan can do in the diaspora to alleviate social issues, for example by distributing information, services and possibly jobs that could help people out. At times, even the most direct measure of social intervention, monetary transfers, can be of limited use because, as their argument go, they all get the same from state welfare authorities and therefore there is no point in helping each other in this way, except for emergencies. Their social function is therefore limited, and more oriented at organizing forms of welfare collection for the homeland, where instead clans have a conspicuous social role.

POLITICAL FUNCTION: a number of factors, including the crisis of the patriarchic structure, undermine the exertion of political authority by clan elders. They have then limited possibilities of issuing binding decisions for their members without running up against either national legal systems or refusals from their members. However, the decline of clanpolitics needs to be attributed especially to the younger generations of Somalis in the diaspora. In fact, they are the ones that ultimately have a say on the clan's destiny, since its reproduction depends on matters like knowledge and application of the xeer; marriages inside the family; abidance to clan obligations. In Chapter Six, I have explained that all these sub-aspects are losing relevance and are increasingly questioned by young Somalis. At the same time, there is no specific evidence to conclude that the clan cannot survive without a strong political component, to be only a non-normative, additional structure of welfare provision.

From concrete to abstract solidarity

Summing up the processes described on the way from A to C, it is possible to say that the sense of people's interdependence (accumulated through experiences and passed down as such by the oldest generation) is not reflected among the youngster (especially), or those who have lived many years in the diaspora. Contexts have profoundly changed, and for this reason, clan-based solidarity has lost its historical 'tail', resulting less appealing to help people navigating in the social present[23]. In the light of the said dynamics, I argue that we can explain the developments in the making in terms of a retreat, or a shrinking of concrete solidarity from the extended family to a more narrower-defined type of social unit. It means, primarily, the reduction in both the acts of welfare exchanges between members of the extended family and in the genealogical extension of those considered part of the welfare group. We can clearly see the reduction at work in the following excerpt from my conversation with a 23-year interlocutor:

> (D_8). When my mum calls me and says to me "your cousin...", I say "which kind of a cousin?"...then I get to know it's her cousin's cousin's son's son. Or something like that; then I am like: "It does not concern me". The circle got smaller for me; it is not just nuclear but I am thinking my mum's sisters and brothers and their kids, they are still in my family. And even my dad's sister's kids, they are still in my family. But I don't go beyond that, I don't go to my mum' or dad's cousins' kids. That does not concern me. Whatever can happen to them, I am thinking this is my family; but for my mum, her concern is her cousin or even the second-cousin: she knows what they are up to, what they are doing, where they are, and keeping everybody together. But for me it is just my mum and dad and their brothers and sisters and their kids, and of course my own brothers and sisters. What I am thinking is with my son, for instance, if we stay here in Denmark, we will only be a nuclear family, even though we try to make the kids meet and see each other. Then, it will only be a nuclear family. That's how I see the future perspectives of it.

Another young interlocutor expressed herself in analogous terms:

> (D_{13}). When they [parents] talk about family, they talk about…like, not your nuclear family. They talk about your cousin's cousin's cousin: this is also your family. I am like: "Okay, relax. My family is my cousin, maybe my second cousin and that is it". So, it is also difficult to help a person that you don't feel any connection with, even though there are a lot of ways you can communicate with them. But, if you don't...yeah, it's difficult to have a relation if you have not grew up together; you don't have any relationship at all.

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[23] Literature suggests that the utility of extended intergenerational relations itself is questioned in nations with comprehensive public services and benefits targeting the nuclear family (Silverstein, Conroy, and Gans 2012, 1258).

