THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN CONFLICT AND MANAGEMENT: THE CASE OF

SOMALIA, 1999 - 2012

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DECLARATION

I, Nyamwaya, Priya N., declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree to any other University.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to my Family. To my Husband, Maj. Y. A. Mohamed (OGW), thank you for the love, support, patience and encouragement that you have given me. From the ideas and information that you have provided that have helped me understand Somalia. To my children, Nazmin and Mohamed Noor Yahya for being patient with your Mother. To my Parents, Mr. and Mrs. Nyamwaya for the love, support and encouragement that you have shown me. To my Siblings, Phoebe, Psalm and Paula Nyamwaya for really encouraging me to finish this project. I thank everyone who has also participated through guidance and information thus ensuring this research is well studied.

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Whereas I reiterate that I am accountable for this work, I cannot omit to recognize the fact that left alone, I would not have accomplished. In this regard therefore, I wish to extend grateful acknowledgement to the people who accorded me support in various ways.

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ABSTRACT

Somalia is a country that has experienced conflict for more than two decades. It has had state fragility, proliferation of small arms, conflict between clans and recently conflict by Islamist movements. Religion has been used in the conflict in Somalia not only t manage violence but also to escalate it. The emergence of Islamist movements also had led to further inclusion of the country in the global jihadist list. Moreover, despite various efforts to manage the conflict, not much has been done with relation to eliminating the groups. In fact conventional, military efforts have been seen to contribute further in the conflict. This has also seen the inclusion of foreign Islamist participating in the Somali conflict; and a as result counter-terrorist measures further complicated the issue. The use of religion in the Somali conflict has further shown how radicalization can further escalate a conflict. This thesis therefore was able to explain this factor further. The study concludes that religion is not necessarily the cause of conflict in Somalia, currently. But rather it has been used as an instrument of conflict and as such it can also be used for the management of the same conflict in order to attain sustainable peace.

ABBREVIATIONS

AIAI Al   -   Ittihad Al Islamiyya

AMISOM   -   African Union Mission in Somalia

ARS   -   Alliance of Re-Liberation of Somalia

ARPCT   -   Alliance for Restoration of Peace and Counter-terrorism

ASWJ   -   Ahlu Sunnah wal Jamaa

ICU   -   Islamic courts Union

ONLF   -   Ogaden National Liberation Front

TFG   -   Transitional federal Government

TNG   -   Transitional National Government

UIC   -   Union of Islamic Courts.

UN   -   United Nations

UNOSOM   -   United Nations operations in Somalia

US   -   United States of America

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

For more than two decades, Somalia has experienced civil conflict. The conflict itself has been quite dynamic in nature, from conflict between clans, and regional conflicts with other neighboring states to humanitarian crises due to famine and having pirate-infested waters. Recently Somalia has been considered a safe haven for terrorists by the United States of America and as such has been included in the list of Global War on Terror. The actors in this conflict have been changing and currently being that the conflict has taken a religious turn with Islamic fundamentalism being the dominant factor.

The use of religion in conflict has been a factor that has become prominent in a number of conflicts. Whether religion is the main cause in most of these conflicts has been a subject that many conflict scholars have debated on. In most cases, religion has been considered a trigger factor in many of the conflicts throughout the world. Rather than being considered as a main cause, it has been used also as a mobilizing agent in some of the conflicts in Africa. Religion has been used as a means of identity, which is very important to the individual and the society at large. Thus it often happens that a threat to one's religious belief more often than not triggers a violent outburst.

Religion has been found to be used both constructively and destructively and as such used as a motivational factor. Due to this, the relationship between religion as a factor or cause of conflict and conflict in itself should be well researched so as to enable a clear understanding of it.

Religious scripts speak of peace all in their own way yet misinterpretation of the scripts is often practiced so as to suit the agenda of the people with ulterior intentions other than peace.

Religion has been the most dominant factor in the current conflict in Somalia. Much as various researches have been done on Somalia, not much has been done on the role that religion has taken up in the Somali conflict. The current situation in Somalia, whereby Islamist movements have taken a lead role in the conflict has rendered the peace efforts largely wanting. The need to understand what has brought about the dominant emergence of these Islamist movements which use religion to guide and sustain the Somali conflict is necessary.

The use of religion in the current Somali conflict has somewhat rendered the various attempts by conventional means such as military interventions and western guided peace conferences wanting as they hardly attain what they hope to achieve. The study therefore will seek to understand the role that religion has played in the continued conflict in Somali and also find out how religion can also be used to enable for conflict management in Somalia.

1.1 Background

Since the post Cold War era, the notion that modernization and secularization would solve ethnic or religious conflicts has long been futile. This is especially as recently most of the conflicts in Africa have been ethnic based and currently religious based. The inclusion of religion in conflict management and peace building efforts have not been addressed quite vastly. Since the outset of Siad Barre in 1991 through a coup, Somalia has been thrust into chaos. The conflict has seen the fighting between rival clans who all wanted a piece of leadership after the removal of the dictator

Siad Barre. The factions 'toppled Siad Barre's government but could not give the people and the country an alternative or a stable political order.'[1] The overthrow of Mohammed Siad Barre in 1991 led to the total collapse of Somalia and the long civil war.

In the early 1990s, armed conflicts were mainly interclan in nature. Initially it meant warfare between the most powerful clan families in the south, the Darood versus the Hawiye. One of the most significant trends of armed conflict since 1992 has been the devolution of warfare to lower and lower levels of clan lineage.[2] The conflict had not only engaged the various clans but also saw the rise of warlords who were acting as leaders in their various areas all over the country. These warlords were mainly clan elders all representing the various clans that existed. These warlords mainly took advantage of the unstable state to carry out illegal economic activities such as illegal piracy and taxation to finance their efforts. This led to a localization of the conflict, whereby reconciliation was done by the clan elders.

The conflict in Somalia has however witnessed quite a change through the years, especially when it comes to the actors of the conflict, from clans members, to warlords. Currently, Islamists are viewed to be involved in the conflict. This has come about strongly especially after the intervention of western powers, that is the United States of America and neighboring countries such as Ethiopia and recently Kenya. The emergence of these Islamist movements has brought about the inclusion of religion as a factor in the Somali conflict. Thus this has led to the importance of fully understanding the influence that religion has got on the course of a conflict.

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[1] Mohamed Osman Omar. Somalia between Devils and the Deep Sea. (Mogadishu: Somali publications co. ltd, 2004).
[2]. Ken Menkhaus. Somalia: State Collapse and the Threat of terrorism, Adelphi paper 364. (New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2004), p 28.

Despite being a country that is monolinguistic in nature, Somalia is a country where by a majority are Muslim. As such Islam is the main religion that is practiced. Religion has, as such been able to cut across the various clans in an effort unite this society that had more often been divided along clan ties. However this factor in itself has also seen the rise of Islamist movements defending the country against 'western powers' of whom they claim are aiming to get rid of their religion by introducing a governance system that is against their beliefs. Thus the role of religion in the Somali conflict is a factor that should be considered when looking for a possible method of peace building. *C*urrently, the most serious problem facing the country and its citizens is the suicidal activities led by self-styled and self righteous religious groups whose aim is to sieze power.

After the various efforts towards peace had been carried out to aid Somalia out of the conflict, most of the policies that were implemented to assist the transitional governments were viewed by the Somali society as western oriented and hardly touched on the lives accordingly. As such peace wouldn't seem lasting. In some ways, the US policy towards the UIC created the very thing it aimed to destroy: its actions helped to radicalize the movement. By the late 2000s, Al Shabaab and other religious militias controlled large parts of southern and central Somalia, while internationally recognized government was confined to a few districts of the capital, Mogadishu.[3] The UIC's miscalculated declaration of jihad against Ethiopia led to its military defeat, but it had already won the battle for hearts and minds.[4] For most Somalis the presence of Ethiopian troops on their soil, and American gunships in their skies was intolerable.

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[3] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a shattered state. (London: Zed books, 2012), p 66.
[4] Ibid, p.85.

With years of statelessness, Somalis had come up with alternative systems of ensuring law and order. The courts, that is, ICU, did this and as such were accepted by the Somali society quite readily in addition also to the fear that the society had of the warlords. Thus to the Somalis, these militant group would rid the country of the warlords who were carrying out illegal activities at the expense of the country. It thus seems that when one tries to seek for solution for the Somali crisis they should have keep in mind that the majority of the Somalis, both extremists and moderates, do not want to hear any solution other than the Islamic system of pacification and regulation.

While the root causes of the conflict and possibly its solutions as well- are to be found in the society of Somalia, external actors have more often than not contributed to the exacerbation of the conflict. They try to minimize the negative spillover effects coming out from Somalia, while at the same time influencing the situation inside the country.[5]

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Somalia has been in conflict for a while, though efforts have been made to make this country stable, still other factors keep hindering sustainable peace. The Somali conflict has of recently taken a religious based turn, whereby the use of religion is motivating the actors in the conflict. Despite the fact the Somali conflict seems quite complex, numerous efforts have been attempted. However the use of conventional ways in managing the Somali conflict seems futile. This is especially as those carrying out these efforts, be it militarily or diplomatically, the understanding

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[5] Tarrory Istran et al. The African State in a Changing Global Context: Breakdowns and Transformations.(London: Transaction Publishers,2011), p. 57.

of Islamism which has taken over the Somali conflict is not yet well established. This has thus seen the growth in strength and numbers of the Islamist movements that have emerged due to this. Thus the need to include religious institutional and leaders in the efforts towards conflict management in Somalia is quite important. Moreover the need to acquire an understanding of the religion in Somalia, that is, Islam and its use in the Somali conflict is a fact that cannot be ignored if sustainable peace is to be acquired in Somalia.

A better understanding of Islamists and how their relationship with broader society changes in the context of state, fragility can inform more effective counter extremism and counterterrorism policies in Africa. Conversely, extremists judge moderates to be in dereliction of their religious duties for their refusal to adopt jihad, or holy war[6].

More often than not, conflicts are ideally political and not necessarily religious; however extremists use religious principle to mobilize support. There is need to research on the role of religion in conflict areas so as to gain an insight on what is it about religion that influences conflict and as such deters conflict management and resolution, that is, case whereby religion has become a tool for war not for peace as experienced in Somalia. It is also important to note that most if not all conflicts are indeed resolvable only that the use of religion makes it harder. This is as religion influences a society thus it is not possible to disregard it in terms of conflict. The 'Clash of Civilization essay by Huntington is increasingly becoming relevant in the conflict

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[6] Zachary Delvin-foltz. Africa's Fragile States; Empowering Extremists, Exporting Terrorism. (Africa centre for strategic studies, 2010), p 2.

resolution area of recent times as it has quite brought out the importance of considering the concept of culture and especially religion as a factor of conflict in the post Cold War era.

Appleby refers to this as the 'ambivalence of the sacred.'[7], that is that religion can be viewed as a source of conflict and the tool for peace. To this effect therefore the research seeks to study religion as a problem in armed conflicts. To find out whether religion is a cause or instrument of mobilization in the Somali conflict. Thereby, explaining how religious conflicts start and sustain themselves and also focusing on religion as a solution, that is, how religious leaders or institutions can contribute to peace. Whether a religious, in this case an Islamic approach would best provide for conflict management. Therefore the key guiding question to this research will be: What role has religion played in the Somali conflict and in the efforts towards conflict management in Somalia?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of the study is to examine the role of religion in conflict and management; with a case study on Somalia, from 1999 to 2012.

More specifically, the study aims to:

i)   Provide an overview of the role of religion in conflict and management in Somalia;

ii) Investigate the role of religion in conflict and management in Somalia;

iii) Explore the relationship between religion and conflict.

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[7] See more in R.S. Appleby The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation. (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers inc. 2000.)

1.4 Literature Review

The Somali Conflict

Different scholars have written extensively on the conflict in Somalia. The conflict has been presented as an age long war between different clans or the consequences of international divisions. A socialist state was established following a coup led by Major General Siad Barre in 1969. A form of 'scientific socialism' was introduced and with it came the attempted eradication of the clan, one of the most fundamental elements of Somali society.[8] However with time and after the endurance of Siad Barre's rule, clans and the factions 'toppled Siad Barre's government but could not give the people and the country an alternative or a stable political order.'[9]

The overthrow of Mohammed Siad Barre in 1991 led to the total collapse of Somalia. This is more so as the factions that had led his overthrow were hardly prepared for the task of governing the country itself as they did not have even a shadow structure of what would take over after the overthrow. As such when they had ousted Siad Barre, wrangles between the various clan members factions came up due to the fact that each of them wanted a share of the power in governing the state. Dictatorship was replaced by the rule of the warlords, as powerful clan leaders, supported by wealthy businessmen and mini armies of militiamen, turned much of Somalia into a patchwork of fiefdoms.[10] This began the over twenty year old civil conflict.

Armed conflicts were mainly interclan in nature. One of the most significant trends of armed conflict since 1992 has been the devolution of warfare to lower and lower levels of clan

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[8] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a Shattered State. (London: Zed books, 2012), p.54.
[9] See Mohamed Osman Omar. Somalia between Devils and the Deep Sea. (Mogadishu: Somali publications co. ltd, 2004).
[10] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a shattered state. (London: Zed books, 2012),p.59.

lineage.[11] This led to a localization of the conflict, whereby reconciliation was done by the clan elders.

Since the intervention by the United States of America (US) and the United Nations(UN) , through the mission, United Nations Mission in Somalia(UNOSOM) in 1993-1995, the conflict had reduced being mostly localized and with lesser casualties as before. However after the 'Black Hawk Down' in which a number of US soldiers were killed, Somalia was left on its own with minimal external intervention. In 2002, the conflicts seemed to take a more violent turn. These conflicts were triggered by a number of factors, but some can be attributed to political maneuvering linked to the IGAD- sponsored peace talks in October plunging Southern and Central Somalia into high insecurity levels.[12]

 Despite the fact that Somalia has got one major language and as such descent, the occurrence of divisions within the clans in Somalia is most appalling. It can thus be noted that the most obvious force dividing Somalis is the clan, which knits groups of people together into distinct units. [13] Said Barre tried to eliminate the clan system when he introduced 'scientific socialism' in the 1970s. The issue of the clan also seemed quite important also in the various attempts of reconciliation efforts such as negotiation and mediation processes especially in regard to clear representation of the various clans. The 2002-04 Somali peace process held in Mbagathi, Kenya, proposed a clan quota that has been used by recent administrations as a guide for how to

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[11]. Ken Menkhaus. Somalia: state collapse and the threat of terrorism, Adelphi paper 364. (New York: routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2004), p. 28.
[12] Ibid ,p.29.
[13] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a shattered state. (London: Zed books, 2012),p.35.

distribute power, known as the 4.5 formula. It states that the four main clans, are Darood, Hawiye, Dir, and Rahanweyn and the 0.5 are the minority mostly the Bantu.[14]

Since then Somalia has been under a transitional governments. The Transitional National Government (TNG) had been established from 2000 after the Arta conference in Djibouti, however it failed and later the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia took over. TFG came about as a two year sponsored negotiation between warring factors mostly warlords in Nairobi.

Due to the instability that Somalia was in for the past decades, various actors in the conflict have taken quite an advantage. From the various warlords and also external actors, the rise of Islamism or the Islamic revival has been experienced in Somalia. Religion being an identity that is shared by the Somali society, it was quite easy for the Somalis to relate to the emerging Islamist movements. Their influence was also backed by the fact that the governments that had been put to place were weak. In a number of ways, the implanting of terrorist cells and the free movement of terrorists is always easier when a nation-state emerges from the chaos of collapse and forms a weak central government. Even the acceptance of the Islamist movements by the Somali society was guided by the fact that they saw that it was the Islamist movements that were looking out for their best interests. In that they were offering aid and support which the western intervention aided by other countries such as Ethiopia were not keen on providing. This thus produced a conducive environment for their growth.[15] Aid from outside, especially from

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[14]Ibid, p. 39.
[15] KennethMenkhaus. Somalia and Somaliland; Terrorism, Political Islam and State collapse, In Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa ed. By Robert I. Rotberg. (Washington: Brooklyn Institute press, 2005), p.8.

countries such as Yemen was readily welcome, this was also due to Somalia's proximity to the gulf states. Moreover the territory harbors its own radical islamist organization, and in the absence of any state-provided social and educational services, local communities have welcomed Islamic charities and schools funded from Saudi Arabia and by the Emirates of the Gulf.[16]

This thus saw the formation of Islamist movements such as Al Ittihad Al Islamiya, the Union of Islamic Courts(UIC/ICU), Hizbul Islam and lately Al Shabaab that is currently on the forefront of most of the attacks in and around Somalia. In addition to these groups is the Islamist movements Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaa (ASWJ) which is considered moderate in comparison to the rest. The Somalis however accepted most of these Islamist movements especially due to the fact that they were fearful and tired of the warlords. When the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC/ICU) then seemed to be bringing a measure of stability to Mogadishu in the mid 2000s, these courts began to gather some support among the Somali population.[17] To them these groups created a form of security, order and stability. Support for the UIC within Somalia was therefore mixed and the actions of the more extreme members of the UIC drew unfavorable attention from the United states and Ethiopia, who were concerned that the price of peace in Somalia could be a hard-line Islamist government.[18] By 2005, however, Menkhaus detected a strengthening of Islamist power especially in Mogadishu. The sharia courts were extending their jurisdiction and in some areas like Mogadishu, were being used to further the causes and ambitions of radical

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[16] Ibid, p9.
[17] Isak Svenson. Ending holy wars: Religion and Conflict Resolution in Civil War. (Australia: University of Queensland Press, 2012), p.6.
[18] Ibid,pg.7.

