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“Home” Near Home: Somali migrants to Kenya, 1991-2013

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DECLARATION

This is my original work and has not been presented for the award of degree in any other University.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the peoples of the Horn of Africa which, despite the adversities, are striving to rebuild a better future for their region through friendly relations, cooperation and socio-economic development.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CLARION: Centre for Law and Research

ID: Identity Card

UNHCR: United Nations High Commission for Refugees

USC: United Somali Congress

SSDF: Somali Salvation Democratic Front

UN: United Nations

SNM: Somali National movement

SPM: Somali Patriotic Movement

OAU: Organization of African Union (African Union)

NFD : Northern Frontier District

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Illegal Migrant

Illegal immigrant refers to person living in a country without government permission or going to settle in another country without the permission of the government of that country.

The Alien Restriction Act

This is An Act of Parliament to enable restrictions to be imposed on aliens, and to make such provisions as are necessary or expedient to carry such restrictions into effect. This Act may be cited as the Aliens Restriction Act.¹

Encampment Policy

A policy by government through which refugees who have gone through the status determination procedures, they are obliged to reside in a camp while awaiting a durable solution.²

Somalia

The Republic of Somalia originated from the union of the Italian Somaliland and the British Somaliland on the First of July 1960

Somali

A person belonging to the Somali ethnic group that can be found in Somalia, Djibouti,, Ethiopian Somali 5th Federal State and the Northeastern province of Kenya

¹ National Council of Law Reviewing, *The Aliens Restriction Act*, Revised Edition 2010 (1985) Published by the National Council for Law Reporting with the Authority of the Attorney General

² The Refugee Consortium of Kenya, *Refugee management in Kenya*, Nairobi: Refugee Consortium of Kenya, 2011

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the issues associated with the increased Somali migrations to Nairobi. Since the 1990s, following the fall of Siyad Barre, Somalia has never known peace. Consequently, the country became a source of refugees to many countries of the world. Kenya became a home to many of the fleeing Somalis. Many Somali refugees in Europe and America and elsewhere in the world go to Kenya even after they have become residents or naturalized citizens of the host countries. While one would expect them to stay in abroad where life is seemingly easier, they are often pulled to what they refer to “home” near home - Kenya. The study is set to investigate the factors that attract many Somalis to Kenya as well as their impact on the Kenyan society.

To unearth the factors that pulled the Somali migrants to Kenya and Nairobi in particular, the study utilized both primary and secondary sources. In addition, the study was based on pull and push theoretical frame work to underscore the push and pull factors that contributed to the Somalis to come to Kenya even after they had established themselves in other more developed countries in the world. In order to understand why the Somalis chose Kenya as their residence of choice this study also used the integration theory to explain the social connections that helped in the bringing together the Somalis in Kenya and those flocking the country from abroad.

The study established that the protracted Somali civil war, the rise of Islamic extremism, terrorism and socio-economic hardship in Somalia are among the key push factors that forced the Somalis out of their h to find refuge in the neighboring countries as well as abroad.

While in diaspora, Somalis have been pulled to Kenya, which they refer as “home” near home by several factors. Among them is the kinship connection, religious connection, availability of good institutions such as schools, mosques and hospitals, welfare facilities, considerable security and safety and geographical closeness to Somalia.

Somalis’ influx into Kenya, despite causing strain on Kenyan resources and amenities, and obviously causing security concerns to Kenya, has also contributed to the social-economic development of the country. The resource transfers through remittances from immigrants and refugees have changed the map of Nairobi in significant ways. Trade and other economic activities in Nairobi have greatly been influenced by the Somali presence. Kenya has provided environments to cultural exchange, and the Somalis have no doubt contributed to the multicultural diversity of Kenya. Due to social, economic and political considerations, Kenya has become a “Home” near Home for many Somalis living out of Somalia.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Civil war, natural disasters, resource conflicts, genocide, *coup d'états* and declining economies, have characterized the Horn of Africa in the past three decades, resulting in displacement and migration of people from their countries in search of peace, economic and political stability, safety and better livelihoods. Some have migrated to western countries while others have remained on the continent, seeking refuge in neighboring countries which they deem stable. One such a case is Somalia which since independence in July 1960 has suffered a lot of conflicts that have seen many of the citizens cross the international borders to Kenya and other neighboring nations such as Ethiopia and Djibouti. Although the Somali people perceive Kenya as a relatively stable country, Kenya is a developing country with a struggling economy lacking adequate resources to cater for its population, let alone additional burden of the immigrants. Refugees from the greater Horn of Africa as well as the Great Lakes region have, due to instability and conflicts in their own countries, often sought refuge in Kenya, however, the largest numbers of those in the country come from Somalia, Kenya's neighbor to the northeast.³

Grappling with economic and political challenges, which include rising poverty levels, increase in rural-urban migration and growing unemployment and restlessness among its youthful population, Kenya presents a context where refugees are both a burden and an economic resource. Although the refugees were required to remain in designated areas to avoid unwanted competition to the locals, many of them sneak into urban areas. The police in executing this requirement sometimes used brutal methods as a mechanism to discourage refugee infiltration into Kenyan urban areas, but still the refugees remained pulled to Nairobi. However, a significant number of the refugees resisted confinement to the camps by moving to urban areas where they settled in various suburbs. Majority of these refugees who resettled in urban areas are of Somali origin and sometimes find themselves having to buy their legality through unscrupulous, often illegal, means. This research wondered why the Somali refugees had to go to such extent and what factors

³ UNHCR, *Refugees in Kenya*, Nairobi: UNHCR News letter, 2010.

pulled them to Nairobi? This research further analyzes the factors that attract Somalis from many parts of the world to Nairobi and other Kenyan cities.

1.1.2 Background to the Somali emigration

Migration of Somalis out of their country is not a new phenomenon. Historically, Somalis are a pastoralist people who have been involved in moving from one place to another as a way of coping with harsh environmental and economic realities. Although to the Somali people migration was part of their life, these migrations were initially restricted to the Somali inhabited territories.⁴ The international nature of migratory patterns of the Somali people can be traced back to the movements of seamen who worked on colonial ships sailing to Western Europe in the early twentieth century.⁵ Working on European ships opened a window to some of the Somali people to settle and form small communities in port cities of countries like the United Kingdom and the Arabian Peninsula.

The Somali peoples' migration did not stop even after changes introduced by the European occupation of the African continent. They continued migrating to many countries during the colonial rule and even after Somalia's independence in July 1960. The Somali students were frequently sent abroad to study at universities in the West and Eastern Europe. In the seventies, Somali workers migrated to the Gulf countries to seek better employment and financial gain that came with the oil boom in the gulf region. From the seventies onwards, those opposed to the Siyad Barre regime became targets of persecution forcing many of them to flee the country. Most of them went into political exile in many Western and Eastern countries.⁶

Despite these continuous waves of the Somali migration, the largest levels of movement out of Somalia began with the start of the Somali civil war and consequent collapse of the Somali government in 1991. Since then there have been a continued migration of the Somali people in search for safer areas of settlement. The majority of those that took flight found themselves in Somalia's neighbouring countries such as Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Yemen, where thousands still remained in protracted limbo and displacement as

⁴ Lewis, H., "The Origins of the Galla and Somali", *The Journal of African History* (1966), pp.7:27-46,

⁵ Gundel, J., "The Migration-Development Nexus: Somalia Case Study", *International Migration*, vol. 40(5), 2002; see also, Kliet, N., *Nomads, sailors and refugees: A century of Somali migration*, Sussex Migration Working Paper no. 23, Sussex University, 2004.

⁶ Bang Nielsen, K., "Next Stop Britain: The Influence of Transnational Networks on the Secondary Movement of Danish Somalis", Working Paper no. 22, Sussex Centre for Migration Research, 2004.

refugees in camps and urban cities. A smaller but considerable number of Somalis who were better placed in terms of economy were able to migrate further, joining already established communities in the Gulf, Western Europe, Australia, the USA and Canada.⁷

The largest numbers of this group of Somalis in the West are found in the UK, followed by Canada and the United States. Some who are also a notable number migrated to the Netherlands and Scandinavian countries. From the Scandinavian countries, the Somalis, however, seemed to be more attracted to the UK. The attraction to Britain made the Somalis to adopt a trend in recent times where many Somalis in the Scandinavian countries migrated to the UK. The reasons given for such migration were that the UK had a larger Somali community providing social networks. The other reasons were that the UK had better economic, educational and religious opportunities.⁸ Conversely, many Somalis who even acquired European citizenship across Europe have been returning in considerable numbers to Kenya for reasons not well researched in the past.⁹

Despite international intervention and various internationally facilitated reconciliation processes, peace remained elusive in many regions of Somalia. This perhaps is one of the main reasons to why many Somalis still preferred moving to Kenya and particularly in the urban areas. The movement from the developed western countries is an interesting scenario when we consider that educational and economic opportunities in Europe and the USA are better than Kenya. Also Somalis living in Somalia's safe areas such as Puntland and Somaliland are pulled to Kenya. Although even for those native to their country, the fluid political landscape is perplexing and rapidly changing and has recently seen the country play stage to competing regional and international interests. Somalia's issues have also been exacerbated by the global war on terrorism, which has become another point of contention in an already complex web of regional and internal conflicts.¹⁰

⁷ Berry, J. W., Kim, U., and Boski, P. "Psychological acculturation of immigrants", in Y. Y. Kim and W. B. Gudykunst (Eds.), *Cross-cultural adaptation: Current approaches, International and intercultural communication annual*, Vol. 11, Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1988, pp. 62-89.

⁸ Van Hear, N, Brubaker, R & Bessa, T., "Managing Mobility for Human Development: The Growing Salience of *Mixed Migration*", Human Development Research Paper (HDRP) Series, vol. 20, no., 2009.

⁹ Harris, H., "The Somali community in the UK: What we know and how we know it", The Information Centre about Asylum and Refugees in the UK (ICAR), London, 2004.

¹⁰ Davenport, Christian, Will Moore and Steven Poe, "*Sometimes You Just Have to Leave: Threat and Refugee Movements, 1964-1989*, *International Interactions*, 29(1), 2003, pp. 27-55.

The war period's political set-up in Somalia was a three zone/divide and the rise of governance without government.¹¹ In fact, the north-east and north-west areas experienced relative stability and a certain degree of security for many years, which resulted in the formation of the autonomous state type administration of Puntland in the north-east, and the declaration of independence by Somaliland in the north-west, although the latter is not officially recognized by the international community.¹² The south-central third zone (which includes Mogadishu and most central and southern regions) is governed by the internationally recognized Somali Federal Government, the newly established Jubba Administration and Shabab. This zone has the least security and stability in the country and for long it was besieged by heavy fighting from the internationally backed transitional federal government of Somalia and the U.S listed terrorist group Al-Shabaab.

Internal displacement remained a persistent consequence of the Somali conflict since the early 1990s, when millions were forced to move within and out of the country. In the mid-nineties the numbers went down as both internally displaced and refugees in neighbouring countries begun returning to their homes.¹³ But as soon as they had settled violence broke out again leading to another wave of migrations. The conflict caused massive displacement.¹⁴ By the end of 1992, asylum claims were made by Somalis in countries including Austria, Belgium, Canada, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Malaysia, Malta, Mozambique, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Turkey Uganda, Yemen, United Kingdom, and the United States. Interestingly, some of these asylum seekers soon started relocating to Kenya. What pulled these Somalis to Kenya is a story that this study wishes to tell.

¹¹ Salehyan, Idean and Kristian Gleditsch, *Refugees and the Spread of Civil War*, New York: International Organization, 2006, pp. 60: 335-366.

¹² United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Economic and Social Impacts of Massive Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries, as well as other Countries*, Standing Committee, New York: UNHCR, 1997, No. EC/47/SC/CRP.7.

¹³ Zolberg, Aristide, Astri Suhrke, and Sergio Aguayo, *Escape from Violence: Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

¹⁴ Zetter Roger and George Deikun, Meeting Humanitarian Challenges in Urban Areas, *Migration Review issue 34*, February, University of Oxford, 2010.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Kenyan government tried to curb the inflow of Somali refugees through enacting new laws and stiff regulations to restrict movement of illegal migrants into the country. The Kenyan law does not recognize settlement into the country without documentation. The laws also affected urban refugees who were restricted by the provisions for an encampment policy. Therefore, any refugee living outside the camp, without authorization, was considered an illegal migrant. But with all such policy, many Somalis both refugees and non refugees continued to be pulled towards Kenya and its urban areas such as Nairobi to be particular. For instance, the Kenyan government on the 2nd of January 2007 put into effect the Refugee Act of 2006, with more stringent policies on encampment of all refugees in the country. Article 25 Section (E) states that any person who, not being a refugee and not having a valid refugee identification document, failed to comply with an order of the minister to leave Kenya; or (F) reside without authority outside the designated areas specified under Section 16(2) will be subject to legal action. This clearly did not give room or create any policies regarding other non refugee migrants and urban refugees. In this case, the non refugee and Somali refugees in Nairobi who escaped the camps or those who come directly from Somalia, and thus had not presented themselves to the Kenyan authorities were illegally settled in urban areas.

UNHCR notes that, several thousand of illegal and legal migrants including refugees without legal protection or material assistance live permanently in Nairobi.¹⁵ Neither the Kenyan government nor the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) provided protection to this group, because some of them were not refugees. Moreover even if they were refugees they were living outside the camps, therefore, were regarded as illegal migrants, and so their security was not guaranteed. Consequently, they were prone to physical attacks from the locals, police harassment, robberies and muggings, which, compared to the refugees in the camps, were higher among these urban refugees.¹⁶ Yet with all such risks they still flocked to the city of Nairobi. This research is investigating the factors that pulled the Somali migrants to Kenyan urban areas. Similarly some of the Somali people who were not refugees and have permanent citizenship in European and

¹⁵ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *The State of the World's Refugees: The Challenge of Protection*, New York: Penguin Books, 2000.

¹⁶ Frey, William, *Melting Pot Suburbs: A Census 2000 Study of Suburban Diversity*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy, 2001.

Western nations with well developed protection networks, as they enjoyed privileges as citizens in those countries but still they opted to come and settle in Nairobi and other Kenyan cities. What actually pulled them to Kenya is the focus of concern to this research.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the genesis of Somali migrations to Nairobi
2. To investigate the factors that pull the Somali migrants to Kenyan urban areas
3. To assess the impact of the Somali migrants to Kenyan urban centres

1.4 Justification of the Study

Many researches such as the ones done by Campbell, Lindley, Jacobsen and Goldenberg, among others, on Somali migrants in Nairobi tend to concentrate on the refugees and their illegal status. Despite the restrictions, the Somalis continue to migrate into the Kenyan cities and have managed to integrate into the society to some level, especially in businesses.¹⁷ These studies suggest that the Somalis play an integral part in Nairobi's economy to a point where if they were to leave, their departure would be detrimental to the Kenyan capital's economy. However, none of these studies explained the pull factors that made Nairobi attractive to the Somali from all over the world. Why are so many Somalis interested in Nairobi? Why did some who had legal status to settle in European countries desert their status to come and live in Nairobi? Why was it that even those with no legal status wanted to live in Nairobi? Campbell, Lindley, Jacobsen and Goldenberg also do not explain the means and ways these Somalis employed to relocate back to Nairobi from Europe where they were legally accepted and supported and come to live and meet competition from locals, maintain their livelihood and live in the city sometimes illegally. Thus, this study attempted an in-depth explanation of the reasons that made the Somalis pulled to Nairobi and other Kenyan urban areas. While the Somali urban refugees have briefly been covered in some studies, the flow of non refugee Somali groups failed to receive the minimum attention. Refugees represent only a temporary phenomenon, while the flow of the other groups seems to be constant, more perpetual and more beneficial to

¹⁷ Campbell, E. H., *Urban Refugees in Nairobi: Problems of Protection, Mechanisms of Survival and Possibilities for Integration*, Oxford University press, 2006, Lindley Anna, *New Issues in Refugee Research; Protracted displacement and remittances: The View from Eastleigh*, Nairobi, UNHCR Research Paper No. 143, 2007, Jacobsen Karen, *The Economic Life of Refugees*, New York: Kumarian Press, 2005 and Goldenberg, T. 2006. Urban Somali refugees call Nairobi's little Mogadishu home, http://news.monstersandcritics.com/africa/features/article,1233394.php/urban_somali_refugees_call_Nairobi_little_mogadishu_home.

the political and economic integration between the two neighbouring countries. By researching on these non refugee groups, the study will contribute in creating more comprehensive and scholarly picture and understanding of the different and diverse motives behind the flow of the Somalis into Kenya.

1.5 Scope and limitations of the Study

During 1991 the scale of atrocities against civilians in Somalia escalated with the overthrow of President Siyad Barre reaching unprecedented levels. The humanitarian disaster in 1992 made the Somalis known throughout the world, as many people starved in the South of Somalia and many more were facing death due to the civil war that disrupted the life-supporting productive activities. The first images that appeared in the media were the broadcast of the famine caused by both the civil war and the climatic conditions. The eruption of the civil war in 1988 generated the beginning of a major movement of the Somali people this time from Somalia into Kenya. This flow was first caused by the intensification of the conflict between Siyad Barre regime and the different clan's armed movements in the 1980s, which reached the climax with the fall of the government and the beginning of the fully fledged civil war in 1991. Large mass flight of Somalis took also place in 2011 affecting the security of Kenya after several terrorist actions which the situation alarming. Kenya soon authorized a military invasion into Somalia in the Operation Linda Nchi. By then thousands unarmed civilians, including many women and children, were deliberately and arbitrarily killed, tortured and displaced by forces of different Al-Shabab militia groups that struggled to control the country. The atrocities continued and even worsened further in 2011 when the United Nations High commission on Refugees declared the Horn of Africa a disaster zone as many more refugees crossed into Kenya. Generally the fall of Siyad Barre in 1991 and the consequent civil war is a very important starting point of sizable refugee inflow, while the period when the KDF liberated Kisimayo in 2012 marks both the destabilization of the centre of power of Al-shabaab as well as temporary escalation of refuges inflow into Kenya. The new waves of refugees in this period were seeking refuge both from the famine and the war between KDF and Al-Shabab.

This study is related to the period between the collapse of the Siyad Barre Government in January 1991 and up to the end of 2012. The study covers mainly non refugee Somali groups in Kenya for diverse reasons and purposes that will be analyzed in this study. The

scope this study includes also highlighting the expected impact on the future socio-economic impact on Kenya and relations with Somalia. Since most of immigrants flow is centered to Nairobi, and for time and resource saving reasons, the research will focus on a representative sample in Nairobi.

In conducting the field research, this study had some limitations particularly among the Somalis who were illegally in the country or living with relatives and friends whose status was suspect. Some of the Somali migrants lived in the area illegally and thus, strived to stay in the shadows to avoid the state's legal system like the police and other authorities who might turn on them. In such a case, random sampling would have been hard due to the difficulty in identifying the potential respondents, as they would not willingly expose themselves. The migrant Somalis in other Kenyan main cities are not included in the interview sample but it is hoped that the larger Nairobi choice is sufficiently representative.

1.6 Literature Review

The literature on different issues on Somalia and Somalis is not lacking. The years since the fall of Siyad Barre and eventual collapse of the government as well as the conflicts and outflow of refugees from Somalia to many countries including Kenya has attracted a lot of interests among scholars. R. Marchal in his work argues that migration is at the heart of the Somali nomadic culture, which is characterized by a subsistence economy, trade to procure necessities not domestically produced, and transhumance to adapt to cycles of climate in search of green pastures.¹⁸ According to Marchal, the Somalis have been migrating for a long time, but the author did not mention why they have remained attracted to Kenya and particularly Nairobi during their migrations.

Olesen and Svan argue that the Somalis are the main group of concern in terms of migration into Kenya. The Somalis remain the largest numbers of refugees in Kenya. They posit that the majority of the Somali refugees are from the large minorities of southern Somalia, and the more distant diaspora abroad, which stem from all of the clans and that even when repatriation attempts are done they still sneak back to Nairobi and other urban

¹⁸ Marchal, R., *Final Report on the Post Civil War Somali Business Class*, European Commission, Somalia Unit, Paris, 1996.

areas.¹⁹ They argue that even if local authorities often emphasize that repatriation of refugees should be accompanied by development or income-generating projects still there is a pull of Somali refugees to Nairobi. This research attempted to investigate the reasons why the Somalis would like to live in Kenyan urban areas rather than those urban centres in other countries.

Discussing the refugee issues, E.H. Campbell notes that several thousand Somali refugees without legal protection or material assistance live permanently in Nairobi.²⁰ Neither the Kenyan government nor the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) provide them with protection, because refugees living outside the camps are regarded as illegal migrants, and so their security is not guaranteed. Although they lose assistance when they leave the refugee camps, still the Somali refugees struggle to come and settle in Nairobi. The author does not explain in depth the reasons that pulled them to Kenya let alone to Nairobi.

Turton argues in his research that the Somali refugees who migrated and settled in Nairobi are consequently prone to physical attacks from the locals, police harassment, robberies and muggings, which, compared to the refugees in the camps, are higher among these urban refugees.²¹ Although exposed to all these dangers still the Somalis from all over the world feel that Nairobi is the best home to raise a family. What actually made them have such believe was not clear hence this research hoped to address.

Landau and Monson argue that in 1990s the Government of Kenya withdrew from refugees' affairs and left the mandate to UNHCR which grants refugees full status and a choice to live anywhere they desired in the country. Before 1991, the Kenyan government granted refugees protection based on both the Organization of African Unity of 1969 and

¹⁹ Olesen, J.W., *Report on Fact-Finding Mission to North East and North West Somalia(Somaliland)*, Danish Immigration Service, Copenhagen, 1996; Olesen, JW *Report on the Nordic Fact-finding Mission to Mogadishu, Somalia*, Udlændingestyrelsen/Statens Invandrerverk, Copenhagen, *The migration-development nexus: Somalia case study, 1998*; Olesen, J.W., L. Anten, and R. Pearce-Higginson 2000 *Report on Minority Groups in Somalia*, Danish Immigration Service, Home Office - UK, Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken - NL, Copenhagen; Olesen, J.W., and C. Svan 1999 *Rapport fra fact-finding mission til Nairobi, Kenya og Middle Shabelleregionen, Somalia*, Udlændingestyrelsen/Statens Invandrerverk, København.

²⁰ Campbell E. H., *Urban Refugees in Nairobi: Problems of Protection, Mechanisms of Survival and Possibilities for Integration*, Oxford University press, 2006.

²¹ Turton, D., *Analysis of Refugee Protection Capacity Kenya, Strengthening Protection Capacity Project UNHCR*, 2005.

the UN Conventions of 1951. Under the OAU/UN Conventions, refugees got Alien Identity Cards from the National Registration Bureau. Although these cards used to be valid indefinitely, the policy now has changed in that the cards will only be valid for two years. This decision was reached because the last decade of the 20th century saw a large influx of Somali refugees into Kenya after the collapse of the Somali state.²² However Landau and Monson did not explain why such a large influx of Somali refugees to Kenya and if it was because of security, why did we have Somalis even from stable countries coming to Kenya and particularly in urban centres?

Torpey on his part argues that when the Kenyan government realized that its sovereignty was being embedded by refugee presence, it extricated itself from the Refugees Affairs and delegated its duties to UNHCR. This happened at the same time when the encampment policy was created with an *ipso facto* of disorganized assistance to refugees which was meant to improve services and assistance that would be accorded to the refugees if they were put together. However, the encampment policy has its shortcomings in that it restricts refugees right to freedom of movement; right to engage in wage-earning employment or self-employment as well as the provision of legal documents or identifications cards as stipulated in Articles (26), (17), (18) and (27) respectively in the United Nations Conventions of 1951, which Kenya is a signatory to. In discussing the laws discussed above on the measures put by the Kenyan government to control illegal migration, theories on spatial control are used to understand further how and why states do so.²³ But why was it that even when Kenya had put in place such restrictions still the Somalis tended to manoeuvre the restrictions and move to urban areas in the country.

According to Kyle and Dale the state uses instruments of control and regulation in order to affirm its sovereignty. They discussed the introduction of documents such as passports and Identity Cards, which in many cases have been successful in enabling the states to control movement.²⁴ However, they did not show course why even with such restrictions by introduction of such documents the Somali still moved to Kenyan urban areas. Dale and

²² Landau, Loren B. & Monson, Tamlyn, "Displacement, Estrangement and Sovereignty: Reconfiguring State Power in Urban South Africa", *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 43 (2), 2008, pp. 315-336.

²³ Torpey, J., "Coming and Going: On the State Monopolization of the Legitimate „Means of Movement". *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 16 (3), 1998, pp. 239-259.

²⁴ Kyle, D & John Dale, "Smuggling the State Back In: Agents of Human Smuggling Reconsidered", pp. 563-569 in S. Khagram and P. Levitt (eds.), *The Transnational Studies Reader: Intersections and Innovations*. London: Routledge, 2008.

Siracusa share in similar observation by showing that these systems of control are effective, although they in turn give room for the mushrooming of new forms of commerce and society which were not necessarily intended. This is an important observation but Dale and Siracusa did not show why the Somalis were ready to go an extra step of buying documents just to access Kenyan urban areas. Similarly, Coplan gave an example of Somalis who fraudulently acquire IDs/passport just to be able to live in Nairobi.²⁵

While discussing sovereignty as a practice in African countries, Lindley argue that, in order for refugees, migrants and long term residents to survive and thrive, they do not only move ostensibly through the state regulated space, but also transform it through strategies of accumulation, coupled with tactics that aid them to elude danger and regulation. To the authors this tactics includes social integration, networks, and livelihood strategies, as some of the tactics that Somalis in Eastleigh resort to in order to survive.²⁶ The author brings out the argument well although does not state why the Somali prefer to develop this networks in Nairobi.

Jacobsen argues that the Somalis are said to have integrated in to the Kenyan community to a great extent, economically and socially.²⁷ Jacobsen describes local integration as having three inter-related dimensions: legal, economic and social. These migrants are economically integrated because they are self-reliant, have established livelihoods and are not reliant on aid and enjoy a standard of living that is equivalent to or even higher than that of many locals. Somalis have integrated easily in Eastleigh because of networks with fellow Somalis who arrived earlier in Eastleigh and also get support from Kenyan Somalis who are dominant in Eastleigh, in terms of entrepreneurship and being a major population.²⁸ Although the reasons fronted by the author are plausible, he failed to tell us why in Kenya and not other cities in the world.

Somalis interact with Kenyans and migrants of other nationalities, as they go about their livelihoods in Nairobi. Franke's study on Somalis in Nairobi showed that hostility from

²⁵ Coplan, D B., "A River Runs Through It: The Meaning of the Lesotho-Free State Border". *African Affairs*, Vol. 100, 2001, pp. 81-116.

²⁶ Lindley Anna, *New Issues in Refugee Research; Protracted displacement and remittances: The view from Eastleigh, Nairobi*, UNHCR Research Paper No. 143, 2007.