When concrete solidarity shrinks, there is usually a corresponding gain in abstract solidarity. Or, to put it in another way, it is the increment of trust, which is required for abstract solidarity to work, the one that reduces eventually the perceived need for concrete solidarity. "Is it my responsibility?", the reader may remember this rhetoric question posed by the young Somali who did not want to support the family in Somalia after that her mother would pass away. In Koselleckean terms, it is the exposure to a "new temporality" intended as "modernity", which increase the weight of the future in the individual's range of experience and diminishes the space of the past. That is, engaging in day-to-day interactions with the state then puts the role of the clan in the background, as it is increasingly seen as a non-functional family arrangement, at least in the diaspora. This process is thus necessarily twofold, because it depends also on the welfare state's ability to instill ideas of the common good as well as the commitment for everyone to contribute for the sake of the system. Consider this revealing quotation:

> (S$_3$). I think they [the Somalis] are quickly to trust the state, if the state can deliver. But when they know the state cannot deliver, all the states, when there is inequality between groups, then you kind of like, you back up in a kind of protecting zone: "I need to go back to my group".

Hence, the Somalis are literally suspended between two safety nets, between two sets of experience, and such delicate situation can have many fallouts for their security. This reflection brings us to somewhere between points A and B in the graph. I have then motivated the further development towards C as the consequence of the process of individualization. I have described at different points in this research that becoming an individual, that is, a legal subject eligible to rights *ad personam*, means that the single person is detached from any sort of primary dependence on the other members of the family in terms of welfare and security. In order for this condition to be feasible, the citizen has to establish a direct relation with, and actually become dependent on, state institutions for satisfying his needs. Thus, the economic base of the family changes, because the state is able to substitute at once the many, fragmented services that the extended family negotiates among its members. State relations socialize and transform the person into an individual and, at the solidarity level, we see a drop in the concrete

type of acts people engage with, because citizens are less prone to participate in supporting the income of relatives they consider distant. Abstract solidarity, instead, gains adherents within a society made of such individualized people, and that is functional for the welfare state.

The expansion of abstract solidarity is, I believe, the most relevant facet of change in the solidarity patterns of the Somalis living in the diaspora, and leads to more trust as well as participation in the welfare practices and in the society of the new countries of residence in general. But it is not only confined to acts like paying taxes, pursuing education or working in Scandinavian countries: the growth of abstract solidarity requires in fact deep emotional negotiations between experiences and expectations, where ideas of what welfare is and of how to best perform it are undergoing tremendous changes. From the analysis of my interviews, I can conclude that negotiations have not led to a perfect zero-sum game: there is no such a thing as the point C in reality, at least for now: not a single Somali I have met that would be totally detached from the clan safety net. Somali welfare in the diaspora is turning into a stable dual system, in which one compensates for the shortcomings of the other.

Transnational welfare and the diaspora

This duality can be explained within an historical frame encompassing the development of transnational welfare practices. In this thesis, I have presented Somali transnational welfare dynamics in two forms: first, as the efforts deployed at the individual or extended family level to support the livelihood and security of the household. Or, as the multiple activities with humanitarian or developmental purposes, which involve governments, international organizations, NGOs, multinationals, local communities[24]. In both cases, the transnational household is

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[24] Summing up some of the information gathered in Chapter Five and Six, the main characteristic of Somali transnationalism is that the boundaries of welfare support are determined by the clan's lineage and the agreements stipulated within and outside it, and less so by geographical references per se. The combination of the two factors is also responsible for making support to needy family members an obligation that individuals can hardly escape without facing social consequence like isolation and blame. Through transnational welfare connections, despite their location in the world, the Somalis face a constant interaction with the branch of the extended family living in the homeland. In many ways, the Somalis have developed globalized clans that have the potential to curve a piece of safety net out for their members at the worldwide level.

for diaspora Somalis the locus of forced confrontation with the clan structures of the homeland and their family-grounded expectations. In the same way, Scandinavian Somalis dealing with home-based family members have to balance their own experiences of security in dialectic confrontation with present requests. This relational structure closely reminds of the model suggested by Brubaker, which I have presented in the Theoretical Framework. At the family level, transnational welfare has so far depended primarily on the perception of obligation that binds family members. Yet, the sense of obligation can no longer be taken for granted:

> (S$_3$). I remember watching a Somali debate on TV, where there were mid-40, -50 men sitting and saying: "the future of the Somali remittance", they were discussing to what extend does it help. And someone was arguing: "it helps because at the time there is a crisis there, you need to do...". It's basically described as a donation, foreign aid. But instead of depending on other persons, why not starting within grassroots people helping each other out; whereas the others were discussing this no longer will be for the next generation: "we get older, the younger generations who are born in other countries, are foreigners, they will not have this close understanding of family, and helping and solidarity. They are in much more individualistic society and the further away, the more they will dis-attach themselves" he said.

I believe that forecasts for transnational welfare in the future are not easy, and we can refer to demographic data, or 'generational' explanations only to a certain extent. To clarify the latter point, let's take the case of Denmark: in 2015, the total population of Somalis aged 35 or below was 14,287, of which 39,4% migrated over time to Denmark, while 60,6% were descendants. Taken together, these two groups represented 72% of the total Somali population in the country. The statistical predominance of second-generation Somalis, in addition to the fact that many of the rest were anyway too young to have meaningful experiences of Somalia at the time they left the country, may lead us to think that clans have a smaller role in the experience of the youth currently living in the country. On the other hand, of all those 14,287 aged 35 or below, 2,5% had migrated precisely in 2015, and the aggregated data inclusive of just the two previous years raise this number up to almost 10% of the total[25]. Simply put, it means that for hundreds of young Somalis the encounter with Scandinavian welfare systems and the

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[25] All data from Statistic Denmark.

management of transnational family relations are still recent facts. Subsequently, the outcome of the negotiations remains partly unpredictable, and is subject to how in the long-run the Somalis will define the 'I' in the world; 'we' in the world; and 'the others' in the world that I have mentioned in the first part of this thesis: including relations between clans, which can still be antagonistic and divisive.

Humanitarian efforts are a perfect case to see that diaspora Somalis are suspended between different conceptualizations of welfare and security, without this preventing activities that work also at the supra-clan level. In the homeland, project leaders as well as local implementers are always presented with the big question: "Which clan do you belong to?" (D_6). Humanitarian operators have to qualify themselves and their intervention plans to the concerned population, and there is an inherent entanglement between lineage and region of project implementation[26]. In Scandinavia, Somali NGOs and associations can still present clan affiliations[27]; however, it has been noted that Somalis working in the humanitarian sector avoid talking about clans when they participate in common events, a precaution that I have also observed in several occasions. A member of a Danish-Somali NGO laid out the rationale:

> (D_6). The clan system is what works in Somalia...It's okay, we are not denying it. It is a system working perfectly because it addresses the insecurities, everything. But it doesn't work here [Denmark], because here there is another system....We have come to another system: (…) there is no use to talk about the clan. So, in that case, it is useless to talk about the clan or to think about the clan.

Therefore, avoiding the clan talk is not just an outgrowth of necessity. There is more to it: diaspora forums; side-by-side humanitarian activities carried out in the homeland; and networking create forms of social capital that stands above the fragmentation of political interests. Kleist noted that first, underlining that the Somali diaspora involved in humanitarian work is indeed a collective moral community that even establishes some levels of trust and reconciliation in a country that lacks both to a greater extent[28]. According to one interlocutor, the

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[26] See Kleist 2008, 313-314.

[27] Tharmalingam 2011b, 169.

[28] Kleist 2008, 319-320.

changing background of transnational humanitarian engagement has brought to the development of a new ambition:

> (S$_2$). To create some kind of diaspora associations were the person is not a member of this association by virtue of his clan but by his own interest of being part of this Somali diaspora institution: these are the things that are going on now.