Islamist such as Hassan Dahir Aweys. [19]Menkhaus explains how Islamic and clan identity and loyalty have and have not, hitherto been used to mobilize Somalis for jihadist campaigns.[20]

Al Shabaab having exploited the state's weakness to form a coalition with moderate Islamists and gain backing, or at least acquiescence, from non-islamist leaders, the group continues to forcefully resist efforts to rebuild the Somali state, in part because Al shabaab recognizes that its influences would decline dramatically in a stable society.[21] The invasion of Somalia by Ethiopia is also credited with the increasing radicalization of al shabaab, a radical and violent wing of the UIC.[22]

Religion and Conflict

Various scholars have written on religion and conflict. However the dichotomy is often between whether religion is a factor or a cause of conflict and whether religion can be used as a tool in conflict resolution and peace building. Religious conflict resolution began to emerge in the 1990s with an increasing awareness that, if religious tradition and teaching could encourage violence and conflict, so the same tradition could be applied to bring about the resolution of conflict.[23] Ethnicity and religion play a determining role in many of the hotbeds of strife and hostility found throughout the world, which is not really that surprising considering the fact that religion and culture are so closely interwoven. Sacred writings often teach the love of peace and compassion, but in times of war, religion adherents are very adept at finding other scriptural references which

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[19] KennethMenkhaus. Somalia and Somaliland; Terrorism, Political Islam and State collapse, In Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa ed. By Robert I. Rotberg. (Washington: Brooklyn Institute press, 2005), p.10.
[20] Ibid
[21] Zachary Delvin-foltz. Africa's fragile states; Empowering Extremists, Exporting Terrorism. (Africa centre for strategic studies, 2010),p.6.
[22] Isak Svenson. Ending holy wars: Religion and Conflict Resolution in Civil war. (Australia: University of Queensland Press, 2012), p 8.
[23] Lee Marsden. The Ashgate Research Companion to Religion and Conflict Resolution.(England: Ashgate publishing limited, 2012),p3.

they claim justify bloody confrontation with people of other faiths or even with those of a different persuasion within their own religion.[24] Yet religious conviction will play a role, whether that of legitimizing reconciliation as a value or that of justifying conflict as a religion demand or even as a holy war.[25]

Religion in Somalia

The strategic location of Somalia coupled with the instability experienced through the years due to the civil conflict have put the country in a position susceptible to the formation and emergence of Islamism. Islam is the religion that is shared amongst 99% of the Somali population and as such together with clan ties, religion, in this case Islam, is also a unifying factor of the Somalis. It is an Islamic society in the periphery of the Persian Gulf. Many of its people work or study in the Gulf States, so Somalia is in the orbit of Wahhabi preaching. The rapid expansion of Islamic charities and schools, mostly funded from the gulf, wins over hearts and minds and provide a convenient structure for recruitment of young Somalis to the cause. And rising anti-western sentiment among Somali fueled in part by a sense of abandonment, in part by anger of American counter-terrorism policies and in part by opposition to the war in Iraq, is easily exploited by radical Islamist.[26]

It is also important to note that Somalia having been a failed state for more than a decade created a possible ground for extremism, radicalization especially by Al Qaeda just as other states that were unstable such as Yemen and Afghanistan. This can also be attributed especially to their

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[24] Jerald D.Gort et al. Religion, conflict and reconciliation.(New York: Robodi b.v,2002), p.3.
[25] Ibid, p.19.
[26] Kenneth Menkhaus. Somalia and Somaliland; Terrorism, political Islam and State collapse, In Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa ed. By Robert I. Rotberg.(Washington: Brooklyn Institute press, 2005),p.32.

location, that is proximity to those countries and Saudi Arabia where the Salafi ideology reigns. Islamism in Somalia is represented by a variety of actors and a conglomerate of different groups, which over the last decades have been overlapping, intersecting, cooperating and fighting against each other.[27] Somalis have been adverse to the more puritanical strains of Wahhabism associated with Saudi Islamic practices. Most Somalis view Wahhabism as a foreign ideology.[28]

The use of religion in Somalia has not begun only recently. Religion had been a unifying factor amongst the Somali society especially during colonialism. There had been a precedent of a kind of a religious war when Seyyid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan did jihad on the colonial forces in the early twentieth century. The Seyyid's jihad has served as a model for other violent religious movements in Somalia some of which have been motivated by a similar agenda: to rid the country of outside influence and to establish a Greater Somalia.[29] It is important, however, to note that the Somali themselves despite sharing the same religion Islam 'do not practice or support militant Islamism.'[30] Since the onset of the 'War on Terror', Somalia has come under intensive scrutiny as a possible haven for Terrorism. The link between Islamist movement and terrorist threats has grown incrementally, driven by a series of attacks in neighboring states in which Somalis or Somalia played an important role.[31] The growth of Islamic violence in the region and elsewhere in the world brought Somalia back on the international radar.[32]

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[27] Ostebo Terje, Islamism in the Horn of Africa: assessing ideology, actors and objectives. International law and policy institute, ILPI. REPORT02/2010 p.24.
[28] Ken Menkhaus. Somalia: State Collapse and the Threat of Terrorism, Adelphi paper 364. (New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2004), p56.
[29] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a shattered state. (London: Zed books, 2012), p.75.
[30] Ibid, p.74.
[31] Ken Menkhaus, Somalia: State Collapse and the Threat of Terrorism Adelphi paper 364, (Routledge, Taylor and Francis group New York 2004),p. 55.
[32] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a Shattered State. (London: Zed books, 2012), p.166.

Islamist Movements

The Islamic trends, that is, traditional Islam, salafism and the Muslim brotherhood, are present in Somalia. Nonetheless, while Sufi orders and Muslim brotherhood are tolerant, salafism is confrontational. The last case of their confrontation is the war between Al shabaab and Hizbul Islam on the one hand and the ASWJ representing the traditional Islam on the other. Indeed, the root of the Islamic conflict in Somalia lies with the ideology of salafism as practiced in Somalia. The rise of Islamist movements in some ways eclipsed the importance of the clans because militias were on the surface united according to the different religious affiliations, rather than blood ties.[33] These affiliations include the Al Ittihad Al Islamiya, Union of Islamic Courts (UIC), Hizbul Islam though was taken over by the Al-Qaeda linked Al-Shabaab, and the Sufi group Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaa (ASWJ).

The most powerful religious group to emerge in Somalia in the early 90s was Al Ittihad Al Islamiya (AIAI).[34]Hizbul Islam was formed in reaction to the Djibouti peace process by four Islamists groups which were opposing it. It followed the Saudi Wahhabi form of Islam and comprised of various regional organizations. It was the predecessor of the Al-Shabaab. One would thus notice that the trend would be such that Islamic fundamentalism is taking the place of civil conflict in Somalia. Eritrea on the other hand has been claimed to be assisting the Islamist movements from Al Ittihad Al Islamiya to Al-Shabaab. This was despite the arms embargo that had been put forward against the Islamist movements. It is also noted that Eritrea and Ethiopia could be using Somalia as grounds for their own proxy wars. Some of the Al-ittihad's members went on to become powerful leaders of the Union of Islamic Courts, Al shabaab and other

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[33] Ibid, p.40

[34] Ibid, p 77.

groups. Al shabaab is in many ways a continuation of Al Ittihad in terms of the ideas it espouses: both groups insisted that religion could not be separated from politics and ridiculed Somalis Sufi orders as unislamic.[35]

The initial issues that caused the Somali protracted conflict had little to nothing to do with religious differences. Though currently religion has taken up a much more significant role in the recent years. In reality, Ethiopia's primary concern wasn't the fact that the UIC was Muslim but that elements within them were calling for a violent jihad to build a greater Somalia, which included taking over Ethiopia's Ogaden region. After its expulsion from Mogadishu the UIC splintered into rival factions. The division hardened considerably when one of the former leaders of the UIC, Sheikh Sharif, became president of Somalia's Transitional Federal Government, TFG, after Ethiopian forces withdrew from Mogadishu in 2009. At this point Sheikh Shariff was derided by some Islamic militants as having sold out as an Ethiopian and American stooge. Within a few months the political terrain in southern and central Somalia had fragmented in large part along religious lines.[36] In this sense, the religious dimension became a more prominent feature of Somalia's conflict overtime. For Al Shabaab the ultimate goal appears to be a pan-Islamic caliphate- hence its growing ties with Al Qaeda. In contrast, the principal forces of Hizbul Islam was creating a greater Somali in the horn of Africa.

By the 2011, Somalia had parts of the country under the control of the Islamist movements Al-shabaab that had links to the Al-Qaeda and had imposed draconian rules that forced people to

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[35] Ibid, p.78.
[36] Paul D. Williams War and Conflict in Africa. (Cambridge: Polity press, 2011), p. 140.

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change their way of life.[37]. The concern over Islamic Fundamentalism is the possibility of the Somali Islamists engaging in direct acts of terrorism and the negative impact of ascendant political Islam as an alternative system of governance.[38] This is however of great interest to the fundamentalist groups who want to govern using Islam albeit in a more strict and extreme fashion than what the moderate Muslims would want.

However the transitional government despite being recognized lacked the capacity to fight off the up-coming Islamist movements and also to establish peace and security in the country. As it seemed to be ally to Ethiopia, it also hardly got support from the majority of the Somali population who saw Ethiopia as an enemy. Having also treated Somalis as terrorists may have pushed some of them who were not pleased with this into Islamic militancy. However it would also be noted that the various countries in the region still benefit from the conflict due to the perception that a stable Somalia would rekindle the 'Greater Somalia' spirit and as such see the taking of parts of the country that were once parts of Somalia. It would be clear to seem that with each intervention posed to Somalia, it seems to be taking an even worse turn than was before.

The Iranian revolution in 1979, together with the role of the mujahideen in driving the soviet forces from Afghanistan, signaled that what might be true of the west wasn't true for the rest and that, 'secularization thesis' notwithstanding, religion remained a significant and arguably increasing force in most of the world.[39]

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[37] Ibid, p.71.
[38] Ken Menkhaus. Somalia: State Collapse and the Threat of Terrorism, Adelphi paper 364. (New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2004), p. 55
[39] Lee Marsden. The Ashgate Research Companion to religion and Conflict Resolution.(England: Ashgate publishing limited, 2012), p.1.

Thus one would seem to ask, or to suggest that the conflict in Somalia has endured due to key interests that have to be fulfilled. According to the war economy theory, it would explain that some cases would benefit from the cost and endurance of the Somali conflict. As such it would be seemingly right to note that interests are what seem to be at the root of the Somali conflict. It may seem that the conflict in Somalia cannot be solved using conventionally made options alone. There is need for the thorough understanding of the complex situation on the ground which is the onset of Islamism. Positivist, empirical and secular biases within International Relations were identified as problematic in dealing with real world situations where religion plays a vital role in the lives of the actors involved. Rather than seeking exclusively secular solutions, policy makers should turn to religious actors to solve problems.[40]

The use of military force alone may not prove as efficient as this, as has been earlier witnessed on many cases, and only lead to retaliation from the warring parties more often onto the opposing actors leading to more loss of lives and destruction of property. The use of civil societies and religious forums in addition to the traditional settings of conflict management need to be considered as options for resolution. As the first decade of the 21 century drew to a close, in parts of Somalia at least it appeared that how to interpret Islamic scripture and its relationship to governance structures was something worth fighting for.[41] It is therefore important to note there is a need to analyse the history and role of religion, that is Islam, in Somalia. To be able to understand the implication and or consequences of the Islamic revival especially in relation to the Somali conflict also to look at the failure of the western ideologies in managing the conflict in Somalia.

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[40] ibid p.4
[41] Paul D. Williams. War and Conflict in Africa. (Cambridge: Polity press, 2011)p 141

The literature gap therefore that this study seeks to fill is to investigate whether religion can also be used to attain peace in Somalia much as it has been used to motivate violence In Somalia. Also whether Islamism is the solution for peace for Somalia. The study also seeks to find out if the inclusion of the Islamist movements in the conflict management process and subsequent peace building process is necessary.

1.5 Justification of the Study

The role that religion plays in politics and especially in conflict and conflict management has been overlooked through the years, with only few studies being carried out in the recent years. The increase in ethnic and religious based conflicts and more especially the increased number of terrorist attacks has invoked the need to include religion into the study of international relations and international conflict management. However it would be important to note that much has been researched on role of religion in conflict and yet little has been investigated on how religion can also influence and contribute to conflict management, in an effort to ensuring sustainable peace.

The same study has however not been largely done in relation to conflicts in Africa, more so in Somalia. The complex relationship between religion and conflict that is currently attributed to the Somali conflict is one that should be well researched in an effort to ensure contribution to conflict management and resolution in Somalia.

The research study would contribute to the understanding of the turn that is the Somali conflict from clan based to religious based and as such contribute in the resolution process. The purpose

of this research is to examine the relationship between religion and conflict especially in the case of the Somali conflict, it seeks to understand what it is about religion that sustains a conflict and also what hinders the management processes. The research study will also contribute in the ongoing debate on religion and conflict, that is, whether religion is a cause or factor to the Somali conflict. The results of this study therefore would also be important to policy makers who may use it to identify probable ways of addressing the crisis in Somalia.

1.6 Hypotheses

The study tested the following hypotheses:

i) Religion has been used in the Somali conflict both destructively in the conflict and constructively towards management;

ii) Religion has enabled the escalation and persistence of the Somali conflict;

iii) Clan systems supersede religious affiliations in the Somali conflict.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

The manner in which religion is understood would greatly influence the recommendations made towards conflict management. It is for this reason that a probable theory that would closely relate to and explain the use of religion in conflict is important. This is especially as it has been viewed that religious based conflict are quite difficult to solve, yet this has been due to the lack of understanding of the underlying factors and systems of these religious conflicts. Religion in the Somali conflict has been used for vast reasons. It has been taken up as a tool for political and ethnic mobilization purposes. Yet, once religion has been utilized, politicized and manipulated, this instrument can decrease the chances of setting an armed conflict peacefully. Conflicts where

the religious dimension is of central concern are even less likely to experience negotiated settlement than those conflicts where the religious concerns are more marginal.[42]

The theory that the study will use to explain the influence of religion in conflict and conflict management therefore would be the Instrumentalism theory. Instrumentalism rejects the view that differences in religion are real causes of political conflict. Conflict like all politics, always been and will always be about 'who gets what, when and how.' Instrumentalists, nevertheless recognize that religion can play a part in violent conflict. They see this role as the 'opium of the warriors'- a tool used by self-interested elites to mobilize support and fighting power for conflict.[43]

Power seeking elites manipulate the society by using religion to justify their deeds all in an effort to gain power. This has been the case of the Islamist leaders who lead the Islamist movements such as Al Shabaab. They were able to win over the hearts of the Somali society by portraying the western efforts in the country as disbelievers out to set a government that would not have the Somali interests at heart

The security of one's religious framework has been identified as a common good in whose defense individuals are willing to take up arms. Secondly, when conflicts are framed as being about religious values-not interests-it is more likely that combatants will regard.[44] One of the principal and social functions of religion is its ability to legitimize actions and institutions

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[42] Isak Svenson. Ending holy wars: Religion and Conflict Resolution in Civil War. (Australia: University of Queensland Press, 2012), p .5.
[43] Stein Sabina. Competing political science perspectives on the Role of Religion in Conflict. Page accessed 22nd April 2014.www.css.ethz.ch/publication/pdfs/politorbis-51-21-26.pdf. p.3
[44] Ibid p3

through moral authority. This can be seen from the manner in which the Islamist movements justify the draconian laws and punishments that they implement on traitors or those they feel are not accepting the ideology.