²⁷ Jacobsen Karen & Loren B. Landau, "The Dual Imperative in Refugee Research: Some Methodological and Ethical Considerations in Social Science Research on Forced Migration", *Disasters* Vol. 27(3), 2003.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

the host community is rare as she asserts that, Kenyans in Eastleigh generally appear to have come to terms with the obvious fact that Somalis are their neighbours. Kenyans, Somalis and other refugee nationalities share washing lines and cramped stairways, their children go to the same schools, they truck and barter. The author argues that Somalis have been socially and economically integrated, but he did not show that the Somalis were legally integrated.²⁹ This study attempted to investigate why the Somalis have chosen Nairobi even without legal integration.

A further claim made by Reimer is that, apart from integration, the Somalis are said to draw a lot from social capital and social networks. The concept of social capital has been explained by a number of scholars and varies according to the context in which it is used. Social networks may provide access to resources and social support, and who defines social capital as social networks and their associated norms that may facilitate various types of collective action.³⁰ Since the civil war started in Somalia, the Somalis not only escaped to Kenya, but to the other parts of the world as well, which gives them extensive networks in the Diaspora but why some of them should come back to Kenya?

Michtelt argues that it is through these networks that most of the Somalis in Eastleigh managed to get to Nairobi, and acquire their livelihoods as capabilities, assets, natural, physical, human, social and financial capital and activities required for a means of living.³¹ However, Michtelt does not tell us why Nairobi was preferred by most Somali refugees. Michtelt explains how some of the Somali migrants in Eastleigh acquire their livelihoods. The most common way is through remittances, which serve as their financial capital. The remittances usually come from family, relatives and friends who are abroad, using a money transfer system known as *Xawilaad*. Remittances play a major role in the life of refugees because they can be invested in informal businesses like clothing shops, telephone operations, hawking of vegetables and second hand clothes, among other wares, on the streets or small shops, which help in ascertaining the refugees' self-sufficiency.

²⁹ Franke, S. *Measurement of Social Capital: Social Capital as a Public Policy Tool, Reference Document for Public Policy Research*, Development, and Evaluation PRI Project, Canada, 2005.

³⁰ Reimer, B, Lyons, T, Ferguson, N, Polanco, G. 2008. Social capital as social relations: the Contribution of normative structures, Journal compilation © 2008 The Editorial Board of *The Sociological Review*. Published by Blackwell Publishing Inc. 9600 Garsington Road, Oxford OX4 2DQ, UK and 350 Main Street, Malden, 02148, USA, 2008.

³¹ Machtelt De Vriese, *Refugee livelihoods: A review of the evidence*, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit, 2006.

Remittances may also be used to meet other urgent needs like paying rent, food, medical care and basically for every day needs. Moreover, the Somalis in Eastleigh remit some monetary resources or other forms of assistance to their relatives in the camps as well as those who are still in Somalia. Then why should Nairobi be a centre for remittance?

According to Macharia Kinuthia another major source of livelihood in Nairobi is entrepreneurship both formal and informal in Eastleigh among the Somalis. Macharia observes that some Somalis come with capital ready to start business in Eastleigh. Entrepreneurship is thus the major livelihood strategy for the illegal migrants. Despite their illegality, these migrants have somehow managed to acquire and sustain businesses which were largely considered informal because they are unregistered coupled with the illegal status of the refugee owners.³² However, Macharia did not tell us why the Somali preferred to run illegal business in Nairobi.

Clarion research shows that the nature of law enforcement in Kenya provides a source of livelihood strategy for the Somalis. They suggest that the Kenyan legal system, the law enforcers and the Ministry of Immigration are corrupt. Thus, corruption was another option that Somali migrants used to survive in Nairobi. Although the authors might be right to some extent but Kenya was not the only corrupt country, therefore, that was not enough reason for why the Somalis were pulled to Nairobi.³³ CLARION research shed some light as it narrated how the passports and ID cards were acquired but did not explain why Kenya was preferred.

According to Horwood, family and social networks were by far the most important resource to Somali migrants and refugees. Existing diaspora communities in all countries that the Somali people settled in Asia as well as in Europe, North America and Australia, provided the information, funding and social connections necessary to undertake the journey from Somalia to the outside world. Horwood noted that Somalis in South Africa rely heavily on traditional social structures that have remained vital for the survival, protection and cultural identity of migrants and refugees throughout the Somali diaspora. These ready-made communities facilitate travel, adjustment and communication with

³² Macharia, Kinuthia, 2003. Migration in Kenya and Its Impact on The Labor Market; Paper prepared for Conference on African Migration in Comparative Perspective, Johannesburg, South Africa, 2003.

³³ Centre for Law and Research International (CLARION), *Report on corruption in government offices in Kenya*, Published by Claripress Limited Nairobi, 2002.

officials and service providers in receiving states.³⁴ The argument by Horwood was instrumental in explaining whether the family and social networks were important to Somali people's migration into Kenya.

Van Hear on his part argues that the Somalis, as with many other communities in displacement, mostly seek safety in other parts of their own country, whilst a large number seek protection in neighbouring countries and a smaller number seek asylum in countries further afield. He further argues that, where the cause of displacement was continual, the persons between these locations develop complex connections. He observes that in the Somali case, remittances were seen as a powerful resource for Somalia. In another work Van Hear argues that remittances were a strategy for Somalis that was in place well before displacement but was broadened after displacement by Somali mobility.³⁵ Van Hear suggests that the Diaspora and the sustaining of transnational relations might represent the most enduring, if not durable, solution to many current situations of displacement. Indeed, although remittance behaviour was addressed specifically in this study nothing was mentioned on why the Somalis feel safe in Kenya.

Berry in his book notes that migrants face a number of acculturation risks because of the involuntary, migratory and potentially temporary nature of their lives. He believes that personalities and social conditions have a greater impact than migration per se, with acculturation strategies depending largely on the individual. He cites an example of parents, separated from their children facing challenges of knowing how their children are faring on. He states that given an opportunity such parents would want to go back to their countries and re-unite with their children.³⁶ The argument by Berry is plausible, but this study wondered why such parents of Somali origin preferred coming to Kenya and not to join their children in Somalia or elsewhere in the neighboring countries.

Fletcher argues that when people migrate to other countries, they were assimilated through different strategies which may emerge for different aspects of their experience, i.e.

³⁴ Horwood, C., *In Pursuit of the Southern Dream: Victims of Necessity*, International Organization for Migration, Geneva, 2009.

³⁵ Van Hear, N, Brubaker, R & Bessa, T., "Managing Mobility for Human Development: The Growing Salience of *Mixed Migration*", Human Development Research Paper (HDRP) Series, vol. 20, 2009.

³⁶ Berry, J. W., Immigration, acculturation and adaptation, *Applied Psychology: An International Review* 46, 1997, pp. 5-68.

integration with respect to language, and separation with regard to cultural traditions. Fletcher believes that, integration was not a linear process and settlement does not occur at a similar rate across all aspects of life. Settlement issues can arise long after arrival of migrants especially those from non-mother tongue speaking backgrounds. He goes on to state that, migrants may be well settled in one dimension of their life (e.g. employment) but poorly integrated in other aspects and that, some members of the migrant family may be well integrated.³⁷ This study attempted to investigate why Somali migrants find it hard to integrate in other countries and easily integrated in Kenya.

Kunz argues that immigrant's orientation to their country of origin also has a significant impact on migration and resettlement. He identifies three different groups namely majority identified migrants who identify with their nation but not with its government, events alienated migrants, who may include religious or racial minorities, who seldom entertain the hope of returning home and the self-alienated migrants, who for various reasons no longer wish to identify with their nation.³⁸ It was of interest to this study to investigate which category do the Somali who re-locate to Kenya are? And why did the Somali orient well with Kenya than other countries?

Boman and Edwards argue that migrants arriving in a new country face a number of stressful situations. These include loss of family members, unsatisfactory employment and isolation, lack of English skills, difficulties with climate and food and tensions within the family.³⁹ They observed that a common pattern is for migrants to experience an initial period of excitement and enthusiasm on arrival, which was soon replaced by feelings of guilt at having survived or escaped while others have not, and pining for lost familiar lifestyles. Feelings of distress can progressively dominate with complaints of sadness, emptiness, loneliness and bewilderment. From the argument of Boman and Edwards, it is clear that the migrants have a strong attachment to their mother country; however what the authors don't tell us is why the Somali migrants had a strong attachment to Kenya and not to Somalia.

³⁷ Fletcher, M., *Migrant Settlement: A review of the literature and its relevance to New Zealand*, Wellington: New Zealand Immigration Service, 1999.

³⁸ Kunz, E. F., "Exile and Resettlement: Refugee Theory", *International Migration Review*, 15(142), 1981.

³⁹ Boman, B., & Edwards, M., The Indochinese Refugee: An Overview, *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 18, 1984, pp. 40-52.

Silove argues that migrants face trauma because of separation from family, beginning with experiences of social upheaval, danger, deprivation and multiple loss in the home country. This according to the authors may be followed by a period as an internal fugitive, before escaping to a country of first asylum, often without other family members. Time spent in looking for documentation may be followed by resettlement with its associated trauma. The authors suggested that time spent in looking for such legal documentation may provide a buffer between the horror of experiences at home and the resettlement process.⁴⁰ Does what Silove describes a reason to why the Somali people preferred to relocate from other countries to Kenya closer to home?

According to Clinton Davis and Fassil, once migrants reach their host country, they may be reluctant to seek help because of shame and the fear of being labeled stateless. They fear that such a label would isolate them from their communities and affect their migrant status or employment.⁴¹ The authors also argued that there are difficulties in measuring psychopathology in migrants. They contended that issues of language may be less important than conceptual issues. Interpreters were often inadequate and have insufficient training, while migrants may be unwilling to reveal their feelings or experiences. If we go by these authors description then we expect the Somali migrants to suffer from home sickness than Kenya sickness.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Causes and impacts of external and internal migration are diverse. This diversity is not only reflected in empirical analyses but also in different theories and models of migration. This study used the Pull and push migration theory. This is the oldest concept in understanding migration which dates from 1885, when Ernest Georg Ravenstein formulated the laws of migration.⁴² The proponents of the theory observed that a variety of clarifications explained how international migration was initiated and which social, cultural, economic or political consequences it has on the destination. What was common to this approach was that migration processes were mainly seen as a unidirectional or

⁴⁰ Silove D, McIntosh P and Becker R. (1999), Research Papers: Migration and Mental Health: Re-traumatisation of Asylum Seekers. Australian Trans-cultural Mental Health Network, University of Melbourne Retrieved March 28, 2001. http://atmhn.unimelb.edu.au/research/papers/migration_health/MMH04Silove.html. Silove.

⁴¹ Clinton-Davis, L., and Fassil, Y., Health and Social Problems of Refugees, *Social Science Medicine*, 35(4), 1992, pp.507-513.

⁴² Ravenstein, E.G., "The Laws of Migration, *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, 52 (June), 1889

bidirectional movement brought about by emigration, immigration or return migration caused by isolated factors, such as economic or political ones.

This idea is very much reflected in push-pull models, where pull and push factors initiating migration were present in the source as well as in the receiving regions of migrants.⁴³ Pull and push focuses on various factors other than the differentials in wages and employment conditions between countries, and on migration costs. It generally conceives movement as an individual decision for income maximization.⁴⁴ The theorists consider not only the labor market as reasons to migrate, but also conditions of other markets, such as the capital market or unemployment insurance market. It views migration as a complex household strategy. The framework fits in this study because most of the Somali immigrants in Kenya have no basic interest with employment meaning but there are many other factors that pull them to Kenya. Although the pull and push theory fits but it does not explain how the Somalis integrate hence the theory was complemented by two more theories namely, interregional theory and globalization theory.

The pull and push theory was complemented by the theory of integration which was propounded by Ernest Haas to explain societal integration. The proponents argue that every part of society is part of a the region of the world, where it integrates with each other. Ernest Haas theorized this experience in *The Uniting of Europe* (1958). The main theoretical contribution was the concept of spill-over. Later Lindberg used this concept to study the early years of the European Economic Community (EEC), which started its existence in 1958.⁴⁵ These early theories are usually referred to as neo-functionalist theories. There were some efforts to apply these neo-functionalist theories to integration in other parts of the world.⁴⁶ The integration process that the Somalis have experienced since the crisis in their country in 1990s made them to learn how to not only integrate with the rest of the world but also assisted in promoting integration created by the Somali business groups in kenya.

⁴³ Lee, E.S., "A Theory of Migration", *Demography*, 3, 1966, pp. 47-57.

⁴⁴ Lewis, W.A., *The Principles of Economic Planning: A Study Prepared for the Fabian Society*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1952.

⁴⁵ Lindberg, Leon N. and Stuart A. Scheingold, eds., *Regional Integration: Theory and Research*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971.

⁴⁶ Haas, Ernst B., 'International Integration: The European and the Universal Process', *International Organization* 15(4), 1967, pp. 366-392, 1967.

Globalization theory was first propounded by Giddens, Ulrich Beck, David Held, Tony McGrew, Manuel Castells and Zygmunt Bauman. Since then it has attracted a much wider following across the social sciences. And what united the various contributions to Globalization Theory in the end were two distinctive and extremely ambitious claims about the contemporary world and how to understand it. The proponents of this theory argue that globalization manifested in the concept of transnational integration of the world to form a single social space, and the rise of new patterns of de-territorialized social relations enabled by new means of communication which produce a fundamental shift in the spatial-temporal constitution of human societies.⁴⁷

And secondly, that the consequences of this shift are so profound that they revealed in retrospect a basic lacuna in the classical tradition of social theory. Globalization is seen by the proponents of the theory to be the need for a new, post-classical social theory, in which the categories of space and time are removed. The Somali people are so widespread all over the world.⁴⁸ They have utilized what the proponents of the theory argue that it leads to globalization. This theory therefore becomes very relevant in explaining how globalization has enabled the Somalis to remove the boundaries by moving and living all around the world and relocating to Kenya in good numbers.

1.8 Hypotheses of the Study

This study has the following hypotheses:

1. The socio-cultural closeness with Kenyan Somalis contributed to Somali migration into Kenya.
2. Social closeness with Kenyan Somalis acted as the pull factor to Somali in diaspora to Kenya.
3. Somali presence impacted positively on the socio-economic life of Kenya.

⁴⁷ Giddens, A., *The Consequences of Modernity*, Cambridge: Polity, 1990.

⁴⁸ Featherstone, M. and Lash, S. (1995) 'Globalization, Modernity and the Spatialization of Social Theory: An Introduction', in M. Featherstone, S. Lash, R. Robertson. (eds.) *Global Modernities*, London: Sage.

1.9 Methodology

In order to unearth the factors that pulled the Somali migrants to Nairobi, and the extent to which they impacted on the socio-economic situation in Nairobi, this study has used both secondary and primary sources. Secondary data was derived from books and scholarly journal articles from libraries and from the internet.

The primary data used in this study was the product of field research. This took the form of oral interviews among selected reliable Somalis in Nairobi. Unstructured and semi-structured questionnaires were used during the interviews as it provided the interviewees with adequate space to speak freely and at length about their lives and experiences in Somalia, refugee host countries and in Kenya. Due to the nature of the face-to-face interviews that were conducted, the researcher was able to get more in-depth information, both verbal and non-verbal through observation. The face-to-face option was used as a lot of information can be revealed that the researcher had not anticipated. The researcher had the chance to get the exact information sought or the chance to guide the participant on certain issues. The researcher interviewed thirty adults above 18 years of age, both male and female who live in Nairobi and particularly in Eastleigh. This group was chosen specifically because this was major area that the Somalis in Kenyan urban areas live. The sample population were those who had lived in the estate or area for more than two years. The snowball sampling method was adopted whereby the first respondents identified the succeeding respondents. These first respondents, with the help from research assistants who had lived in Nairobi some from different Somali clans and social groups helped to build a credible representative sample.

Data was collected using semi-structured interviews. The interviews took approximately an hour per person. The open ended questions aided the researcher in capturing more information that might have been omitted and any other relevant information. For example, questions dealing with legality needed more convincing as the Somalis view it as a very sensitive issue which makes it hard for them to divulge information.

The researcher availed himself of a tape recorder during the interviews to enable him to get all the information given. Although most of the respondents refused to be recorded, one third of the respondents agreed and thus aided the researcher in saving time as well as to listen attentively to the respondents, which created a comfortable environment and more

room for observation. Where tape recording was not possible, as mentioned above, the researcher used the note taking method. Considering the population studied was Somalis and few Kenyan non-Somali citizens to give a different view of the story. The raw data from the in-depth interviews with the Somalis was analyzed using content analysis. This approach was specifically chosen, as it aided the researcher in analysing the qualitative data. After the content analysis, the researcher employed inductive analysis where the patterns, themes and categories of analysis that come from the data. The people selected as sample

Interviewees were only those reputed as responsible and trustworthy, after a series of checks and information gathering about them. Even after the conclusion of the survey further investigations were made through informal contacts and friendly discussions on the subject in and outside Kenya for ascertaining the validity of the outcome of the research findings.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SOMALI PEOPLE

2.1 Introduction

The Somali people's history is very important in understanding the reasons to why they are pushed out of Somalia and pulled towards Kenya or out of their own country. The history of this people helps us contextualize their present life in relation to their past and reasons to why they are spread to many parts of the world. History helps us to understand the environment of the Somali people and demonstrate their relationship with Kenya where many of them are pulled to. The history outlined in this chapter helps us to trace the origin of the Somali people, their social relationships within and outside Somalia, their economic livelihoods and their relationship with the different colonial regimes that portioned the Somali people into different spheres of influence, and the unstable post-independence period that led to conflicts, civil war and mass exodus of refugees.

All the above issues under discussion in this chapter helps us to understand the foundational factors that led most of the Somali people to be pushed out of their homeland and equally the factors that pulled them towards Kenya and in particular in urban centres such as Nairobi. This history is therefore very important in laying the foundation of the main objective which not only addresses the push and pull factors but also the contribution of the Somali people to Kenya.

This people with unique history, common culture, with the longest coast line in Africa and sufficient natural resources compared to the limited population has always had homogeneous and uniting factors despite the inter-clan rivalries and conflicts in fighting for resources and clan supremacy. A tradition of roaming freely in their vast plateau and following the seasons and greener pastures for their livestock created a natural sense of movement and migration.

2.2 The Somali people and their land.

The land occupied by the Somali-speaking people is almost 400,000 square miles in the Horn of Africa. Their territory stretches from around Ethiopian highlands, the Gulf of Aden and Tana River region in Northern part of Kenya. According to the Somali oral belief this territory was under one bloc until the period when the African continent was split into different colonial spheres of influence.

The colonial occupation led to dividing of same people into different regions. For instance, the Somali people alone were split up into five separate regions, namely the ex-French Republic of Djibouti, Ethiopia's Ogadenia, former Italian and British colonies (present Somali Republic) and the Northern Eastern region of Kenya.⁴⁹

The Somali people belong to the Hamitic ethnic group famously known as the Cushites most of whom occupy the Horn of Africa. The Somali are a close kin with the Afar or Danakil, the Oromo (Galla) Saho and Beja.⁵⁰ The Somali people have a long history of relationship with Arabian people. Traditionally the Somali people claim that their descent is from Arabian lineages and specifically from the family of the Prophet Mohammed. These claims are however dismissed by some Somali nationalists who believe that the Somali people are purely African and that they only share with Arabian people in terms of Islamic religion, and trade. The long standing history of relationships between the Somalis and Arabia is clearly seen through the presence of Arabic loan words in the Somali language and other historical and cultural relations.⁵¹

Although the Somali language has been highly influenced by Arabic language, it remains a single channel of communication and common medium linking the Somali people together. The Somali people as a single language nation, sharing land culture, religion and claiming common ancestral descent, the Samale (Somali proper). The main clan families include the Darod, the Hawiya, the Dir (with Issak majority sub clan) and the Dighil and Mirifle. The above mentioned groups are patriarchal or based on male line and are overwhelmingly pastoralists, with some minorities groups as farmers in the rivers areas and fishermen on some coastal areas. Apart from movement out of their regions, the Somalis also extensively move within their regions as part of their practice of nomadic pastoralism which requires them to move from one region to the other in search of pasture and water for their livestock.⁵² However, their movement does not alter their clan boundaries because any interference might lead to serious clan conflicts that might push people out.

⁴⁹ Lewis I.M., *A modern History of Somali- Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*, Athens: Ohio University press, 2002, p.1.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Andrzejewskis,B.W., "The position of Galla in the Cushitic language Group", in *Journal of Semitic studies*, 1964, pp .135-138.

⁵² *Ibid.*

This can not preclude, however, sharing temporarily water points or grazing lands in reciprocation or mutual consent terms.

The Somali minorities of Bantu descent practice cultivation around Shebelle and Juba Rivers and therefore comprise of a significant economic force among the Somalis.⁵³

Although the Somali Bantu still maintain some identity, they are being absorbed in the wider Somali society. They are part of the larger Somali cluster. The Somali Bantu groups include the, Shidle, Shebelle, Wa- Gosh, and the Gabaweyn.⁵⁴ Apart from the Somalis we also have the Asian community which resides in Somalia. They consist of the Arabs, Indians, Pakistanis and Persians people who settled in Somalia during the early days of contact between the Somalian coast and the outside world. Somalia was also home to some members of the European family. Somalia is known to have had a long history of relationship with Europe particularly due to its strategic position in the Horn of Africa, Asia and Europe. The Asian communities living in Somalia are mostly traders while members of the Europeans community are mostly settlers who practice banana farming on large scale estates that they own in the South of Somalia.⁵⁵ The absolute majority of the above non Somali groups left Somalia in eve of the civil war, and many of them are yearning for return to the country where they spent most of their life and reclaim their assets. It is the diversity in ethnicity, culture and the mix different backgrounds of thought that flourish and nourish a nation. The pastoral major segment of the Somali people, with its assertive endurance, risk taking, surviving in harsh condition, flexible to adapt to changing environments is the backbone of the nation. But the other minor but not less important ethnic Arabs, Europeans and Asians who lived in Somalia for generations are also important and the future Somalia will have to get them back in their home.

The above description indicates that Somalia is a diverse country with diverse communities. There is a clear indication that the Somalis are widely linked to the rest of the world, Kenya being part of the network, hence probably explaining, to some indirect extent, the pull factors that brought the Somalis to Kenya. Furthermore, the diverse nature

⁵³ Lewis, I. M. "Visible and Invisible Differences: The Somali Paradox", in *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 74, No. 4 (2004), pp. 489-515, Published by: Cambridge University Press on behalf of the International African Institute Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3556839>.

⁵⁴ Oral interview, Noor Ali Sudi, Garissa, (born in Afmado and Somali oral literature expert) 20/09/2012.

⁵⁵ Andrzejewski, B.W., "The position of Galla in the Cushitic language Group", in *Journal of Semitic studies*, 1964, pp. 135-138.

of the Somali people and environmental conditions dictated modifications in modes of organization. The Somali society is, therefore, an outcome of complex interactions assimilations, borrowing and modification as well as contributing to other communities that they interacted with. They had to adapt to their environment through specific evolution of institutions of organization which assisted them to survive. The following section will focus on the mode of life and social institutions among the Somali people. These institutions are very important in explaining the connection between the Somalis of Somalia and the Somalis of Kenyan origin as well as the Somali people's connection with the rest of the world. This connection is instrumental in not only explaining the pull factors of the Somali into Kenya but also their contribution to socio-cultural, political and economic livelihood of Kenya⁵⁶.

2.3 Life in the Somali Society

As mentioned in the above section, the Somali society is complex and so is their economic activities and social organization. The large Somali society practices a mixed type of economic livelihood. For instance, part of the Somali population practices sedentary cultivation particularly those living in the fertile regions of Somalia. To these communities agriculture is their mode of survival. The main cultivators among these communities are the Southern Rahanweyn sections of the Somali people and the Bantu communities along the rivers. The main reason being the southern part of Somalia is fertile with not only stable source of water but also receives reliable rainfall. But for those communities that inhabit the arid areas or environs of the north, central and far south which includes northern part of Kenya, nomadic pastoralism is their main mode of occupation.

The Somali people's economic activities as it is with other communities around the world are therefore largely informed by the climatic conditions where the specific clans live. The Somali people adjusted their livelihood and social institutions depending on the environment that they lived in. As seen in the above argument, those clans that live in fertile areas engaged in agriculture where they produced sorghum, beans, and cash crops. They had a stable economy until when the war broke out that most of them abandoned their farms to seek security elsewhere.

On their part those who live in dry areas engaged in pastoralism. They keep flocks such as sheep, goats, herds of camels and cattle.⁵⁶ A highly worldwide appreciated brand of banana, the Somalita, was produced and exported mostly to Europe. It was a vital source of employment for many and hard currency earner for the country. Livestock exports to the Gulf and livestock raisin and trade remain, however, the backbone of the economy.

Of all the above mentioned flock kept by the Somali pastoralists, camels are valued most. It is on camels that a man's substance is measured in the Somali society. Similarly, the pastoralists' culture is best expressed on camel standards. For instance, how big the camel herd that a man has determines not only his relationships in the pastoral Somali society but also determines the influence that he has, in terms of marriage, kinship and political circle.⁵⁷ Equally, it is on camels that a man's life and position is determined as well as that of a woman in the Somali society. For instance this can clearly be expressed in terms of the compensation in case any death is caused. . Although a lot of premium is placed on camels, it does not mean that other livestock is not valued among the Somali people. Other livestock are equally important component for the Somali societal livelihood.⁵⁸ That is why in case of any interference in harmony or peace, the pastoral communities move with their livestock to safer regions. The movement sometimes brings them to the border of neighboring countries.

To the pastoral cluster of the Somalis the flocks are important because they provide food, labour and as a mode of transport. Due to their importance, livestock cements the relationship between different Somali clusters in terms of sharing pasture, water and administration at various levels of the Somali clans.

Ecological and environmental degradation in most regions of Somalia led to desertification and less and less water points and grazing resources, with consequent decimation of flocks and dwindling employment chances that fueled migration of former pastoralists and farming laborers to urban areas or asylum-seeking in the neighboring countries or even, in

⁵⁶ Lewis I.M., *Marriage and the family in Northern Somali land*, Kampala and London: East African institute of social Research, 1962.

⁵⁷ . Farer, Tom J "Somali Democracy", Source: *Africa Today*, Vol. 12, No. 5 (May, 1965), pp. 5-7Published by: Indiana University Press Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4184631>.

⁵⁸ Peter D. Little, "Traders, Brokers and Market Crisis in Southern Somalia", in *Africa: Journal of the International*, African Institute, Vol. 62, No. 1 (1992), pp. 94-124Published by: Cambridge University Press on behalf of the International African Institute Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1160065> .Accessed: 09/10/2012.

some cases, smuggling or trafficking to other distant countries. The rural areas that was the past food life-line, employer and subsistence for millions of Somalis is giving the way to masses of unskilled, uneducated, jobless youth mushrooming in urban areas, venturing in piracy, crossing borders and oceans in pursue of refuge hood and easily falling for the traps of religious extremism and criminals manipulations.