Hearing the Somalis recounting about their transnational engagement with the homeland leaves few doubts that there is an intrinsic wish to keep connections alive. There are though different motivations that lead the individual to strive for that, and I conclude this section by providing what I believe to be the most exemplar case of reconceptualization of the individual approach to transnationalism. Young interlocutors perform both kinds of transnational assistance even when they do not feel obliged to do so by familiar bonds, or when they do not subscribe to the clan system. In these cases, they frame their engagement in a total new narrative, centered on concepts like "choice", "charity", "sharing economy" and emphasizing the role of Islamic values of solidarity in motivating their welfare decisions. Moreover, they question the "long-term sustainability" of the remittance system, when not accompanied by interventions that could improve the factual economic conditions of the receivers. This change in views seems to be compatible with the previously noted transformations in the sphere of solidarity, and hints once more at the fact that kinship as normative principle is losing its appeal in shaping the spaces of social action. Therefore, while it may be still too early for taking stock of the broad-scale implications of fading kinship in transnational welfare, a shift to a sort of "untied familiar welfare" (*untied* from broader political understanding of family bonds), as prelude to forms of charity and aid, can be noted for the present.

Welfare nationalism

The idea that state provision of welfare contains components ascribable to nationalism relies on two types of power: the ownership of welfare structures and integration measures, and the political power to define those who qualify for assistance. At the practical level, this gives the state the initiative to presume the needs of the people in these categories, and the political responsibility to decide how to remediate these needs. The dominant principle of Scandinavian rhetoric

and practice upholding such societal intervention consists in equality as a realization of sameness, in the sense that the understanding of the good society is of a place where people experience themselves as alike, thus equal[29]. However, the state requires also that individual members perform their predefined roles, a tendency that has become more relevant during the 1990s, when activation policies established a conditionality regime to access social assistance and unemployment insurance benefits[30]. These underpinnings of the welfare system, based on its long-term goals of societal standardization, can turn though into normative constructs that measure what people are lacking in order to become proper members of the society, that is, like the rest of the other citizens[31]. This is ultimately the meaning of welfare nationalism: to see all individuals in the society through the lens of national categories, and expect from them behaviors based on the same categories.

In this respect, nationalism represents thus a crucial repertoire of values to set up the criteria of deviance from the norm and to perform the said distinction. To be sure, I am referring to both political nationalism, the one that often takes the form of welfare chauvinism and animated political debates; and to cultural nationalism, the one that shapes subtle everyday practices in the guise of Billig's banal nationalism. Yet, while in the former the reference to national values is voiced strongly, loudly, and often represents the content of the message itself, in the latter nationalism operates more quietly but any less effectively. Think of family dispersal and reduced mobility in the introductory courses for refugees; or the stigmatization of families with many children; or again the critical assessment of certain education and upbringing practices: all become a showcase to see the enforcement of national categorizations. These policies and attitudes have the goal of fostering integration through the dismantling of previous family structures and the re-orientation of the immigrant's feeling of solidarity from the extended

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[29] Larsen 2013, 156.

[30] Kananen 2014, 165; Hagelund 2016.

[31] Olwig and Pærregaard 2007, 23.

family towards the state[32]. However, this happens at the price of the security of Somali refugees, who especially in the early times of their resettlement are met by considerable challenges.

Some of the latter seem to have a sequential and even cyclical motion: dispersions of kin might contribute to disintegrate families; parents' low education levels, paired with discouraging supervisors in schools, determine fewer role models among the Somali youth. Few role models in the community means fewer inspirational examples and weaker social capital and network available to people. In turn, this can led to higher unemployment, which attracts the attention of media: frequently negative media coverage is likely to fix certain images and reproduces societal discrimination, which would do nothing but bringing more stigmatization and other unfortunate social consequences. Somalis are then particularly exposed in the context of the policy shift from rights to duties, repeatedly promoted by Scandinavian governments in the last decades as part of the activation measures. There are two additional reasons for that to be noted: first of all, while all members of the society, including migrants and refugees, are asked to be active makers of their own socio-economic destiny, the cultural ownership of integration structures is still in the solid hands of governments, which set overall modalities, rules and expectations. Somalis lament scarce access to information concerning their entitlements and duties; language barriers, imposed also for low-skilled jobs, remain problematic; the encounter with social workers and caseworkers is still far from ideal. Secondly, despite all the positive efforts put in place by governments, they eventually can only partly control instances of discrimination taking place in different sectors of the society, like in the job market; education; housing; and media, to mention those that were reported by my interlocutors.