As complex and multilayered matrices of meaning, religion can be interpreted as legitimating-even sublimating- violence and at times be interpreted as encouraging unity and reconciliation. [45] Regarding instrumentals, the policy implication would be to deal with the true material causes of conflict, or to educate the masses so that they can no longer be manipulated by the elites.[46]

1.8 Research Methodology

As the study was assessing mostly information of an explanatory and descriptive nature, it therefore made use of qualitative research. The study would rely on information collected from various sources. It would be based on literature study and the available factual data and Religion will be the variable to be studied. The main source of information that the study relied on was from library and internet research. This was from library research, academic articles and journals, news sites and internet sites containing the relevant information on the topic of study. Additionally a limited field research also supplemented the secondary sources of information.

The researcher made use of open-ended questionnaires, interviews to respective experts on the subject matter, that is conflict management experts, academics, and religious leaders such as Imams, Islamic scholars, sheikhs and also to the Somali community. The interviews were guided by pre-structured and carried out in a semi formal manner to allow the respondent discuss issues probably not provided by the researcher and the interviews was recorded so as to enable

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[45] Ibid p5
[46] Ibid p6

further elaboration of concepts important to the study. The study was conducted in Nairobi. Target population will include the Somali community, Religious institutions such as Supreme council of Islam in Kenya, and religious leaders from various Islamic institutions in Nairobi, academics in the conflict management area and government officials from Kenya and Somalia.

With every other study there is always a possibility of limitations. As the study carried out is one based on a state that is not yet stable enough, and also due to financial restraint on the part of the researcher, it would not be possible to travel to Somalia to acquire first-hand information from the locals or government officials due to the levels of insecurity. The most that one would do therefore is travel to the refugee camps or the areas where most of the Somali community live such as Eastleigh, Garissa and Mombasa in sought for information. Language is also a barrier in communication as the researcher has no knowledge of the Somali language. As such, the use of an interpreter will be applied although the risk of information being altered in its true meaning may be experienced in the process. The sensitivity of the issue which is the Somali conflict and especially Islamic fundamentalism may cause the respondents not to be honest in their response.

1.9 Chapter Outline

Chapter One will be an introduction of the topic of research by explaining the broad context of the study, the statement problem, justification, theoretical framework, literature review, hypotheses and methodology of the study.

Chapter Two will provide the background of the study. It will provide a historical and descriptive analysis of the use of religion in conflict and specifically in Somalia. It will look at how the use of religion has brought rise to Islamic militancy and how it can be applied in the conflict

management process. The study will also attempt to link the theory provided to explain the influence that religion has in the Somali conflict. This will also lead to the identification of the literature gap of which the study sees to fill.

Chapter Three will analyse the concepts discussed that is religion, Islamism and especially in relation to the Somali conflict in an effort to understand how it contributes to conflict and how it can be used in the management process. This it will do through the help of data collection both from primary and secondary sources and a limited filed research.

Chapter Four analyses the data collected in the previous chapter in relation to the hypotheses stated. It will critically analyse and explain some of the emerging issues therein in an effort to better understand the study and how the research can contribute to the field of study which is conflict management. It will also address some of the challenges that may have been experienced by the researcher.

Chapter Five will give a conclusion to the study and explain some of the key findings attained from the study. It also suggests possible strategies, recommendations and suggestions on areas for further study.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN COFLICT AND MANAGEMENT: AN OVERVIEW

2.0 Introduction

With the end of the Cold War, it seemed that modernization and secularization would reduce conflicts in the world. However it has been noted that quite a number of the current conflicts in the world are influenced by ethnic ties or religious affiliations. A brief survey of the most entrenched deadly conflicts around the world suggests an urgent need for increased understanding of the role religion plays in human disputes.[47] However religion is seen not to be the main factor but is being used to influence conflict and hinder management efforts.

Conflicts influenced by religion are becoming difficult to manage especially conventionally. This is as religious based conflicts are types of ideological conflicts which are hardly managed militarily. This is evident from the rate at which these conflicts escalate and are sustained. It should be duly noted that, much as religion has been used to influence conflict, it also can be used to manage and reconcile it. This is especially as no religion favors conflict. As such, religion can also undeniably claim a significant role in helping communities resolve differences, in advancing international human rights, in overcoming great injustices and in encouraging peaceful management of conflicts.[48]

Whether religion is treated as a causal in ideological explanations, or as a contributing factor to other variables, it is an integral piece of the security puzzle and as such deserves focused

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[47] Bridget Moix. Matters of Faith, Religion, Conflict and Conflict Resolution, In The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice, edited by Morton Deutch et al. (San Fransisco: John wiley& Sons, Inc, 2006), p.583.
[48] Ibid,p.585.

attention. [49] Participants in the process of reconciling conflicting parties often look to religion in a special way both because religious elements may be seen as contributing to conflict and because religions can bring to bear deep traditions of forgiveness and peacemaking, but most religions can offer teachings and practices that can propel or improve process of reconciliation.[50] Thus the study seeks to understand what makes religion a factor that influences conflict. It seeks to understand how religion has been implemented in the Somali conflict so as to be able to understand why it has become a hindrance too in the management efforts. There is also need to establish how religion and its tenets can also be used in ultimately managing the Somali conflict and attaining reconciliation.

2.1 Background

The Somali government in the year 1969 was taken over by the military under the leadership of General Mohamed Siyad Barre. A form of "scientific socialism' was introduced and with it came the attempted eradication of the clan, one of the most fundamental elements of Somali society.[51] Siyad Barre's leadership however was termed dictatorial. This ultimately forced Somalis to seek allegiance to the various clans that they belonged to. Various groups all affiliated to the various clans were formed and were able to oust General Siyad Barre out of power in 1991, leaving Somalia without a stable government for more than two decades.

With Siyad Barre out of power, various clans each wanted to have leadership of the country leading to the beginning of the civil war. Dictatorship was replaced by the rule of warlord, as

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[49] Robert A. Seiple and Dennis R. Hoover. Religion and security: The new Nexus in International Relations.(xlibris corporation, 2012), p.13.
[50] Katherine Marshall, et al. Development and faith: Where Mind, Heart and Soul Work together. (Washington DC: The World Bank , 2007), p.280.
[51] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a Shattered State. (London: Zed books, 2012), p.54.

powerful clan leaders, supported by wealthy businessmen and mini-armies of militia men, turned much of Somalia into fiefdoms.[52]   At this time clannism became one of the sources of conflict, with the main clans involved, that is, the Darood, Dir, Issaq, Hawiye and Rahanweyn.

Conflict Management Efforts

In 1992, responding to the political chaos and humanitarian disaster in Somalia, the United States and other nations launched peacekeeping operations to create an environment in which assistance could be delivered to the Somali people.[53]   Earlier in April 1992, the UN had established an operation for Somalia-UNOSOM1. A force of comprising 50 military observers, 350 security personnel and up to 719 military support staff, its mandate was to monitor a cease fire in Mogadishu.[54] This mandate was expanded under an augmented UNOSOM II of 28000 military and police personnel in March 1993 to secure the environment for dispersing humanitarian assistance throughout Somalia. However by 1995, UNOSOM II had collapsed after suffering massive casualties.[55] When the United States and the UN withdrew their forces from Somalia, in 1994 and 1995 respectively order had still not been restored, conflict between rival warlords and their factions continued throughout the 1990s.[56] This led to the international community assisting Somalia 'from a distance'.

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[52] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a Shattered State. (London: Zed books, 2012), p.57.
[53] Tarrory Istran et al. The African state in a Changing Global Context: Breakdowns and Transformations.(London: Transaction Publishers,2011), p.58.
[54] Stefan Wolff and Christalia Yakinthou. Conflict management in divided societies: Theories and Practices. (New York: Routledge, 2012), p.157.
[55] Ibid,p.158.
[56] Tarrory Istran et al. The African state in a Changing Global Context: Breakdowns and Transformations.(London: Transaction Publishers,2011), p.58.

At this time, the era of direct intervention was over; it was now time for a long succession of internationally sponsored peace conferences, held a safe distance away in the neighbouring countries of Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti.[57] A number of transitional governments were formed during these conferences but they were unable to function effectively in Somalia. Even though these transitional administrations were internationally recognized as the legitimate authorities in Somalia, they were in reality no more than 'virtual' governments because they controlled hardly anything. [58] In 2000, another external mediation effort was undertaken, this time by the government of Djibouti, with the strong support of the UN. These talks, known as the Arta process, produced a Transitional National Government (TNG) in August 2000. By 2002 the TNG was virtually defunct, and in August 2003 its three- year mandate expired.[59] TNG failed to become minimally operational as was plagued by internal schisms, did not gain widespread bilateral recognition, and by 2002 appeared increasingly irrelevant.[60] Despite its continued presence, the reformed TNG, established in 2004, has been plagued by corruption and has been unable to control the various warlords and militant opposition groups, so it remains a façade government with no true power or control.[61] The TNG experience revealed much about the intentions of Islamist figures in Somalia, many of whom sought to parlay their leadership of sharia' courts into constituency-representative or cabinet positions in the government.[62]

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[57] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a Shattered State. (London: Zed books, 2012.) p.64.
[58] Ibid,p.65.
[59] Ken Menkhaus. Somalia: State Collapse and the Threat of Terrorism, Adelphi paper 364. (New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2004),p.8.
[60] Ibid,p.17.
[61] John Davis. Terrorism in Africa: The Evolving Front in the War on Terror. (Plymouth: Lexington books, 2010),p.10.
[62] KennethMenkhaus. Somalia and Somaliland; Terrorism, political Islam and State collapse, In Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa ed. By Robert I. Rotberg. (Washington: Brooklyn Institute press, 2005), p.29.

After the failure of TNG, the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was formed. The Transitional Federal government was the result of two years of difficult negotiations under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in Nairobi, Kenya, starting in 2002. In late 2004, the peace talks produced a government composed of 275 members of parliament, (selected along the lines of the 4.5 formula of clan proportional representation) and an eighty- nine- person cabinet led by President Abdullahi Yusuf and Prime Minister Ali Mohamed.[63] However the formed TFG, failed to succeed in its tenure as it did not get support from the Somalis who saw this Ethiopian- backed government as a conspiracy to further destabilize Somalia for their own interests. This was mostly due to the history that the two countries shared. Another attempt was made on forming yet another government. This led to the Mbagathi-Eldoret talks that saw a renewal of the TFG under President Sheikh Shariff Sheikh Ahmed in the year2009.

It was during this period of leadership of the second TFG that Islamist led numerous attacks in the country and were outspoken on their disapproval of the government. The Islamist movements saw President Shariff as a traitor as he had been one of the Islamist leaders and had agreed to negotiations with conditions that most did not approve. They saw this government as one used to eradicate Islamic values on which they hoped the government would adopt. In 2008, fighting between insurgent groups, Ethiopian and TFG forces intensified, and by late 2008, the TFG had lost control of most of south-central Somalia to the insurgent groups.

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[63] Ibid, p.30.

In December 2008, Ethiopian soldiers withdrew from Somalia, leaving behind only the AMISOM contingent of several thousand troops to help the new and fragile coalition government; which was formed in the neighbouring Djibouti following the resignation of President Abdullahi Yusuf in December 2008. The new government was headed by Sheikh Shariff Sheikh Ahmed, the former head of the ICU.[64] In February 2008, the then Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice designated Al Shabaab as a foreign terrorist organization. In early May 2009, Somali extremist groups backed by foreign fighters launched a major offensive against the Transitional Federal Government and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The primary objective of this offensive is to oust the TFG from power and force AMISOM to leave Somalia.[65] From late 2012, local elections were held in Mogadishu for the first time -- in more than two decades – and a new federal government was elected. Al-Shabaab continues to fight oust the government and its allies including AMISOM.

Kenya also currently joined in this effort in 2011 as a country, when it seemed that its own security was at risk when the Islamist movements Al shabaab kidnapped some tourists from the country. The Somali conflict has undergone transformation, from the conflict led by clan leaders to warlords; to the emergence of Islamist movements that have turned military in nature. Moreover the idea of religion offering safety, stability and order for the country has often seemed welcome by the Somali people and an Islamic solution to the management of the conflict viable. The return to the chaotic existence under the TFG and the growing violence only served to reinforce solidarity with the Islamic Movement which demonstrated, albeit for a limited period,

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[64] Tarrory Istran et al. The African state in a Changing Global Context: Breakdowns and Transformations.(London: Transaction Publishers,2011), p.59.
[65] Ted Dayne. Somalia; Current Conditions and Prospects for a Lasting Peace. (CRS report for Congres. Feb 4, 2012).

that there exists an alternative to the chaotic state in this country. Thus the alternative for the 'Islamic model' must contend with difficult objective circumstances and power brokers that will do their utmost to undermine this sort of move and prove once again that Islam offers the only viable solution.[66]

2.2 Religion and Conflict

The number of ideological conflicts in the world proves that religion cannot be ignored in the study of conflict and management. According to Appleby, religion constitutes an integral culture capable of forming personal and social identity and influencing subsequent experience and behavior in a profound way.[67] Religious identity forms from a mixture of beliefs and values, the influence of leaders and sense of belonging to a community, and one's membership or relationship to religious institutions and networks.[68] This is as in Somalia whereby religion has been used to create an identity uniting clan-inclined Somalis in an effort to rid the country of foreigners through conflict.

The secularization thesis has been overtaken by a desire to understand how religious actors contribute to both conflict and resolution of conflict. The initial shock of terrorism 'going global' on 11th September 2001 was followed by the steady realization that its declared motivator, religion, was actually a familiar feature of conflict. [69] This is also due to what has been termed by

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[66] Shaul Shay. Somalia between Jihad and Restoration. (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2008),p.195.

[67] R.S. Appleby The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation. (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers inc. 2000), p.9.

[68] Bridget Moix. Matters of Faith, Religion, Conflict and Conflict Resolution, In The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice, edited by Morton Deutch et al. (San Fransisco: John wiley& Sons, Inc, 2006), p. 593.

[69] Rosemary Durward and Lee Marsden. Religion, Conflict and Military intervention. (England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009), p.1.

some scholars as a 'resurgence of religion', in Somalia; it has been termed as the 'Revival of Islam'.

Coward and Smith, use the term religious peace building to describe a range activities performed by religious actors and institutions for the purpose of resolving and transforming deadly conflict, with the goal of building social and political institutions characterized by an ethos of tolerance and nonviolence.[70] Religious actors are underutilized in these roles, to the detriment of peace process.[71] This is especially where the use of religious institutions and leaders comes into aspect. Religion is often, though not always; an important factor in conflict and social tension, and thus it often needs to be part of the solution during periods of rebuilding.[72]

2.2.1 Islam in Somalia

Majority of the Somalis practice Islam which has also been integrated into their culture. However, the Islamic identity is one of several horizontal identities that cut across clan lines, but in a manner which tends to be subordinate to or which complements rather than challenge the primacy of clannism.[73] Virtually all Somalis are nominally members of a Sufi Order, the most important being the Qadirriya, Idrissiya and Salihiyaa. These orders are usually non-political but can be used as organizational vehicles for resistance when faced with the external enemies, as in the rebellion by Mohamed Abdullah Hassan against colonial rule in 1900-1920. The Sufi scholars hardly participated in conflict, that was present in Somalia through the years. They

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[70] Harold Coward and Gordon S. Smith. Religion and Peacebuilding. (New York: State University of New York Press, 2004.) p.5
[71] Ibid,p.9.
[72] Katherine Marshall, et al. Development and faith: Where Mind, Heart and Soul Work together. (Washington DC: The World Bank , 2007), p.279.
[73] Combating Terrorism Centre At West Point. Al Qaida's Mis-Adventures in the Horn of Africa. (Diane Publishing Company 2009),p.29.

propagated Islam by peaceful methods, and their role was mostly featured in conflict resolution. They were the leaders that the Somalis turned to when they had problems.[74]

Islam continued to play an important role in people's political consciousness in the years leading up to and immediately following independence in the 1960. The Islamic faith had for so long been such a part of the Somali identity that it was in many ways inevitable that it would play a role in the formation of the newly independent, modernizing Somali State. Siad Barre's coup in 1969 and the subsequent introduction of 'scientific socialism' crushed much of the dynamism and free thinking of the post-independence years. Religion was not immune from this; the turning point came in 1975 when religious leaders voiced strong opposition to the promulgation of new and controversial family legislation, which among other things gave more rights to women. The authorities responded to the criticism by executing ten of the most vocal clerics and imprison a dozen others.[75] After the fall of Siad Barre and the subsequent collapse of the Somali state, there was an explosion of religious groups in the country. However most of the powerful groups in the 1990s were run on a clan basis.[76] A bewildering array of Islamic associations suddenly emerged, each purporting to represent a discrete religious doctrine. Their common denominator was the desire for an "authentic" form of Islamic governance in Somalia.[77]

Islam is no exception when it comes to the importance of religious leaders as is often emphasized to have been the manner in which the religion is conveyed and carried forth through generations.