Clans are the largest effective political or organizational unit among the Somali people, particularly the major pastoralist groups. These clans are led by sultans or chiefs but the Council of Elders decision is above the chiefs' decision.⁵⁹ In administering the clan, the sultan or chief is assisted by elders who are responsible for clan affairs. Respect for elders is well outlined in the Somali customary processes of decision making. For instance, before decision is reached the elders are expected to engage in discussions to ascertain that they are on the right path and in harmony with the Somali customary law. Some issues are dealt in accordance with the Islamic Sharia with the intervention of Sheikhs agreed by the parties of elders. The decision making is always democratic and everybody is allowed to air his views without any kind of discrimination.⁶⁰ Issues such as inheritance and family are the domain of Sharia Law while most questions are solved through arbitration, mutual reciprocation, friendly settlement and consensus in accordance with the customs and traditional Somali rules.

Members of the Somali clans are sometimes separated from other Somali communities by clan alliances and restrictions.⁶¹ It is the clan segregation and restrictions that sometimes lead to conflict within the Somali community. No human being is ever comfortable with a discriminatory environment hence most of them would feel better moving out, to areas where they feel comfortable. Any movement out of Somali hostile areas is always informed by clan alliances. The clan is a very important administrative unit among the Somalis. The clan is the principle of government where allegiances to political alliances and clan divisions are determined. Such alliances are very important for the survival of the Somali people in terms of security and economic prosperity.

⁵⁹ Lewis I.M., *A modern History of the Somali*, Athens: Ohio University press, 2002.

⁶⁰ Lewis, I. M. "Visible and Invisible Differences: The Somali Paradox", in *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 74, No. 4 (2004), pp. 489-515, Published by: Cambridge University Press on behalf of the International African Institute Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3556839> .Accessed: 09/10/2012.

⁶¹ K.L.G Goldsmith and I.M Lewis, "A preliminary Investigation of the Blood Groups of the "Sab" Bondsmen of Northern Somaliland", in *man* vol. LVII, 1958, PP.188-190.

In cases of inter-clan wars, the clan unit is very important. Victory in such clan wars means access to some vital resources such as water and pasture in addition to power and prestige.⁶² Lewis contends that even in the modern administration system, the Somalis still retain use of clan affiliation and force particularly when redressing wrongs and competing for resources in the society.

It is the effects of clan affiliations that have contributed to frequent conflict among the Somali community. These conflicts have to a large extent been a major factor that pushed some Somalis out of their country into the borders of neighboring countries. As they are pushed out kinship alliances play a very important role in determining the place of residence to the Somalis. Another factor worth mentioning and that which plays out well in the Somali alliances and movement is the concept of religion. Despite the divisions, wars, feuds, alliances and fighting, the Somali people claim to devote their lives to religion as men of God.⁶³ Because of their Islamic faith, Somalis allege strong followers of the Quran and the teachings of the prophet Mohamed.⁶⁴ Equally, Islamic religion played a key role in the expansion of the Somalis not only into Kenya but to the entire Horn of Africa. This can also be an indirect factor facilitating the migration of some Somalis into Kenya.

2.4 The Somali Expansion before the Colonial Rule.

In order to understand why the Somali people are easily pulled to Kenya, one has to review the long history of the Somali expansion. The history of Somali people's expansion dates way back before the colonial partition and occupation of the Horn of Africa. Indeed by the 19th century, the history of the Horn of Africa was dominated by the Somali expansion. The Hamitic Somali, gradual expansion and its effects to the region can be traced back to tenth centuries.⁶⁵ Their expansion involved occupation of territories probably formerly occupied by other communities. For instance, by the 10th Century the Dir group of the Somalis who are regarded as the oldest to occupy the Somali coastal strip had already settled in the region.

⁶² I.M, Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: A study of pastoralism and politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa*, London, 1961.

⁶³ Oral interview, Noor Ali Sudi, Garissa, (born in Afmado) 2009/2012.

⁶⁴ I.M Lewis, "Conformity and contrast in Somali Islam", in Lewis (ed), *Islam in Tropical Africa*, London, 1966.

⁶⁵ Lewis, *I.M A Modern History of the Somali*, Athens: Ohio University press, 2002, P.18.

According to the oral history of the Somali people, the Dir cluster were the first to occupy the territories associated with the Somali people. The Dir were followed by the members of the Darod clans at around the 11th Century in the same area close to the Gulf of Aden. The area of the Somalis was generally arid and harsh and the drive for expansion in search of greener pastures was irresistible. This also was supported by religious elements from Arabia dedicated in spreading Islam in the area and formation of communities of different tribes or descent that united under the name of one religious man and later characterized themselves as one unitary group or clan entity. This facilitated the spread of the Somalis further into the Oromo country. Names, traces, legends and oral histories left behind by generations to generations around the expansion of the Somalis in the north of Somalia up to Gibouti and the present Ethiopian eastern regions are still like a living event in the memory and proud history of many Somalis. The Oromo country is the territory which stretches from the current day Ogaden region of Ethiopia and the North Eastern part of Kenya. .⁶⁶

In the 13th Century another cluster of the Somali people, the Hawiye, settled for sometime on the banks of the Shebelle River where they came in contact with the Digil (Rahanwein) cluster. Together with the Ajuran the Hawiye clan consolidated their position in the Shebelle region. They established a strong dynasty and rose to dominance between the 15th Century and the 16th Century and managed to rule Mogadishu region.⁶⁷ The Ajuran dynasty and power over the Mogadishu region declined in the 16th Century due to challenges emanating from attacks by their neighbouring clans. As the attacks increased, some of the Ajuran members migrated into Kenya and Ethiopia where their presence is slightly felt. Their presence in the two countries, together with more massive Ogaden migration into the North Eastern regions of Kenya in 19th C, plays a very important role in influencing the modern Somali expansion and acts as a pulling force to their Kinsmen who moved into Kenyan territories presently dominated by Somalis.

Apart from the normal expansion through migrations as described above, religion also played up in the Somali expansion. The Somali people are strong followers of different factions of the Islamic faith. Islam spread to the rest of the world from the Arabian Peninsula through peaceful propagation or armed jihad movements. Trade and migration

⁶⁶ Huntingford, G.W.B., *The Galla of Ethiopia*, London 1955.

⁶⁷ Cassanelli, L.V. *The Shaping of Somali Society*, Philadelphia, 1982.

of some Arab families strengthened further this trend. The Somalis were equally involved in this Holy War of Jihad. They engaged in such wars particularly against Abyssinian Kingdom. The Muslim states that were highly involved in these wars were those of Adal and that of the port of Zeila states under the leadership of the Walashima dynasty with a mixed population of Somalis, Oromo Moslems and Arab minority occupying the area.⁶⁸ This facilitated the expansion of the Somalis deeper into areas previously dominated by the Oromo, including the historical city of Harar that then became the main Islamic cultural center in the area. The conflict took a holy war character when the Ottoman Turks begun arming the Emir and General Ahmed Gurey(1505-1543) of the Adal Sultanate which facilitated for him to capture two-thirds of Abissinia. Portugal promptly reacted by sending arms and men including 400 musketeers in February 1541 led by Cristofer Da Gama, son of the famous explorer Vasco Da Gama. The expedition was defeated and Da Gama killed in the battle-field on the 4th of April 1542. Other expeditions followed and Ahmed Gurey, too, was killed in the battle-field in 21st February 1543. The death of their charismatic military leader arrested the drive for the conquest of Abyssinia and the Somali militias who were the backbone of the campaign disbanded and returned to their pastoral traditions. This was also the end of the expansions of the Somalis into Ethiopia.

The expansion of the Somali people was then further interrupted by the coming of European colonial powers, following the late 19th century Berlin Conference for scramble for Africa. In fact after that Conference, the Somali people were drawn into the theater of colonial competition of their territories. The competition was between the British, France and Italians. Since Somalia was a large country with very combative and hostile people against every sort of foreign domination, the competing Europeans always appeased Ethiopia in order to secure its collaboration against the Somalis and, in exchange, massive arms were given to Ethiopia which enabled it to conquest big chunks of Somali land and new territories, including Ogadenia and the important cities of Harar, Diredaua and Jigjiga.

By 1897 the partition of Somaliland was complete and new frontiers of the Somali territories had been defined. This meant that the Somali people by then had been divided into four territories with four different colonial powers. For instance the British occupied the British Somaliland region which was very important for meat supply to her garrison in

⁶⁸ Shihab ad-Din and R.Basset (ed) *Futuh al-habash*, Paris, 1897-1909.67 Stenhouse, Paul Lester, *The conquest of Abyssinia*, La Vergne TN USA 2011, The Lightning Source Inc.

Aden operating at the coast. The garrison had been stationed at the coast to safeguard the route to India. The British main rivals in Somalia were France and Italy. Italy had established her colony of Eritrea from where they expanded to other territories occupied by the Somali people. France, Britain and Italy officially possessed Somalia, splitting the Somalis into various spheres of influence. The years that followed were now characterized by wars against foreign occupation. But even the bloody battles against Britain and Italy by Sayid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan in the North of Somalia between 1889 and 1920 or the armed struggle of Majertein sultanates against the Italians in 1924-1928 (in the North-East of Italian Somaliland) or the Bimal and Hawiye resistance to the Italians in the Benadir area, could not stop the drive of the Somalis to new areas despite the restrictive measures of the new colonial administrations.

The new colonial powers tried to introduce controls, artificial borders, taxation, registration of people and other kinds of limitations. These were all rejected or avoided by the Somalis, a proud pastoralist people, with strong and deep centuries old tradition of roaming freely in the open vast plateau of Somalia. In many times and in addition to the traditional continuous pursue of greener pastures, people were pushed to migration in order to flee from hostile environment or alien restrictions. The westward push or what became known as “Darod Invasion” took place beginning with 19th C, with forceful expansion to the Gedo region, Afmadu and Kismayu, all in Jubaland area, pushing the Oromo Wardey and Boran clans back to the present areas in Kenya.

Although the sphere of influence had been declared over territories that the Somalis claimed, the Somalis did not stop their migration idea. They kept on spreading. For instance, by 1909, the Darod had pressed as far South as the Tana River delta displacing the communities that were previously living in the region. In 1912 the British established administrative and military posts in northern part of modern Kenya while the Darod, Degodia, Garreh Murile and Ajuran already had a foothold on big areas from Mandera, to Wajir, Garissa and on the move to occupy and dominate Tana regions.

Their occupation of these regions forced the Warday Galla to move across the Tana River.⁶⁹ The Galla Wardey people were not happy with the forced relocation. They soon started fighting to repossess the land they had lost mainly to the Darod clan. By 1919 the fighting had intensified forcing the British to intervene in their effort to stop the conflict. The intervention led to a peace agreement famously known as the Somali-Oromo Peace, which reduced the hostilities between the two communities.⁷⁰ By that time, however, different Somali tribes were already close to deeper areas in Kenya including Marasabit, Moyale and Isiolo, in addition to consolidating their presence in areas such as Wajir and Garissa.

The colonial British administration tried by all means to restrict any further Somali migration into new areas west of Tana River, by expelling some tribes back to Somali Juba area and by appointing closed and separate administration for Northern Frontier District (NFD). The administration's main concern was polity, economic gains and preventing any demographic push of Kenyan tribes by the Somali migration to white settlement areas. In addition to the bitter memories with the Somali anti-colonial history, the Somalis were also suspected to be involved in illicit trade of ivory, fire arms and poaching. The Somalis were occupying vast land with ever increasing population and migration until, with 15th July 1924 treaty signed in London between Italy and Britain, almost half of the area inhabited by the Somalis in the Kenyan colony, better known as Jubaland, was ceded to Italy. Many of the Somalis of this area still speak Kiswahili, some families are split between Kenya and Somalia which facilitate easier pull-migration to Kenya. The migration into Kenya of the ethnic Bajuni Somalis is even much easier, as the members of this community inhabit in Kismayo and several Bajuni islands on the coast of Somalia closely linked with Lamu and other coastal Kenyan areas. The members of this community share language and tradition with the Kenyans of the coast and their migration between Kenya and Somalia have always open and continuous despite the restrictions of the

⁶⁹ Peter D. Little, "Traders, Brokers and Market Crisis in Southern Somalia", in *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 62, No. 1 (1992), pp. 94-124. Published by: Cambridge University Press on behalf of the International African Institute. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1160065>. Accessed: 09/10/2012.

⁷⁰ Lewis, I. M. "Visible and Invisible Differences: The Somali Paradox", in *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 74, No. 4 (2004), pp. 489-515. Published by: Cambridge University Press on behalf of the International African Institute. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3556839>. Accessed: 09/10/2012.

colonial authorities, and the pull of Bajuni Somalis into Kenyan coastal areas is not even noted.

All the Bajunis speak fluent Kiswahili and differentiating the Somali ones from the Kenyan Bajunis of Mombasa-Malindi-Lamu is very difficult and most of them hold both Somali and Kenyan identity documents.

The Somalis have a long history of not only clan segmentations but also colonial division of the same people. The current Somali nation can therefore be argued to be an amalgamation of the British Somaliland and the Italian Somali land. Since the two colonies were inhabited by Somalis, they were merged to create one nation state although good part of Somalis still inhabit Djibouti, Kenya and the Ogaden region of Ethiopia as part of these countries.⁷¹

Despite the divisions by different factors, the Somali are also united by common faith, culture, ethnicity and tradition. The Somalis are also united by one common language namely the Somali. Other languages spoken by the Somalis include Arabic, English and Italian but Somali language dominates other languages. Another event that is remembered for uniting the Somali is the period when Italy was defeated and Britain was administering all Somali territories, except Djibouti, during World War Two.⁷²

The Somali unification that might have changed the history of the Somali people was, however, short lived. The unification was soon reversed when in 1949 that the United Nations tried to intervene in order to save the Somali people from further fragmentation. The United Nations General Assembly, however, by Resolution 289, placed Italian Somaliland under the international trusteeship with Italy as the administering Authority.⁷³ In 1950 Italy began to administer Somali land formerly not as a colonial power but as the United Nations Trustee territory of Italian Somalia for a period of ten years⁷⁴, while the

⁷¹ Farer, Tom J. "Somali Democracy", Source: *Africa Today*, Vol. 12, No. 5 (May, 1965), pp. 5-7 Published by: Indiana University Press Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4184631> .Accessed: 09/10/2012.

⁷² Nii Wallace Bruce, "The statehood of Somalia and the United nations," paper presented at the 17th Annual conference of the Academic Council on the United Nations systems, the Haque Netherlands, 23-25 June 1994.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ Anthony S. Reyner, "Somalia: The Problems of Independence", Source: *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (Summer, 1960), pp. 247-255 Published by: Middle East Institute Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4323254> .Accessed: 09/10/2012.

ante World War Two previous status-quo was restored for the remaining parts of Somali territories.

Under the United Nations guidance, Italy organized the general elections in 1959 which were successfully held. The Somali Youth League (SYL) under the leadership of Seyyid Abdullahi Issa emerged victorious. Seyyid Abdulahi Issa became the first African Prime Minister of Somalia. In July 1960, the Italian Somliland was joined together with the British Somaliland as an independent republic and Aden Abdullah Osman became the first president with Seyyid Abdullah Issa maintaining his previous position as the prime Minister of Somalia. Seyyid Issa was later replaced as prime Minister by Dr. Abdirashid Ali Shermarke.⁷⁵

The first government of Somalia faced severe obstacles in administrating the country soon after independence. One of the issues that threatened the stability of Somalia was power struggle. Immediately after independence Somalia began to witness intense power struggle between different factions of the political elite.⁷⁶ Unlike in other African countries which also witnesses civil unrest immediately after independence, the political struggle in Somalia took an added dimension as a result of radical nationalism and irredentist ideologies pursued by the post-colonial governments. Shermarke's government began making territorial demands on North Eastern territories under Kenya and the Ogaden region under Ethiopia.⁷⁷ Realizing that such a move of uniting the territories occupied by Somalis would threaten their grip on the Horn of Africa, Britain and the western countries opposed the irredentist idea pursued by Somalia.

As the Western European countries were still thinking of how to deal with the Somali irredentist ideology, the cold war environment complicated the situation. The Republic of Somalia used the cold war politics to acquire huge stocks of arms from the Soviet Union. With weapons readily available, the Republic of Somalia also increase the numerical strength of its military to 60,000 soldiers, 2000 navy personnel, 2500 Air Force officers,

⁷⁵ *The Europa World yearbook*, Vol.1. 34th edition, London: Europa publications Ltd, 1993 pp. 2358-2368.

⁷⁶ A.I Asowaju (ed) *partitioned Africans: Ethnic relations Across Africa's International Boundaries 1885-1984*, New York: St. Martins Press 1985.

⁷⁷ Saadia Touval, *Boundary politics of independent Africa*, Cambriadge, M.A: Harvard University press, 1972.

8000 police officers, 1500 border Guards and 20,000 people's militia.⁷⁸ With such a military strength, Somalia decided to execute her nationalist ideas. It soon armed Somalis to wage guerilla warfare against Ethiopia which led to military confrontation and tensions between the two countries. Kenya also viewed Somalia with suspicion. For instance, in 1964, fighting broke out between Somalia and Ethiopia over the Ogaden region, similarly there was tension between Somalia and her neighbours, Kenya and Djibouti.⁷⁹

As tension between Somalia and her neighbours continued on 15 October 1969, president Shermake was assassinated, followed within one week by military coup d'état which toppled the weak democratic system and brought to power Major General Mohammed Siyad Barre.⁸⁰ The coup d'état ushered in a reign of dictatorship in Somalia. Soon after taking over power General Barre suspended the constitution, dissolved the National Assembly and established an all military council known as the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC). In the following year, (1970) Siad Barre declared Somalia as a socialist state.⁸¹ Some initial tangible economic and social achievements were realized by the regime, including the writing of the Somali language as the official national administration medium, intensive support and free education and health care. The years that followed, however, saw high levels of suppression of any voice of opposition in Somalia. For instance, in 1976, Barre dissolved the Supreme Revolutionary Council and replaced it with the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party (SRSP) by then the only political party in Somalia.

General Barre also went ahead and adopted a Soviet brand of a socialist system of administration based on repression and absolute dictatorship.⁸² He also went further to modify the system to what came to be known as the Clan culture of nepotism and favoritism. The regime was accused of favoring clan relatives and political loyalists to the Barre regime that were appointed into national leadership positions. They held prominent authority, power, civil service positions, controlled the armed forces, academic and

⁷⁸ IISS *The Military Balance 1990-1991*, London: International Institute for strategies studies.

⁷⁹ Bereket Habte Selessie, *conflict and Intervention in the Horn of Africa*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1990.

⁸⁰ Loan Lewis, "The politics of the 1969 Somali Coup", in *The Journal of modern African studies*, No. 10. October 1972, pp. 397-400.

⁸¹ John Markakis and Michael Waller (eds.), *Military Marxists Regimes in Africa*, London: Frank Cuss, 1976, see also Ahmed I. Samatar, *socialist Somalia: Rhetoric and Reality* London: zed publishers, 1988.

⁸² It is a Soviet model of government where patronage to the government and its leaders was upheld. The system gave no room for questioning the government rather than just obeying its decisions and orders.

government institutions.⁸³ Barre went on to manipulate the clan system as a strategy to maintain power. He also resorted to divide and rule system where he split those who were challenging him. When Barre realized that he could not sustain the divide and rule policy, he started engaging in mass suppression of the elites who belonged to the opposing clans in 1980.⁸⁴

The main victims of mass suppression were the members of the clans opposing the regime. Thousands of these clans could not sustain the conditions and began fleeing the country in large numbers to the neighboring countries. Resenting the repression accentuated for rebelling and staging an attempted coup that failed in April 1978. This marked the beginning of the repression and the beginning of the armed opposition against the regime by the Majertein military officials who staged the failed coup as they fled to Ethiopia under the leadership of Abdullahi Yusuf, one of the post-civil war Somali Presidents. In 1979 - 1984 the members of several major clans, the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF), as the militia of the Majertain in the North East of Somalia; the Somali National Movement (SNM) of the Issak in the North b West; the United Somali Congress(USC) of the Hawiye in the Central Regions and the Capital city area; and the Somali Patriotic Movement(SPM) of the Ogaden in the Lower Juba went on to form resistance movements with the aim of removing General Siyyad Barre dictatorship from power and safeguarding the narrow interests of the concerned clans at the same time.⁸⁵

The violence and atrocities of the administration were clear indication that the socialist republic of Somalia was headed to a major internal conflict that would see more people pushed out of the country to the neighboring countries. A large number of the Somalis were pulled toward Kenya. It did not take long when in 1991 conflict and violence led to the explosion of Somalia. The fire was fuelled by both clan-based rivalries and political and economic concerns. The clan repressions adopted by General Siyad Barre proved disastrous as it led to disagreements and violations of political and human rights. The northwest part of Somalia which is home for the Isaaq clan started rebelling and begun

⁸³ Robin, Theobald "Patrimonialism", *world politics*, No. 34, 1982.

⁸⁴ Jeffrey Clark, "Debacle in Somalia: failure of the collective Response", in a Lori F. Damrosch (ed), *Enforcing Restraint; Collective intervention in internal conflicts* New York: Council on foreign Relations Press, 1993, pp.209-211.

⁸⁵ Said, Samatar, *Somalia: A Nation in Turmoil*, London: Minority Rights Group report, August 1991.

armed struggle (SNM).⁸⁶ In responding to the rebellion, the government forces unleashed a bloody repression against northern civilian population using aircrafts and heavy weapons. The response by the Barre government institutionalized a cycle of violence in Somalia hence exacerbating the push factors of the Somali people out of their home country.⁸⁷

The rebellion was not only restricted to the northern part of Somalia but spread to the rest parts of the country. Some southern opposition groups emerged under the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM) and the United Somali Congress (USC) to fight against the repressive regime of Siyad Barre. The USC and SNM and SPM joined hands to wage a strong war that by 1990 had weakened General Barre's government. By mid 1990's the government had been reduced to only controlling some areas of Mogadishu. The situation got worse when the Barre government turned against members of the Hawiye clan who were living in the city.

Barre suspected that members of the Hawiye clan were supporting the disgruntled opposition to execute their plan of removing him from power. After the attack on them, the Hawiye joined hands with the opposition against the Barre regime. By December 1991 the Barre regime disintegrated forcing the dictator to temporarily settle in his native Gedo Region and then crossing into Kenya on his way to exile in Nigeria where he later died.⁸⁸ Although Siyad Barre went to exile, remnants of his troops remained behind fighting against the militia of Gen Aideed who tried to extend his power to Jubaland area bordering with Kenya without success.⁸⁹

The actions of clan militias inflicted a profound psychological blow to the people of Somalia. Similarly their actions led to intra-clan hatred and violence that exacerbated the conflict. After removing Siyad Barre from power, USC splintered into two major factions with two figures namely General Mohamed Farah Aided and Ali Mahdi turning to be bitter adversaries. The power struggle between the two former allies led to loss of many

⁸⁶ Mohammed m. Sahnoun, "prevention in conflict resolution", in Philip Tetlock et,al (eds) *Behaviour, Society and Nuclear War*, Vol-1 New York: Oxford University press, 1988, pp. 209-333.

⁸⁷ Mohamed Osman, Omar, *The Road to Zero: Somalia's Self- Destruction*, London: Haan Associates, 1992.

⁸⁸ Lewis, Loan *Making History in Somalia: Humanitarian intervention in stateless society*, discussion paper No.6, London; Centre for the study of Global Governance, 1993.

⁸⁹ Rebert G. Puman, "The UN operation in Somalia in Ramesh Thakur and Caryle Thayer, (eds) *UN Peacekeeping in the 1990* Boulder CO:Westview, press, 1995.

lives. Since then Somalia degenerated into a severe civil conflict that would see many Somali migrate to other countries either as refugees, economic asylum seekers or business people or other reasons. Since 1992, the civil war combined with severity of drought and climatic conditions produced the greatest humanitarian crisis in the history of Somalia.

The immense military arsenal left behind by the deposed regime fell in the hands of the clan militias and warlords of the capital city and this was enough for killing, wounding, maiming, devastating defenseless civilians and weaker communities, displacing and forcing people to seek security or refuge outside Somalia.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter gives account of events that took place in Somalia and leading to conflicts, civil war and exodus of many Somalis outside their homeland. The extensive Somali land, the culture and the ways of life, the traditional social organization of the society, termed by some scholars as “pastoral democracy”, the European colonization and the post-independence national governments have all been addressed. Historical factors and events, as discussed above, will shape the future of the Somalis for many years to come. Hardened by the local harsh environment and continuous struggle to adapt to it, they create new patterns of survival and coping mechanisms. Migration has always been part of this strategy. While a farmer is attached to a plot of land, a Somali pastoralist (as the background of most Somalis is) is prone to continuous movement in tracking the flock in the pursue of greener pastures. Cultural easiness for migration, civil war and the presence of a good number of Kenyan Somalis are among the main factors that pulled Somalis to Kenya. The importance of their social connections and the potential socio-economic contributions to Kenya will be analyzed later in this study.

CHAPTER THREE

CIVIL WAR IN SOMALIA AND ITS IMPACT

3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the driving factors that pushed most of the Somali migrants out of their country. It is argued that there are many factors, among them is identity as manipulated by ideology in the trappings of religion, as well as the perceptions of neglect, dictatorship and scramble for the scarce resources combine to drive the Somali to conflict. This conclusion is based on an extensive review of literature on conflict in Somalia. Due to the small sample size, the argument presented cannot be generalized to all the Somali migrants living in Kenya. The findings, however, offer valuable insight into the reasoning of an important subset of most of the Somali people who crossed into Kenya. Given the porous border between Somalia and Kenya, the large presence of Somali refugees in Kenya particularly in Eastleigh facing dire conditions almost identical to those in Somalia with the exception of war, and the growth of Eastleigh as an economic hub, the voices of the interviewed Somalis are relevant to this debate.

The chapter will look at two driving factors for pushing the most of the Somali immigrant people out of their homes, examining both the civil war during and after the Siyad Barre regime that led to push and the emergency of Islamic radicalism. Push factors are the negative social, cultural, and political features of one's societal environment that aid in "pushing" vulnerable individuals onto the path out of their country. Push factors are what are commonly known as underlying root causes such as poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, discrimination, and political and economical marginalization caused by the war or conflict environment. A Somali dictum says that one's country is not where he/she is born but where he/she can decently live. Furthermore, with the longest coastline in Africa, many Somalis traveled over the centuries to many parts of the world in trade links and this created a culture open to outward migration.