Conclusions: vulnerability and the path out of it

In the light of what has been presented in this thesis in regards to the different kinds of interaction occurring between the Somalis and welfare state institutions, I

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[32] Trägårdh 1990, 579; the Danish Government's White Paper Visions and Strategies for Better Integration (2003) is quite explicit about that goal.

have observed the creation of artificial categories as well as long-term slowdowns in the integration pace. Such bold statement is not resulting only from the *longue durée* perspective on things: the findings are substantiated primarily by a synchronic investigation of issues that allows to capture the moment in which tension arises between past experiences and expectations. In these moments, characterized by a lack of security, I have learned from my interlocutors in what way welfare practices are negotiated, and which new future expectations are consequently created. The Somalis in Scandinavia have faced many forms of shortcomings of ontological security, and what has changed over time is not the occurrence, but their capacity to go about it. That is why I emphasize that their story of integration in Scandinavian states recounts of a slow progress from a condition of vulnerability, which is caused by both 'intrinsic' problems related to post-war traumas as well as forced migration, and contextual complications emerging in Scandinavia.
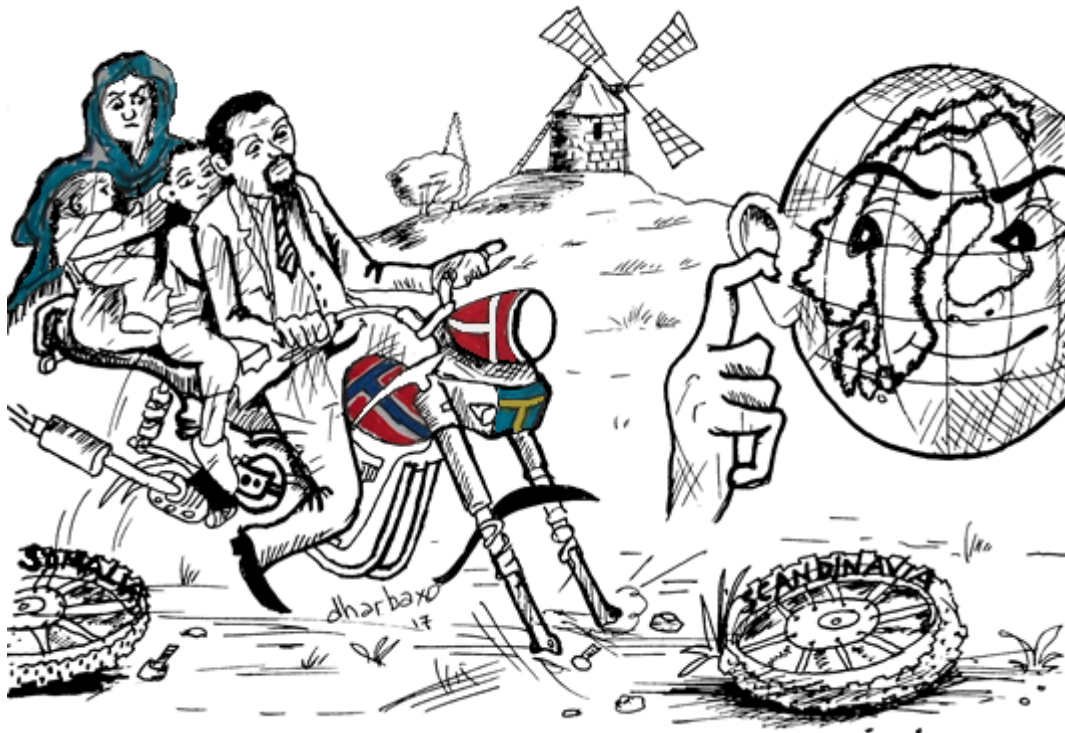