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[74] Jon Abbink. The Islamic Courts Union; The Ebb and Flow of a Somali Islamist Movement, In Movers and Shakers: Social movements in Africa, edited by Ellis Stephen and Ineke Van Kessel. (Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV Publishers, 2009), p.95.
[75] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a shattered state. (London: Zed books, 2012), p.76.
[76] Ibid,p.77.
[77] International Crisis Group. Somali Islamists. (Africa report no. 100,12 December 2005), p.2.

Somali Ulemaa (sheikhs) established themselves as the respected and accepted religious authority in Somalia.[78] However it is the same religious leaders who have contributed to the manner in which the religion is practiced, mostly due to the manner in which they interpret the scriptures and propagate the message therein. Interpreting religion for the purpose of political ends will definitely end up in religion chaos and division as the case of Somali extremists.[79] This factor was considered during the regime of Siyad Barre. He introduced Scientific Socialism a system that did not incorporate religion. Socialism in the 1950s and 1960s diminished the role of Muslim leaders and certain institutions traditionally controlled by religious scholars were transformed to secular authorities.[80]

To fully appreciate the Somali situation, it is important to understand the role Islam has taken in Somalia as both a populist response to perceived Western encroachment and as a type of political order to fill the governance gap that has persisted for nearly two decades.[81] Therefore it is important to define Islamism as has been used to explain the use of Islam in a political context and in the Somali conflict. Islamism is the term used for the extreme political version of Islam that sees Islam in a state of constant conflict with the west, non-Muslims and insufficiently pious Muslims. Even within Islamism there are categories, but it is important to understand the Islamic category is a microscopic minority and not representative of the Muslim people.[82] Islamism is expressed through a rejection of rational discourse, pluralism, free speech and democratic

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[78] Dr. Elmi A. M. The Battle Dossier: Anatomy of frustration, Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaa. (1st Edition, November 2010),p.17.
[79] Ibid, p.19.
[80] Eloy E.Cuevas and Madeleine Wells. Somalia;Line in the sand: Identification of MYM vulnerabilities. (US Army War College), p.5.
[81] Ibid
[82] Kunal Mukherjee. Islamism and Neo-Fundamentalism, In Religion, conflict and military intervention, edited by Durward, Rosemary and Lee Marsden (England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009.) p.17

governance. It advocates resources to violence and is a worldwide response to the peculiar strains of the twentieth century.[83] Today the Islamist response is both internal and external, that is, to release Islam from the scholastic cobwebs as well as to rid it of the ideas imbibed from the West.[84] Islamism is the response of Muslim theoreticians and freelance activists to the challenge of modernity. Its immediate ancestry lies with the salafist reformist thinkers of the late nineteenth century. Like the Wahabbis, these reformers sought to return to the roots of Islam for guidance, rejecting the tradition of imitation (taqlid) in favor of authenticity.[85]

The use of religion in this sense then contributed to the emergence of Islamic militancy. A shift from traditions to texts as the source for determining the proper behavior for Muslims goes a long way forward explaining the rise of Islamic fundamentalism across the globe.[86]

2.2.2 Islamic Militancy

The use of religion has been manipulated to justify the reasons as to why Islamic militant groups emerge and engage in conflict. Militancy also encompasses politics and a desire not only to change individual behavior and levels of spirituality but also extend the influences of religion across political, economic and legal spheres based upon interpretations located within the Quran and Hadiths.[87]

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[83] Ibid,p.19.
[84] Ibid, p.24.
[85] Alexander De Waal. Islamism and its enemies in the Horn of Africa. (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004), p.4.
[86] Jonathan Fox. Ethnoreligious Conflict in the late Twentieth Century: A General Theory. (Maryland: Lexington books, 2002) ,p.53.
[87] Stephen Vertgans. Militant Islam: A Sociology of Characteristics, Causes and Consequences. (New York: Routledge, 2009), p.5.

Islamic militancy has been present in Somalia since the colonial period. The Islamist movements then was led by Seyyid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan. Seyyid Mohamed and his dervish fighters had an uncompromising attitude towards the colonialist presence in the country as they were determined to drive all of them from the Somali soil. With this objective in mind, in 1899, Seyyid Mohamed called on all the young Somali men irrespective of their clan affiliation to join his dervish army. He appealed to the clans in the spirit of their Islamic religious ties. Phrased differently, the message of the Seyyid was: let us unite in the name of our religion and confront the occupying foreigner infidels in order to save our land and our Islamic faith.[88] The same approach has been utilized by the Islamist movements.

Whereas mistrust of foreigners and their types of governance is common place, Islam offered and offers an alternative framework for rule and law that is perceived by some to be more indigenous and authentic.[89] It is for this fact that Islamist movements were able to recruit and gain support from Somalis. However Islamist movements did not exist on their own rather there are various factors that contributed to their emergence.

However with the exposure and external influence experienced in the country, a different ideology was introduced in Somalia. This ideology is used by most of the Islamist movements in the world to propagate the religion and also guide their operations. The ideology, termed Wahhabism or Salafism, had been introduced to the country from Saudi Arabia by the Somali youth who had gone to study in Egypt and Saudi Arabia and were exposed to it. Ironically this

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[88] Abdullah A. Mohamoud. State collapse and Post-Conflict Development in Africa: The case of Somalia. (USA: Purdue University Press, 2006), p.71.
[89] Eloy E.Cuevas and Madeleine Wells. Somalia;Line in the sand: Identification of MYM vulnerabilities. (US Army War College), p.6.

created division among Islamists within Somalia, by opening the way to relatively new interpretations of the Koran following a more Saudi-style Wahhabi ideology, which condemned more traditional forms of Islam such as the Sufi traditions so popular inside Somalia.[90] The Salafist seek to change the traditional Islam that has been practiced in Somalia for centuries. This however it does through hard line methods that are carried out by the Islamist movements who exert their ideology upon the Somalis and those who object to it are termed as infidels and punished strictly. Wahhabism could be political, it could be Islamist with a focus on peaceful change, but if could also be violent. Wahhabism was nevertheless to leave its mark on the trajectory of Militant Islamist organization inside Somalia.[91]

Although militant Islamist movements now wield an unprecedented degree of influence, especially in terms of their control of such large parts of the country, political Islam, including the advocacy of violence to achieve its aims, is not new to Somalia.[92] History has been repeating itself time and again, Islamist movements keep changing in name but the same ideology remains. To a certain extent, the differences between Somalia's Islamist movements were doctrinal: traditionalists resisted the encroachment of what they considered to be alien reformist stands of Islamic thought. Among the reformists, there was friction between modernist thinkers affiliated with the Muslim Brothers and conservative groups inspired by Salafism. And conventional Salafis disapproved of those from their ranks who embraced political and military action.[93]

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[90] Stig Jarle Hansen. Al Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group, 2005-2012.(London: Hurst & Company,2013), p.16.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a shattered state. (London: Zed books, 2012), p.74.
[93] International Crisis Group. Somali Islamists. (Africa report no. 100,12 December 2005), p.2.

Since the onset of the war on terrorism, however, Somalia has come under intensive scrutiny as a potential safe haven for terrorist networks. Its Islamic movements, Al Ittihad Al Islamiya (AIAI) have been the focus of attention for possible links to Al Qaeda.[94] For the most part, worries that Islamists would take over pockets of the collapsed country, or even come to exercise control over the entire state, were decoupled from concerns that Somalia would be used as a terrorist safe haven.[95]

In 1991 the Siad Barre regime collapsed, but AIAI was divided on the issue of violent jihad in Somalia. Parts of the organization engaged in the battle for Arrare in April 1991, defending the interests of the Darood clan; this illustrated the centrifugal forces of clannism influencing AIAI. Crucially, several future Al-Shabaab leaders ended up in Afghanistan, most likely, drawing upon Networks established when Al- Qaeda had a Somali presence.[96]

The role of Islam cannot be undermined in Somalia. Much as it has been manipulated to use by the Islamist movements, it has also proved efficient in other areas. It had given rise to the establishment of Sharia courts, Islamic charities also became rather prominent in Somalia as this provided the much needed aid to Somalis and the provision of Islamic schools.

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[94] Ken Menkhaus. Somalia: State Collapse and the Threat of Terrorism, Adelphi paper 364. (New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2004), p.49.
[95] Ibid,p.55.
[96] Stig Jarle Hansen. Al Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group, 2005-2012.(London: Hurst & Company,2013), p.17.

2.2.3 Islamic Movements

Islamic movements were primarily organizations bent on fostering Somalia's Islamic identity and furthering the interests of Somalis in a state where political opposition was impossible.[97] The Islamic movements that have emerged in Somalia include Al Ittihad Al Islamiya, United Islamic Courts, Al Shabaab and Ahlu Sunnah wal Jamaa.

Al Ittihad Al Islamiya (AIAI)

Al Ittihad Al Islamiya, founded in early 1990s, is among the first Islamist movements to emerge in Somalia. Al-Ittihad is an Islamic group whose principle ideology was to establish an Islamic state and to bring law and order by utilizing the Islamic Court system.[98] It was created by the merger of a number of regional organizations that followed the strict Saudi Wahhabi form of Islam, very different from the mainstream Somali religious practices.[99] Al Ittihad Al Islamiya was the first militant group that had a political agenda. Al Ittihad assertion that Islam could not be separated from politics offered a bold challenge to the regime at a time when Barre's 'revolution' had run out of steam.[100]

In its attempts to create an Islamic state, Al Ittihad initially established an Islamist 'emirate' near the port of Bossasso in north-eastern Somalia, which served as a base and training facility for

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[97] Jon Abbink. The Islamic Courts Union; The ebb and flow of a Somali Islamist Movement, In Movers and Shakers: Social movements in Africa, edited by Ellis Stephen and Ineke Van Kessel. (Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV Publishers, 2009), p.96.

[98] Ted Dayne. Somalia; current conditions and prospects for a lasting peace. (CRS report for Congres. Feb 4, 2012),p.23.

[99] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a Shattered State. (London: Zed books, 2012), p.77.
[100] International Crisis Group. Somali Islamists. (Africa report no. 100,12 December 2005), p.4.

about a thousand fighters. It was driven out of the region and in 1992 set up base in the town of Luuq in southern Somalia's Gedo region, near the border with Ethiopia.[101] AIAI managed to govern Luuq from 1991-1996, imposing shari'a law on the community.[102] In 1996, the Ethiopian branch of AIAI engaged in several acts of terrorism inside Ethiopia, including two hotel bombings and an assassination attempt. Those acts prompted the U.S State Department to label AIAI a terrorist organization.[103]

Some of Al-Ittihad members went to become powerful leaders of the Union of Islamic Courts, Al- Shabaab and other groups.[104] Such include Hassan Turki and Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys. The former leader of Al-Ittihad, Sheikh Hassan dahir aweys, remains a key figure in the Somali Islamist Movement, and is in a sense its spiritual head. [105]

The defeats of AIAI in Gedo, as well as ideological differences over how Wahhabism should be promoted and clan differences, led to serious fragmentation within AIAI.[106] Because of internal troubles, AIAI was by 1998 a spent force, fragmented and weak.[107] Al-Ittihad abandoned its ambition to spread its ideology through military means and began to concentrate on providing

[101] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a shattered state. (London: Zed books, 2012), p.78.
[102] KennethMenkhaus. Somalia and Somaliland; Terrorism, political Islam and State collapse, In Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa ed. By Robert I. Rotberg. (Washington: Brooklyn Institute press, 2005), p.35.
[103] Ibid,p.35.
[104] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a shattered state. (London: Zed books, 2012), p.77.
[105] Ibid, p.78.
[106] Stig Jarle Hansen. Al Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group, 2005-2012.(London: Hurst & Company,2013), p.21.
[107] Ibid,p.22.

social services to communities through Islamic schools and health care centers.[108] This shows how slowly the Islamist movements had begun to find favor amongst the Somali.

Islamic Courts Union/ Union of Islamic Courts (ICU/UIC)

After the collapse of Al Ittihad Al Islamiya, the provision of justice was carried out by a number of Sharia' courts that had been established in some parts of Somalia to ensure law and order. These courts had been present since the fall of Siyad Barre but had after the fall of AIAI, been more prevalent. The courts generally executed judicial functions and hardly engaged in military functions. For the most part, the Islamic movements – the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) developed as a grassroots organization designated to correct the chaotic situation in Somalia and restore law and order. Due to the fact that the organization grew at different focal points, it came to contain a wide range of moderate and extremist leaders.[109] However this eventually changed. The courts started to represent an alternative power system when they united to face a common enemy, the US- backed Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism, which was formed by a group of warlords in 2006.[110]

The Islamic Courts Union (ICU) in Somalia was a social-religious movement with a political programme.[111] In the absence of state authority and public security in 2004, it responded to the social need of local people and grew into a large militia force that by late 2006 controlled much

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[108] Ted Dayne. Somalia; Current Conditions and Prospects for a lasting Peace. (CRS report for Congres. Feb 4, 2012),p.23.

[109] Shaul Shay. Somalia between Jihad and Restoration. (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2008), p.194.
[110] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a Shattered State. (London: Zed books, 2012), p.80.
[111] Jon Abbink. The Islamic Courts Union; The ebb and flow of a Somali Islamist Movement, In Movers and Shakers: Social movements in Africa, edited by Ellis Stephen and Ineke Van Kessel. (Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV Publishers, 2009), p.87.

of southern Somalia. The ICU emerged from a number of Sharia courts in the Mogadishu region and its predominant clan base was Hawiye/ Habr-Gidir. The ICU could thus in many respects be compared with the Warlord/Clan militia forces, pursuing a similar armed struggle to power but in this case in the name of Islam.[112] The ICU was a heterogeneous alliance of Islamic groups, Islamic courts and Radical Islamists in the opposition to the TFG business or progress.[113] Much to the surprise of the outside world, the UIC militarily defeated the warlords' alliance in Mogadishu, and, for the latter half of 2006, controlled significant parts of southern and central Somalia. For the brief six months it was in power, life under the UIC was, for many Somalis, safer than it had been for the past sixteen years.[114] In December 2006, a military campaign by Ethiopia, in support of the Somali TFG, ousted the ICU.

As the courts gained power, they were seized upon by the politically ambitious, principally Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys, the former leader of Al-Ittihad, and an active promoter of the interests of the Ayr sub-clan. With the help of his fellow Ayr member and Afghan-trained lieutenant, Adan Hashi Ayro, who transformed the court militias into the highly disciplined Al Shabaab army, Aweys sidelined moderate elements in the UIC and alienated many non-Ayro clan members.[115] In mid December 2006, the UIC declared a jihad against Ethiopia; and by so doing signed its own death warrant.[116] The UIC's miscalculated declaration of jihad against Ethiopia led to its military defeat, but it had already won the battle for hearts and minds.[117] The

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[112] Ibid, p.98.