3.2 The Somali Civil War

For a better understanding of the factors that pushed the Somalis out of their country, their history has to be analyzed. Somalis constituted the most extensive and united nation in Africa before the arrival of European colonialists. The Somalis speaking the same

language and adherents of the same Sunna Muslim faith, they should have been the least expected to disintegrate into internecine conflict. The Somalis are divided only by clan affiliation. They have a strong relationship between their extended families that stretch back over generations. The Somalis history was negatively changed when they were deprived of their natural ethnic homogeneity by the European powers that colonized them. Their nation became a victim of the scramble and partition by colonial powers at the Berlin Conference of 1884–85.⁹⁰

With these divisions imposed on the Somalis from abroad, the dismemberment of Greater Somalia changed to serve the ambitions of future leaders by providing a readymade reason to war against neighbors. Differences among clans would in turn serve as reason to war against each other. All these wars played a significant role of pushing the Somalis out of their country.⁹¹ The colonialist split the ethnic Somalis into five parts. The border with Ethiopia lopped off much of the Ogaden and Haud deserts to the west, tiny Djibouti was excluded from the northwest Somaliland and given to France and the border with Kenya divided Somali zone NFD from southern Somalia.

The colonial partitions of the Somali people were not celebrated instead it gave rise to a feeling of re-uniting the Somali people. The aspirations of one day unifying Greater Somalia, contrary to the foreign imposed boundaries was evident in the national flag unfurled at independence in 1960. The flag had five white stars, set on a blue background. Each star represented the Somalis living in other countries namely; Kenya, Djibouti, Ethiopia, British Somaliland and Italian Somalia itself.

The dream of Greater Somalia was mainly resurrected by Mohamed Siyad Barre, the dictator who came to power in a military coup in 1969. Siyad Barre applied ruthless and harsh policies that made thousands of the Somalis to run for safety in the neighboring countries as refugees. Barre maintained his strong hold by tight control of the army and security services and though attacking tribalism in public he kept on quietly playing clans off one another. This caused hostility between members of different clans.

⁹⁰ John Drysdale, *Whatever Happened to Somalia?*, London: Haan Associates, 1994, p. 70.

⁹¹ Ioan M. Lewis, preface to Somalia Delegation, *Spared from the Spear: Traditional Somali Behaviour in Warfare*, Nairobi: International Committee of the Red Cross, 1997, p. 1.

In public, Syad Barre denounced tribalism saying that tribalism and nationalism cannot go hand in hand and that it was unfortunate that the Somali nation was rather too clannish than nationalist. He was quoted saying that; “if all Somalis are to go to Hell, tribalism will be their vehicle to reach there.”⁹² But no matter the whims of Barre blood kinship were too embedded in the Somali psyche to be exorcised. The abiding faith in clan allegiance, coupled with the modern weapons amassed by Barre during the Cold War led to a disaster that pushed many Somalis out of their country.

The situation in Somalia was worsened by the East-West involvement in Somalia politics. The involvement of the two blocs of power worsened the security situation in Somalia forcing many people to relocate to neighboring countries. First, the West was interested in Somalia for its strategic location in relation to Indian Ocean, the Middle East and the Suez Canal.⁹³ At the same time, the local elite began the drive towards irredentism which had serious military implications as Somalia waged war against Ethiopia. Regional strategy and irredentism combined to make military preparedness a Somali priority especially following the Kenya and Ethiopia defense pact of 1963. Somalia went all out for military aid and managed to attract limited alternating military assistance from Britain, Italy, USA and the Western countries discouraged the idea of supplying Somalia arms beyond modest defensive or internal security needs they sought the assistance from the USSR in ever increasing levels as from 1964. After the military government take-over, Barre increased expenditure on the military to unprecedented levels. Somalia National Army grew both in numbers and in armament from a force of 10,000 in 1963 to 60,000 in 1977. The army further expanded to 96,000 in 1980, 115,000 and eventually 123,000 by 1984-5.⁹⁴

Another factor that pushed the Somalis out of their country was the Cold War politics. In 1974 Somalia was the first sub-Saharan African country to sign a friendship treaty with the Soviet Union. The end result of the Somali-Soviet relationship was the deployment of 6,000 Soviet soldiers and civilians who assisted in militarizing Somalia. They controlled the ministry of defense, the secret police and an important military facility at Berbera. They turned the ragtag Somali army into a solid fighting force, armed with heavy artillery

⁹² Rick Atkinson, “The Raid That Went Awry: How an Elite U.S. Force Failed in Somalia,” Part One of series “Fire fight in Mogadishu: The Last Mission of Task Force Ranger,” *The Washington Post*, 30 January 1994, pp. 1-27.

⁹³ Rick Atkinson, “The Raid That Went Awry: How an Elite U.S. Force Failed in Somalia,”

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

and assault rifles. They supplied the air force with MiG fighters and built one of the strongest infantry in Africa.⁹⁵

With the Soviet Union the Somali side, the USA allied itself to Ethiopia in 1970s. The massive Soviet weaponry infused into Somalia heightened tension and military might imbalance that induced the Somali army to march into the Ogaden region of Ethiopia in 1977. Ethiopian armies were overwhelmed and within two months 90 percent of the Ogadenia was in Somali hands. Siyad Barre felt that the dream of Greater Somalia was partly realized.⁹⁶ While thinking that he was going to realize his dream of uniting the Greater Somalia, lest did he know that the Soviets had already begun to support the young Ethiopian revolutionaries who had deposed Emperor Haile Salassie. Their efforts to persuade Barre to form a Marxist alliance with Ethiopia failed, and the Somali leader forced the Soviets to make a choice. Siyad Barre was a man of his own, loyal only to his own designs which were not compatible with the Soviet ones, and, in consequence, the Soviets switched allegiances, prompting a remarkable Cold War in the Horn of Africa. The cold war between Somalia and Ethiopia and their respective supporters acted as a catalyst that will see the two countries engage in a serious war namely the Ogaden War. The Soviets who were instrumental to the making of Siyad Barre military power soon shifted from Mogadishu to Addis Abeba, and within months 15,000 Cuban troops, columns of Soviet tanks, and hardware worth more than \$1 billion were deployed to protect Ethiopia's borders from eventual Somali aggression.⁹⁷ The Soviet realignment belatedly caused an American turnaround, as Barre played the Cold War card to find a new source for weapons.⁹⁸

Barre soon invaded Ethiopia but the mission later turned disastrous as he did not have enough weaponry supply to contain the Soviet and allied socialist countries that supported Ethiopia. He sought Western and Arab countries for help to turn back what he called the

⁹⁵ Jane Perlez, "Somalia Fighting Keeps Aid from a Suffering City," *The New York Times*, 11 December 1991.

⁹⁶ Oral interview, Noor Ali Sudi, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 03/02/2013.

⁹⁷ Scot Peterson, *Me against My Brother at War in Somalia, Sudan and Rwanda*, New York, Routledge, 2000.

⁹⁸ Lewis, A(2002): Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: a Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa*, published for the International African Institute, London: Oxford University Press, 1961, pp. 15–16..

Soviet-Cuban imperialism in Africa's Horn. President Jimmy Carter promised military aid but Congress insisted that Somalia first withdraw its troops from the Ogaden.

Backed by overwhelming Soviet and Cuban firepower, Ethiopia began to recapture the Ogaden. The war in Ogaden was very vicious as the Ethiopian troops and Somali ones were blamed for committing atrocities against humanity.⁹⁹ This led to massive displacement and refugees to neighboring countries like Kenya.

The humiliation of the Somali forces in the Ogadenia War frustrated the Somali government and people. National pride was dealt a severe blow, a bad result for any Somali warrior, for whom victory alone assures power and credibility. Barre responded by purging the top ranks of the military. But defeat was so total that Barre feared popular uprising that could topple his government. Ethiopian units would not cross into Somalia as the real military power in Ethiopia was in the hands of the Soviets and their allies. The tacit agreement between the Americans and the Soviets was to reverse the Somali invasion of Ogadenia and to keep intact the border status quo between the two countries. Nevertheless an atmosphere of hostility and tension was reigning and resumption of war and hostilities was looming in the air. The fear worsened the refugee crises as thousands fled Somalia. Arms were anxiously distributed by Ethiopia to clan militias and refugees opposing Siyad Barre in addition to the military men who deserted to their respective clan militias.¹⁰⁰ Those weapons in angry public hands would haunt the Somali people's history until the state collapsed.

To ensure his survival, Barre hardened repressive measures and sought financial help from the US which gave both limited economic and military aid to the country. One quarter of the money was spent on the exchange for the USA military access to ports and airports in Somalia. Somalia's former colonial master, Italy, contributed about \$1 billion from 1981 to 1990, part of which went for weapons, budget support and some development projects.¹⁰¹ Somalia got limited supply of mortars, 106mm anti-tank cannons, and howitzers, along with the aging Soviet hardware left back by retreating Iraqi forces in

⁹⁹ Ruth Sinai, "Somalia Arms," Associated Press, 2 November 1993.

¹⁰⁰ Robert Gersony, "Why Somalis Flee," August 1989, as quoted in Africa Watch, *Somalia: A Government at War with Its Own People: Testimonies About the Killing and the Conflict in the North*, New York: Human Rights Watch, January 1990, pp. 217-218.

¹⁰¹ Refugee Policy Group (RPG), *Hope Restored? Humanitarian Aid in Somalia 1990-1994*, a comprehensive after-action aid report prepared for the Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance by the Center for Policy Analysis and Research on Refugee Issues, Washington D.C., November 1994.

Kuwait during the first Irak war or bought from East European countries. The weapons would later serve to lubricate the nation's destruction during the civil war that saw thousands pushed out as refugees. Since the insurgency of Sayid Mohamed Abdulla Hassan, there had hardly been a time when Somalia were not at war with itself or its neighbors. But with internal opposition growing, economic hardship and popular discontent armed insurgency was inevitable.

Soon the military became an instrument of overt repression, authoritarianism and corruption. This went alongside proliferation of arms in the wider Somalia society and militarization of civilians.¹⁰² But the sustainability of the military budget depended more on external support than on internal resources. This external support came as debt and with the changing bases of foreign support the regime gradually fell in deep trouble.¹⁰³ Barre used the military to repress society, promote clan manipulations, and to destroy channels of debate and dissent, until some of his creditors' quickly slapped conditions for further aid.

Between 1985 and 1991 when Barre was deposed, state tyranny along clan lines became rampant. Widely perceived as ruling through clan maneuvering politics, Barre used untold repression on perceived rebel clans. This contributed to the relocation of many Somali who run away to safety areas. In reaction the US suspended military aid in 1988 and economic aid in 1989. The stoppages were abrupt.¹⁰⁴ The stoppage happened in a highly militarized context, a context in which Somalia was susceptible to easy collapse.

The collapse of Barre's rule was accelerated by, and led to an increase in free proliferation of guns in unauthorized hands. This collapse also occurred against a background of intense suspicions within Somalia among rival clans and groups. The coalition that opposed and ultimately deposed Barre was unstable, ill conceived and steeped in a survivalist and individualistic character.¹⁰⁵ It was mainly focused on ending Barre's personalized rule. As such, it was built and united solely by the need to fight against the tyranny and authoritarianism of Barre's rule. Once Barre was ousted, the coalition entered a new phase

¹⁰² David N. Gibbs, "Realpolitik and Humanitarian Intervention: The Case of Somalia," in *International Politics*, 37 (March 2000), pp. 41-55.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Huseein M. Adam, "Somalia: A Terrible Beauty Being Born? op., cit. P.71.

¹⁰⁵ Abdi Ismail Samatar, "Leadership and Ethnicity in the Making of African State Models: Botswana and Somalia," in *Third World Quarterly*, 18/4, pp. 697-698.

of intense suspicions, factionalism and conflict that exacerbated the flow of refugees out of Somalia. The central government in Somalia collapsed as factional conflict and intense warfare escalated. The collapse of the Barre regime in 1991 led to immense militarization of Somalian society, drought and famine, poverty and misery to untold suffering levels. The impact of war on innocent Somalis, especially the women and children, was horrendous.¹⁰⁶

Another factor that, up to a certain extent, contributed to the worsening of the economic and social conditions of many citizens and pushed a number of Somalis out of their country was the implementation of structural adjustment programs. Julius Ihonvbere argues that structural adjustment programs has led to marginalization of the African continent and the subsequent conflicts that have displaced millions of the African population. He argues that the IMF led policies introduced in Africa such as privatization; deregulation and currency devaluation were thrust on a poverty stricken and debt ridden environment that could not address the urgent needs of the African continent. And that also the regime types characteristic of most African states were illegitimate and desperate, having a ruling elite that was closely connected to external foreign interests but lacking internal solidity, efficiency, productivity, accountability and discipline.¹⁰⁷

The imposition of World Bank-IMF structural adjustment programs in early 1980s led to exacerbated poverty, eroded the purchasing power of a large portion of local people and generally caused untold desperation and misery among vulnerable groups. For many, this has entailed a direct invitation to deepening social crisis and violence that contributed to refugees, displacement and migration. Such conditions, like devaluation, the floating exchange rate, and an end to trade and prize restrictions, were added to high levels of inflation that had hit the 400 per cent mark between 1978 and 1982. By 1985, Somalia was weak, poverty stricken, highly militarized and in general chaos that led to many people fleeing the country.¹⁰⁸ The trade restrictions, devaluation and de-regulation imposed in 1985 all exacerbated an already bad situation. For instance, the Siyad Barre regime in Somalia faced with such crisis of governance and unable to maintain law and order,

¹⁰⁶ McMichael, Celia "Everywhere is Allah's Place: Islam and the Everyday Life of Somali Women in Melbourne, Australia," in *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 15/2 (2002), pp. 171-188.

¹⁰⁷ Oral interview, oral interview, Lul Ali Issa, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 05/02/21013.

¹⁰⁸ Huseein M. Adam, 'Somalia: A Terrible Beauty Being Born?' in I. William Zartman (ed.) *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995, p. 75.

resorted to despotism, authoritarianism, and repression against any internal view of challenge. Internal problems of bad governance, corruption, politicization of ethnicity, poverty and economic mismanagement were central to the Somalia predicament. But of immediate relevance to understanding the relationship between conflicts in Somalia and the push factors of the Somali people to Kenya, the militarization of the Somali society was itself also a product of the political experience of Somalia during the Cold War.¹⁰⁹

By emphasizing the military factor and its connection to the push factors that forced the Somalis out of their country does not minimize internally generated problems. All these factors should be seen as reinforcing each other. Siyad Barre took over power in a bloodless military coup in October 1969, barely a decade after Somalia gained political independence from Britain and Italy. He remained in power until January 26th 1991 when he was also deposed by a coalition of groups opposed to his dictatorial rule. Upon assuming power, Barre suspended the constitution, dismissed parliament and instituted a Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) under his leadership. In 1970 Barre declared socialism as the ideology of the military regime, the state and society were completely militarized. The dominant legacy of Barres rule, especially in the last half of his rule, was that of authoritarian, dictatorship, corruption and the active promotion of regional and clan factionalism.¹¹⁰ History will book for him also some initial social achievements, including boosting the rights of minority clans and women, introduction of written Somali language and consequent reduction of analphabetism and support for free education and health care. Barre's methods of administration had altered the traditional laws and limits of war. Soldiers were not properly paid which often led them to desert, loot and not conform to military discipline which angered the local population.¹¹¹ Forced conscription of men over the ages of 18 during the war with Ethiopia made for an unhappy army of soldiers who deserted often with their military experience and weapons intact, ready for uprising. The conscription acted as push factor to those Somalis who never wanted to be part of the

¹⁰⁹ Ali A. Mazrui, "Crisis in Somalia: From Tyranny to Anarchy," in Hussein M. Adam and Richard Ford (eds.), *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century*, Lawrenceville, NJ and Asmara: Red Sea Press, 1997.

¹¹⁰ Hussein M. Adam, "Somalia: Personal Rule, Military Rule and Militarism," in Eboe Hutchful and Abdoulaye Bathily (eds.), *The Military and Militarism in Africa*, Dakar: CODESRIA Book Series, 1998, p. 368.

¹¹¹ Africa Watch, "Somalia: Beyond the Warlords: The Need for a Verdict on Human Rights Abuses," 7 March 1993.

military. Every Somali even the young learned how to use an assault rifle. The result of Barre's militarism was part and parcel of Somalia's modern refugee experience.

As the guerrilla groups began infiltrating the capital, more weapons became available on the black market. The anarchy reached a peak in the first days of 1991. The several thousand-strong "Red Beret" presidential guards and military could no longer withstand the armed opposition. Despite the fact that they were all well trained and loyal, they abandoned him, and left in convoys flanked by tanks and armoured vehicles. The president, who had vowed many times that he would resist to the last drop, stayed on with meager defense to do the job.¹¹² As Mogadishu fell, the amphibious unit of US Marines from the USS Guam, diverted from final preparations for Operation Desert Storm in Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf, evacuated 272 American Embassy staff from Mogadishu in early January.¹¹³ By 26 January 1991, the rebels had fought their way to Barre's hilltop residence at Villa Somalia, forcing him to flee so abruptly in a convoy of armored cars, leaving behind massive military arsenal enough to fuel the civil war for many years to come to lead millions of Somalis either to displacement, refugee hood, starvation or migration.

With the collapse of law and order, Somalia became a black market where weapons were sold. Mogadishu's arms markets had grown unchecked since the eve of the government's collapse, when merchants quietly took clients aside to inspect their clandestine weapons stocks. Now the market teemed with criminals and self-appointed defenders and excited boys, the whole was that of chaos. A writer described the situation as worst and that man with wheelbarrows loaded with ammunition were seen almost on every street of Mogadishu.¹¹⁴ Mogadishu was full of gun merchants with stalls stacked with artillery rounds and mortars of all sizes and oily boxes of screw in detonators, heaps of rocket-propelled grenades and launchers.

Somalia was in enough trouble that warranted movement of people out of the country. The capital Mogadishu was divided between the strongest clans, the Habr Gedir and the Abgal,

¹¹² Mohamoud M. Afrah, *Target: Villa Somalia, An Eyewitness Account of Mogadishu's Fall to U.S.C. Guerrillas* Karachi: Naseem, 1991.

¹¹³ Jonathan Stevenson, *Losing Mogadishu: Testing U.S. Policy in Somalia* Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1995.

¹¹⁴ Africa Watch, "Somalia: Beyond the Warlords: The Need for a Verdict on Human Rights Abuses," 7 March 1993, p. 4.

which had fought together to oust Siyad Barre. But then they squabbled over the control of resources. Mogadishu was split between north and south by an unruly no-man's-land called the Green Line. It was there that the sparkling merchandise of the gun market was used, and it was at the gun market that the gunmen congregated to discuss the afflictions of Somalia. There was no law, no government and no security.¹¹⁵ This situation was unbearable to many therefore the best alternative was to relocate to other countries. Mogadishu was characterized by rounds falling almost everywhere any moment in the city, adding to the daily casualty rate of those maimed by stray bullets.¹¹⁶ The rain of bullets never seemed to stop and therefore the only way of survival for many was to relocate as refugees to other countries with Kenya receiving the largest population of the same.

Somalia was already in the grip of militiamen with guns. The country disintegrated further into the bloodiest clan war in Somalia's history. The rival warlords' quest for power and the destruction would lead to famine that further pushed many Somalis out to Kenya. Gangs of bandits looted, killed and raped, exacting a fierce toll. By late 1993 there were nearly 40 distinct bandit groups in the capital alone. The militiamen were recruited with promises of loot. They caused great damage to the economy of Somalia. Factories were dismantled and sold complete to other countries by the militia group leaders.¹¹⁷ The dark culture of the Siyad Barre's dictatorial regime injected into the minds of every single Somali the appetite for power, either for the individual or for the clan. Power in Somalia is synonymous with wealth, freedom and personal and clan security. This was a very selfish approach because nobody cared about the other.¹¹⁸

The epitome of love for power and its use was General Mohamed Farah Aidid. He was a strong man with a military sense of purpose, decisive and unforgiving. For many he was a real personification of Siyad Barre himself. He unleashed wrath to the people who stood on his way of seeking power. His gunmen had killed plenty. Farah Aidid was a ruthless warrior and man of arms. Aidid had the best claim to power after Siyad Barre was toppled. His clansmen inherited a sizable portion of the deposed regime's arms stockpile

¹¹⁵ Oral interview, Mohamed Jama Issa, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 03/02/2013.

¹¹⁶ Hussein Ali Dualeh, *From Barre to Aideed: Somalia; The Agony of a Nation*, Nairobi: Stella-graphics, 1994.

¹¹⁷ Mariam Arif Gasseem, *Hostages: The People Who Kidnapped Themselves*, Nairobi: Central Graphics Services,

¹¹⁸ Oral interview, Deria Kulmiye Ali, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 13/02/2013.

that had served the third-largest army in Africa after South Africa and Egypt. He declared himself the undisputed leader of the Hawiye clan although in Mogadishu he was challenged by members of Abgal sub-clan.¹¹⁹ So Aidid directed his Habr Gedir sub-clan to wage war against the rival Abgal subclan, led by Ali Mahdi Mohamed, a businessman who had also been appointed president of Somalia by a limited group of supporters. In the battle to oust the Barre regime, the two men had been allies, both leaders of the United Somali Congress (USC) and the Hawiye clan. But the split was caused by mutual provocation, mutual intransigence, and mutual thirst for power. When Barre fled, Ali Mahdi declared himself head of a new government so quickly that some of his ministers had not been notified in time. Aidid, whose forces had done part of the job of removing Siyad Barre from power, was not happy.¹²⁰ All efforts of the Hawiye elders to reconcile the differences between the two leaders became fruitless.

Somalia soon became a murdering ground that saw many Somalis ran for refuge in Kenya. The traditional system that once bound clans to preserve peace, or at least to stem war were destroyed. The conflict divided Ali Mahdi's northern Mogadishu enclave from Aidid's turf in the south, creating the so called lethal Green Line. Killing was so widespread. The main objective of the killings was to subdue the enemy sub-clan. Each leader believed that to end the complex blood feud, one must destroy the enemy clan.¹²¹ Most of the population of the city was of Ali Mahdi's Abgal sub-clan, but Aidid had heavier weapons, controlled the bigger area, and was reinforced by supporters from many allied sub-clans. The constant war reduced the city center to a skeleton wasteland.¹²²

During the most intense period of fighting, from mid November 1991 to early March 1992, the amount of unleashed artillery fire, aimed by militias who knew nothing in terms of respect for human life, made life impossible or very difficult in the capital. During the period many people were forcefully pushed out of the country. The common scenario, especially in the Southern Somalia, was damaged homes, lack of food and water, a situation which made life unbearable for many Somalis. As hunger increased and insecurity kept out nearly all relief workers and food aid, many citizens were forcefully pushed out of their country.¹²³ The common saying among the people of Somalia was that;

¹¹⁹ Mohamoud M. Afrah, *The Somali Tragedy*, Mombasa, Kenya: Mohamed Printers, 1994.

¹²⁰ Oral interview, Mohamed Abdi Issa, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 05/02/2013.

¹²¹ Oral interview, Said Adan Abo, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 05/02/2013.

¹²² Oral interview, Mursal Nur Farah, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 03/02/2013.

¹²³ Oral interview, Maryam Ali Abdi, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 03/02/2013.

“If you want security, you must make your own.”¹²⁴ The alternative was to hire security or face the daring risk.

In Somalia fighting potential very largely determined political status, feud and war are instruments of power politics.¹²⁵ The warlords simply extended traditional clashes among nomads over grazing and water rights to a more destructive national level. There was vast suffering, which had no coping meaning for its victims, so the traditional restrictions were easily ignored and therefore the only means of survival for many was to relocate to other countries either as security or economic refugees.¹²⁶ Throughout the civil war, for example, there were few places to hide in one’s homeland. Militias prowled Mogadishu streets denying all the people any sort of peace or freedom. As for journalists, they had to negotiate through various obstacles where crossing required patience, humility, stubborn arrogance taking a cue from the Somalis and cash dollars.¹²⁷ Payments for everything from hired gunmen to hotel rooms were counted in increments of hundred dollar bills. This created a war economy. Because the risk was so great, many Somalis were pushed out of the country.

Staying in Somalia was like playing a constant game of Russian roulette. The longer you kept at it, the more likely you were to lose and in this case losing own life. In Mogadishu tension was steady but prone to surges. Every dusty alley seemed to harbor gunmen. As the civil war raged in Mogadishu, another battle was under way in Somalia’s interior, one that would take tens of thousands more lives by precipitating famine and displacement. Months after President Siyad Barre was forced to flee the capital to his home turf in southwest Somalia, he regrouped the fighters of his followers and counterattacked. His forces were countered by the militia of General Aidi. Their forces began moving, ravaging farms and food stocks for six months during three unsuccessful attempts to return to Mogadishu. The relatively peaceful community of the area, compared to the rest of the Somalis, became easy victims and battlefield in the power struggle between two ruthless personalities. Barre and Aidid laid waste to the area, turning Somalia’s traditional bread basket into a barren ruin of smoldering villages. More than anything else, this tactic was

¹²⁴ Oral interview, Mohamed Nur Ali, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 05/02/2013.

¹²⁵ Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy*, p. 242.

¹²⁶ Rick Atkinson, “The Raid That Went Awry: How an Elite U.S. Force Failed in Somalia,”

¹²⁷ Oral interview, Haji Abdi Issa, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 05/02/2013.

the harbinger of the tragedy to come. The tactic turned food into a strategic weapon and resulted in famine which even pushed many more people out.¹²⁸

Militia gunmen forced families at gunpoint to reveal hidden grain caches. Hundreds of their cattle, sheep, and goats were sometimes confiscated to feed the fighters¹²⁹. Relatives and sons were shot dead when they tried to intervene. The militia used crude methods in instilling fear in the people to reveal every food they had kept and break every resistance from their part.¹³⁰ Even after Siyad Barre fled Somalia, the suffering of the people of area continued unabated to traumatize more and more people.

It was warlords like Mohammed Aidid and his financier Osman Ato who were the de facto government in many areas in the central and south of Somalia. But like other leaders in Somalia, these two trod a narrow line between providing security and directing the bands of looters that contributed to their wealth, firepower, and political status that even pushed many further out of Somalia.¹³¹ Caught in this web, many Somalis had little choice but to relocate to neighboring countries. Somalis can be said of having accepted the alienation pain of the exile as a necessary evil. Even in hospitals run by MSF, visiting relatives brought grenades and knives so that patients could protect themselves. This is the period when traditionally non pastoralist communities such as farmers, fishermen, non Somali Asian minorities left the country leaving behind their possessions and bitter memories of a past that will not return and unpredictable future.

3.3 The Rise of Islamic Extremism

Somalia is a Muslim country which has always been brisk as a political unit in a persistent struggle against a perceived clan domination and marginalization. Different Somali clans have not been shy to coalesce in various religious-political groupings in search of recognition, politically, socially and economically.¹³² It also happens that the larger Somalia is mostly underdeveloped as compared to other countries in the region. It is not surprising that the Somali community has produced some of the most vocal politicians and

¹²⁸ Oral interview, Faduma Abdi Farah, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 05/02/2013..

¹²⁹ Mariam Arif Gasseem, *Hostages: The People Who Kidnapped Themselves*, Nairobi: Central Graphics Services, 1994, pp. 132-137.