Fig. 9: Somalis in Scandinavia

Artist's comment:

"Somali families are very confused between the new system they come through and their old traditional system. There is a conflict between cultures. Authorities do not consider too much their cultural background and want the Somalis to adapt"

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis was preoccupied with achieving a deeper understanding of the societal dynamics characterizing the life of the Somali diaspora in the Scandinavian countries, through an analysis that has taken into account the historical foundations of both systems of social security. The motivation for undertaking my specific study came originally from political debates, which have often depicted the Somalis as a burden for the welfare state, in the light of the their overrepresentation among beneficiaries of social assistance. Against this background, we are consistently lacking voices and life stories from the side of Somali refugees and immigrants and their relation with welfare and security, and I have decided to address this inadequacy specifically in my thesis. In fact, just as welfare and social security have increasingly become central items in the agenda of Scandinavian political parties of different orientations, I have argued that issues of welfare and security exist also among the Somalis in the diaspora, although they are often overlooked in public discourses at the national level.

Some of my interlocutors have lamented difficulties, lack of information and fear in matters of ordinary life like family relations, children upbringing, education, leading to a loss of existential or ontological sense of security and to the feeling of not being a part of Scandinavian societies. Many concomitant causes can be said to produce such unfortunate effects, including lack of engagement on the part of the Somalis. Yet, I have noted that in many ways present circumstances are the result of their constructions of everyday security, which are rooted in past experiences and are now challenged by the cultural understandings of the same matters in Scandinavian countries. In other words, the integration of newcomers is not just about granting resources that the provider believes to be effective, but should consist also in ensuring that the resources are functional in the way receivers construct their world of security. To do so, we need to gain knowledge about their notions and practices of welfare and security, which are the product of different, but any less legitimate, historical processes. To say it differently, we need to incorporate these processes in the vocabulary of

"modernity", which is instead still a rather exclusionary exercise that marginalizes the value of non-Western experiences in the making of the definition.

One of such experiences in the Somali way of understanding and practicing welfare, which is perhaps harboring most tension, is its being stateless. This means that taking both material and immaterial care of community members continues also at the transnational level, involving frequent money transfers, visits to needy persons, and coordinated actions between dozens of people: as this study has hopefully demonstrated, the Somali diaspora is in fact a welfare actor that contributes to the wellbeing of its dispersed members. Such expectations of transnational welfare put necessarily some constraints on the Somalis in the diaspora, since they have to come to terms with the national containment of many of the new dynamics they are exposed to, including social assistance. For this latter reason, I have decided to focus also on the responsibility of the welfare state and welfare societies in reiterating certain ontological security dangers in the life of the Somalis, a path that I believed to be relatively less explored in the academia, and also less 'heard' in public debates.

The findings even led me to talk explicitly about 'artificial' conditions of insecurity imposed on the Somalis, and one can imagine on other non-national groups, by the institutional setting, in the sense that not all of the integration measures are conducive for resolving their security issues. Instead, some of these measures seem to put even extra strains on the Somalis, especially in the delicate early times of their settlement. For example, I have emphasized that while the arrival to Scandinavian countries may be represented as the completion of Somalis' personal journey to physical and psychological safeness, it is not a liberation from concerns, duties and obligation to family members that stayed behind. Being in the position of helping them financially and fulfilling their expectations is thus a concern they feel from day one. Yet even societal expectations and personal desires to contribute to the economy of the recipient country are made complicated by a number of factors, which often involve mutual responsibilities of diaspora members and receiving societies.