[113] Ibid p.100
[114] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a shattered state. (London: Zed books, 2012), p.80.
[115] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a Shattered State. (London: Zed books, 2012.)p.83
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid p.85

UIC leaders described their flight from Mogadishu as a 'tactical withdrawal', saying an 'Iraqi-style' Insurgency' would follow. Such a strategy was encouraged by radical Islamists elsewhere in the world, some of whom adopted UIC militiamen as their fellow jihadists.[118]

The Ethiopian occupation and the US airstrikes did not succeed in eliminating Islamism from Somalia. Quite the opposite; the UIC re-emerged in a far more dangerous form as Al-Shabaab, which took over large parts of central and southern Somalia, including most of Mogadishu.[119] In many areas, clan militias were replaced by religious armies, including Al-Shabaab, Hizbul Islam and the Sufi group Ahlu Sunnah wal Jamaa, which fought on the side of the transitional government against the radical Islamist movements.[120]

Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaa (ASWJ)

Ahlu Sunnah as an organization was established in the year 1991 in Mogadishu. The objective of which the organization was established was to peacefully counter the organized threat from the Wahhabi groups from countries in the Gulf in late 1970s that were growing in numbers since then. The peaceful method Ahlu Sunnah employed is to preach the people the correct way of Islam that is peace, tolerance and benevolent. The timing of the organizational establishment was perfect because when General Aideed's forces combined with the Mogadishu people's revolt in 1991 succeeded to overthrow Siad Barre governments the extremists tried to fill the vaccum.[121] Ahlu Sunnah wal Jamaa (ASWJ) brings together traditional Somali Sufi leaders in an attempt to

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[118] Ibid p.84
[119] Ibid p.85
[120] Ibid.
[121] Dr. Elmi A. M. The Battle Dossier: Anatomy of frustration, Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaa. (1st Edition, November 2010.), p.9.

resist the encroachment of reformist Islamist movements.[122]   ASWJ's perceived political allegiance, however, was widely seen as inappropriate for religious leaders, and despite initial popularity in Banaadir and Lower Shabelle, it eventually lost influence to other, better funded Islamic groups.[123]

From 1991-1998 Ahlu Sunnah sheikhs succeed in informing and educating the people in true teachings of Islam so that the people wouldn't support the ideology of hatred, violence and destruction that these groups spreading in Somalia in the name of Islam.[124] Although Ahlu Sunnah are categorically a peaceful people because of their religious beliefs, the grief of the people was gaining momentum from the time the extremists started digging out the graves of Ahlu Sunnah Sheikhs. Ahlu Sunnah sheikhs adopted on 4th December 2008, a resolution of armed struggle against the extremists.[125]

Since 2008, Addis was sponsoring the ASWJ, a Somali paramilitary group consisting of Sufis and Moderates opposed to the radical Wahhabi rebel group Al Shabaab. Ethiopia even brokered a cooperation agreement between the ASWJ and TFG.[126] The ASWJ tried to fight against Wahhabism and were involved in the peace negotiations in 2004, Mbagathi thus also getting involved in political issues. Its (ASWJ) efforts to mediate between politics, radical Islam and

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[122] International Crisis Group. Somali Islamists. (Africa report no. 100,12 December 2005),p.15.
[123] Ibid, p.16.
[124] Ibid p.9
[125] Dr. Elmi A. M. The Battle Dossier: Anatomy of Frustration, Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaa. (1st Edition, November 2010), p.11.
[126] Tarrory Istran et al. The African state in a Changing Global Context: Breakdowns and Transformations.(London: Transaction Publishers,2011), p.60.

Somali Muslim traditions have often placed it in a difficult position. In late 2008 it started to form militias to counter the Al Shabaab insurgents.[127]

Al Shabaab

Al Shabaab grew from a being a small militia associated with a group of sharia courts into Somalia's most powerful and effective Islamist movement. [128] Al Shabaab has ideological divisions, with some leaders saying that they are fighting for the establishment of an Islamic republic within Somalia's current borders, some that they want to establish the 'Islamic Republic of Greater Somalia', and others that they want to take the jihad far beyond 'Greater Somalia', creating a giant Islamic state stretching down into East Africa and up towards Egypt. Al Shabaab later became an occupying force in some area, leading to a greater degree of stability and enabling it to impose more rigorously its strict rules and regulations.[129]

Al-Shabaab is more than a product of insecurity; it is also a product of the export of Al-Qaeda's ideology into Somalia. The importance of international informal networks in this process should not be forgotten. It was a network of former Afghanistan veterans that established Al-Shabaab and the diffusion of ideas has gone through individuals with Al-Qaeda's connections.[130] Al Shabaab's way of recruitment is by the use of the religious schools, and through the religious leaders who identify the youth who can be trained. Younger members of the Somali community

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[127] Jon Abbink. The Islamic Courts Union; The Ebb and Flow of a Somali Islamist Movement, In Movers and Shakers: Social movements in Africa, edited by Ellis Stephen and Ineke Van Kessel. (Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV Publishers, 2009), p.96.

[128] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a shattered state. (London: Zed books, 2012.) p.85
[129] Ibid p.86
[130] Stig Jarle Hansen. Al Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group, 2005-2012.(London: Hurst & Company,2013), p.6.

might dislike the clan system and Al-Shabaab to a certain extent challenged clan loyalties, but no organizations in Somalia can escape the clan trap.[131]

Al Shabaab as an Islamist movements carried grievous atrocities. These were carried out through suicidal bombings in Somalia as well as the neighbouring countries. Amongst these was the strict implementation of the sharia law and severe punishments. Al Shabaab's spectacular attack so far, the 11 July, 2010 suicide bombings that killed seventy-six people watching soccer on TV in Uganda, was in fact an example of the local focus. Indeed the attack was indicative of operational sophistication in that it demonstrated how Al Shabaab was able to inflict casualties outside Somalia, and how it could use the international jihadist narrative to enlist support in Uganda,[132] as well as other countries. AMISOM and TFG also launched a major offensive against the Al Shabaab forces in Mogadishu on 22 February 2011.[133]

Though the international community is hesitant to collaborate with a group it considers to be terrorists, Al Shabaab's dominance in Somalia is so widespread that it will be impossible to solidify a peace agreement without its participation; as ostracizing the group runs the risk of perpetuating the conflict beyond the possibility of cooperation.[134]

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[131] Ibid, p.7.
132 Ibid, p.96.
133 Ibid, p.106.
134 John Davis. Terrorism in Africa: The Evolving Front in the War on Terror. (Plymouth: Lexington books, 2010), p.9.

2.3 The Role of Religion in Conflict and Management

Gopin states that religious traditions are dynamic and can change profoundly through discussion and the influence of leadership.[135] Furthermore, religious actors are playing an increasingly important and valuable role in resolving international conflicts.[136] Thus, it is important to understand not only the relevant texts of a religious system but also the actual practitioners themselves.[137] There is need to understand the appeal of extremism, and also the interplay of religious values and institutions.

Various theories have been able to explain conflict and its factors, however not many have been able to fully explain how religion influences conflict. The Instrumentalist theory has been used to explain how identities, such as religion, can influence conflict. It is important to note that the instrumentalist path does not mean that religion is salient to politics. Rather it is meant to explain cases where it hasn't been salient in recent times. Thus, it can apply to cases where old but dormant religious divisions are awakened as well as to cases where they are made politically relevant for the first time.[138] Such as in Somalia where Islamist movements were once dormant become active with regards to politics.

The Instrumentalist theory places emphasis on the role of the elites, such as religious leaders, in conflict. Instrumentalism views that the elite often manipulate religion to suit their own interests. This allows for mass mobilization and radicalization. For example one can observe how easy it

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135 Marc Gopin. Holy War, Holy Peace: How religion can bring peace to the Middle East. (New York, Oxford University Press, Inc, 2002), p.8.
136 Ibid, p.1.
137 Ibid, p.3.
138 Jonathan Fox. Ethnoreligious conflict in the late Twentieth Century: A General Theory. (Maryland: Lexington books, 2002.), p.38.

was for Somalis to join Islamist movements after the Ethiopian invasion, this also being despite the traditional Sufi teachings dominant amongst the Somalis. By the late 2000s, Islam was the only belief system in Somalia that had not been discredited, and citizens went to religious leaders with their need for protection. They were simply seen as the best alternatives. The pre-Al Shabaab networks were seen as upholders of justice and fairness, since they were ostensibly dedicated to Islam.[139]

It is for this reason that Instrumentalists state that religion in itself does not necessarily encourage violence but rather it has been manipulated especially by extremist religious leaders for political purposes. This is done through the propagation of misinterpreted religious doctrines. Religion can be a contributing factor in conflict or an inhibitor and occasionally both at the same time. It has the potential to complicate military intervention or facilitate its success.[140] Religion defines the perpetrators of terrorist violence, and it influences the politico-strategic response, as well as tactics and outcomes from military intervention.[141] Religion is only one identity factor that contributes to a sense of self and helps define individuals and groups in society: however, it can be a particularly powerful influence in moving people toward or away from violent conflict.[142]

The enhanced profile and importance of Islamic services is perceived by some observers as evidence of a deliberate strategy by Islamist organizations and their sponsors to take power in

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[139] Stig Jarle Hansen. Al Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group, 2005-2012.(London: Hurst & Company,2013), p.23.
[140] Rosemary Durward and Lee Marsden. Religion, conflict and military intervention. (England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009), p.2.
[141] Ibid, p.3.
[142] Bridget Moix. Matters of Faith, Religion, Conflict and Conflict Resolution, In The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice, edited by Morton Deutch et al. (San Fransisco: John wiley& Sons, Inc, 2006), p.593.

Somalia.[143]   The use of sharia courts has also been evident in restoring justice and order. Most courts, however, are less a product of Islamist activism than of Somalia's two most common denominators; clan and the traditional Islamic faith.[144]

Religion is often used to justify ethnic aspiration and ethnicity can often give rise to religious traditions.[145] Also attempts by secular nationalist governments to accommodate religion through compromise often leads to the double frustration of being seen as the traitors to both sides.[146] Religion leaders at times contribute to conflict escalation through their doctrinal and ethical interpretation but other times, religious leaders call for tolerance, and co-existence among warring parties. They also lead mediating forums and opt for dialogues as a way of managing conflict. Examples of religious leaders and organizations to take part in conflict management include The All African conference of Churches in mediating a cessation to the Sudan conflict in 1972, and Archbishop Desmond tutu's role in south Africa. Somalia's case ideally is a political strife that turned ideological, moreover religion, if given chance has provision for reconciliation thus the importance of considering use of Islam in conflict management.

2.4 Conclusion

 The resurgence of Islam in Somalia is a factor worth noting as it has contributed to the emergence of Islamist movements and the sustained Somali conflict. Various scholars such as Appleby,[147] Horowitz,[148] have sought to explain how religion influences conflict. However not

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[143] International Crisis Group. Somali Islamists. (Africa report no. 100,12 December 2005),p. 19.
[144] Ibid,p19.
[145] Jonathan Fox. Ethnoreligious conflict in the late twentieth century: a general theory. (Maryland: Lexington books, 2002),p.71.
[146] Ibid, p.49.
[147] See more in R.S. Appleby The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation. (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers inc. 2000.)

enough research has been done on   how religion can be used in conflict management and eventually peace building especially in Somalia. The need to understand the Islamist movements is very important as this will eventually enable one to understand how religion has been used by the Islamist movements to gain popularity. This study therefore will seek to fully understand what it is about religion and how religion has been used in the establishment of Islamist movements that are currently in conflict with the government. Also it seeks to examine how religion can be used to bring about sustainable peace to Somalia.

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[148] See more in Donald L. Horowitz. Ethnic Groups in Conflict. (London: University of California Press,1985.)

CHAPTER THREE

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN CONFLICT AND MANAGEMENT: THE CASE OF

SOMALIA, 1999 - 2012

3.0 Introduction

The Somali conflict has shown dynamism in its course. The current situation in the conflict is the emergence of Islamic militancy, changing the course from one dominated by warlords to one guided by religious principles. The onset of Islamic militancy, has also brought to light the complexity of the conflict in terms of the role of religion in the conflict and how it has seemed difficult to resolve.

Religion has become a factor in international relations that cannot be ignored. Religion has also influenced various conflicts currently in the world. It has contributed to humanitarian transgressions, yet at the same time has also described values that can contribute to conflict management towards sustainable peace. However efforts to resolve conflicts influenced by religion using conventional means have been futile. Religion as a factor or resource of conflict has been vastly addressed and the same can be attempted in order to understand the situation in Somalia.

3.1 Religion as a Cause of Conflict

Somalia is a country whereby majority of its people observe the same religion, that is, Islam. For this purpose it is often assumed that a country where by the belief shared is the same, chances of conflict would be minimal. Religion in Somalia has been a cause of conflict. Religion is a source of legitimacy. In fact it can be used to justify nearly any policy or action, even those that may

otherwise be considered unjustifiable. [149]This is especially when the Somalis are in conflict with other parties whom they feel are a threat to them. For example, when the Islamist movements in Somalia declared jihad on Ethiopia in an effort to liberate their fellow Somalis in the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, to them it seemed as a religious confrontation that was religious based. Moreover when Ethiopia intervened in the Somali conflict, it did not gain favor from the Somalis who saw them as a long time enemy. This is also as they had religious differences and were viewed as Christians who had come to oppress them in their own country. This same reason saw the lack of support of the Transitional governments that were created with the support of Ethiopia and Western powers. They were seen as lacking in Islamic values and rather taking up secular values. For this reason Islamist movements were able to mobilize Somalis in fighting against these governments.

However in Somalia, a form of sectarianism has occurred, whereby there is conflict between the extremists and the moderates, that is between those following the Salafi ideology and the traditional Sufi- followers in the country. This in itself had gone to further the conflict in Somalia. The extremists use violence and extreme punishments to propagate the ideology and exert their presence. They also are in conflict with the traditional Sufis whom they view as not following the religion as should be followed and practiced. They are of the view that their ideology is the right one and for this reason those who are not observing it are infidels, together with the unbelievers. And for this reason then they should be punished, for being' moderate'.

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[149] Jonathan Fox and Shmuel Sandler. Religion in World Conflict. (New York: Routledge,2006), p.34.

In general, Sufi Brotherhoods are moderate and use peaceful means of propagating Islam that offer due consideration to the norms and customs of the people. On the other hand, Salafism stands completely in opposition to the traditional Islam in Somalia. The adherents of this ideology identify the pernicious innovations (bida) introduced to Islam as the primary obstruction that caused the decadence of Muslims.[150] One can observe then that it is for this reasons that the extremist view those not following Salafism as infidels. To this effect therefore they then turn to violence to ensure that Salafism is followed. They consider their principal duty to be spreading al Aqidah al Sahiha (the right theology),deliberately engaging in conflicts with other Islamic groups.[151]

It is for this purpose that when the 'moderate' Muslims in Somalia support the government in a quest for peace, the extremists view them as traitors. This fact in itself has also contributed to the sustained conflict. Thus one can observe that religion can be viewed as a latent source of conflict which if met with any triggering occurrence can lead to the escalation of conflict. Religion in Somalia has been seen to contribute also in governance. It is to this effect that one can note that religion and politics are distinct but not separate categories in the discussion about conflict and peace in the world.[152] Fox also observes that the religious insurgence is, in part, a reaction to the challenges posed to and breakdown of religious values by the new secular values.[153]

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[150] see Dr. Osman Farah. Somalia; Exploring a Way out. (Nairobi: A National Civic forum Publication, 2011. August 2010) pp44- P47
[151] ibid
[152] Gerrie Ter Haar et al. Bridge or Barrier: Religion, Violence and Vision for Peace.(Lieden, koninklijke Brill NV.2005), p.32.
[153] Ibid p.54 Jonathan Fox. Ethnoreligious conflict in the late twentieth century: a general theory. (Maryland: Lexington books, 2002.)

It can therefore be noted that although the principal ingredients which caused Somalia's protracted conflict had very little to do with religious differences, religion has assumed a more significant role in recent years.[154]

3.2 Religion as a Resource for Conflict

Religion in most of the conflicts in the world is not necessarily the factor to conflict but rather has been used to justify violence and conflict. It has been taken up as an outlet through which frustrated parties find an avenue to express their rage. The Somali conflict is no less. Situations in Somalia such as poverty, insecurity and the conflict itself made religion a suitable avenue for peace to be attained. Furthermore, it is often true that there are powerful social motivations for affiliating with any group that espouses a certain doctrinal approach to religious experience, an affiliation that, in turn enmeshes the person in a particular moral, social and political universe. [155]

Religion has been used as an instrument to conflict. Religion is a powerful instrument in the hands of those who use it.[156] Recently, many of the conflicts that have been viewed as being religious-based -- more often than not -- do not have religion as the main factor of the conflict. Rather, the reality is that religion becomes intertwined with a range of causal factors- economic, political and social- that define, propel and sustain conflict.[157] This goes to show that religion has therefore been adopted as a means of identity so as to cause the escalation of a conflict. The Somali conflict is of no exception. It has moved from warlordism to the current Islamist led

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[154] Paul D. Williams. War and Conflict in Africa. (Cambridge: Polity press, 2011), p.140.
[155] Marc Gopin. Religion, violence and Conflict Resolution. (Consortium on peace Research, Education and development. PEACE AND CHANGE, vol.22 no.1, January 1997 1-31), p.5.
[156] Gerrie Ter Haar et al. Bridge or Barrier: Religion, Violence and Vision for Peace.(Lieden, koninklijke Brill NV.2005), p. 31.
[157] David Smock. Religion in World Affairs: Its Role in Conflict and Peace. (United States Institute of Peace Special Report 201, February 2008), p.3.

conflict. Islamic militant groups such as the Al- Shabaab have used religion to propagate their agenda and to even recruit members.[158]

Certainly one cannot dismiss the cognitive or emotional needs that may be met by a particular text, idea or spiritual image,[159] jihadists rewards are paradise. Political manipulation of religion is probably the most frequent way in which religion is used, or in the view of others, misused in present times.[160]

In religious circles, the attempt to establish a legitimate foundation for religion as a resource for peace is pursued notably by highlighting those aspects of scared scriptures and tradition that are conducive to a positive valuation religion in public life. Hence it is important to identify and subsequently propagate those elements in a particular religious tradition that have the potential to make a significant contribution to the solution of social and political conflicts and thus to establish peace.[161]

Subtle theological changes in a particular culture might provide an early warning system of sorts as to the nascent growth of religious intolerance and the justification of violence. This would be an invaluable tool in responding to conflict before it reaches a stage beyond which it cannot be controlled.[162] For example the change from the traditional Sufi tradition to Salafi ideologies amongst the Somali could have been a warning to the Somalis and the international community

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[158] David Smock. Religion in World Affairs: Its Role in Conflict and Peace. (United States Institute of Peace Special Report 201, February 2008.), p.3.