¹³⁰ Quoted in Afrah, *Mogadishu: A Hell on Earth*, p. 46.

¹³¹ Oral interview, Yasin Dubbad Ali, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 10/02/2013.

¹³² Arye Oded, *Islam and Politics in Kenya*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, London, 2000.

activists who believe that foreigners were responsible for the conflict in the country by supplying arms for fighting and creation of puppet governments. This perceived political and socio-economic deprivation and their religious inclination only serves to create an environment for nurturing radicalization and pro-terrorism attitudes among many Somalis and Kenyan Muslims. In the past, other exogenous factors have been credited for this trend notably the gradual replacement of tolerant Sufism by dogmas of Salafism (strict Islamic fundamentalism) and Wahabism (Saudi version of Islam) occasioned by influence and financing from Gulf States.¹³³ Somalia is member of both the African Union and the Arab League but none of them has created a solid sense of belonging in the Somali peoples' psyche due to the known historical territorial dispute with the bordering African states and the alien intolerant religious support of some Arab states and organizations in Somalia. Many Somalis felt also betrayed by both the Western and Eastern powers during the Ogadenia War as USSR fully sided with Ethiopia while the Western countries took a neutral position. The outcome was a feeling of isolation, bitterness and hopelessness in the middle of civil war period without state institutions to secure law and order or mitigate the situation.

This fueled radicalization and the rise of Muslim-related conflicts and attacks in the country that resulted to mass migration of the Somalis to the neighboring countries. Muslim organizations were responsible for clashes at Mogadishu and other parts of Somalia in the early 90s.¹³⁴ Actors in such localized conflicts backed up by foreign influence gradually germinated metamorphosis to be involved in international crimes of terror that provoked frequent internal wars and American aerial attacks in the name of fighting terrorism.¹³⁵ There were notable measures to curb such factors particularly pinning down sources of funding and banning collaborating organizations' links with the outside world, but still the country remained a hotbed of Islamist radicalism and terrorism. Consequences of such radicalization were becoming more apparent after successful clan attacks, some of which were directed at aid workers working in the country. This posed a looming danger on many innocent people who chose to leave the country. Though hiding behind the curtains of foreign interferences in the Somali internal affairs, the Somalis have

¹³³ Bjørn Møller, 'Political Islam in Kenya', *Danish Institute for International Studies*, DIIS Working Paper no 2006.

¹³⁴ Oral interview, Maryam Ali Abdi, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 03/02/2013

¹³⁵ Bjørn Møller, 2006, "Religion and Conflict in Africa: with a Special Focus on East Africa", *Danish Institute for International Studies*, DIIS REPORT 2006, p. 6.

demonstrated strong links with this radicalism.¹³⁶ It has begun as a seemingly innocent religious zeal advocating Islamic moral values in a lawless country, supporting social services in a land without public institutions and giving handouts and assistance to the poor. The initial charitable façade, however, soon transformed itself into an inexorable machine of extremist indoctrination and brain washing of unemployed and uneducated youth. Somalia had a history and culture of tolerant Islam, but the new trend is dangerously worrisome for Somalia, the region and the world, especially after Al-Shabab declared allegiance to Al-Qaida.

3.4 Terrorism in Kenya and intervention in Somalia

Terrorism as a phenomenon is not new to Kenya. At the height of al-Qaeda, Kenya suffered some major terror attacks including bombings in 1998 at the US Embassy in Nairobi and in 2002 at the Israeli owned Kikambala hotel in Mombasa in addition to other minor but continuous attacks. It seemed to be caught up in the crossfire of global terrorism mainly due to its association with Western countries and presence of their installations in country. Religious reasons have also been cited to attract global terrorism in Kenya.¹³⁷ Kenya has suffered relentless grenade attacks with the worst hit towns being Nairobi, Mombasa and Garissa. Some of these attacks were seen grenades hurled at churches provoking condemnation from religious leaders across the board. These attacks were widely associated with radical Muslims in the bloating Somali community sympathetic of their brothers across the border.¹³⁸ One of the Islamic radical movements which were associated with these attacks is Al-Shabaab which was also widening their net in the country, taking advantage of impoverished youths luring them in to their heinous operation.

These terrorists thrived under a highly inefficient law enforcement unit and poor surveillance evident in the Kenyan internal security departments. While these factors remained constant, the threat of international terrorism remained more forthcoming than ever, a situation perhaps only pacified by the weakening of the al-Qaeda globally after the

¹³⁶ Emmanuel Kisiang'ani, "Kenya: Mombasa Republican Council - Liberators or Nascent Radical Fanatics?" *Institute for Security Studies*, Tshwane/Pretoria. Available at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201206270319.html> viewed on 30 June 2012.

¹³⁷ Kefa M. Otiso, 2009 "Kenya in the Crosshairs of Global Terrorism: Fighting Terrorism at the Periphery" *Kenya Studies Review*, Volume 1, Number 1, December 2009.

¹³⁸ "Kenyan Somali Islamist Radicalisation", Policy Briefing, *International Crisis Group*, Africa Briefing N°85, Nairobi/Brussels, 25 January 2012.

death of its leader, Osama Bin Laden. Moreover, the country was faced by another dynamics presented by a nascent domestic breed of terrorism.¹³⁹ These breed of terrorism targeted not only the locals but also the tourists from Western countries. It was clear that Kenya was not going to watch as the terrorists from Somalia threatened the tourism industry. It did not take too long before Kenya dispatched its military into Somalia to flush out elements of Al-Shabaab in what was dubbed “Operation Linda Nchi” (Operation Protect the Country).¹⁴⁰

Kenya’s Defense Forces launched a military offensive in Somalia. The operation, in collaboration with the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia, aimed at obliterating the intensifying threat of Al-Shabaab terrorism. Plans of Kenya’s direct military involvement in Somalia send fear to many Somalis who instead re-located to Kenya to avoid contact with the Kenyan Defense Forces¹⁴¹. To Kenya, however, Somalia presented a complex security matrix as early as their independence days having hard to deal with irredentist Somali policies claiming the Northern Frontier District in Kenya. It continued to bear the brunt of the unrest in Somalia by not only hosting over half a million refugees, but also dealing with such security issues proliferating through the porous borders including small arms, human trafficking, money laundering, piracy and now more than ever terrorism.¹⁴² Since the entry of the Kenyan defense forces (KDF) into Somalia, it was expected that many Somalis will re-locate to Kenya in order to evade in the battlefield area of the Kenyan military intervention. This has been attributed to the infiltration of Somalis through the porous Kenya-Somalia border.

Al-Shabab declared its allegiance to Al-Qaida which led the international community to define this organization as terrorist group endangering peace and stability locally, regionally and globally. The confrontation between Kenya and Al-Shabab stems beyond the presence of the KDF in the ranks of the African Union or international forces fighting

¹³⁹ The Kenyan Military Intervention in Somalia”, *International Crisis Group*, Africa Report N°184 – 15 February 2012.

¹⁴⁰ Mike Pflanz “Al-Shabaab warns Kenya of reprisals if Somalia deployment continues”, *The Telegraph*, 17 Oct 2011, Nairobi. Available at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/somalia/8831849/Al-Shabaab-warns-Kenya-of-reprisals-if-Somaliadeployment-continues.html> Viewed on 29 June 2012.

¹⁴¹ Kefa M. Otiso, “Kenya in the Crosshairs of Global Terrorism: Fighting Terrorism at the Periphery” *Kenya Studies Review*, Volume 1, Number 1, December 2009.

¹⁴² Samson S. Wasara, *Afr. j. polit. sci.* (2002), Conflict and State Security in the Horn of Africa: Militarization of Civilian Groups, Vol. 7 No. 2, p 46, <http://archive.lib.msu.edu/DMC/African%20Journals/pdfs/political%20science/volume7n2/ajps007002004.pdf> (accessed 28 June 2012).

for the restoration of peace and stability in Somalia. Al-Shabab is part of Al-Qaida and so committed to the strategic terror designs of the higher organs which aim at installing extremist Islamic centers in this area. This will require recruitment of disaffected uneducated and unemployed Somali and Kenyan youth and continuous terrorist acts in both countries, with consequent flow of refugees into Kenya. On the other hand, the terror waged by Al-Shabab in Somalia will reduce the possibilities for repatriation of the Somali refugees already in Kenya for many years. Neither Kenya nor Somalia will enjoy peace and security, or the flow of new refugees to Kenya will stop until this terrorist organization and its activities are eradicated.

3.5 Socio-economic Factors

Unemployment was another factor that pushed many Somalis out of their country. Many of the youth see that all employment opportunities in Somalia had been destroyed by the war leaving them with no other alternative rather than to relocate elsewhere. According to them, crossing to Kenya promised a good future because they would do business to survive, depending on the type of business.¹⁴³ Therefore, for some of these youth, a significant reason for coming to Kenya was because it enabled them to provide for themselves and their families. Crossing to Kenya also facilitated as transit point before proceeding to somewhere else.

Although poverty at individual levels was not a reason that pushed many Somalis out of their country, the case of the youth shows that the effects of poverty, such as idleness and low self-esteem, cannot be ignored in this discussion of push factors. The fact that many Somali youth are unemployed and rely on relatives for sustenance, either in Somalia, Kenya or in the diaspora, dampens their self-worth such that when an opportunity to fend for oneself arises, they are quick to take advantage of it. Many Somali youth were not able to pursue different avenues in life and they did not see a bright future ahead. As a result, they decided to come over to Kenya to try their luck rather than languishing in poverty with no chance to pursue something greater.¹⁴⁴

Some of the Somalis opted to relocate because of fear of victimization by al-Shabaab. They also worried about being seen as weak by family and society at large and thus had to

¹⁴³ Oral interview, Mursal Nur Farah, Eastleigh, Nairobi 02/09/2013.

¹⁴⁴ Oral interview, Mohamed Abdi Issa, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 10/02/2013.

move out and seek survival elsewhere. This was especially the case for those youth who lived in al-Shabaab controlled areas. If an able-bodied youth did not join, one could be suspected of supporting the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). Since some of them would want to remain neutral, they had to move out of Somalia. As one youth put it, “You have to make a choice. You are either going to move out and become a refugee or join the government side or al-shabaab”.¹⁴⁵

AMISOM bombardment was also responsible to the re-location of some Somalis to Kenya. They explained that the bombing of Somali towns in the fire exchange between Shabab and Ugandan and Burundian UN peacekeeping force, AMISOM, pushed many people out of Somalia. The destruction of property and life in this confrontation was a great cause of distress. They stated that they moved out of Somalia to seek refuge as well as to protect themselves and their families.¹⁴⁶ Some Somalis moved out of their homes for security. Their urge for security was due to harassment, particularly of female relatives at checkpoints.

Those who listed security described TFG soldiers and al-shabaab fighters as “unislamic” who “would touch their women inappropriately at the checkpoints. One youthful Somali noted that; “Imagine when you see this being done to your mother or your sister - it is humiliating and infuriating.”¹⁴⁷ The coping mechanism for similar situations in Somalia is very precarious. Due to lack of any form of protection or security, employment or other means of survival or even place of temporary displacement within Somalia, crossing to Kenya is a choice of last resort. A daring alternative taken by some youth is wandering from Somalia to Ethiopia to Sudan to Sahara desert to Libya or Tunis to the Mediterranean Sea to Greece or Italy! Many of those who tried that route are buried under the sands of the Sahara Desert or perished when their crowded tiny boats capsized under the tides of the Mediterranean Sea. Faced with similar alternatives, crossing to Kenya is the easier and closer option.

¹⁴⁵ Oral interview, Maryam Ali Abdi, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 03/02/2013.

¹⁴⁶ Oral interview, Mursal Nur Farah, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 02/09/2013.

¹⁴⁷ Oral interview, Said Adan Abo, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 05/02/2013.

3.6 Conclusion

After the failure of the Somali state that nearly was perceived as similarly chaotic as the civil war that followed it, Somalis were left with no option but for many of them to leave the country. This chapter has indicated that President Mohammed Siyad Barre from the Southern Darod sub-clan was enthusiastically welcomed and established a strictly centralized political order. He gave people new hope by initially lifting up the economy up to a certain level. He even became the embodiment of his people's national feelings, a phenomenon that reached its peak when he tried to fulfill Somalia's dream of unification when he attempted to capture the Ogadenia from Ethiopia in 1977.

Siyad Barre failed, and Somalia's defeat was a considerable humiliation that undermined Barre's political position. He attempted to preserve his power by finding scapegoats. In particular, he put the blame upon the Northerners, first the Majerteen and later the Isaaq and then the Hawiya of the central regions of Somalia. The dictator unleashed the military against his opponents with devastating results. Members of opposing clans were potential suspects everywhere, in the South they lost their jobs, they were detained, some executed, and subsequently their main cities fell prey to bloody destruction. Hargeisa, capital of the North, was bombed to wipe out the insurgents in 1988. The only alternative was for many to flee the country when they felt that they were no longer safe. The chapter has documented how the conflict was a push factor of many Somalis out of their country with many of them being pulled to Ethiopia and Kenya as documented in the chapter that follows.

CHAPTER FOUR

PULL FACTORS OF SOMALIS TO “HOME” NEAR HOMETO KENYA

4.1 Introduction

Since 1991 a steady stream of Somali migrants have been leaving their home country and moving to various countries. However, interestingly, part of them move from various countries to Kenya where they live in urban areas. Drawing from in-depth research this chapter addresses several questions: Why do Somalis move to various countries and then back to Kenya? What are the magnetic dimensions of Somali migration to Kenya? Why do Somalis make decisions of having their children to school in Kenya even when some of the have already acquired European or western countries citizenship? What role does social capital play in facilitating migration to Kenyan urban areas and Nairobi particularly? The findings in this chapter illustrate the ways in which the Somalis are pulled and motivated to live in Kenya. The chapter shows how the Somali migration decisions are motivated by changing agentic orientations and actualized by social capital. In the analysis, the researcher explains the nuances and complexities of pull factors of Somalis' migration decisions and illustrates the ways in which magnetic dimensions of Somali migration decisions interpenetrate with their social structure in Kenya.

Pull factors, are the positive characteristics and benefits that pull the vulnerable individuals to move to a certain country or location. These include the people's ideology such as emphasis on changing one's condition through moving to a perceived better environment, strong bonds of brotherhood and sense of belonging, reputation building, prospect of fame or glory, and other socialization benefits. The enquired participants unanimously stated that it was a confluence of factors that led them to move to Kenya, as the Kenyan destination presented a package deal of advancing ones life and interests.

4.2 Somali Pull factors to Nairobi

Nairobi is now home to a large number of Somalis, and at least another large population of Somalis lives in many other Kenyan urban areas. Although their migratory paths are as varied and interconnected as the people that have traversed them, most Somalis share a

common past of having lived in other countries before relocating to Kenyan urban areas.¹⁴⁸ Some of these Somalis even acquired citizenships in European countries but still they opted to relocate to Nairobi or remain in Europe but have their children growing up and schooling in Kenya before joining them in Europe. A considerable percentage of Somali refugees were resettled in many European countries through refugee resettlement programs mostly in Sweden, Britain and USA however, many Somalis chose to maintain Nairobi as their home.

In fact, most of them would remit funds to their family members to run business in Nairobi's Eastleigh and many other urban areas in Kenya. Many ask, but why Kenya and why Nairobi? At first glance, it is perplexing. Nairobi has many challenges with most social services missing, with Christian majority, there are few Muslims, wages tend to fall below national averages, and the economy is struggling. But closer observation reveals many reasons for this Somali consideration of Nairobi as home than many other cities around the world. This section addresses several questions: Why do Somalis move to Kenya? What are the magnetic dimensions of their migration? How do the magnetic dimensions of migration decision interpenetrate with social structure of Nairobi? What role does social capital play in facilitating Somali migration to Nairobi?

Since the outbreak of the civil war in Somali the Somali in 1991 immigration of Somalis to Kenya has steadily increased. Between 1991 and 2010, refugees from Somalia constituted the largest number of arrivals in Kenyan urban areas. In fact, between 1991 and 2010, the UNHCR admitted close to a million refugees, of which the largest percentage was Somalis. The rise of Somali immigration has its roots in the Somali civil war, which began in 1991.¹⁴⁹ Given the continued violence and turmoil in Somalia and the tens of thousands of Somalis still residing in refugee camps in Kenya, Somali immigration to the Kenyan urban areas is expected to continue growing. While many will arrive as refugees, increasing numbers of Somalis will arrive via family reunification programs, sponsored by relatives who have become permanent residents or Kenyan citizens. Somali refugees have settled in almost every town in Kenya.

¹⁴⁸ Lewis, I.M. *Pastoral Democracy: a Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa*, published for the International African Institute, London: Oxford University Press, 1961, pp. 15–16.

¹⁴⁹ Jane Perlez, "Somalia Fighting Keeps Aid from a Suffering City," *The New York Times*, 11 December 1991.

Somali settlement in Kenya is characterized by both concentration and dispersion. The majority of Somalis are concentrated in large metropolitan areas around the world. However, Somalis seldom remain where they are resettled. They engage in secondary and tertiary migration. The Somalis relocate in search of various types of opportunities such as affordable housing, employment, education and health care. In terms of education, the Somalis prefer their children to study in Kenya. One of the arguments fronted for such behavior is that the Somalis have a tendency to settle in communities with other Somalis. In Nairobi, they prefer Eastleigh metropolitan areas because it has established Somali communities, but others move to small metropolitan or rural areas whose populations are racially heterogeneous and where the Somali are often highly visible.

Previous researches including Zakir Hussein indicated that the most important determinants of Somali migration to any part of the world include the existence of an established ethnic community,¹⁵⁰ socioeconomic factors,¹⁵¹ educational opportunities,¹⁵² the possession of human capital,¹⁵³ and access to social capital.¹⁵⁴ There is ample evidence that new immigrants and refugees gravitate to geographic areas where there is an existing concentration of compatriots¹⁵⁵ and that the majority of secondary migrants move to large metropolitan areas with concentrations of foreign born residents.¹⁵⁶ Research also indicates that the key socioeconomic factors affecting secondary migration include social class status, employment opportunities, local economic conditions, and availability of resources. In his work with Laotian refugees, Zakir Hussain determined that refugees with the most financial resources were likely to relocate.

¹⁵⁰ Hossain, Zakir, "Factors Affecting Secondary Migration: A Case Study of Laotian-Americans in a Midwestern City," in *American Sociological Association: American Sociological Association*, 1998.

¹⁵¹ Shandy, Dianna J. *Nuer-American Passages: Globalizing Sudanese Migration*, Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2007.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ Long, Larry, "Changing Residence: Comparative Perspectives on Its Relationship to Age, Sex, and Marital Status," *Population Studies* 46, 1992, pp. 141-158, see also Gurak and Kritz, "The Interstate Migration of U.S. Immigrants: Individual and Contextual Determinants", pp. 1017-1039.

¹⁵⁴ Gurak and Kritz, "The Interstate Migration of U.S. Immigrants: Individual and Contextual Determinants", pp. 1017-1039, see also Simich, Laura, "Negotiating Boundaries of Refugee Resettlement: A Study of Settlement Patterns and Social Support," *The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology/ La Revue Canadienne de Sociologie et d'Anthropologie*, Vol. 40, 2003, pp. 575-591.

¹⁵⁵ Zimmerman, Wendy and Michael Fix, "Immigrant Policy in the States: A Wavering Welcome," *In Immigration and Ethnicity: The Integration of America's Newest Arrivals*. Ed. Barry Edmonston and Jefferey S. Passel, Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press, 1994, pp. 287-316.

¹⁵⁶ Zavodny, "Determinants of Recent Immigrants' Locational Choices", pp. 1014-1030.

In fact, reasonable amount of financial resources are needed sustain the cost of travel, new settlement and unforeseen expenditure in new destinations.

4.3 Institutional Facilities

Migration, forced or voluntary, is an integral part of human history. People migrated since time immemorial for a variety of reasons. Population movements in the contemporary world, of which migration constitutes the main element, generally reflect the prevailing socioeconomic conditions not only in a given society, but also in the world at large. The increasing rates at which out migration from Somalia to Kenya is occurring reflect, among other things, the crisis of the post-colonial Somali state. At certain points of time in the very recent history of Kenya migration was encouraged or at least not discouraged from certain countries. The conditions brought about by the end of colonialism necessitated bringing some expatriate workers whose labour was needed in the Africanization of the economy after the Europeans left.¹⁵⁷ Kenya encouraged foreign labor migration to assist build her economic institutions. Today, some of these migrants settled in Kenya permanently. However, due to availability of large cheap, skilled and educated labor, the need for migrant labor was never crucial.

In fact, after a very short period of independence, Kenya managed to educate her population who acquired skills in almost all needed fields and therefore stopped further migrations of labor unless in the fields which are lacking highly qualified personnel. Since then most of migrants are either asylum seekers or refugees. In other words, gaining access to Kenya is possible for migrants only through asylum and refugee tickets. The shift from inviting economic migrants to accepting asylum seekers and refugees reflects the saturation of Kenyan economy, and also the generalized state of instability in the sending countries. This reality underlines the challenge most diaspora population face in today's world. This can well be understood from the angle of pushing countries of origin and saturated host destinations. In between these two challenging conditions, too many trajectories unfold that certain categories of people procure home nowhere.

¹⁵⁷ Robert Gersony, "Why Somalis Flee," August 1989, as quoted in Africa Watch, *Somalia: A Government at War with Its Own People: Testimonies About the Killing and the Conflict in the North*, New York: Human Rights Watch, January 1990, pp. 217–218.

Despite the fact that Kenya tightened her immigration and refugee laws, there are still some institutional pull factors that are responsible for Somali migrants' decisions to move into the country. These factors include, among others, liberal asylum policies, imperial past and historical links and closeness to Somalia. Part of the explanation for large flows of Somalis to Kenya could certainly be related to the nature of the Kenyan liberal asylum policies particularly before passing of the encampment policy for the management of refugees. In the encampment policy refugees are supposed to be enclosed in restricted camps where their freedom of movement is reduced. They wholly depend on food rations and opportunities for self-reliance. The policy requires all refugees in either of the two official camps namely Kakuma camp in the northern region, near the Kenya-Sudan border, and Daadab Camp in the Eastern region, near the Kenya-Somalia border.¹⁵⁸

Looking at the refugee reports available with UNHCR Kenyan Wing, one finds out that there is almost no rejection rates of refugees who move to Kenya unless they have a criminal record publicly known to authorities.¹⁵⁹ Kenya's humanitarian outlook could also be seen as one of the factors pulling Somali migrants to the country. Kenya is on the top of countries in the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa regions that contribute to humanitarian aid to people dislocated by any sort of danger. In the same lines, the Kenyan welfare system is ranked among the top in the region, and this is a sufficient pull factor not only for Somalis but also for other refugee migrants generally.

In migration generally, migrants seek destinations with the greatest potential benefit in terms, for instance, of economic opportunities and or self-advancement. For this to be effective, migrants need comparative information about a possible destination.¹⁶⁰ The Somalis all over the world have more information about Kenyan destination and that is why they would need further strong reasons to make the choice. One significant reason is the presence of family members. This is particularly the case with Somalis. For the Somalis, Kenya can hardly be a first asylum country. Furthermore, historically Kenya and Somalia have a lot of meaningful connections. The crisis of the state in Somalia during the

¹⁵⁸ Omolo, Jacob (2010) *The dynamics and trends of employment in Kenya*, IEA research paper series no 1/2010.

¹⁵⁹ Horst, C. "Buufis amongst Somalis in Dadaab: the transnational and historical logic behind resettlement dreams," *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 19(2), 2006, pp 144-157.

¹⁶⁰ Farah, Nuruddin, *Yesterday, tomorrow: voices from the Somali diaspora*, London and New York: Cassell, 2000, pp. 27-53.

1990 just acted as a trigger factor that brought Somalis in significant numbers, compared to those moving to other countries as refugees and asylum populations.¹⁶¹

Like many African countries, Kenya has imperial past experiences, and therefore it has historical and cultural connections with its Somali immigrants. But then while comparative policy issues, geographical proximity, and cultural and historical factors can all be seen to have some importance, they fall short to explain anomalies of flows. This presents a challenge to general migration propositions, and requires giving attention to specific policies and the context within which such policies are put into place.¹⁶² The established Kenyan welfare system is certainly one institutional factor that affects the Somali people's decision about making the country a desired destination. With its liberal outlook, the welfare in Kenya undoubtedly provides a decent living standard for the Somali migrants, however, the position of Somalis within the Kenyan welfare system is intriguing because the Somalis somehow procured a lot of attention.¹⁶³ Such attention is nonetheless, mostly negative and not always true to the fact. In the media and popular knowledge outlets, the Somalis are portrayed as heavily dependent on the welfare system and are prone to resist qualification programs and citizenship naturalization enhancement. These negative portrayals are not all baseless, of course. They are supported by comparative statistical evidence that elicit recurrent and consistent pattern of bad performance of Somalis compared to non Somali refugees living in Kenya.¹⁶⁴ In effect, the Somalis are caught in a special relationship with the Kenyan society, a relationship in which suspicion and mistrust feature prominently.¹⁶⁵

Although institutional and policy frameworks can be considered as important pull factors for the Somalis to Kenya, their importance is supplemented by other factors related to individual migrants, their life courses, and to transnational connections that are mostly predicated on kinship and family ties. In recent years, attention has been directed towards

¹⁶¹ Day, Kate and Paul White, "Choice or circumstance: The UK as the location of asylum applications by Bosnian and Somali refugees," *Geo-Journal*, 55, 2002, pp. 15-26.

¹⁶² Djuve, Anne B. and Kåre Hagen, 1995: *Skaff meg en jobb: livekår blant flyktninger i Oslo*, Oslo: Fafo, 1995, p. 45.

¹⁶³ Assal, Munzoul A. M., "Somalis and Sudanese in Norway and the question of religious authenticity," in Markussen, Irene and Richard Natvig (eds.), *Islam i Norge*, Uppsala: Swedish Science Press, 2005, pp. 30-65.

¹⁶⁴ Hein, Jeremy, "Refugees, immigrants and the state," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 19, 1993, pp. 43-59.

¹⁶⁵ Assal, Munzoul A. M., "Somalis and Sudanese in Norway and the question of religious authenticity," p. 106.

individual level explanation of asylum destinations.¹⁶⁶ This represents a shift from the conventional way of focusing almost exclusively on the push side of the continuum, and also demonstrates the usefulness of adopting a social networks approach. This trend could be seen as falling within conventional migration approaches since it focuses on processes of decision making within Somali migrants. This study's view is that understanding asylum-seeker destinations might be that the very act of fleeing persecution largely eliminates the refugee's level of individual agency, such that choices are not a valid concept.¹⁶⁷ Although in a sense true, this does not take into consideration the multiplicity of asylum seekers' experiences and belittles their agency. And it is even weaker in the case of Somalis. This argument will be elaborated in the following section.