On this basis, I have understood the history of the Somalis in Scandinavia as a slow process of emerging from a condition of societal 'vulnerability' that,

considering the arguments presented in this thesis, can be said to be moving towards more integration in the countries of resettlement. Achieving higher degrees of participation in the society is not though a question of mere chronological progression: it takes, for the Somalis, to come to terms with questions of welfare and security. In fact, they do not experience security deficits because they are lacking the instruments to curb life uncertainties. The equation of civil war with anarchy has often led to an emphasis on the political side of the clan, diverting the attention from the existing non-state security structures that prevented the Somali society from further disintegration. Hence, they do have a system providing different kinds of assistance and insurance to their fellow community members, but it is becoming less and less applicable in its original form to the new risks emerging in the Scandinavian context, and even the most generous welfare system in the world cannot compensate right away for the vanishing safety net. The three components of the 'welfare group' (experiences of risk; normative principles; institutions) have attempted at explaining, in comparative perspective, the differences between the two safety nets, as well as what it may take for a fruitful cooperation. This unit of analysis well applies for comparisons of different sorts, for example in the case of other diasporas and/or other countries, because we recognize that these transcultural encounters are an increasingly common feature of many Western societies.

From the methodological point of view, I have described a process of negotiation characterized by tensions when, on the one hand, past experiences have less and less determination, and on the other hand future expectations become more prominent, but disconnected from the past. This asymmetry between experiences and expectations is the 'historical time' where the stories of my Somali interlocutors are staged. This explains both why I contend that their integration is best understood as the leap from a safety net to another, and why I have resorted to a qualitative research to grasp the details, the micro-histories, and the biographical nuances of these processes. The combination of methodologies inspired by Koselleck and Appadurai provided insights on these nuances, allowing this research to benefit from an interdisciplinary approach that combines long-term perspectives with the intricacies connected to everyday cultural

practices. The historical account could not do alone without anthropological informed viewpoints on human practices, just as the description of my interlocutors as "cultural actors", namely without a historical contextualization of their life experience, would have been incomplete for the scope of this thesis. This combined approach guided me in the selection of fragments of life histories that show most evidently the kind of dialectic confrontation between experiences and expectations of welfare and security that I have theorized in this thesis. Similarly, the methodology enabled the author to attribute meaning to the same fragments, a meaning that reflects also the role of social values and patterns of aspiration displayed by my interlocutors. The results of this approach have revealed the agency of individuals in enduring, dealing with and changing the social structures surrounding them. The outcome of my research in fact does not necessarily suggest that my interlocutors overcame social risks, whether coming from the welfare state or their transnational obligations, but rather that they are today better equipped to cope with them, compared to the past. Subsequently, they are setting sights onto new horizons of expectations for their future life.

Recovering these stories is thus of paramount importance. In fact, while there is an advanced public debate on the economic costs of integration, we are less keen on discussing the failed provision of security needs, as well as the social costs of the missed opportunities deriving from it. Maximizing the cultural potential of different definitions of the safety net, instead, may even lead to cost-effective measures and reduction of social expenditures. These points suggest likewise that the perspective of welfare and security reflects more closely the lived experiences of individuals, and can be thus a pertinent subject of study for questions of integration as well as diaspora dynamics, compared to researches that seek explanations in the role of ethnicity or identity alone. Even the notion of culture, as Rodger and Appadurai have clarified, should not be understood separately from values and emotional choices about caring and security, and from the horizon of choices that these experiences project in the life of each individual. Coming now to the research questions, which I report here below:

A. What are the reasons for the the lack of security experienced by the Somalis in Scandinavia?

    A1. What strategies do they adopt to cope with these challenges?

    A2. What are the effects over time on their traditional practices of welfare?

B. To what extent is the migrant'/refugee's lack of security a product of the politics of the welfare state?

    B1. What is the long-term impact of the welfare state system on the safety net of the Somalis living in Scandinavia?