[159] Ibid p.5
[160] Gerrie Ter Haar et al. Bridge or Barrier: Religion, Violence and Vision for Peace.(Lieden, koninklijke Brill NV.2005.), p. 11.
[161] Ibid, p.19.
[162] Marc Gopin. Religion, violence and Conflict Resolution. (Consortium on peace Research, Education and development. PEACE AND CHANGE, vol.22 no.1, January 1997 1-31.) p.7

at large. If the Transitional governments and the Sufi leaders had come out strongly then maybe the Salafi jihadist ideologue wouldn't have spread thus far. Acknowledging and dealing with countervailing beliefs is crucial for conflict resolution in a religious context. That is accepting the new ideology that is salafism may bring more disaster to the country than good is important for both the religion leaders and institutions and the Somalis themselves.[163]

Religious involvement in peacemaking initiatives can also prepare and equip conflict resolution practitioners and diplomats for much proactive roles in transforming the conflict. Thus engaging in religious peace-building can provide a spiritual basis for transformation and compensate for the mechanistic and instrumental conflict resolution models.[164] Participants in the process of reconciling conflicting parties often look to religion in a special way both because religious elements may be seen as contributing to conflict and because religions can bring to bear deep traditions of forgiveness and peacemaking, but most religions can offer teachings and practices that can propel or improve process of reconciliation.[165]

Fortunately, many of the avenues to ameliorate religious violence lie within the religious realm itself. Religious communities have also directly opposed repression and promoted peace and reconciliation.[166] Secular political institutions that seek to mediate amongst competing groups often are most vehemently opposed by religious actors and institutions.[167]

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[163] Ibid p.20

[164] Jacob Bercovitch et al. The SAGE Handbook of Conflict Resolution.(London, Sage Publications 2009.), p.274.

[165] Ibid p.280 Katherine Marshall, et al. Development and faith: Where Mind, Heart and Soul Work together. (Washington DC: The World Bank , 2007.)

[166] David Smock. Religion in World Affairs: Its Role in Conflict and Peace. (United States Institute of Peace Special Report 201, February 2008.)p.3

[167] Article: Ours is the way of God: Religion, Identity and Intergroup Conflict by Jeffrey R. Seul. Source: Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 36, NO.5(Sep.99).pp 553-569. Sage Publications, ltd. (http://www.jstor.org/stable/424533) p.562.

3.3 The Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Somalia

The inclusion of religion into politics often creates room for militancy. In the case of Somalia, it saw the growth of Islamic Militancy. During the Siyad Barre regime, Islamic militancy was not quit dominant as it currently is. It is the inclusion of religion as a political discource that has created a field for the growth of Islamic Militancy, a circumstance whereby even the Islamist movements are keen on giving their input in governance. For example, Al Shabaab saw the transition governments as corrupt and this was mostly due to the fact that they initially hardly implemented the Shari'a law. Although one would observe that, religion had been included even in the way of governance, for example, TFG's Charter allowed for political factions, clan representation, seats for women and the acceptance of Islam as the national religion and agrees that Shari'a (Islamic law) would be the basis for national legislation.

In the occurrence of a collapsed state, it was easy for the Islamist movements to recruit and gain support from the Somalis. This is especially as they wanted change from the warlord era whereby they were being oppressed. To the Somalis, the Islamist movements were able to provide security against the warlords. However to the warlords, the Islamist movements were seen as competition, especially in light of the various lucrative businesses and resources that they were out to keep.[168] The view especially by the West of Islam as a threat to secular values only aided in the emergence of Islamic militancy in the world of which Somalia was no exception.[169] Religion taking part in political discourse has contributed in the growth of Islamic militancy in Somalia. It has been viewed that Islamic conflict is a product of militancy under the influence of Islam. The emergence of Islamist movements in Somalia occurred in the environment wherein

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[168] Interview at Nairobi, 20th july.

Somalia was a failed state. The collapse of government and the rise of warlordism set the environment of lawlessness and lack of order. Though Islamist movements seemed to be accepted not all welcomed their presence.

One can observe that Islam is a religion that propagates peace , however it has also been used to influence militancy. The main ideology that has been used to propagate militancy has been the Wahhabi ideology, (some scholars refer to this ideology as Salafism). It should be noted that this ideology was not originally practiced by Somalis and was alien to them. It was rather picked by Somali youths who had gone to study in the Arabian peninsula and were thus introduced. Saudi Arabia constitutes the bastion and influential factor of the Wahhabist movements that act to export the radical Islamic concepts of the Wahhabi school to Islamic focal points throughout the Muslim world. It acts to disseminate radical Islam through charities and welfare organizations who serve radical Islamic organizations and entities with the authorities' knowledge.[170]

It should be noted also that, the increase in the use of religious symbols and titles in Somalia after the outbreak of the civil war was to create an atmosphere favorable to Islamist- inspired movements.171 Moreover the local problem, in the country, of poverty and insecurity further allowed for the expansion of these Islamist movements. Recruits to the Islamist movements also have gained from being in the groups. Financially, they were able to support their families from the allowances that they received. Yet ultimately, spiritually, they were aiming for the attainment of Paradise on their demise as Mujaheed. One can argue that the Somalis then would feel justified to be part of the Islamist movements. Moreover some of the Somali people who were

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[170] Shaul Shay. Somalia between Jihad and Restoration. (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2008.) p.48
[171] Ibid p.17

accepting of this ideology were also benefitting in other areas. For example, trust networks established on common commitments to political Islamist agenda gained Somali businessmen easy access to capital through connections to Islamist counterparts in Dubai and Saudi Arabia.[172] Islamic militancy did not just emerge in the current decade; rather it has been part of the Somali society since before colonialism. Islamic militancy was a way for the Somali society to join forces in ridding the country of foreigners whom they did not trust. However it was never really much in the fore front and with Siyad Barre's government, it even went 'underground' only to emerge in later years.

The call for jihad and offensive attacks by the Islamist movements is nothing new to Somalia. One of the earliest and most well- known examples is the Seyyid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan's Jihad against colonial forces in the early years of the twentieth century. The Seyyid's jihad has served as a model for other violent religious movements in Somalia some of which have been motivated by a similar agenda: to rid the country of outside influence and to establish a 'Greater Somalia'.[173]

The emergence and rise to power of militant Islamist movements in Somalia exhibits the changes especially in actors involved that have occurred in the conflict. It has transformed the Somali conflict from a purely clan based wrangle to an ideologically driven one. Yet each intervention seems to create a new 'political force'. The Islamist movements are viewed as a potential political force. The recruits to Islamist movements seem to gain from joining them both economically and spiritually as they perceive. Before tracing the development of Islamist

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[172] Ibid45
[173] Ibid p.75

movements in Somalia, it is important to point out that most Somalis, although almost all are Muslims, do not practice or support militant Islamism.

When one studies about religion, that is, Islam in Somalia, one will observe that the early advent of Islam into Somalia was carried out by the Sufi Brotherhood. Somalis have traditionally venerated Sufi saints and belong to three main Sufi Brotherhoods, the Qadirriya, Ahmediya and Salihiya.174 It was initially difficult for the Somali, who majority were followers of the Sufi ideology to accept the new kind of ideology that was being propagated by the Islamist movements. The Islamic groups offered services that the central government wasn't offering thus their acceptance in the society became easy, contributing further to their emergence.[175]

In the early 80s the two main Islamic movements were the Al Islah Movement and AIAI. Al Islah took a more peaceful approach to carry out its agenda. Islamists had at first tied their Islamic quest for an emirate with nationalism but currently seems that the quest is for jihad. The Islamic movements are a potential political force. The collapse of the state and lack of state structures enabled the Islamic movements to propagate their ideology. They got through to the masses through the provision of services. Those who joined the Islamic movements initially didn't even know of the anti-western propaganda. They were guided by Islamic sentimentalism, nationalism, clannism and their own personal interests.

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[174] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a shattered state. (London: Zed books, 2012), p.74.
[175] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a shattered state. (London: Zed books, 2012), p.74.

Islamic militancy, despite having existed before in Somalia, became prominent from the year 2006 when the UIC who had taken over Mogadishu and parts of Southern and Central Somalia, were defeated by the Ethiopian troops backed by the United States. This year in itself saw many changes among which include the collaboration of Somali Warlords with the United States in eradication of the Islamist movements. Such a collaboration includes the former TFG President Abdullahi Yusuf, resulting in the formation in February 2006 of an Alliance For the Restoration of Peace and counter-Terrorism (ARPCT).

The militant Islamic organizations are too violent and ideologically polarized to bring together all sections of the Somali society and their actions have highlighted the sensitivities of putting religion at the centre of modern governance.[176] The onset of Islamic militancy therefore saw the rise of the Islamist movements. These have included the Al Ittihad Al Islamiyya, the Union of Islamic Courts and Al shabaab.

In 1992, military assistance from Sudan, Iran, and Al-Qaeda began to flow to Al Ittihad's military wing, facilitating its emergence as a major military player in a Somali now devoid of central government. The ideological orientation of Mogadishu's Islamic Courts has varied, ranging from Somalia's historic tradition of Sufi moderation to a Wahhabist reformism with a strong jihadist bent. [177] In 2000, the chairman of the Islamic Courts in Mogadishu, Hassan Sheikh Mohamed Abdi advocated the establishment of an Islamic state to solve the country's

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[176] Accord issue 21-30 Islam and Somali Social Order-2010-..(Title: Whose peace is it anyway? Connecting Somali and International peacemaking),p.97.
[177] Gregory A. Pirio. The African jihad: Bin Laden's quest for the Horn of Africa. Asmara: (The Red Sea Press. 2007,) p.81.

problems, but also took pain to stress that he wanted to have good relations with the United States and Europe. [178]

However, the Union of Islamic Courts' agenda was purely Islamic and did not recognize the Xeer system. The first courts to be set up in Mogadishu in 1994 were led by the warlord Ali Mahdi Mohamed (of Hawiye/abgal clan) under the chairmanship of Sheikh Ali Dheere of the same clan. The courts were run according to their respective clans, issued sentences according to the Sharia' and weren't ideally extremist. The UICs were formed from different Islamist movements with political aims. Much as there was Islamic militancy in Somalia, it became prominent especially from the year 2006 when UIC, which had taken over Mogadishu and parts of Southern and central Somalia, were defeated by the Ethiopian troops backed by the United States and some internal efforts. It would be necessary to observe that majority of Somalis are Sufi and that radical Islam was not supported until recently. From 2006-2009, there was external intervention in Somalia. With the Ethiopian intervention, Al- Qaeda spoke to back the Somali Mujahideen. In May 2008, Al- Shabaab proclaimed support for Osama bin Laden in an effort claiming to the global jihad against the West.

During the latter part of the first decade of the 21st century, Al- Shabaab became the predominant Jihadist organization in the region, although it focused almost all its effort on Somalia. Al Shabaab is an Islamic militant group with links to Al-Qaeda whose objective is currently not only to overthrow the Western backed government that is moderate Islamist but also to join in the course of global Jihad declared by Al Qaeda. Participation in the global jihad is so as to aid in the realization of a global Islamic caliphate which is the agenda of the global

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[178] Ibid p.83.

jihadists. The Islamists argued that the government did not implement Sharia law and they considered this governance as foreign.

Al Shabaab had initially began with a nationalistic agenda, whereby it wanted to liberate fellow Somali Muslims from foreign lands, that is, in its neighboring countries- especially Ethiopia. However with time it evolved in a different agenda that is to propagate the Wahhabi ideology and also participation in the Global Jihad. For Al-Shabaab the ultimate goal appears to be a pan-Islamic caliphate- hence its growing ties to Al-Qaida. It also reflected the significant impact foreign jihadists were having as a driver of Somalia's conflict. In contrast the principle focus of Hizbul Islam was creating a greater Somalia in the Horn of Africa.[179]

In general, Sufi Brotherhoods are moderate and use peaceful means of propagating Islam that offer due consideration to the norms and customs of the people. However, together with the mentioned Islamist movements, the Sufi order also joined in the conflict in Somalia, although in a defensive course. Originally established in 1991, this group of Sufi Scholars turned militia took up arms in response to Al- Shabaab's attempts to ban Sufi religious practices, impose strict separation of the sexes, and mete out harsh punishments such as amputations and stoning.[180]

3.4 Religion and Conflict Management

Religion doesn't make conflict resolution impossible; however it makes it harder to implement the processes. The United Nations on Rights may not necessarily apply to religious militant movements thus the need for religious institutions and religious leaders in their capacity to assist

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[179] Paul D. Williams. War and Conflict in Africa. (Cambridge: Polity press, 2011), p.140.
[180] Ibid, p.140

in conflict management. To look at how religion can be used in management, there is need to analyse religious literature and traditions and what it speaks of conflict management and peaceful resolution of disputes. Religious involvement in peacemaking initiatives can also prepare and equip conflict resolution practitioners and diplomats for much proactive roles in transforming the conflict. Thus engaging in religious peace-building can provide a spiritual basis for transformation and compensate for the mechanistic and instrumental conflict resolution models.[181]

In religious circles, the attempt to establish a legitimate foundation for religion as a resource for peace is pursued notably by highlighting those aspects of scared scriptures and tradition that are conducive to a positive valuation religion in public life. Hence it is important to identify and subsequently propagate those elements in a particular religious tradition that have the potential to make a significant contribution to the solution of social and political conflicts and thus to establish peace.[182]

Secular political institutions that seek to mediate amongst competing groups often are most vehemently opposed by religious actors and institutions. In terms of social crisis, when identities are most vulnerable, religious norms and institutions may provide ready, alternative frameworks for governance or perhaps more commonly support and justification for the non- clerical leaders and institutions which emerge to establish regimes in the service of a religious groups' aspirations. Nonetheless, when conflict involving one or more religious group does occur, the

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[181] Appleby R.S. The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation.(New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers inc. 2000) p.274.
[182] Gerrie Ter Haar et al. Bridge or Barrier: Religion, Violence and Vision for Peace.(Lieden, koninklijke Brill NV.2005),p.19.

combatants may be emboldened by a sense of religiously defined identity and purpose and their

tradition may provide a fund of symbolic moral, institutional and other resources that can be used

to mobilize the groups and legitimate its cause.[183]

Subtle theological changes in a particular culture might provide an early warning system of sorts

as to the nascent growth of religious intolerance and the justification of violence. This would be

an invaluable tool in responding to conflict before it reaches a stage beyond which it cannot be

controlled[184]. For example the change from Sufi tradition to Salafi ideologies amongst the

Somali. Government or rather if Sufi leaders had come out strongly then maybe the Salafi

jihadist ideologue wouldn't have spread thus far.[185] Acknowledging and dealing with

countervailing beliefs is crucial for conflict resolution in a religious context[186]. This means that

accepting the new ideology that is Wahhabism may bring more disaster to the country than good

is important for both the religion leaders and institutions and the Somalis themselves.

The rise of non-state actors as essential components of informal governance and security systems

in Somalia has posed a challenge to external organizations accustomed to dealing only with state

counterparts[187]. The Ulemaa command automatic respect and people have always turned to them

to help with unresolved disputes. During Somali reconciliation meetings in and outside the

country, the Ulemaa have played important roles by counseling negotiations and speaking to

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[183] Article: Ours is the way of God: Religion, Identity and Intergroup Conflict by Jeffrey R. Seul. Source: Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 36, NO.5(Sep.99).pp 553-569. Sage Publications, ltd. (http://www.jstor.org/stable/424533),p.562.
[184] Marc Gopin. Religion, violence and Conflict Resolution. (Consortium on peace Research, Education and development. PEACE AND CHANGE, vol.22 no.1, January 1997 1-31),p.7.
[185] Ibid p.19
[186] Ibid p.20
[187] Combating Terrorism Centre At West Point. Al Qaida's mis Adventures in the Horn of Africa. (Diane Publishing Company 2009) ,p.32.

them through the media, urging them to show flexibility and compromise. They would urge leaders to refer to Islam in solving their differences.[188]

Religious involvement in peacemaking initiatives can also prepare and equip conflict resolution practitioners and diplomats for much proactive roles in transforming the conflict. Thus engaging in religious peace-building can provide a spiritual basis for transformation and compensate for the mechanistic and instrumental conflict resolution models. Participants in the process of reconciling conflicting parties often look to religion in a special way both because religious elements may be seen as contributing to conflict and because religions can bring to bear deep traditions of forgiveness and peacemaking, but most religions can offer teachings and practices that can propel or improve process of reconciliation. [189]

Fortunately, many of the avenues to ameliorate religious violence lie within the religious realm itself. Religious communities have also directly opposed repression and promoted peace and reconciliation.[190]

3.5 The Role of Religious Leaders and Institutions in Conflict Management

In the wave of identity conflicts, it has been observed that more often than not, the way to resolve such conflicts is by engaging the identity itself. In the Somali context the elders and the religion leaders are the embodiment of tradition and moral order. They are seen as peacemakers who are also knowledgeable in cultural techniques of conflict mediation and resolution.