4.4 Individual and kinship

One individual pull factor that affects the decision of Somalis to get to Kenya is kinship. But before looking at kinship and family connections as important pull factors, it is important to give some space to some conceptual issues related to the difficulty in making clear cut categories of different migrants. Whereas the conventional wisdom in migration studies looks at refugees and immigrants as having different motives for leaving a homeland, immigrants for economic reasons and refugees for political ones, the contemporary studies show that a mix of factors ranging from political violence, economic crisis and family reunification often work together in inextricable manner to produce both immigrants and refugees.¹⁶⁸

According to Hein, political conditions can cause migration when they result in deteriorating economic conditions. The distinction between economic and political reasons as the conceptual basis for distinguishing refugees from immigrants or vice versa cannot be sustained, or considered analytically useful. Therefore, a nominalist approach is more promising in explaining the Somali migration to Kenya because the dichotomy is untenable, and political conditions can lead to economic problems, which in turn led to

¹⁶⁶ Koser, K. "Social networks and the asylum cycle: the case of Iranians in the Netherlands," *International Migration Review*, 31, 1997, pp. 591-611.

¹⁶⁷ Day, Kate and Paul White, "Choice or circumstance: The UK as the location of asylum applications by Bosnian and Somali refugees," *Geo-Journal*, 55, 2002, pp. 15-26.

¹⁶⁸ Fuglerud, Øivind, 1999: *Life on the outside: the Tamil diaspora and long-distance nationalism*. London: Pluto Press, 1999, pp. 34-36.

migration of the Somalis into Kenya.¹⁶⁹ In the case of Somalia and many other African countries such as Rwanda, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia and recently Sierra Leone, refugee crisis is the consequence of the political dynamics of state formation and transformation, and it generally reflects the crisis of the modern African state where political, economic, and ethnic problems and other trajectories often intersect in protractible ways and reinforce each other, leading finally to displacement of people who eventually end up either as internally displaced or refugees crossing the border to other countries.¹⁷⁰

Apart from the difficulty involved in legal terminologies, the habit of looking at refugees and asylum seekers as vulnerable victims distorts their rich experiences and blurs their agency. This is particularly the case with asylum applicants. This is for a number of reasons. Firstly, asylum applications undergo many stages. Too many asylum seekers lodge their applications long after their first encounter with forcible circumstances. In other words, their applications are normally not lodged when their agency is at its weakest. In the research on Somalis, it is found that many Somalis go through different countries before they finally decide to settle in Kenya.¹⁷¹ This way, one can argue that asylum seekers carefully calculate their decisions, often with the help of relatives.

Secondly, the period in transit countries could be used to regain ones strength and also seek information about possible long distance destinations. The consideration of refugees' agency begs for differentiating between different asylum seekers' situations or life courses. In this regard, Kunz provided a couple of scenarios and differentiated between anticipatory and acute refugees. Anticipatory refugees are the ones who leave before a problem occurs. This means that this category does some planning before leaving. The second category, acute refugees, comprises the ones who get involved in events and flee with little or no planning.¹⁷² A third category is added by Day and White (2002) under the name blocked returnees, whose members are outside their country of origin, but who

¹⁶⁹ Hein, Jeremy, 1993: "Refugees, immigrants and the state." *Annual Review of Sociology*, 19, 1993, pp. 43-59.

¹⁷⁰ Horst, C., "Buufis amongst Somalis in Dadaab: the transnational and historical logis behind resettlement dreams," *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 19(2), 2006, pp. 144-157.

¹⁷¹ Oral interview, Mohamed Abdi Issa, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 05/02/2013.

¹⁷² Kunz, E., "The refugee in flight: kinetic models and forms of displacement," *International Migration Review*, 7, 1973, pp. 125-146.

cannot return.¹⁷³ The Somali community in Kenya exhibits all the three categories. These different scenarios imply differential access to resources and information, and knowledge about destination countries. Among these categories, acute refugees are the ones who are characterized by loss of agency and decision making ability and therefore become victims to institutional forces of different types. But even within this category, the convoluted nature of refugee journeys is likely to result in allowing individuals to exercise some agency over the modicum of chances available to them.¹⁷⁴

Somali refugee's movement represents a very complex process of fleeing and travelling. In a chronological sense, the process of fleeing can be seen in terms of stages, influences, and consequences. The decision to flee is affected by conditions of threat or insecurity and economic hardship, and often people end up leaving Somalia. To leave Somalia, people need resources and here there are varieties of sources that people depend on. One is to use one's own resources. This is the case with anticipatory asylum seekers who often carefully plan their movement.¹⁷⁵ Alternatively, people may depend on their expatriate relatives or friends to finance their travel. The support people get from relatives or friends is important during the period spent in first asylum countries. Since the prospects for resettlement in first asylum countries are bleak, refugees and asylum seekers normally gather information about their preferred destinations.¹⁷⁶ In choosing a specific country, people rely on the information they get from those who are already there and from a variety of other sources too. In addition to having relatives or friends, the prospects for further education and qualification also affect the choice of specific country over another.¹⁷⁷ For those who leave home before finishing their education, choosing a country where they could pursue further education is likely to be one thing they think about. To support such this point, Mohammed Noor had this to say:

¹⁷³ Day, Kate and Paul White, "Choice or circumstance: The UK as the location of asylum applications by Bosnian and Somali refugees," *Geo-Journal*, 55, 2002, pp. 15-26.

¹⁷⁴ Assal, Munzoul A. M., *Sticky labels or rich ambiguities: Diaspora and challenges of homemaking for Somalis and Sudanese in Norway*, Bergen: BRIC/University of Bergen, 2004, p. 56.

¹⁷⁵ Griffiths, David J., "Fragmentation and consolidation: contrasting cases of Somali and Kurdish refugees in London", *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 13(3), 2000, pp. 281-302.

¹⁷⁶ Hein, Jeremy, "Refugees, immigrants and the state," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 19, 1993, pp. 43-59.

¹⁷⁷ Richmond, Anthony H., "Globalisation: implications for immigrants and refugees." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 25(5), 2002, pp. 707-727.

“The main reason for me to move to Kenya from the UK is because of my children. I am a graduate degree holder in economics and as I, as an educated person, assessed that Kenya was relatively better in raising children because Somalis have a sense of community and coming together as one people. Kenya is “home” near home for us. This has various advantages in that there are Mosques and Madrassas for me and my children to go to. I have been through the education system in the United Kingdom and I have seen so many flaws such as the British government has a mandatory policy of each child having to go to school. This makes the bad children to come to school and they influence the good children to do bad things. However in Kenya it is different because the bad children tend to drop out of school and this acts like a filter for the education system here. My case was different when I was at the University because I grew up in my Somali Community with strong beliefs in religion and culture and could not be easily influenced. I was scared for my children to be brainwashed into the western culture and especially my two young girls, Rabab and Nasra because if they do not know their culture they will develop anti-Islamic behaviour such as wearing short trousers which is an abomination in Islam and a curse to the parents. Somalia is a country that is emerging from civil war and if it will be safe and I might move my children there, who knows what the future holds for me. In the meantime Kenya is the best transitional option”.

Another key push factor was lack of educational facilities in Somalia. The education system has collapsed with destruction of all public institutions. Strict religious Sharia based education system is now the trend in Somalia and, for this reason, some affording parents send their children to attend schools and universities in the neighboring countries. Kenya is reputed to be the best of these educational venues and so attract some migrants of that nature.

The rate of Somali migrants’ children who dropped outs from school or took the road of bad behavior of drugs and alcohol and other asocial habits in Europe or other western countries is very alarming. In big cities like Minneapolis and London it is estimated that several thousands of young Somali boys and girls are in prison for committing different sorts of criminal offences.

Many of these children are sent back by their parents to Mogadishu, Somaliland and Puntland in correction centres led by unprofessional teachers without proper competency in educational or psychological skills. One of the parents of these children contacted by the author of this research stated that he regrets the day he migrated to London with immature young children and that for now his dream was not to have a child with degrees but a healthy one free from alcohol and drugs. Despite their big number in Kenya, not one single

schoolboy or girl from the Somali migrants in Kenya has been reported in those infamous rectification houses in Somalia. This validates the rationale why an increasing number of Somalis in developed countries send back to Kenya their families for the education of their children.

The civil war destroyed also the public health and sanitary facilities in Somalia and Kenya, as a neighboring country with good health facilities, is the ideal venue to provide different health treatments for many Somalis who come to Kenya disguised as refugees or with visa. The better endowed ones are attended at Nairobi Hospital or Agha Khan Hospitals, while the vast majority seeks their way, in one way or the other, to the more modest health facilities serving the Kenyan masses around the country. In this way, health seekers contribute in a lesser extent to temporary migration of Somalis in Kenya.

Haji Abdi is a seventy years old Somali migrant Minneapolis – USA. He comes to Nairobi during the yearly Ramadan period, to avoid the about 17 hours long local fasting day and enjoy the bearable and tolerable twelve hours long Kenyan fasting days. He confirmed in the interview that many others of his age group do the same every year.

Reasons for the diaspora Somalis to come to Kenya are so diverse that sometimes one comes across very unusual explanations. A man in his forties, who asked that his name be kept in anonymity in this report, has this to say: “Europeans like to portray themselves as guardians of women’s rights. They don’t lose any occasion without subtly repeating that Moslems abuse women. This influenced my wife and our two daughters. Nobody can love and our mothers, sisters and wives more than us, but we do that in our way, according to our culture and traditional values”. This man concluded bitterly, that divorce became inevitable and he relocated from Sweden to Kenya to rebuild his new life. While in Somalia, men were the bread winners and patriarchal custodians of the family, many of them in western countries live on public welfare assistance and with gender equality some men resent the lost social status and this can disrupt the harmony and unity of the family.

Kenya is also a social contact center for young Somalis in the diaspora to meet relatives, for short tourism stays and for marriage engagements due to security concerns to avoid Somalia, as Kenya is easily reachable and marriage in Africa is more preferred than the culturally westernized one. The above movements of Somalis for diverse reasons, despite the limited scale of every single group, their total and continuity can constitute a sizable number of the Somali pull factor to Kenya.

4.5 Somali Kinship system connections.

Before ending up in Kenya, many Somalis engage in journeys that take them to more than one country. Many do not just settle in Kenya directly from Somalia, but first go to European or American countries from where they relocate again to Kenya. First asylum countries are preliminary stations, where asylum seekers prepare themselves for another journey that would take them to a final resettlement country. Some Somalis who ended up in Kenya as asylum seekers were actually expatriates in other countries such as those of the Arabian Gulf. When the civil war started in Somalia, and instead of returning to a burning home they ended up uniting with other family members and relatives in Kenya. Others experienced the horrors of the civil war and the atrocities committed by rival warlords before fleeing to Kenya and Ethiopia. These stories show how complex the reasons behind migration are. The nature of the journeys Somalis engage in before finally arriving and settling in Kenya, begs for exploring the role played by networks of different sorts, that help people tame difficulties and face challenges involved in the process of migration. People fall on various forms of network for material and emotional support during both movement and settlement.

The decision to move, and to which destination, is usually affected by the presence of relatives or friends in the specific destination, and this is the case with asylum seekers.¹⁷⁸ Refugees sometimes do not have much choice, for the UNHCR decides in which countries they will be resettled. But in case there is a choice, refugees normally choose a country in which they have relatives or people they know. It is therefore important to emphasize the fact that there are other factors than immediate threats or general lack of security, which are involved in the process of migration of refugees and asylum seekers.¹⁷⁹ Kinship is one important factor here. Hussein Abdi, a Somali migrant to Kenya stated that kinship played a significant role in networks for the Somalis. The kinship factor in the case of the Somalis becomes intelligible if we look at it through the institution of the clan. Clans are groups of people who consider themselves as descendants of a common ancestor. The idea of kinship as a pull factor was strongly supported by Hameed in the quote below which states that:

¹⁷⁸ Assal, Munzoul A. M., *Sticky labels or rich ambiguities; Diaspora and challenges of homemaking for Somalis and Sudanese in Norway*, Bergen: BRIC/University of Bergen, 2004, pp. 30-57.

¹⁷⁹ Assal, Munzoul A. M., "Somalis and Sudanese in Norway and the question of religious authenticity," in Markussen, Irene and Richard Natvig (eds.), *Islam i Norge*, Uppsala: Swedish Science Press, 2005, p. 68.

“I left to Yemen from Somalia in 1993. I was registered with the UNHCR. Yemen is not in my mind a place to settle in, and I was hoping to be sent by the UNHCR to another country. I spent one year and a half in Aden and that was a very difficult time for me. There was a lot of questioning as to why I left Somalia. The Yemenis also treated us badly, and I felt I was alien and unwelcome. The Yemenis use the word Abid (slave) frequently when addressing an African, as though it is written in our faces. I had many times engaged in fights with them. The strange thing is that they do not consider it hurting to call somebody Abid. After one year and a half of patience I lost hope and decided to leave Yemen. A relative of mine who is living in Saudi Arabia sent me some money with which I travelled to Ethiopia. Six months later, I travelled to Moscow and then to Helsinki. I did not apply for asylum in Finland because I did not have relatives or close friends there. It was not easy to come to Norway from Finland, and I had to go through Sweden. On arrival to Norway I applied for asylum and was taken to a camp in the north. There were many Somalis in that camp, some of them I knew personally and others were friends of people I knew. The long process of my asylum was not a problem because I already spent more than one year waiting in Yemen. But I was lucky to have documents that support my case. I got a positive answer to my asylum application after seven months. If it were not to relatives and friends, I think I would have still been in Yemen or Ethiopia. Although in Norway I was not openly discriminated at, nevertheless a feeling of diverseness from the majority of the community was always present in my mind. Soon I mastered the language and became a naturalized citizen, but decided to have my children grow up in Kenya. This would assist them have African moral values which are partly missing in European countries”.¹⁸⁰

Claims of belonging to a certain clan can also be claims about kinship. At times of hardship and suffering people do not have the leisure to maneuver about when they take the decision to flee. Citing an example from the Vietnamese boat people where people take whatever chance they happen to have and face all the risks involved.¹⁸¹ But in that situation too people depend on resources, contacts and on skills, in order to get access to a boat. And this situation shows the same. The ubiquity of the phenomenon of movement makes it futile to insist on looking at refugees as victims only. Kinship ties and the existence of friends in certain countries affect the decision of an asylum seeker or refugee in as much the same way as any other factor does. This means that kinship and other social networks constitute strong pull factors for Somalis to choose Kenya as their home.

¹⁸⁰ Heemed, a Somali informant, quoted in above Munzoul (179), Do they have a choice? Factors pulling Somalis to Norway: University of Khartoum, Sudan.

¹⁸¹ Knudsen, John Chr., Vietnamese Survivors: Processes involved in Refugee Coping and Adaptation, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bergen, 1988.

The act of migration is rarely undertaken as a completely independent event, rather it is often a decision made easier by being accompanied, or received, by friends or relatives among whom first or second hand knowledge of the area of destination is almost a certainty.

On arrival in some of the European countries, some Somalis found it difficult to get working permits and employment. Somalis came to Kenya because they already had members of their family in the country. Although Somali families may look shattered, the formation of Somali kinship networks of transnational character is in the making. It is not a matter of overemphasizing the importance of the different forms of kinship networks people have. Neither it is to deny the fact that there are many Somalis who did not have any choice when they come to Kenya.¹⁸²

Somalis can hardly be in the first asylum country. Its geographical location makes it inaccessible as first asylum country, and most refugees have to pass through Kenya before they are relocated to other countries. It is difficult to get information about the nitty-gritty of coming to Norway, and the greater part of the stories told about such intrigues are sort of anecdotes and hearsay. Some Somalis come to Kenya after their asylum applications in European countries are rejected. In Kenya, for example, while some Somali refugees keep moving between Kenya and Europe, and yet some others leave to the US and Canada on their own, or join other family members who are already there. This calls for the need to acknowledge the role of transnational and kinship networks as a vital source of information that facilitates the movements of migrants, forced and otherwise. Whether refugees who are involved in these networks are fraudulent or not is another question. But in the opinion of the researcher, it is essential to separate between reasons and means of movement because fleeing through the assistance of others does not preclude the possibility that the movement was forced. It is difficult to construct a clear distinction or differentiate between voluntary and involuntary movements; between economic hardships and political instability, and between legal and illegal movements. In all this, however, kinship ties remain to be one very important pull factor for Somalis to choose Kenya.

¹⁸² Oral interview, Ibrahim Ali Jumale, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 10/02/2013.

4.6 Employment possibilities

The Somalis' relocation into Kenya can also be understood from the perspective of employment opportunity. According to Zimmerman and Fix, one of the most important reasons for relocation of people to new places is employment.¹⁸³

Research indicates that human capital characteristics such as age, language proficiency, education level, employment, and skill set influenced the Somali immigrants' propensity to relocate to Kenya. The Somalis who had a higher level of education were the most likely to migrate to Kenya in search for employment opportunities¹⁸⁴. This is also due to the presence of many NGOs and diplomatic missions working with Somalia but based in Kenya for security reasons and availability of facilities. Some Somali immigrants crossed the international border into Kenya to advance their human capital through educational opportunities available in Kenya but not available in Somalia because of the instability that characterized the country.¹⁸⁵

4.7 Welfare availability

Buckley points to a relationship between migration of a people and welfare availability particularly among refugees. This also applies to all immigrants particularly those who are forcefully relocated from their home country.¹⁸⁶ Welfare possibilities that are a characteristic of Kenyans also influenced refugees' migration decisions, although to a lesser extent than jobs and family ties.¹⁸⁷ Some Somali refugees did move into Kenya to obtain access to resources that will help them improve the situation for their families.

Since the outbreak of the civil war in Somalia, many more Somalis have been moving into Kenyan urban areas than those who were leaving. For most Somalis in Nairobi, economic incentives cannot be the primary factor for their migration into Kenya. The reason being, some Somalis have citizenships of European countries which have better economy than

¹⁸³ Zimmerman, Wendy and Michael Fix, "Immigrant Policy in the States: A Wavering Welcome," *In Immigration and Ethnicity: The Integration of America's Newest Arrivals*. Ed. Barry Edmonston and Jeffrey S. Passel, Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press, 1994, pp. 287-316.

¹⁸⁴ Bartel, Ann P. and Marianne J. Koch, "Internal Migration of U.S. Immigrants," *In Immigration, Trade, and the Labour Market*, edited by J. M. Abowd and R. B. Freeman, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991, pp. 121-134.

¹⁸⁵ Shandy, Dianna J. *Nuer-American Passages: Globalizing Sudanese Migration*, Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2007.

¹⁸⁶ Buckley, Francis H, "The Political Economy of Immigration Policies," *International Review of Law and Economics*, 16, 1996, pp. 81 -99.

¹⁸⁷ Zimmerman and Fix, "Immigrant Policy in the States: A Wavering Welcome", pp. 287-316.

Kenya. Their preference of Kenya more than other countries is informed by factors more than economic. Equally, most Somalis who cross into Kenya have low education levels and Kenya has extremely limited job opportunities indicating that their pull factors into Kenya are not necessarily economic. What confounded most refugee resettlement and migration relocation activity was the absence of any resettlement activity or industry that might have influenced their relocation decisions to the city.¹⁸⁸ This economic reality has contributed to the widespread public perception that Somalis are moving to Kenyan urban areas and particularly Nairobi to use welfare benefits. This perception is stronger in the less advantaged Kenyan groups that feel that the Somali migrants and refugees are competing with them in the limited welfare facilities and public services.

Supporting the concept of non economic pull factors is the argument that in Europe and the USA, tax dollars are used to give Somalis large cash sums in terms of different benefits such as housing, schooling, healthcare and so on.¹⁸⁹ This is the indication that there are better economic opportunities out of Kenya than in Kenya. If the Somali were interested in economic progress alone then they would have preferred the European states than Kenya. Closer examination indicates that while some Somalis may be attracted to the limited social services provided in Nairobi, such services are not the singular motivating factor driving Somali migration to Kenyan towns. The most common reason given for moving to Nairobi was to improve quality of life for less endowed or refugees fleeing the closed camps or the civil war in Somalia.¹⁹⁰ Although welfare is one aspect of such an improvement, more frequently cited macro-level aspects included safety and increased social control, good schools, and affordable housing.¹⁹¹

Although most Somalis particularly refugees argue that Nairobi is a hard place to raise a big family, most of them prefer Kenyan urban areas to other cities around the world. In these ways, Somalis resemble other migrants who seek a better life for their families. Few of the Somalis interviewed during this study did specifically mention welfare benefits as a

¹⁸⁸ Phil Nadeau, "The Somalis of Lewiston: Effects of Rapid Migration to a Homogeneous Maine City," *Southern Maine Review*, 1995, pp. 105-146.

¹⁸⁹ Rabrenovic, Gordana, "When Hate Comes to Town: Community Response to Violence Against Immigrants," pp. 349-360.

¹⁹⁰ Francis H. Buckley, "The Political Economy of Immigration Policies," *International Review of Law and Economics* 16, 1996, pp. 81-99.

¹⁹¹ Wendy Zimmerman and Michael Fix, "Immigrant Policy in the States: A Wavering Welcome", in *Immigration and Ethnicity: The Integration of America's Newest Arrivals*, ed. Barry Edmonston and Jeffrey S. Passel, Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press, 1994, pp. 287-316.

reason for moving to Nairobi.¹⁹² The data suggest that welfare benefits were a macro-structural factor affecting some Somalis' decision to relocate to Nairobi however, it is important to point out that this widespread perception appears to be exaggerated in the media and other factors tend to be overlooked.

Although some of the Somali migrants do come from states with very high economic standards than Kenya, Kenya is preferred over such countries because it offers other motivating factors. This illustrates the ways in which magnetic dimensions intersect with social structure namely welfare benefits as well as the fluid nature of magnetic orientation. Those who are drawn to Nairobi because of the relatively better welfare benefits were often responding to the inadequate resources available in their initial places of settlement.¹⁹³ In trying to attend to their basic needs they are temporally oriented toward the present whereas, as will be discussed below, some of the Somalis are attracted to Kenya by economic factors.

4.8 Safety and security

Many of the study participants interviewed initially lived in Somalia before relocating to other parts of the world. Some resettled in large, inner city neighborhoods in European countries most of which were characterized by high crime, drugs, gang activity, substandard housing, and grossly underfunded schools in depressed low income people areas. Some participants expressed dissatisfaction with the macro-level structures in these neighborhoods such as insecurity, while others referred to the tensions and conflicts that occurred on the micro-level in these communities in European cities. For instance Abdi Omar, a Somali man in his thirties, points out that Many Somali refugees in many countries are resettled in very deprived communities. So by the time you come and realize where you are, it is like: "Oh, my God! Where am I living in the US or Europe or elsewhere? Is this the country I was coming to?" It's these very tough neighborhoods where even the front-doors have iron security protections and in many nights what you hear are police sirens and gun shots and murders.¹⁹⁴ In some cities refugees are settled by the host governments in areas with congested poor migrant families of different origin. To some Somalis this is like segregated ghettos. Paradoxically, one educated Somali that

¹⁹² Oral interview, Haji Said Obokor, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 13/02/2013.

¹⁹³ Franklin Goza, "The Somali Presence in the United States: A Socio-Economic and Demographic Profile," in *From Mogadishu to Dixon: The Somali Diaspora in a Global Context*, ed. Abdi M. Kusow and Stephanie R. Bjork, Trenton, NJ: The Red Sea Press, 2007, p. 262.

¹⁹⁴ Oral interview, Abdi Omar Jama, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 05/02/2013.

inhabited for some time in a predominantly white Danish area in one city Denmark told to the author of this study that he had to move to another area because he and the members of his family had it difficult to interact with the neighbors. He did not complain of any visible racial incident but the diverseness feeling, as he termed it, was very visible in the lack of social contacts, sense of isolation of the children from their age group and the missing exchange of smiles or handshakes between neighbors. He convincingly stated: “the diverseness of culture and color of the humans play an important role”. Somalis are very open and like to socialize with others. Kenya, with its very warm, friendly people and multicultural setting offers an extra incentive to be chosen to live in.

Although most Somalis moved out of their country because of insecurity caused by the civil war, safety was still not assured while in Europe or the USA. For many Somalis, security includes safety from drugs, alcohol and alien culture that can split the unity or harmony of the family. Most of the Somalis would then prefer to move themselves to Kenya or move their children to Nairobi. Some argued that they moved to Nairobi because their children were being bullied. There was a lot of violence in the European cities that they lived in. Similarly, some cited the conflicts that ensued between Americans and Somali immigrants. Less affluent Americans usually inhabit the dilapidated neighborhoods that react to the new immigrants which result in tensions and conflicts. These observations were echoed by several interviewees who described being harassed and bullied by this category of Americans at school for those living in the USA.¹⁹⁵ This is mainly because of the competition for scarce public services and amenities, employment or different youth gang activities.

Safety, especially for raising children, was the most persistent reason given for moving back to Africa and in particular to Nairobi. To understand why safety is paramount, it is important to remember that unlike many immigrants who move to the European countries and the United States for economic opportunities, Somalis were fleeing war and poverty in Somalia or harsh and unsafe conditions in refugee camps. One young woman stated, “My mom moved us to Nairobi since she was the only one with us. My father did not come

¹⁹⁵ Nureddin Abdullahi Ali, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 10/02/2013.

with us as he is still in Sweden where we had first relocated to, so that's why we decided to come here because it's quiet and smaller and less crime prone.¹⁹⁶

Some Somalis moved to Nairobi to have more social control over their children's religious and cultural behaviors, as well as to keep closer eyes on their conduct. Some parents expressed heightened concern for teenage sons, whom they viewed as being at higher risk than daughters for being drawn into oppositional cultures in European and American inner cities. Many of the interviewees noted that it was easier to exert parental control over their children in Nairobi compared with other places in Europe or America where they had lived earlier after relocation from Somalia.¹⁹⁷ This was often attributed to the large number of Somalis in Nairobi as well as to more religious conservatism among Somalis and Kenyans in Nairobi than the Somali population in the European and other cities around the world.

Amina, a young Somali woman had this to say; "We joke all the time when we see someone and say: how long do you want to stay out - My mother will be calling to know where I am right now?" It's a kind of a joke but it communicates the feeling of care a Somali girl feels she has for being in Kenya. They can keep a closer eye on their children because it's a city with a large Somali population which respects their culture.¹⁹⁸ For some parents, the desire to have more control over their children was especially acute when their children were young and in school. Relative to other places they had lived, Somalis viewed Nairobi schools as safe places where their children could get a good education.¹⁹⁹ Some interviewed Somalis reported coming to Nairobi either to escape racialized experiences in other urban areas particularly in European and American cities. Such Somalis believed that the Kenyan urban areas would be more accepting of racial and religious diversity than other countries. In the USA for instance several young Somalis reported being beaten up or harassed by other racial minorities prior to moving back to Kenya.²⁰⁰ This view is echoed by Omar who had this to say:

¹⁹⁶ Oral interview, Deria Kulmiye Ali, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 13/02/2013.