I can conclude the following:

A. There are several overlapping reasons preventing Somalis from being secure in Scandinavian countries. Some of them are linked to the traumatic experiences of the civil war in the homeland and to the forced migration, yet others come to affect them in their new life in Scandinavia. With a perspective centered on welfare practices, one can sum up that the integration of the Somalis in the societies comes at the price of a redesigning of their sense of safety net, in order to fit into the new understanding of family, physical mobility, education, partnership with the state, which they meet in Scandinavia. The security deficits analyzed in this thesis take place within this framework of encounter, or clash if you will, between two systems of welfare provision.

    A1. The challenges cast by welfare states force the Somalis to negotiate many of their traditional tenets in relation to the safety net. The main outcome of this negotiation process is the coexistence of multiple welfare strategies to achieve security, and not the submission of one system to the other. We may talk of mixed or dual welfare arrangements, since the Somalis appear to compensate the shortcomings or the inefficiency of one system with the advantages offered by the other, and vice versa.

    A2. Some of the traditional practices, however, are losing appeal in the diaspora. Many aspects connected to the patriarchal structure of the family, or to the political authority exercised by the clan in different matters, are now questioned on a higher level in the diaspora. I have put forward a two-fold explanation: these structures are disconnected from the economic system of the Scandinavian states: they are therefore not functional, and their reproduction in next

generation is endangered. Moreover, the state becomes the new partner to address extra-clan needs and stimulates the individualistic enjoyment of rights. On the other hand, traditional family structures remain relevant for interacting with the homeland, where the clan is still the ultimate authority in many respect, as well as the central actor of what I have termed the welfare group. I have suggested that the maintenance or the disappearing of certain traditional practices depend also on where the individual Somali places him/herself in relation to both the transnational family network in general, and to aspiration of going back to Somalia.

B. I have described that the welfare state operated historically in the society with the goal of standardizing notions of risk and need, elaborating, consequently, common social assistance schemes. This strategy allows the welfare system to cover the entire population while being still economically viable; yet, it also led to an unavoidable process of stigmatization and criminalization of deviance from the established conformity, which became all the more relevant since Scandinavian countries started experiencing intense immigration flows. I have stressed that welfare nationalism becomes particularly visible in the dual form of welfare chauvinism (access to social goods should be restricted to national or contributing citizens) and reiteration of categories that are linkable to the nation, such as family relations; patterns of cultural consumption and participation, and so on. The latter form does not emanate only from the political level, but has also a specific banal, ordinary source of reproduction in society and institutions, which serves as a further means to set differences between the national way to understand and perform welfare, and that of the "others".

B1. Many among my Somali interlocutors regard the Nordic model of welfare provision as a positive societal accomplishment, which they would like to keep for most part intact and even reproduce in their homeland. I have explained the processes of integration and appreciation of the welfare state as dependent on the mechanisms of trust and individualization, which lead Somalis to interact on a more and more direct basis with state institutions. When this occurs, we can observe a shift from what I have defined 'concrete' solidarity, to 'abstract' solidarity, meaning that Somalis understand themselves as less tied to the

extended family. I could see, in fact, that the diaspora is engaged in a redefinition of the 'family', in terms of both its extension and assistance to be granted. At the transnational level of welfare, some of my respondents criticized the expectations of family welfare coming from those in the homeland, and exposed preferences for limited responsibility towards relatives they consider too far.

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APPENDIX

Overview of the interviews

Interlocutor's code	Gender		Interlocutor's code	Gender
D_1	Male		D_{16}	Male
D_2	Male		D_{17}	Female
D_3	Male		D_{18}	Female
D_4	Male		N_1	Male
D_5	Male		N_2	Female
D_6	Male		N_3	Female
D_7	Female		N_4	Female
D_8	Female		N_5	Male
D_9	Female		N_6	Male
D_{10}	Male		S_1	Male
D_{11}	Male		S_2	Male
D_{12}	Male		S_3	Female
D_{13}	Male		S_4	Female
D_{14}	Female		S_5	Female
D_{15}	Male			