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[188] Accord issue 21-30 Islam and Somali Social Order-2010-..(Title: Whose peace is it anyway? Connecting Somali and International peacemaking), p.96.
[189] Katherine Marshall, et al. Development and faith: Where Mind, Heart and Soul Work together. (Washington DC: The World Bank , 2007.)
[190] David Smock. Religion in World Affairs: Its Role in Conflict and Peace. (United States Institute of Peace Special Report 201, February 2008), p.3.

Furthermore, religious actors are playing an increasingly important and valuable role in resolving international conflicts. It is therefore reason as to why the need to involve religious leaders and institutions in the conflict management process has been encouraged. Religious leaders may influence the conflict either positively by assisting in management or negatively by enabling the escalation of the conflict. [191] But a faith based commitment to peace is a complex phenomenon. The difficulty in widening the scope of religious ethics, to include outsiders or non- believers remains a serious challenge, especially in fundamentalist circles.[192] The groups or even the Somalis themselves might not be willing to interact with these kinds of mediators freely. Thus the need for religious leaders.

More specifically a clearly perplexing set of puzzles exists surrounding the role of religious elites in particular play in the complex dynamic of conflict escalation and de-escalation; religious leaders at times contribute to conflict escalation through their doctrinal and ethical interpretations and specific calls to action. At other times we see religious leaders directly appeal for tolerance and a deeper relationship of co-existence, organizing interfaith dialogue and in some instances directly mediating peace. This juxtaposition of religious leaders' roles in exacerbation of conflict and the instigation of violence and their roles.[193]

With blood shedding being the most heinous crime in Islam, Somali scholars usually abstain from clan fighting in the harsh pastoral environment. Their role is limited to conflict resolution,

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[191] Marc Gopin. Religion, violence and Conflict Resolution. (Consortium on peace Research, Education and development. PEACE AND CHANGE, vol.22 no.1, January 1997 1-31.)
[192] Ibid,p.16.
[193] Ibid ,p.17.

community education and conducting religious functions.[194] However with the change in actor in the Somali conflict, religious have been used by Islamist movements to radicalize the Somalis. This enables for easy recruitment. In Somalia, the case is the same in the extent to which religious leaders are involved in the conflict. They have been used as a means of recruiting the Somalis into the various Islamist movements through the use of Dawaa and through Madrassas. Religious leaders currently in Somalia also have at times played an active role in the political environment in the country.

The popularity of religious leaders and the growth of self-proclaimed religious political factions also opened the way for the misuse of religion for instrumental gains, an example the warlord turned Islamist Yusuf Mohamed Siad ' Indaadde', but it should not be forgotten that even instrumentalism can be caught up by its own hypocrisy. In Somalia Al Shabaab redefined some of the assumptions of traditional Islam, for example defining the resurrection of the Caliphate as a target for religious activism, as well as depicting its struggle in "Clash of Civilization's rhetoric, while also keeping a focus on the Sharia and on charity and justice.

However religious leaders in Somalia traditionally were used in the resolving of disputes along with the clan leaders. Before the inception of the Islamic courts, Muslim scholars did not contest this combination of traditional and Islamic practice and elders and religious leaders worked side by side. The Ulemaa command automatic respect and people have always turned to them to help

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[194] See Dr. Osman Farah. Somalia; Exploring a Way out. (Nairobi: A National Civic forum Publication, 2011. August 2010), pp44- P47.

with unresolved disputes.[195] Encouragement and forgiveness between those in conflict was always a major part of conflict resolution both in Islam and their traditional Somali practice. [196] Role expectations converge on religious leaders, since they are often seen as just and able to fulfill judicial functions in societies with weak state structures. Religious leaders and institutions can be mediators in conflict situations, serve as a communication link between opposing sides and provide training in peacemaking methodologies.[197]

Religious leaders usually have greater legitimacy and credibility in communities where religion plays an important role in the society. Due to this legitimacy, religious leaders and faith-based institutions often have a unique advantage to resolve conflicts.[198] Although conflict resolution scholars and practitioners can tap into various religious sources of conflict resolution, only religious leaders who are recognized as an authority can interpret religious texts legitimately.[199]
 However, Muslim scholars believed that the proper application of Islam should always draw upon the support of Islamic leaders and elders, as well as, intellectuals and other community leaders. During Somali reconciliation meetings in and outside the country, the Ulemaa have played important roles by counseling negotiations and speaking to them through the media, urging them to show flexibility and compromise. They would urge leaders to refer to Islam in solving their differences. From 2002 onwards, the ASWJ began to play an active role in different

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[195] Accord issue 21-30 Islam and Somali Social Order-2010-..(Title: Whose peace is it anyway? Connecting Somali and International peacemaking), p.96.
[196] Ibid,p.95.
[197] David Smock. Religion in World Affairs: Its Role in Conflict and Peace. (United States Institute of Peace Special Report 201, February 2008), p.4.
[198] Jacob Bercovitch et al. The SAGE Handbook of Conflict Resolution.(London, Sage Publications 2009), p.277.
[199] Ibid, P. 278.

peace initiatives promoting a moderate Islamic school as a platform for restoring peace and order in Somalia.[200]

Islamic scholars have attended most previous reconciliation conferences, but usually as observers, members of the Ulemaa Forum and Ahl Sunnah Wal Jamaa were observers of the 1993 Addis Ababa Conference. Islamic Scholars had less influence in the Mbagathi peace talks in Kenya from 2002-2004, where warlords and clan elders were the main actors. The 2008 Djibouti negotiations between the TFG and the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS) also involved a large number of Muslim scholars and other religious activists have their biggest representation in the subsequently expanded parliament and are playing a more prominent role within the Somali political process. Many Somali Islamic scholars believe that only Islam has the potential to achieve absolute security in the country because Somalis are 100% Muslim and will accept Islam more readily than any other political system.[201]

3.6 Religion and Other Factors of Conflict: The Interplay

For one to state that religion is entirely responsible for the current conflict in Somalia would be a misappropriation. There have been other factors that have indeed aided in the manner in which religion has come to influence the Somali conflict. These include internal factors such as clannism, and external factors such as external interventions.

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[200] Shaul Shay. Somalia between Jihad and Restoration. (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2008), P.40.
[201] Ibid, p.97.

Clannism

Identity is related to a description of who one is and how one fits into social groups and society overall and is closely tied with culture and religion.[202]The role that clannism has taken in Somalia is quite predominant such that even the presence of Islamist movements in the country could not subdue it. One should be aware of a particular feature of Somali culture in the context of the civil war. As soon as an organization becomes powerful, it is thereafter referred to as a clan organization and of course, 'belongs' to the clan of its leader.[203]

Clan loyalties and ties were used for the benefit of the Islamist movements. These Islamic militias used to settle in a place through the patronage of a local member of their group belonging to the powerful clan of the area. Though they were adamant that clanship was a sickness, they knew how to use it for their own best interests. The Islamic Courts worked alongside traditional elders to gain acceptance of their rulings by the clans, as well as their help in consoling and bereaved and arresting criminal suspects. [204] If the population was ready for an alternative solution, then Islamic courts were not yet ready to fulfill their expectations. Some religious figures decided to set up clan-based Islamic Courts. These Courts employ judges and militia who belong to the same sub-clan and their authority is, in principle limited to their kinsmen.

These Sharia courts were not radical- they were funded by businesses, overseen by clan elders and operated by traditional clerics. But they would later be used as a base for more politically

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[202] Jacob Bercovitch et al. The SAGE Handbook of Conflict Resolution.(London, Sage Publications 2009), p.265.
[203] Accord issue 21-30 Islam and Somali Social Order-2010-..(Title: Whose peace is it anyway? Connecting Somali and International peacemaking),p.344.
[204] Ibid, p.95.

minded Islamists. Hizbul Islam worked pragmatically with the clan structures, Al-Shabaab saw Somalis' commitment to clan as proof that they were insufficiently committed to Islam. [205] Al Qaida failed in Somali for three reasons first, their argument about fighting a foreign occupier did not resonate with the locals because they too were seen as a foreign force. Thirdly, they could not recruit at a sufficient level to sustain operations because the benefits of the membership were perceived as low in comparison to the cost of leaving one's clan or tribe.[206] Specifically, the practice of Sufi Islam and its deep integration into Somali culture; the enduring salience of clannism and Somalia's pragmatic political culture have all inoculated Somali society to some degree from radicalism.[207]

However it should be noted that, one of the most worrisome aspects about the recent ascendance of both jihadist violence and hard-line Islamist leadership in Mogadishu is the possibility that their narrow agenda will be increasingly- and – intentionally-conflated with the political interests of some Mogadishu-based clans, which have produced much of the top Islamist leadership and business elite.[208]

Despite the ascendance of a political Islamic movement in contemporary Somalia, clannism remains the dominant political logic within which Islamists and shari'a courts are generally constrained[209]

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[205] Paul D. Williams. War and Conflict in Africa. (Cambridge: Polity press, 2011), p.140.
[206] Combating Terrorism Centre At West Point. Al Qaida's mis Adventures in the Horn of Africa. (Diane Publishing Company 2009) p.63
[207] Ibid,p.29.
[208] KennethMenkhaus. Somalia and Somaliland; Terrorism, political Islam and State collapse, In Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa ed. By Robert I. Rotberg. (Washington: Brooklyn Institute press, 2005), p.43.
[209] Ibid, p.26

External Interventions

There are actors that have been part of the dynamics of the Somali conflict. These are especially its neighboring countries that are Ethiopia and Kenya. They have been involved as they have interests in the country, for example concerns over territorial disputes, the overspill of the conflict in Somalia, amongst other concerns. External intervention in Somalia, it should be noted, cannot be avoided. One can observe that, however, it has also led to further emergence of Islamic militancy.

The development of political and militant Islam did not occur in a vaccum. External actors had a strong influence in the dynamic events in Somalia. States such as Ethiopia and the United States used warlords to get to the Islamists. However the warlords also had ulterior motives, as they wanted the defeat of the Islamists so that they can gain back the ports and lucrative businesses that had been ceased by the militants. Other actors that have been part of the dynamics of the Somali conflict include also Eritrea, Yemen and Kenya. For some states such as Kenya, overspill effects of the conflict into the country are what have caused its current entry into Somalia. However in the case of Eritrea, it can be observed that it is supporting Somalia, as it is an opponent to Ethiopia. It seems more like a case of "your enemy is my friend". More over it has also been observed that Somalia has also been ground for Ethiopia and Eritrea's proxy wars.

Ethiopia's involvement with Somalia has historical ties to it. It often intervened in Somalia although for its own national interests rather than for the stability of Somalia. In fact Somalia at times has been used for the proxy war between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Following the UIC victory, the government of Addis seems to have attempted to undermine the power of the UIC, probably

alarmed not only by the rhetorical support of the latter on the ONLF and the OLF and various overtly irredentist statements by self-proclaimed spokespersons of the UIC, but also by the rise to prominence of Sheikh Aweys, a former leader of the AIAI, which probably encouraged an Ethiopian view of the entire organization as a potential threat.[210] The courts sent their poorly trained and largely conscripted militia to Baidoa late in 2006 to confront the TFG and professional Ethiopian Military forces. The Ethiopian quickly crushed the militia and then entered Mogadishu unopposed. The leadership of the Islamic Courts and its Al-Qaida supporters dispersed to Southern Somalia, pursued by Ethiopian forces and small numbers of US Special Forces from Kenya. While Ethiopian scored a quick victory, historical animosity between Ethiopian and Somalis gave Al-Shabaab a new and important theme for recruitment.

The presence of the TFG and especially of Ethiopian troops sparked a complex insurgency in Mogadishu. The Shabaab militia started to gain popular backing as a resistance movement. Moreover the notion that the United States partnered with Ethiopia on occasions encouraged this further .[211] Besides its public support for the Ethiopian invasion, the United States launched a series of missile attacks on fleeing SCIC leaders in January 2007.[212]

During the two years of Ethiopia's occupation, Mogadishu was reduced to a level of human suffering, violence and disorder unknown since the civil war, and anti-American Sentiments rose to an all-time high. Outrage over the Ethiopian occupation prompted members of the far-flung

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[210]See Bjorn moller: The Somali Conflict.
[211] Brownyn E. Bruton. Somalia A New Approach.(New York: Council on Foreign Relations,2010),p.8.
[212] Ibid,p.9.

Somali diaspora, including twenty youth from Minnesota, to return to their homeland to fight for Al Shabaab.[213]

Superficially, the Ethiopian intervention might look like a Christian regime targeting a Muslim one. In reality, Ethiopia's primary concern was not the fact that the UIC was Muslim but that the elements within them were calling for a violent jihad to build a Greater Somalia, which included taking over Ethiopia's Ogaden region. Then the Ethiopian intervention and the Djibouti conference in 2008 further radicalized the Islamist movements, Al Shabaab in particular. The intervention by the Ethiopian troops in Somalia, also gave the opportunity to Islamist movements to emerge and strengthen their numbers and support from Somalis who did not trust Ethiopia. Thus leading to the prevalence of the Islamist movements in the Somali conflict.[214]

By linking these organizations with terrorism, the United States of America contributed to a new way of thinking about Somalia; events in the country were increasingly seen through the prism of Al-Qaeda and violent Islamism. The events of 9/11 and the subsequent 'War on Terror' shaped the way the United States of America and others approached Somalia; in many ways it became a testing ground for the way global powers dealt with militant Islamism, especially, its presence in Africa.[215]

Hence the Ethiopian intervention in December 2006 already touched on which ultimately proved profoundly counter-productive. The result has been a relative strengthening of the

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[213] KennethMenkhaus. Somalia and Somaliland; Terrorism, political Islam and State collapse, In Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa ed. By Robert I. Rotberg. (Washington: Brooklyn Institute press, 2005),p 26.
[214] Paul D. Williams. War and Conflict in Africa. (Cambridge: Polity press, 2011),p.140.
[215] Mary Harper. Getting Somalia wrong? Faith, War and Hope in a Shattered State. (London: Zed books, 2012), p.169.

extremist forces in the Islamist movement, both by following militant militias such as the Al Shabaab to gain ground and by promoting more Salafist versions of the Shari'a over the more apolitical and moderate Sufism.[216]

Kenya is another country that has lately been militarily involved in the Somali conflict. One would observe that the invasion of Somalia in 2011 by Kenya also saw a different side of the relation that Kenya had with Somalia, this is especially as Kenya had been welcoming of the refugees that fled from Somalia and had diplomatically assisted its peace efforts. The support that Kenya got from the US also aided in the growth of Islamic movements in Somalia and saw the changed sentiment towards Somalia from the Somalis.

Other non-state actor such as Al Qaeda have also aided in the emergence of Islamist movements. The initial objective of Al-Qaida as it made preliminary contacts with Somali Islamists, was to explore an alternative base of operations to Afghanistan. Thereafter, the primary mission appears to be to promote recruitment and establish training bases in Ogaden region of Ethiopia and inside Somalia in support of the Somali 'mujahideen'.[217] Al Qaida failed in Somali for three reasons first, their argument about fighting a foreign occupier did not resonate with the locals because they too were seen as a foreign force. Second, they significantly underestimated the costs of operating in a failed state environment. Thirdly, they could not recruit at a sufficient level to

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[216] See Bjorn Moller: the Somali Conflict
[217] Combating Terrorism Centre At West Point. Al Qaida's mis Adventures in the Horn of Africa. (Diane Publishing Company 2009), p.38.

sustain operations because the benefits of the membership were perceived as low in comparison to the to the cost of leaving one's clan or tribe.[218]

3.7 Conclusion

The role of religion in Somalia has thus been used instrumentally in the Somali conflict. Moreover Somalia being mostly an Islamic state, the need to understand the religion especially its use in conflict and management is essentially necessary for peace builders. Fundamentalism, in this case, Islamism has greatly contributed to the course that the Somali conflict is currently taking. Religion has been seen to have duality in Somalia. With the existence of Islamist movements that are extremist, there is the availability of traditional religious leaders, mainly Sufis. They initially were strictly engaged in moderate implementation of punishments. They are also responsible for the efforts made towards peace building in Somalia.