¹⁹⁷ Horst, Cindy, "The Somali Diaspora in Minneapolis: Expectations and Realities," In *From Mogadishu to Dixon: The Somali Diaspora in Global Context*. Ed. Abdi M. Kusow and Stephanie R. Bjork, Trenton, NJ: The Red Sea Press, Inc. 2007, pp. 275 – 294.

¹⁹⁸ Nogle, June Marie, "Internal Migration for Recent Immigrants to Canada," *International Migration Review* 28, 1994, pp. 31-48.

¹⁹⁹ Oral interview, Ali Ossoble Abdi, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 15/02/2013.

²⁰⁰ Evergeti, Venetia and Elisabetta Zontini, "Introduction: Some Critical Reflections On Social Capital, Migration and Transnational Families," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29, 2006, pp.1025-1039.

“I came to Nairobi from USA which to me was totally a different world. When I arrived in the USA, I saw well developed cities with large populations. In the first place you might think you will fit well in, but only to come to realize that you cannot take one step without being identified as a Somali or alien. Oh my God, this place is not even diverse”.²⁰¹

The Somalis have positive thinking about Nairobi. They have positive things to say about their experiences in Nairobi. Many love Nairobi because they have a feeling that it does not welcome racism. The Somali communities in Nairobi are proud in freely taking part of their community social activities without any interference with total consent and tolerance from other communities and public organs. There were so many people from all over Nairobi who have no problem with the presence of Somalis. Most of them love to buy goods from Somali shops, the condition that has turned Eastleigh into a city within a city with many non Somali customers and small traders. Nairobi is a great city and most of the Somalis there don't face racism. While those who established business in Kenya are prospering, offering convenient products to the public and creating employment, revenue to the state and melting to the mainstream society, the Somalis who opted for South Africa met fierce unwelcoming attitudes that resulted in looting of Somali shops, destruction of properties and killings at the hands of gangs and poor disgruntled citizens.

In Nairobi most of the people mind their own business therefore Somalis do not face discrimination of any kind. They do not experience any discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity or religion. One Somali young man commended that, in Nairobi people are very polite and very respectful, but slow to open up to new immigrants.²⁰² This is due to most of them having lived here since their birth. They already have all the friends they need. Although most Somalis talk positively about Nairobi, some feel that ethnicity often negatively defined in public, sometimes may flare up different cultural interactions. Living in Nairobi might have taken a toll on some Somalis. It's exhausting being Somali and living in Nairobi because it's not just limelight it's kind of like a shining, beaming spotlight that goes with you wherever you go. Because whenever you go particularly after the military operation against Al-Shabaab people treat Somalis with some suspicion. You will hear those making sometimes negative comments on the Somalis.²⁰³

²⁰¹ Oral interview, Abdi Omar Jama, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 05/02/2013.

²⁰² Oral interview, Mohamed Abdi Issa, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 05/02/2013.

²⁰³ Al-Sharmani, Mulki, “Diasporic Somalis in Cairo: The Poetics and Practices of Soomaalinimo,” In *From Mogadishu to Dixon: The Somali Diaspora in a Global Context*, Ed. Abdi M. Kusow and Stephanie R. Bjork, Trenton, NJ: The Red Sea Press, Inc. 2007, pp. 71 – 94.

All in all, Kenyans are among the friendliest peoples on earth, in the opinion of the writer of this research. With good weather, wonderful tourist attractions, reasonable prices and connections with many local friends, a reasonable number of Somalis in pension age are pulled to Kenya.

Educational safety is also a determinant factor when it comes to Somali pull factor to Nairobi. Educational opportunities are a determinant of Somali migration to Kenya. Education is essential to any parent who values the life of his children. This is not surprising since Somali culture tends to have strong positive attitudes toward, and expectations of, modern education.²⁰⁴ Schooling was definitely one of the biggest reasons why the Somalis moved to Nairobi. Most Somali families moved to Nairobi when their children were young because they had heard of good schools and colleges in Nairobi.

When describing the importance of education among Somalis, one thing which needs an understanding is that, religious or not, teaching their children and encouraging getting a higher education is one thing that is common for all parents. Most Somalis who relocated to Kenya had positive ratings to say about the schools in Kenya, especially compared to their experiences elsewhere.²⁰⁵ Somalis feel that in contrast to cities in the western world, the education in Kenya is friendly and respects religious rights of all individuals. Somali children feel a lot safer in Kenya and the schools have been more structured, more serious, and more willing to help them. And that being closer to Somalia, there are more caring people who want to see Somali children succeed.²⁰⁶ Ubah Yasin supported this fact by saying:

I decided to move to Kenya as opposed to the United States or Somalia because of religion and security respectively. In the United States as children are growing up they don't have Madrassas where children are taught religion for teaching the Holy Quran. Therefore the children don't put importance on religion and according to Islam it's the responsibility of the parent to teach the child Quran. The reason I chose Kenya over Somalia is because Kenya is safer as the United States, as the stuff you hear in Kenyan news such as someone was killed or raped is the same news you would hear in the States. The social services such as healthcare, education and job opportunities are better in the states but religion is my first priority and besides my family members are all US citizens and if

²⁰⁴ Emirbaryer, Mustafa and Ann Mische, "What is Agency?", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 103, No. 4, 1998, pp. 962 – 1023.

²⁰⁵ Oral interview, Jeilani Abu Sharif Ali, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 15/02/2013

²⁰⁶ Oral interview, Mariam Ali Abdi, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 03/02/2013

something comes up I can always go back to the states as a plan B. Culture is an important aspect also as Somalis value their rich culture whereas in the united states the children become westernized thereby forgetting their culture and this leads to emergence of bad social behavior such as alcohol drinking , stealing and other criminal activities.²⁰⁷

The enquiries of this research unearthed that since 1992 no refugees or other migrants from Somaliland or Puntland were pulled to Kenya for safety reasons. This because these two areas have built local administrations that secured some law and order that secured the safety of the citizens. Even those fleeing these areas with crowded boats are not mainly citizens of these two areas but are from the south of Somalia. This confirms the thesis of this research that some Somalis are pulled to Kenta for their safety from unsafe areas due to lack of law and order.

4.9 Conclusion

The Somali Somalis represent one group that is growing in Kenya. Their migration to Kenya reflects the crisis of their state in the Horn of Africa, globalization, and many other factors not properly researched in the past. They encompass persons of all types of age groups, business people, temporary guests, asylum seekers and for many other reasons. A mix of institutional and individual factors pulls Somalis to Kenya. At the institutional level, the liberal Kenyan asylum policies, along with the modest welfare system constitutes one important pull factor for some Somalis.

But this research's own information on Somalis in Kenya and other studies on refugees elsewhere show that individual level pull factors are very crucial in pulling Somalis to Kenya. Such factors can be looked at through kinship and family networks, and knowledge about specific destinations. Many Somalis choose Kenya because of family and friendship ties. This is one significant pull factor. For many Somalis, reuniting with family members or relatives is not seen as only a choice, but a necessity. Even when people are in the stage of acute crisis, they turn for relatives for advice and support. A very important element that lies at the pull side of the continuum is the fact that migration and asylum flows have cumulative effects. In other words, earlier flows create networks that over time become transnational. It is through these transnational networks that pull factors become intelligible.

²⁰⁷ Oral interview, Ismail Yusuf Einab, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 13/02/2013

Transnational kinship connections and social networks that traverse these connections represent an important research area for scholars of migration, diaspora, and refugee studies especially in the Somali context. What eluded so far the attention of most researchers and observers is the ever increasing number of Somali migrants that, despite being naturalized citizens of developed Western countries, are flocking to Kenya for reasons that include social networking, investment opportunities, education and safety of their children and easier connection with Somalia.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE SOMALI MIGRANTS TO KENYA

5.1 Introduction

After the breakdown of the political system of Government in 1991, the first wave of around 500.000 people from Somalia fled to Kenya in few months. While the Kenyan government tried to contain these refugees in camps, the biggest one in Dadaab - now home to around 350.000 refugees from Somalia - many people preferred to settle outside the camps either in the Somali parts of Kenya in North Eastern Province or in Kenyan cities like Nairobi, Mombasa or Nakuru. Up to 100.000 refugees from Somalia live, very often illegally, in these urban centres. Simultaneous to the exodus of people from Somalia to the cities, some Kenyan Somalis from North Eastern Province also moved into the urban centres. In the years following the initial migration movement the refugees came with several effects to the cities. Many conflicts evolved between local communities and Somali migrants. In the course of these tensions, especially after the insurgency of the Islamic Courts and the Shabab from 2006, Somalis are often indistinctively depicted as Muslim fundamentalists, who are responsible for a radicalization of Islam in Kenya and the spread of terror from Somalia to the neighboring countries, and/or as ruthless businessmen, who are using pirate money to get control over the Kenyan economy, as sometimes unjustifiably reported by the mass media. This chapter aims to question these assumptions by analyzing the specific impact the migration of Somalis to Kenyan cities had since the early 1990s on the local communities and the country.

Apart from Nairobi, many Kenyan cities have the presence of Somali urban refugees or migrants from Somalia and other parts of the world. The Somali population is of course smaller in other cities than in Nairobi, Eastleigh. When this migration movement started in the Kenyan towns, there already existed small Kenyan Somali settlements. Many of the first Somali migrants living there had come from British Somaliland while working for the colonial army or administration. Similarly, a big chunk of Southern Somalia, the Jubaland, was part of the Kenyan colonial administration until it was ceded to Italy in 1924, which facilitated their migration into Kenya.

These groups together with the North Eastern Province Kenyan Somali citizens integrated into the Kenyan nation. In the early 1990s an exchange of population took place. While people from Somalia and the North Eastern Province came to the urban centres, many Somalis of every age, both already settled and refugees, left the towns and went to Europe or Northern America. In the last couple of years, a fourth group of Somali migrants was seen in the urban centres. These were people, coming back from Europe, Northern America and Arab countries; often these are well-off families with children, who shall grow up not in a Western but an African way of life or looking after business and investment opportunities. Additionally to looking at the impact of Somali migrants on the local communities the focus of this chapter lies on cities as fields of interaction between the different groups of Somali migrants, their distinct ways of integration into the local communities and the diverse ways of constructing identity and difference.

5.2 Brief Prologue to Somali Migration to Kenya

The history of post- independence Somali migration to Kenya is directly related to the armed conflict that began with the Ogaden war in 1977. From being a major refugee-receiving country in the 1970s, the stream of refugees out of Somalia gained pace from 1988 onwards and escalated throughout the 1990s. Drought, flooding, and famine have combined with warfare to cause the mass flight of refugees and the large-scale displacement of Somalis to Kenya. As argued in the earlier chapters, the period of armed opposition to Barre dates from the formation of the different clan militias after the Ogaden war in 1977 with Ethiopia over the disputed Ogaden region concluded with the defeat of Somali troops in 1978.²⁰⁸ The war had an immediate effect in terms of internal conflict intensification and confrontation within Somalia and refugee flows into Kenya. Economic hardship, with suffocating hyperinflation on the cost of living led to mass dissatisfaction, and the defeat in the war was blamed on the government for waging a war without international support. While the west and African states were for respecting the status quo of the borders left behind by the colonial powers in Africa, the socialist bloc was massively supporting Ethiopia in the war with Somalia.

²⁰⁸ Lewis, IM (1961): *Pastoral Democracy*, Africana Publishing Co.

The regime was weakened militarily, economically and morally. Bitterness, anger and general discontent ensued. Attempted coup d'état by some military officials in April 1978, desertion of armed personnel to their respective clan militias and opposition groups all led to social unrest and further repression by the regime in many parts of the country. The first victims were the Majerten of the North-East Somalia as most of the attempted coup military officials belonged to this clan in addition to being also the backbone of the Somali Salvation Front (SSDF), the first armed opposition formed in Ethiopia immediately after the failed coup. The 1980s signaled thus the beginning of the Somali refugees' flow into Kenya.

At that time, the Isaqs were being targeted as many members of this community actively participated in the struggle after the formation of the Somali National Movement (SNM) in the Gulf States and Britain in the early 1980s.²⁰⁹ In May 1988 the SNM launched coordinated attacks on the northern cities of Hargeisa and Burao and succeeded in causing havoc that resulted in heavy military operations, loss of property and suffering of civilians. As a result of the war in the north-west, Somalis sought refuge in Kenya and Ethiopia. The armed confrontations hampered the patterns of livestock trade and the resources vital for the pastoral economy and this added to the pressure to migrate to Kenya and Ethiopia. Hostilities also spread to the south of the country. The three liberation movements (the SPM, USC, and SNM) were formed in 1990 and led a coordinated attack against Barre that resulted in his overthrow and flight from Mogadishu in January 1991. Barre was to continue destabilizing the south of the country through his army, from his native stronghold in Gedo against the warlord, Aidid, with devastating effects for the inhabitants.

The coalition of forces which overthrew Barre soon dissolved into factional disputes, and the bands under the command of the warlords committed heinous atrocities, including rape, indiscriminate killings of civilians, looting and cleansing and unlimited destruction of property and environment. The coastal regions of Brava and Merca, the Benadiri population in general, and the central agricultural regions were systematically looted and razed to the ground as the contending factions battled for resources and power.²¹⁰

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Lamba, N., "The employment experiences of Canadian refugees: measuring the impact of human social capital on quality of employment", *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, 40(1), 2003, pp. 45-64.

The outcome of the civil war in Somalia's Southern regions was the destruction of the agricultural belt occupied by the Rahanweyn, Gosha, and other minority clans and communities.²¹¹ With the destruction of livestock and other life sustaining basic assets and structures, many farmers and defenseless citizens were forced to flee to Kenya and other countries around the world.²¹²

5.3 Long-term positive effects of the Somali migration to Kenya

The arrival of refugees particularly in the Northern part of Kenya placed additional strains upon the already scarce resources, which in some cases caused tensions between local Kenyans and the refugees. Some refugees were forced by the hostile relations with the host Kenyans to return to Somalia or to relocate to urban cities or other countries in the region. Some relocated even as further as South Africa where they are facing ever increasing hostile environment and opposition from the local population. According to the local population, root of the tension in South Africa is mainly because the Somali refugees established small businesses in squalid remote poor areas in competition with the local underprivileged population. In Kenya Somali businesses are in urban areas with some concentration of Somalis and the Kenyan people is also known for its friendliness and tolerance.

Competing with the Kenyans on the available limited welfare in health or education facilities is a very sensitive issue in the beginning. With time, however, feelings placated and cooled down as the presence of the refugees begun showing the initial benefits. With the influx of ever increasing refugee population the local market mechanisms strengthened and the intervention of international and humanitarian organizations assisting the refugees benefitted also the local population through building roads, schools and health units and related facilities. Sharing the new structures with the refugees, buying some cheap food, medicines and bartering with the refugees in many commodity items all were beneficial and appreciated by the local Kenyans. It became also a part of the policy of the UNHCR to entice the population of the area of the refugee camps in every possible way (some food and medicine donations, public relations etc) in order to make the refugees acceptable to the Kenyans.

²¹¹ Oral interview, Asha Farah Elmi, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 10/02/2013.

²¹² Oral interview, Abdulkadir Omar Muhiddin (former farmer in Kismayo), Eastleigh, Nairobi, 15/02/2013.

The refugee camps became also big shanty towns producing bread and some handcrafts, and trading in many different commodities, thanks to the flow of the remittances they receive from their relatives in diaspora. Refugee camps area like Dadab and Kakuma are generally a desolate and depressed areas and refugees' presence can be considered a modernizing factor. Some poor local people had even the possibility of presenting themselves as refugees from the neighboring countries, and some got even the chance of obtaining refugee settlement in Western countries as refugees from Somalia. All in all and, despite the negative burden on the ecology and environment, the presence of the Somali refugees even in the camps, is considered by many observers as positive and beneficial to Kenya when balanced by the attained benefits. Some refugees from Dadab, enquired in this study, were in agreement on one point – that the Somalis are in the camps only temporarily and that everyone will relocate back to Somalia or somewhere else.

This firm conviction is supported and justified by the solidarity culture of the Somali people whereby, sooner or later, everybody can count on finding a relative or friend or a helping hand to help him/her in the translocation. That can be a blessing for Kenyan authorities and humanitarian organizations to hope in an end to eventual protracted Somali refugee hood in Kenya. Realistically, however, one has to bear in mind several points that make the question more complicated. First of all, after the several terrorist attacks suffered by the country, Kenya cannot afford to host such a large Somali refugee population in camps and urban areas which can conceal the infiltration of terrorists and extremists. The second point is that despite the international recognition of the Somali government, peace and conditions allowing the repatriation of refugees will not be realized in the near future.

This is because Shabab is still holding big chunks of Somalia and destabilizing the rest, the government is weak and cannot provide security or institutional services and the economy and basic national institutions are still devastated. The third point is that the world, especially the rich countries, have closed the resettlement door to the face of the refugees and the number of African refugees resettlement in the Western countries is ever dwindling, also because preference is given to migrants from Asia and eastern Europe that are skilled and more easier adaptable to western culture and conditions. That Shabab succeeded in recruiting in the ranks of this terror organization some American or European young citizens of Somali descent might also impact negatively on the willingness of resettling some Somalis in these countries.

Non refoulment or voluntary repatriation principle is expected to be respected by Kenya, and some refugees are die-hard foreign resettlement seekers and some others have no real incentive to go back to Somalia after losing all their property and their loved ones or still overwhelmed by the tragic and bitter memories of the civil war. Also resettlement in Kenya of many unproductive refugees is difficult due to the local economic and demographic conditions. This situation might create some conspicuous level of protracted Somali refugee hood in Kenya both in the refugee camps and in urban areas.

The Australian government report of 1985 on migrants indicated that immigration more broadly had a positive impact on the economy and that migrants did not take jobs from the host communities rather, they contributed to the expansion of the economy and employment generation.²¹³ This report has contributed significantly to a general consensus that the benefits are positive, in economic terms, in many countries like Kenya.²¹⁴ The significant positive economic contribution of the Somali migrants in Kenya is well-established in robust empirical evidence. However, there is a relative lack of rigorous research into the long-term economic impacts of Somali migrants into Kenya. Waxman (2001) explores early economic adjustment experiences of migrants to the host community. Existing studies commonly use a very limited set of fiscal measures such as initial resettlement costs and short-term economic return, and these studies sometimes provide an incomplete picture.²¹⁵ The study by Richardson found that migrants create employment opportunities by participating in the labour force, rather than to unemployment.²¹⁶

Migration and the intake of refugees from Somalia diversified and enhanced the skill level of the Kenyan population, increased economies of scale and fostered innovation and flexibility.

²¹³ Liebig, T., *The Labour Market Integration of Immigrants to Australia*. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers, Paris, 2006, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/28/12/38164878.pdf>.

²¹⁴ Collins 1991, cited in Kyle et al 2004.

²¹⁵ Waxman, P., "The Economic Adjustment of Recently Arrived Bosnian, Afghan and Iraqi Refugees in Sydney, Australia", *International Migration Review*, 35(2), 2001.

²¹⁶ Richardson, S, Healy, J, Stack, S, Ilsley, D, Lester, L and Horrocks, J., *The Changing Labour Force Experience of New Migrants: Inter-Wave Comparisons for Cohort 1 and 2 of the LSIA*, the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, Canberra, 2004. <http://www.immi.gov.au/media/research/projects/economic/labour-force-settlement.htm>.

Migrants and refugees are often entrepreneurial as they face the need to set up and establish themselves in a new environment.²¹⁷ They arrived with individual and collective skills, experiences and motivations that created new businesses and employment opportunities that led to positive direct and indirect fiscal effects.²¹⁸ A good illustration of the entrepreneurial trait that Somali refugee arrivals often had on Kenyan urban economies is evident since the collapse of the Siyad Barre regime in 1991. Most wealthy people running business in Eastleigh and some other urban areas of Kenya are people whose families had originally come to the country as refugees.²¹⁹

Most Somali migrants to Kenya are poor, but there are also wealthy individuals, mainly with own resources, who came with cash readily available either in hand or in foreign bank accounts for large investments. Two factors characterize their business activities in Kenya. First, they operated largely outside the formal economy of the country. Secondly, they relied heavily, but not exclusively, on clan or kinship networks of trust in their business dealings. The limited business activities that occurred in the formal sector were in hotels, real estate, restaurants and transport industries.²²⁰

Somali migrants and refugees in particular, have invested and transformed Eastleigh into a bustling commercial centre. They have bought up residential blocks and rapidly converted them into modern retail outlets. Many Somali living in Western and Middle Eastern countries have been attracted by the business opportunities in Kenya. Most of the investment centres on family-owned businesses but it also extends to real estate. Many entrepreneurs who began in the informal economy have expanded their businesses, turning them into contemporary shopping malls, operating inside the formal economy. The economic transformation of Eastleigh has brought tremendous competition to the marketplace, driving down the cost of goods and services.²²¹ Somali entrepreneurs have introduced new concepts of business in Nairobi. Instead of going to a bank, preparing a business plan and asking for a loan, as in the past, these entrepreneurs now prepare a

²¹⁷ Kofman, E., *Women Migrants and Refugees in the European Union*, Conference paper for The Economic and Social Aspects of Migration, 2003, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/15/2/15515792.pdf>.

²¹⁸ Stevenson 2005

²¹⁹ Oral interview, Ibrahim Ali Jumale, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 10/02/2013.

²²⁰ Farah Abdulsamed, "Somali Investment in Kenya", *Africa Programme* | March 2011 | AFP BP 2011/02

²²¹ Olesen, J.W., and C. Svan, *Rapport fra fact-finding mission til Nairobi, Kenya og Middle Shabelleregionen, Somalia*, Udlændingestyrelsen/Statens Invandrerwerk, København, 1999.

business plan, sell shares and implement the project.²²² It is widely believed that Somalis might fare rather poorly in farming or fishing but they are excellent business people. For centuries they had trade links with Asian markets and the African countries on Indian Ocean coast. Many were also working in the Arabian Gulf countries. For many Kenyans the arrival of the first wave of refugees was a blessing in disguise.

Some of these refugees and migrants were seasoned traders with links with Asian markets and Arabian Gulf employment opportunities. Except for some Kenyan of Asian origin these opportunities were unknown to the vast majority of the other Kenyans. The new Somali migrants played invaluable role in introducing the Kenyans to the Asian trade centers and to the Arabian Gulf labor market. Kenyans are now more appreciated than the Somalis themselves and considered more hard-working and more cost effective than the Somalis. One clear example is that Kenya Airways begun operating for the first time in that market with ever increasing number of daily flights after the arrival of the Somalis. As regarding the trade, the booming of goods and articles of every kind, with very competitive prices began flooding Eastleigh, with customers all over Kenya and some even from neighboring countries. Due to the stiff competition from the Somalis and other Kenyan new-comers in the field, many Asian Kenyans shifted from import trade to manufacturing and other productive sectors non engaged by the Somalis for the moment, a shift that is very beneficial to the economy of the country.

5.4 Migration and Resource Transfers: Remittances to Migrants and Refugees

Financial remittances to Somalis living outside Kenya is perhaps the outstanding feature of the Somali migrants' economy, for remittances have long been crucial to the Kenyan economy. Today, the new Somali diaspora in the West has assumed a very important role as a source of remittances to family members living in Kenyan urban areas or in refugee camps in Kenya. The Somalis who went to work to the Gulf States during the 1970s began to send back remittances to their relatives living in Somalia, using the so-called *franco-valuta*.

²²² Bradbury, M., and V. Coultan, "Somalia: Inter-Agency Flood Response Operation Phase I", an evaluation sponsored by the governments of Sweden, USA, and UK, July, 1998.

For instance, people from the 1970s in particular utilized this system, in which foreign exchange was transferred to traders who would import commodities for the Kenyan - Somali markets, and then give the cash to the families of the migrants.²²³

This system, together with the practice of migrants settling close to fellow clans-people in Kenya, contributed to a strengthening of clan identity common to clans in North Eastern urban areas. The system was crucial for the provision of foreign exchange, and enabled Somali families in Kenya to import consumer goods. According to Marchal, rough estimates suggest that around US\$300 million was remitted annually from the late 1970s and during the 1980s, equivalent to about 40 per cent of the GNP of the entire Somalia at that time.²²⁴ The *franco-valuta* system was officially banned in 1982. It was argued that the money was misused by financing illegal purchase of arms which undermined the security of North Eastern and Somali government.²²⁵

The ban had little effect as it only led to a new system. The Hawilad system evolved which did not involve a trader, but still provided hard currency which was used to support the economic life of the Somalis living in Kenyan urban areas. The Hawilad system evolved during the 1980s and into the 1990s, where remittances were transferred to the armed guerrillas some who were operating in from Kenyan territories who eventually helped overthrow the Siyad Barre regime. This would later lead to Somali involvement and spread of efficient telecommunication companies in post-collapse Somalia.²²⁶ Today, there are several Hawilad companies having branches in Nairobi and other urban centres wherever in the world Somalis live, and scattered all over Somalia.

Through this network, a Somali can transfer money to a family member inside Kenya and Somalia within minutes on online basis. It is the most efficient and safest way of transferring money to Kenya and to Somalia, and even the international NGOs use it extensively.

²²³ Waldron, S., and N.A. Hasci, *Somali Refugees in the Horn of Africa: State of the Art Literature Review*, Nordiske Afrikainstitutet, 1995.

²²⁴ Marchal, R., *Final Report on the Post Civil War Somali Business Class*, Paris: European Commission, Somalia Unit, 1996.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 25

²²⁶ Joakim Gundel, *The Migration-Development Nexus: Somalia Case Study*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 2002, pp. 268-273.

The companies do work across clans, but also maintain a certain minimum clan bias. The Xawilad system has become a strategic asset not only in development of the Somali refugee economy in Kenya but also in the civil war economy, and is still the most important social safety net for most Somalis, evidenced by the initial temporary effects of the US shutdown of the Baraakaat Company in connection with the war against terrorism.²²⁷ That shutdown initially halted the normal flow of the remittances with Security Council Resolution for a short period before people organized themselves in setting up new remittance companies to fill the gap and serve the needs of the market.

The source of remittances kept on changing during the war. For instance, in the 1980s, it was primarily migrant workers in the Gulf States and Saudi Arabia who dominated. Later the Somalis living in the UK, Italy and the entire Somali in the diaspora became very significant in terms of remittances. After the outbreak of civil war, conflict-related refugee flows to Western Europe and Northern America changed the remittance pattern. Thus, a result of the civil war was the growth of the diaspora and the volume of remittances. The civil war related migrations led to families settling in Kenya including women and children, while their husbands or male migrant workers moved to European countries seeking work to support the families which had settled in Kenyan urban areas.²²⁸ The Somali exiles live mostly of welfare allowances that were intended to meet their most basic needs. The Somalis having very strong family ties would send some of the money to their families living in Somalia and Kenyan urban areas and refugees camps.

According to surveys made by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1985, the 165,000 to 200,000 Somalis living in the Middle East earned \$700 million dollars a year, of which approximately 30 per cent \$280 to \$370 million dollars, according to estimates was sent back to their relatives living in Kenyan urban areas and their native country of Somalia. Annual remittances were very high.²²⁹ According to a survey conducted by Ismail Ahmed, a mean household receipt of remittances per annum was nearly

²²⁷ UNDP, *Human Development Report*, New York: UNDP, 2001.

²²⁸ Ahmed, I.I., "Remittances and their economic impact in post-war Somaliland", in *Disasters* 24(4), 2000, pp. 380-389.

²²⁹ UNDP, *Human Development Report*, New York: UNDP, 2001.

US\$4,170²³⁰ during the years 1999-2000. This is by far above the earning of most Kenyan population meaning that most Somalis would be living a life better than most Kenyans.

Historically, remittances were used to finance consumption as the foreign currency of the remittance was used to import consumer goods. But recent observations show a new trend where remittance money is invested in small businesses or real estate. Today, however, it is clear that remittances have become a dominant feature of the Somali people's economy, and are crucial for household livelihoods and for pooling resources or raising capital for business ventures. Although remittances have become the critical source of hard currency for the country, the precise value of this economy is difficult to calculate for several reasons. First, there is no reliable data on the size of the Somali diaspora. Second, the remittance companies are reluctant to report the amounts transferred. Finally, remittances are transferred in different forms and through different channels, as cash or goods in kind, through remittance companies, through merchants, or through relatives.²³¹

The structural effects on development of the remittances are limited. Thus, remittances were primarily used for consumption, to invest in real estate and housing, for marriage, for trade, for family or clan support. UNDP Somalia estimates that most remittances to households fall in the range of US\$50-\$100 per month, and find that the flow of remittances increase in times of economic stress, during droughts, or in response to inter-clan warfare. The positive aspect of increasing consumption through remittances was that this did improve the real balance of payments and enabled imports of capital goods and raw materials for industrial production. The high level of consumption and imported goods, however, left only little surplus for capital-generating investments, while the demand on consumer goods increased inflation and pushed up wage levels in Somali and Kenyan urban areas.²³²

So, the immediate positive effects in terms of easing the effects of rising oil prices and increasing living standards turned into negative effects in the long run as they were spent on non-productive investments, which increased dependency and eroded incentives for

²³⁰ Macharia Kinuthia, 2003. Migration in Kenya and Its Impact on The Labor Market; Paper prepared for Conference on African Migration in Comparative Perspective, Johannesburg, South Africa, 2003.

²³¹ Joakim Gundel, *The Migration-Development Nexus: Somalia Case Study*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 2002, pp. 268-273.

²³² Oral interview, George Kamau, Eastleigh, Nairobi., 3/1/2013.

production. Some positive effects did come out of increases in trade, but these did not have the same long-term effects, such as investment in a productive sector. On the other hand, remittances in Nairobi in recent years have been used less for consumption and unproductive investments, but instead contributed significantly to the growth of a vibrant private sector.²³³

Remittances have also contributed to unequal development as areas with bigger numbers of outside migrants receive more remittances and consequent income compared to others with less community members in the diaspora. This is a very important aspect although it is not sufficiently reflected in most of the available studies because the prime focus of most of the studies on the Somalis are on the ethnic Somali migrants proper and only their practices in terms of development effects.²³⁴ Thus, the existing studies often only concern the nomadic Somalis, and far less the agro-pastoralists Rahanwein and Digil people, Goshu, Bantus, and other minorities such as the Barawani/Bajuni cultures along the coast and the same ethnic group members in Kenya. All of these groups do not seem to have been in a position to travel outside Africa in the scale of the other Somalis.²³⁵ But, some did seek refuge in Kenya and to the outside world.²³⁶ Nevertheless, remittances do play the role of a social safety net, preventing economic collapse in the face of setbacks such as drought and recurring host governmental bans on illegal trade.

Another socio-economic factor that must be taken into consideration when discussing the effect of migration of the Somali people to Kenyan urban areas is the trade of qaat (Mira). The Somali migrants to Kenya have used significant percentage of remittances to finance the import of the mild drug *qaat*. No reliable figures exist how much is spend on *qaat*, but estimates put the annual amount at more than US\$100 million.²³⁷

²³³ Oral interview, Fatah Gedi Allale, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 10/02/2013.

²³⁴ Pérouse de Montclos, M.A., "Minorities and discrimination, exodus and reconstruction of identities: the case of Somali refugees in Mombasa, October, *ORSTOM*, France: A refugee diaspora: when the Somali go west", in K. Koser (Ed.), *New African Diasporas*, London: Routledge, 1997.

²³⁵ Olesen, J.W., L. Anten, and R. Pearce-Higginson, *Report on Minority Groups in Somalia*, Copenhagen: Danish Immigration Service, Home Office - UK, Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken - NL, 2000.

²³⁶ I. M. Lewis, "Visible and Invisible Differences: The Somali Paradox", in *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 74, No. 4 (2004), pp. 489-515, Published by: Cambridge University.

²³⁷ UNDP, *Human Development Report*, New York: UNDP, 2001.

This is a considerable amount which has played a key role on development not only to the urban economy but also to the rural economy where qaat is produced or traded in Kenya. Mira is also exported by air to the UK and from there smuggled to other parts of Europe and USA where this product is banned by law. Both Mira importers and consumers in these countries are mainly Somali migrants. New estimates, based on the yearly cost and air freight of this drug to the main cities in Somalia is calculated at about 200 million Dollars. In the eyes of most Somalis both at home and in the diaspora, this is unacceptable in terms of economy and social dimensions. Since Qat is scientifically considered a drug many western countries have criminalized its use in their countries and others are hoped to follow suit. This would be highly beneficial as it will make crucial resources available for productive socio-economic destinations in both Somalia and would also free the Qat producing land in Kenya and Ethiopia for the production of the much needed food and other essential crops.

5.5 Somali Immigrants and Kenyan GDP

Kenya stands out as a safe haven for refugees from African and beyond with statistics placing the numbers at about one million. About 60 percent of the refugees are living in camps while the remaining 40 percent constitute what is now commonly known as the urban or even privileged refugees. A survey into the economic activities of Somali immigrants revealed that they are successful entrepreneurs, building businesses that not only provide a living for their families but also employ members from the local Kenyan community in good numbers. Far from being passive recipients of international humanitarian aid, many Somalis have been able to turn crumbling urban environments into centers of economic excellence.²³⁸

Apart from changing the face of Eastleigh with modern constructions and vibrant businesses, the Somalis have also pumped a lot of money into the Kenyan economy through other urban centres, for instance through cross-border trade. Dhobley, for example, is located along the Kenya-Somalia border, 245 km from the port town of Kismayo, and 90 km from the Dadaab refugee camp and 198 km from the Garissa livestock market. The Kenyan side of the market is called Liboi. Doble is situated in the south inland pastoral livelihood zone. It is an active market transacting both formal and

²³⁸ Oral interview, Halima Hashi Warsamem Eastleigh, Nairobi, 15/02/2013.

informal trade for livestock, food and other general commodities.²³⁹ Prominent refugees or former refugees with connections with both sides of the border play important role in linking or engaging directly in this business.

The livestock market opens for business daily between 10 am and 5 pm, while the food and general commodities market operate between 6 am and 9 pm. The market is managed by the Doble town committee that regulates access and use of the market facilities. Cross border trade is important for food security on both sides of the border. Pastoralists sell livestock, and use the proceeds to purchase cereals, sugar and other household budgets. Livestock trade and related activities also provide incomes to traders, livestock trackers and transporters. The market is also an important transit point for food import from Kismayo to the Dadaab refugee camps then to Garissa. The transportation of this food is a source of livelihoods to laborers' loaders and un-loaders at the border, transporters, money exchangers, hotels and restaurants. Livestock traded within Dhobley market include cattle, sheep and goats, camels and few donkeys. However, cattle, sheep and goats are the main livestock species traded across the border from Doble into the Kenyan market of Garissa and Nairobi or Mombasa.²⁴⁰ With flux of Somali refugees and migrants to Nairobi camel meat and milk have become part of the daily dishes in many homes in Nairobi. It is needless to mention the empirically researched and worldwide ascertained nutritional and medical value of these products.

The important food commodities traded across the border include imported rice, wheat flour, sugar, vegetable oil, tea and pasta that are also moved from Somalia into Kenya, mainly targeting the Dadaab refugee camp and the border area inside Kenya. In addition, locally produced hides and skins, salt and sesame oil are also traded from Somalia into Kenya. Other commodities include non-food items cloths, electronics, shoes, petrol and kerosene, bottled drinking water and soap. There is ever increasing export of Mira, tea, coffee, bottled water, kerosene, building material, soap, tea and coffee from Kenya into Somalia.²⁴¹

²³⁹ Oral interview, Abdulmalik Said Arrale, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 15/02/2013.

²⁴⁰ Oral interview, Faduma Abdi Farax, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 05/02/2013

²⁴¹ Oral interview, Mohamed Naik Ali, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 03/02/2013

According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics of 2011, the Kenyan exports to Somalia has shown ever growing trend, departing from 2.6 billion Khs in 2004 to staggering 12.00 billion in 2010 , a result that is among the best of the African economic partners of Kenya. The return of peace to Somalia will mark the beginning of a large scale reconstruction which will involve physical material an skills abundantly available in Kenya and ready to boost further Kenyan exports to Somalia.

Livestock, particularly cattle, sheep and goats are tracked from different parts of southern Somalia including Baidaba, Dinsor, Afmadow, Dif, Tabto, Qoqani and Doble area and brought to Doble market by Somali small scale traders. Cross-border traders or their agents purchase livestock from the small scale traders or livestock producers in the market and employ the services of trackers who move the livestock to Kenya, mainly targeting Garissa market and Nairobi.²⁴² Brokers facilitate exchange between buyer and seller and also verify whether the sellers are the actual owners of the livestock being sold. Usually a person who knows the seller acts as a guarantor. Live Somali cattle export to Kenya was very active also in the 1960s, when this cattle export was the life line feeding the basic input in the Mombasa Meat Factory. Kismayo area sea bordering Kenya is full of fish which is sold in Mombasa. Some Kenyan fishermen as well businessmen have it easy to have partnership arrangement or sale agreements with counterpart Somalis in order to organize fishing campaigns in Somali territorial waters and marketing the product in Mombasa. While minor consumer items from Somalia are sold in the refugee camps and areas in north Eastern province areas, the overall trade balance is massively in favour of Kenya.²⁴³

5.6 Somali Immigrants and multicultural contribution to Kenya

This section reviews the social and civic contributions made by Somali immigrants, refugees and humanitarian groups working with refugees. The review of this section covers the multi-task participation in volunteering, the way in which volunteering can act as a pathway to paid work, the social capital that refugees generate and the non-paid work that humanitarian groups perform in their homes and communities. There is evidence that humanitarian groups made significant social and civic contributions to Kenya.

²⁴² Oral interview, Yusuf Issa Haji, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 06/02/2013.

²⁴³ Oral interview, Mohamed Nur Abdullahi, Eastleigh, Nairobi, 03/02/2013.

Concerning the prevalence of non-paid and voluntary work among refugee communities reveals that informal volunteering where people are providing community, family and individual support to others in an unstructured or unmanaged but nevertheless committed way plays just as an important a role in building social capital as does formal or more recognizable forms of work. The non-remunerated activity is no less important if it is carried out by an unmanaged volunteer outside of a formal organizational structure.²⁴⁴

The research found that volunteering was found not only to integrate refugee women into broader society but also to provide the opportunity for refugee women to view themselves as actively shaping and improving society. The voluntary work provided important benefits to refugee women who, for various reasons, were unable to undertake paid employment, while simultaneously benefiting the organizations who were recipients of their unpaid work. The research also noted volunteering could enable access to resources including job and training networks, social connections and information unlikely to be available to those outside of the organization. Bloch, while focusing on refugees' participation in the labor market, education and training, did also collect information on the role of voluntary work in the lives of refugees and communities where they are hosted.²⁴⁵ Volunteering is a way of contributing to civic society, garnering networks and social capital and generating the initial pathway to paid employment.

Acknowledging the social capital of refugees is important, as it refers to all activities within a society that contributes to strengthening the life of the community.²⁴⁶ While official definitions of volunteering may exclude unpaid work done in the home or within families, social capital provided by refugees represents a significant portion of their contribution to Kenyan economy. The social capital and connections that refugees bring to their community are powerful.

²⁴⁴ Kerr, L, Savelsberg, H, Sparrow, S and Tedmanson, D., *Experiences and perceptions of volunteering in Indigenous and non-English speaking background communities*. A joint project of the Department of State Aboriginal Affairs, the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission, Volunteering SA, the Unaipon School (University of SA) and the Social Policy Research Group (University of SA), Adelaide, 2001, www.unisa.edu.au/SPRG.

²⁴⁵ Bloch, A., "Refugees in the UK labour market: The conflict between economic integration and policy-led labour market restriction", *Journal of Sociology and Politics*, 37, 2007, pp. 21-36.

²⁴⁶ Madkhul, D., *Supporting Volunteering Activities in Australian Muslim Communities, particularly Youth*. Australian Multicultural Foundation and Volunteering Australia, for the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007, <http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/files/8FF8XEMEEG/AMF%20Muslim%20Youth%20Volunteer-final%20with%20cover.pdf>.

These community links, or social bridges, can be developed in a number of ways, including through social contacts in neighborhoods and through engaging in voluntary activities.²⁴⁷ These social connections and networks, particularly those that include host country members, contribute significantly to positive settlement outcomes.

This positive impact is not only social but also practical; the connections can help when seeking employment. The critical role of social capital and, in particular, bridging social capital between refugee populations and mainstream society needs to be recognized as valuable by governments and built into economic and social policies for both refugee communities as well as for the wider Kenyan community.²⁴⁸ While existing information about the educational and labor force outcomes of the children of refugees is limited, available sources point to above average rates of success in education and employment, consistent with the successes achieved by children of non-humanitarian migrants. In terms of employment almost every Somali family employs one Kenyan to assist the housewives and, as per Somali culture, they respected and considered as part of the family.

In addition to Eastleigh, the Somali migrant community recently opened in the center of Nairobi about a dozen highly regarded restaurants serving Somali-Kenyan-European dishes that are highly appreciated by the Kenyan, tourists and Somali customers. Understanding each other's culture in food, dress, tradition and culture will bring the people of the two nations closer to each other. Mutually beneficial business relations, understanding and appreciating ones neighboring country will result in common interest, cooperation and mutually beneficial relation at the state and peoples levels.

²⁴⁷ Atfield, G, Brahmhatt, K and O'Toole, T., *Refugees' experiences of integration*, British Refugee Council and University of Birmingham, UK, 2007, http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/policy/position/2007/Integration_work.htm.

²⁴⁸ Miralles-Lombardo, B, Miralles, J and Golding, B., *Creating learning spaces for refugees: the role of multicultural organisations in Australia*. National Centre for Vocational Education Research, 2008, <http://www.ncver.edu.au/research/proj/nr5L07s.doc>.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter indicates that Somali immigrants and refugees who settled in Kenya have had a profound impact in enhancing the nation's social, cultural and economic life. Their resettlement has played a crucial role in international efforts to provide protection to persons whose life, liberty, safety and other fundamental rights were at risk. It has also enabled Kenya to tangibly demonstrate its international solidarity with the mostly poor and vulnerable members of society and hosting the majority of the refugees of the area. Kenyans have also learnt to explore and exploit new ways to utilize better the huge potential that refugees have to enrich the nation. The chapter has shown that the Somali immigrants and refugees make substantial contributions to Kenya expanding consumer markets for local goods, opening new markets, bringing in new skills, creating employment and filling empty employment niches. There may be short-term costs as refugees are resettled and adjust to their new surroundings but once successful integration has occurred refugees are able to quickly make permanent cultural, social and economic contributions and infuse vitality, humanitarian values and multiculturalism into the communities into which they are resettled.

Refugees in Kenya and humanitarian entrants have found success in every field of endeavor, including the arts, sports, media, research, business and civic and community life. Refugees' stories are extremely diverse, however, there are some commonly mentioned ingredients for success including having had community support; feeling motivated to give back to society; and having access to training, English classes, mentoring and cultural, sporting and volunteering activities. Migration and intake of refugees can diversify and enhance the skill level of the population, increase economies of scale and foster innovation and flexibility. Somali immigrants and refugees are often entrepreneurial as they face the need to set up and establish themselves in a new environment. The efforts of Somali diasporas not only benefit Kenya but often also their homelands. Outward remittances by migrants and refugees from Europe and elsewhere enabled pumping money into the Kenyan economy.

These remittances represent a significant development resource to these countries. The positive impact of refugees has also been especially felt in regional and rural Kenya. In recent times rural areas have experienced large scale departures in population resulting in skills losses, lack of local entrepreneurship, business closures and the loss of social capital and services. Successful regional and rural refugee resettlement programs have helped plug some population gaps, supply much-needed labor and stimulate economic growth and services delivery.

More generally, the young age profile of humanitarian entrants makes a very positive contribution to a labor market in which new retirees now need new labor force entrants to replace them.

Another positive factor of the Somali connection is the multitude traffic of Somalis using Nairobi as travelling and transit route to and from Somalia as connection with Europe and America. This implies airline ticket sales, hotels and other services that generate income to Kenya and social interaction. After all, it is the human interactions in business of diverse nature, at schools, health centers, tourism at state and individual citizens' levels that create reciprocal value and interest that cement a common unbreakable bond between societies and nations as the ones now clearly developing between Kenya and Somalia.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

A number of issues have been discussed in this project, including the historical antecedents of the Somali people, colonial and post-colonial governments and other aspects of that related to the conflict witnessed in Somalia. In the main, it has been shown that Somalia has had many problems that led to conflict that pushed the Somalis out of their country. Having passed through the eras of colonial dismemberment and partition of the Somali people, dictatorial government of Siyad Barre and now struggling with recent factional conflicts legacy and religious extremism, the country seems to be still far to realize the stability needed to stop the out-flow of its people. While it is true that the conflict in the country had negative effects on the Somalis, other countries seem to have economically benefited from the conflict in Somalia. In the specific case of Kenya, relations passed through different phases:

In the beginning of the last century the British colonial administration halted the movement of the pastoral Somalis to the west of Tana River. They were accused of poaching elephants and refusing to pay taxes. Somalis as well as other Hamitic groups of Northern Frontier District (NFD) were not important for the colonial purposes which were dealing at that time with only economy, polity and administration. For reducing further the Somali problem and securing the friendship of Italy Britain ceded to Italy big chunk of the Kenyan colony inhabited by the Somalis with a treaty signed in London on 15th July 1924. Art 9 of that treaty sanctioned that “the two governments undertake to prevent any migration of Somalis or other natives across the new frontier”. After the cession of that area known as Jubaland with Kismayo as its capital, the rest of NFD was declared a closed district and administered separate from the rest of Kenya. After the independence of Kenya in 1963, the people of the area favored unity with Somalia and with strong support from Somalia they waged guerilla warfare, the so called Shifta war, with disastrous outcome in terms of lives and development. The conflict ended with the 1967 Memorandum of Arusha on normalization of Kenya-Somalia relations and end of border disputes. The conflict hindered any tangible migration or cooperation for many years. It also hindered every kind of development of the Somali inhabited North Eastern part of Kenya (NFD).

But sometimes tragedies produce blessings in some contexts. The civil war in Somalia, despite its devastation, changed the history of the relations between Somalia versus Kenya and Ethiopia. Beginning from the early months of 1991, the civil war was in full scale and people were escaping for safety of their lives and their families but doors were shut on their face by many parts of the world especially the oil rich Arab countries with which Somalia was linked with traditional relations and common membership of the Arab League Organization.

The nearest and the only remaining alternative was to burst the borders of Kenya and Ethiopia. With open hearts and hands they welcomed, cared and assisted with their meager resources millions of refugees some in camps and enabling others to begin new life in urban areas. In Kenya the pressure was heavy with the bulk of the refugees coming in waves from sea, land and air. Many settled and melted in the society, contributing to the economic and social development of Kenya. Others proceeded to Europe or America but they always remained grateful to that beautiful land and its lovely people who enabled them to stand on their feet and take off into the future during the stormy days. This is why some of them bring their families back from Europe or America to educate and raise their children with African culture and tradition in Kenya, while many others come back to establish business ventures or for many other reasons.

The economic recession and cultural and security concerns in many Western countries is also creating xenophobia and opposition to foreign migrants which strongly revives a sense of belonging to the roots in the former Somali homeland. Kenya is the closest and most connected country to Somalia and that is important to the Somali migrants' social and psychological wellbeing.

The journey towards an effective government in Somalia is far from being attainable; the road leading thereto is rather narrow and long. In other words, amidst the conflicts, uncertainties and confusion associated with the system, there is economic benefit for Kenya despite the security risks associated with the presence and flux of massive uncontrollable Somali migration. As indicated in the earlier discussions, some immigrants and refugees that crossed to Kenya came along with economic benefits and talents.

The study has therefore served to add knowledge to the history of Somalia, added knowledge on the push factors that forced the Somalis out of their country and added voice to the ongoing discussions on the refugee crisis to the countries in the Horn of Africa. It is not a conclusion in itself, but both an addition to, and a summation of, whatever has already been discussed on this subject that is crucial to the future solution to the refugee problem. In tandem with this concern, the study has illuminated the socio-economic and political effects of Somali migrants to Kenya. The flow of Somali diaspora from Western countries to Kenya shows that migration can continue after resettlement through different countries and that socio-cultural factors play important role that motivate the Somalis in their migration choice.

While the focus has largely been on the economic benefits, it should be recalled that there are other benefits associated with the Somali migrants presence in Kenya as social, cultural and political closeness are boosted.

Some of the push factors discussed include, but are not limited to conflict, historical factors, poverty, internal and international conflicts, civil disobedience, foreign interference and poor governance all played a role in driving the Somalis out of their country.

Historical factors have played a fundamental role in shaping the conflict in Somalia. For example, foreign invasion subjected Somalis to political, economic and social domination. Besides tampering with the socio-economic and political fabrics of the societies, it was characterized by conflict. One would therefore argue that Europeans and foreign interventions and manipulations bear part of the blame of the conflict affecting not only Somalia but the entire continent.

Civil wars and conflicts also have a hand in pushing Somalis out of their country. Peace and stability are a prerequisite for economic growth and development of a country. Sadly, a wave of atrocities continues to rock Somalia unabatedly. These conflicts not only violate the peoples' economic and human rights, but also consume a large percentage of countries' national budgets and resources.

As a result of civil wars and conflicts, resources which would otherwise be spent on strengthening the welfare of the people are mostly diverted to military and security concerns. Adverse socio-economic conditions have also affected Somalia in many ways. Some of the adverse socio-economic conditions affecting the country are poor economies, inadequate infrastructure, poor or inexistent national institutions, poverty and diseases, lack of quality education, famine and attendant food shortage and the persistent lack of adequate socioeconomic policies, absence of real reconciliation among the clans and continuation of hostilities between some communities and lack of post conflict development or public policies that create employment, income generation or hope in future to recover from devastation of the civil war.

Poverty in Somalia has also translated to pushing people out of the country. The problem is evident from the fact that about one fifth of the Somalis are out of their country as either migrants or refugees. With regard to culture as an inhibiting factor, it should be pointed out that the research achieved its aim and objective by illustrating the factors that pushed the Somalis out of their country and those factors that attracted them to Kenyan urban areas.

In the past a big portion of the national budgets of Somalia was spent on defense and military purposes. The dream was “unity of the Somali people under one flag”. The present and future dream now is: “Wellbeing of the Somali people whichever flag they are under”. The bitter memories of bad treatment and violation of basic human rights during the so called Shifta years cannot keep the Somalis prisoners of the past. Things have dramatically changed to the better and the Kenyan Somali community now enjoys equal rights with other Kenyans in terms of public power share and perceived importance as the fifth or sixth largest ethnic group in the Kenyan family.

This, combined with the brotherly Kenyan treatment and care of the Somali refugees and migrants during and after the civil war, the sacrifices of the Kenyan people and military personnel in fighting and defeating extremist groups in Somalia and the flow of Somali migrants from Somalia and elsewhere that are contributing in the economic, social and cultural development of Kenya - will all inevitably contribute to a win-win situation and positively impact on future good neighborhood, cooperation and a multifaceted integration between the two brotherly countries. It is in this spirit that even families with comfortable

life in Europe and North America, when disenchanted with culture or social conditions in these countries, come back to Kenya for the education of their children. Kenya is also the preferred destination of many Somalis for business, tourism, health care, transit and many other reasons.

Realistically, however, the above positive and promising picture is heavily challenged by serious security concerns, environmental pressures to the areas of the refugee camps and competition of the Somali urban refugees and other Somali migrants with the locals on the already strained public services. Local, regional and international efforts are needed to tackle these thorny issues. Up to the present time, the magnetic attraction of Somali migration to Kenya seems relentless. Kenya is also the closest country and easiest land, sea and air reach, which makes Kenya an ideal “Home near Home” to the Somalis.

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APPENDIX 1

Interview Guide – Somali migration into Kenya

- Name..... Age.....
- Birth place..... Current residence.....
- Citizenship..... Profession.....
1. Where do you live now (city? Neighborhood?).....
.....
 2. When did you come to Kenya?.....
Why?.....
Directly from Somalia or through other countries.....
 3. Do you intend to stay here and for how long?.....
 4. Which factors helped you in migrating (kinship, friends, own resources)?
.....
 5. What is your job?
Do you have business?.....
What nature?
Location?.....
Number of employees?.....
 6. Do you think the Somalis are attracted to Kenya?
If yes give reasons why.....
 7. How friendly are the Somali migrant relations with Kenyans? And with other
communities?.....
.....
 8. Do you feel well and safe while in Kenya?.....
 9. Have you ever been in a refugee camp?
If yes, how was the life in it?.....

10. Is there any social or cultural practice that brings the Somalis together in Kenya?
.....
11. What are the main business activities migrant Somalis engage in urban centers?
.....
12. Do they engage in any business activity in rural areas of Kenya?
.....
13. Why some Somalis are relocating back to Kenya when they citizenships from Europe or America?.....
.....
14. Will the Somali migrants go back to Somalia if peace and security are secured?
.....
15. What about if they are granted reasonable incentives to repatriate?
.....
16. Do plan for further migration or relocation back to your country of resettlement?
.....
17. Explain briefly, your understanding of the history of the Somali community
.....
.....
18. What is the contribution of the Somali migrants to the social and cultural advancement of Kenya?
.....
19. What are the economic activities initiated by migrant Somalis that can contribute to the development of Kenya in terms of economic growth or employment?
.....

20. Do think the Somali migrants are competing with the local citizens on the available scarce resources (welfare, job market, and housing) and if yes, how can we alleviate the problem?.....

.....

21. How can we turn the movement and presence of the Somalis to the best interest of both Kenya and Somalia (economically and politically)?

.....

.....

22. Are there any more insights on the subject you may add?

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