 It should be noted also that clannism, which has been the foundation of identification in Somalia ahs also been quite predominant to Islamism. As earlier explained, no organization seems to operate without the consent from clan leaders. However one can observe also that the Islamist movements also engaged the clans in that they also manipulated the use of these clans for their own benefit.

External influence and intervention have also greatly contributed to the current situation in Somalia. It has been note that with every new intervention the conflict takes, the strength and

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[218] Ibid,p.63

numbers off these Islamist movements increase. This is mostly as the Somalis view most of these groups that intervene as foreigners and as such it becomes easy for the acceptance and recruitment into the groups.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN CONFLICT AND MANAGEMENT: THE CASE OF

SOMALIA, 1999 – 2012

4.0 Introduction

From the study carried out there are a few emerging issues that have arisen in the study. These have thus gone further to explain how the role of religion in Somalia has influenced the conflict. Some of the emerging issues discussed are Religious fundamentalism, Clannism and External intervention.

4.1 Emerging Issues

4.1.1 Religious Fundamentalism

The wish to restore religion to what is considered its rightful place at the heart of society is in fact, the most notable common denominator of today's religious fundamentalist movements.[219] The emergence of interest groups that espouse violence and that seem to be inspired by a particular religious ideology has tempted many observers notably in the west, to assume an intrinsic connection between religion and violence.[220]It is for this case that fundamentalism in Somalia is an area to be well studied. In this case, since the religion practiced in Somalia is Islam, Islamism will thus be considered. Religious identity, might be a vital part of a national or local identity, making it valuable as a potential political instrument. Religion may become an identity marker, demarcating a group and employable as a tool to strengthen loyalty within this ethnic group versus other groups of different religion.

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[219] Gerrie Ter Haar et al. Bridge or Barrier: Religion, Violence and Vision for Peace.(Lieden, koninklijke Brill NV.2005), p.4.
[220] Ibid,p.6.

As the first decade of the 21st century drew close, in parts of Somalia at least, it appeared that how to interpret Islamic scriptures and its relationship to governance structures was something worth fighting for.[221] In the 1980's radical Islam began taking root especially after Muslim scholars returned from Egypt, Saudi Arabia. Preaching radical Islam was accepted especially during a time that corruption was prevalent and also civil unrest during the dictatorship regime. Islamism has been described as the active assertion and promotion of beliefs, prescriptions, laws, or policies that are held to be Islamic in character.[222] One should not confuse Islam and political Islam(Islamism). From a Sociological perspective. Islam is a way in which people frame their lives. Political Islam encompasses ideologies are framed within an Islamic discourse, based on Islamic values and propagating s specific interpretation of what Islam is and is not supposed to be in its interaction with the state and organization of the society.[223]

Islamism has played part in the dynamic nature of the Somali conflict. It has been existence since colonialism however has been prevalent in the period after the collapse of Siyad Barre's government. It however is not much of a surprise that Islam has played part in the politics of the country. This is especially since Islam is practiced by majority of the Somalis. the Islamic awakening in Somalia came about in the 1960s and 1970s.it was in this time that Somalia had joined the Arab league. From these many of its youth were able to get grants for further study in the Arabian Peninsula. They were able to come back having been exposed to a different type of ideology contrary to that which they had been practicing. They brought the Wahhabi ideology and even started propagating it. It can be observed that during Siyad Barre's rule, most of the

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[221] Paul D. Williams. War and Conflict in Africa. (Cambridge: Polity press, 2011) p.141
[222] International Crisis Group Report. " Understanding Ilamism." Middle East/ North Africa Report no. 37-2 March 2005, p.1
[223] Roland Marchal A Nation without A State.life and peace Institute. P.12

muslim scholars were not quite active especially as a different type of governance had been introduced in Somalia all together. His socialist regime went ahead to ban all Islamic groups especially since they had brought some type of resistance regarding the Family Law was being implemented. Due to the suppression caused to the Islamist movements and the further execution of a numbert of them, most of the Islamist leaders escaped into exile in neighboring states. However with the overthrow of the socialist regime, these Islamist movements, resurfaced. They especially came to the forefront after state collapse in 1991.

The lack of stability also allowed for possibility for external Islamic groups to breed in Somalia.statelessness and mistrust of the warlords led the Somali people to find 'sanctuary' in militant Islam. The intimate intertwining of Islam and Somali culture and identity appears to have inoculated the region from the politicalgoals of Islamism in the quest for an Islamic state or caliphate. Madrassas have been used to teach the ideology. ' there are various beliefs guiding the onset of islam in politics. Amongst these is the notion of state decline as such modernization lack of law and order is said to cause many more from the straight path of Islam. The solution therefore is seen to be the return to Islam in all ways.

Islamism is the response of Muslim theoreticians and freelance activists to the challenge of modernity. Its immediate ancestry lies with the salafist reformist thinkers of the late nineteenth century. Like the Wahabbis, these reformers sought to return to the roots of Islam for guidance, rejecting the tradition of imitation (taqlid) in favor of authenticity.[224]

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[224] Alexander De Waal. Islamism and its enemies in the Horn of Africa. (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004), p.4.

There are various schools of Islamic Jurisprudence that are followed. However, Somalis adhere to the Shafi'i school of Islamic jurisprudence. Therefore Somali can be said to adhere to the Sunni Shafi'ite denomination of Islam[225] The spiritual life of Somalis is rather a complex amalgamation that includes many elements that are carryovers from indigenous practices that predate Islam; it also includes elements from Islamic mysticism and philosophy, commonly known as Sufism.[226] Traditionally in Somalia culture, the religious sphere and the political sphere have been kept separate from each other, in practice though; this has not always been a clear-cut division.

The development of the Islamic consciousness should be seen as historical evolution and a range of responses to the challenges from specific tension. The Islamic awakening in Somali got momentum after the introduction of socialism by Siad Barre. In Somalia insecurity had been on the increase since the outbreak of the civil war, and religion became a beacon of hope, a thing to turn to. Islam has certain commandments that deal with social justice and promote solidarity with the weak and poor in society, and religious leaders understandably became more popular because of this.[227]

Islamic militancy and Islamism in itself had begun in Somalia since colonialism. It often arose from the need to protect the Somalis from one or the other problem. As people turned to Islam for security and the moral and physical reconstruction of communities, Islamic foundations and

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[225] Mohamed Diriye Abdullahi. Culture and customs of Somalia. (Westport: Greewnwood Publishing group, 2001) ,p.55.
[226] Ibid, p.57
[227] See Stig Jarle Hansen. Al Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group, 2005-2012.(London: Hurst & Company,2013)

benefactors outside the country invested in business and social services. At different times Somali political leaders also promoted Islamic movements in pursuit of their own political strategies.[228] First of all Somali became a place where Islamic charities developed their activities in competition with traditional Western Non- Governmental organizations (NGOs). The Gulf business class has been a source of inspiration for many emerging Somali traders who often become more religious, even militantly so, in order to build the trust necessary to get access to their counterparts across the Red Sea. After ten years of civil war, though the strength of these movements is still debatable, it is clear that they seem influential enough to play a role in the resolution of the Somali Crisis.[229]

By 2000, political Islamism in Mogadishu was clearly an ascendant force. But the particular manifestation of political Islam that would emerge- progressive, moderate Islamism or radical jihadi Islam- was not a foregone conclusion.[230] As the first decade of the 21st century drew close, in parts of Somalia at least, it appeared that how to interpret Islamic scriptures and its relationship to governance structures was something worth fighting for.[231] Militancy also encompasses politics and a desire not only to change individual behavior and levels of spirituality but also to extend the influence of religion across political, economic and legal spheres based upon interpretations located within the Quran and Hadiths.[232]

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[228] Accord issue 21-30 Islam and Somali Social Order-2010-..(Title: Whose peace is it anyway? Connecting Somali and International peacemaking), p.94.
[229] Ibid, p.332.
[230] Combating Terrorism Centre At West Point. Al Qaida's Mis Adventures in the Horn of Africa. (Diane Publishing Company 2009), p.36.
[231] Paul D. Williams. War and Conflict in Africa. (Cambridge: Polity press, 2011),p.141
[232] See Stephen Vertgans. Militant Islam: A sociology of characteristics, causes and consequences. (New York: Routledge, 2009).

Islamist movements came up recruiting Somalis into the movements. Islamists in Somalia were very successful at exploiting two commodities which Somali communities desperately craved after fifteen years of civil war and state collapse- a sense of public security and a sense of unity. By declaring jihad on Ethiopia, they successfully conflated Somali nationalism, anti-Ethiopianism and Islamism. Mobilizing from a broad range of Somali society, even those who were uncomfortable with some aspects of their Islamic agenda. Al Shabaab benefited from the 'Somali' resurgence of religion; it was able, at least, initially, to project an image of pious and law abiding individuals, and legal justice based on Islam was a major element in its propaganda, while religious institutions aided the Somalis when no aid was forthcoming from other sources.[233]

One can observe that the current Islamic militants have an International agenda unlike the previous ones, like AIAI's agenda was a domestic agenda. The militant Islamic organizations are too violent and ideologically polarized to bring together all sections of the Somali society and their actions have highlighted the sensitivities of putting religion at the centre of modern governance. Paradoxically, the militants' violent pursuit of an Islamic state may be pushing the prospect of an Islamic state further than ever.[234]

Al Qaeda's involvement began as they sought to exploit the Al Ittihad Al Islamiya Movement during the civil war, creating an armed group organized around an Islamic and nationalist

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[233] Combating Terrorism Centre At West Point. Al Qaida's mis Adventures in the Horn of Africa. (Diane Publishing Company 2009), p.32.
[234] Accord issue 21-30 Islam and Somali Social Order-2010-..(Title: Whose peace is it anyway? Connecting Somali and International peacemaking), p.97.

agenda.[235] When Al Ittihad abandoned armed struggle, it left a vaccum for Al Shabaab to emerge into, which it did after 2003. The differences between Somalia's islamist movements were mainly doctrinal, traditionalists, reformists, modernists, salafis, jihadists and others. The distinction between the different groups were not only doctrinal but as well the difference of leadership, dominant clan affiliation and sectoral interests.[236]

Despite the recent military surge against Somalia's armed Islamist extremist and self declared Al-Qaeda's affiliate, Al Shabaab, its conclusive 'defect' remains elusive. Even if its territory is squeezed in the medium term, Al Shabaab will continue to control both money and minds. It has the advantage of atleast three decades of Salafi- Wahhabi proselytisation (daawa) in Somalia; social conservatism is already strongly entrenched – including Somaliland and among Somali minorities in neighbouring states-giving it deep reservoirs of fiscal and ideological support, even without the intimidation it routinely employs. An additional factor is the group's proven ability to adopt, militarily and politically- flexibility that is assisted by its leadership's freedom from direct accountability to any single constituency

4.1.2 External Intervention and Influence

Civil war and state collapse have rendered Somali society especially vulnerable to external influences, some of which have helped to nourish the growth of radical Islamic groups within Somalia, often as part of broader international networks. As Ethiopia is a historical enemy as well as a predominantly Christian country, it was all too easy for Islamists to potray the

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[235] Islamism and politics in Somalia by Dr. Abdurahman M. Abdullahi (Baadiyow) Islamism and politics.(chatman house 12 june 2012), p.3.
[236] Shaul Shay. Somalia between Jihad and Restoration. (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2008),p.37.

intervention as a new crusade by the infidels against the dar al-Islam, that is, the abode of the true faith.[237]

In reality, Ethiopia's primary concern was not the fact that the UIC was muslim but The elements within them were calling for a violent jihad to build a Greater Somalia, which included taking over Ethiopia's Ogaden region.[238] Ethiopian concerns about what a strong Somali state might do are quite understandable, especially considering that the Somali claims to the Ogaden.[239] Somali region have never really been abandoned. Secondly, Somalia may forment unrest among the ethnic group of Ethiopia, especially the Somalis. there is thus a fertile ground for any Somali attempts to instigate a conflict, the leaders of which might even play the religious card by couching Somali national aspirations in terms of Muslim rights, perhaps even by proclaiming jihad, as did the Somali UIC. Therefore, to Ethiopia the feeling is such that, whereas a strong and hostile Somali state would thus be the worst conceivable option and a strong friendly one the preferred one, the government of Addis may have opted for the second best solution: a weak state which is completely dependant on the Ethiopian support.

The United States had not been a key player in the Somali conflict especially in the decades following the tragic Black Hawk Down whereby 18 American troops were killed after their plane was shot down by fighting Somalis. However since the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the US and the whole Global War on Terror, Somali has been considered a dangerous palce by the US. It is to this effect that it has involved itself either directly or indirectly by intervening in the Somali conflict although militarily. Unfortunately, however, just as in the early 1990s, the consequences

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[237] Bjorn Moller: the Somali Conflict p.21
[238] Paul D. Williams. War and Conflict in Africa. (Cambridge: Polity press, 2011),p.140.
[239] Bjorn Moller: The Somali Conflict, p.20

of various initiatives and activities have been predominantly negative and counterproductive. The main difference between the nineties and recent years seems to be that, whereas the predominant motive then was altruistic and humanitarian, it is now selfish and focused on US national security. In the nineties, the result was an exacerbation of the Humanitarian crisis, whereas now it is a growth of Islamic militancy and perhaps, even terrorism.[240] This is especially since it is the US that had designated the title of 'terrorist' to the Somalis, including Somalia in the list of countries in the Global War on Terror.

Somalia has been 'securitized' by the US under the heading of the Global War on Terror, that is, it has discursively constructed as a threat of ' existential' propositions and considerable urgency, thus warranting a resort to 'extraordinary measures.' The equally unfounded equation of Islamism with militancy and jihadism has further produced exaggerated concerns about the AIAI- reinforced by the beauracratic logic according to which whoever is (rightly or wrongly) included on a terrorist list (as were both AIAI and Sheikh Aweys) should be treated as a terrorist, regardless of any evidence to the contrary. [241]This further increased the anti-West sentiment that exists among the Somalis, who would see the West as out to benefit from the conflict but yet to oppress them.

The decision to intervene inSomalia: "On the one hand, there is the global agenda based on the vision professed by Washington-or at least some members of the administration- concerning the war on terror and the hunt for members of Al-Qaeda. On the other, there are the self-serving interests of the Ethiopian regime, which is contested from inside the country and is also trying to

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[240] Ibid,p.25.
[241] Ibid, P.26.

prevent a new power from emerging along its southern flank that would have cordial relations with Eritrean enemies and armed Ethiopian opposition groups.[242]

4.1.3 The Role of Clannism

Clan loyalties in Somalia are very dominant factors to be considered when studying the conflict in Somalia. The clan identity is amongst the major building blocks of Somalia. Throughout the Somali history, the clan system has paid a significant role, and can be seen as one of the sources of Somalia's present life. The need for clan ties arose due to the need for protection, a security system, and hence the extended families loosely bonded to form clans. Thus at the time the function of these clans were to offer security. Since its arrival Islam was and still is more or less assimilated into the clan system. Specifically, the practice of Sufi Islam and its deep integration into Somali culture; the enduring salience of clannism and Somalia's pragmatic political culture have all inoculated Somali society to some degree from radicalism.[243]In Somali society, clan commands more than mere loyalty, it becomes a constructed filter for social reality, as clans have common meeting places. In Somalia and Afghanistan, one source of conflict is over which brand of Islam will prevail. But in both cases clan and ethnic differences define the composition of the forces in conflict as much as religious differences do.[244]

Despite the ascendance of a political Islamic movement in contemporary Somalia, clannism remains the dominant politic logic within which Islamists and Shariah courts are generally

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[242] Somalia: A New Front Against Terrorism by Roland marchal published Feb 05,2007..accessed 6th april 2013. http://hornofafrica.ssrc.org/marchal/index.html
[243] Combating Terrorism Centre At West Point. Al Qaida's Mis Adventures in the Horn of Africa. (Diane Publishing Company 2009), p.29.
[244] Hansen Jarle Stig. Al Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group, 2005-2012. London: Hurst & Company,2013), p.7.

constrained. Perhaps more than most societies, Somalis tend to be suspicious of the motives of foreigners and quick to take offense at perceived imposition of foreign values. This has historically served to insulate Somali Islam from Salafi influences, which are viewed by Somalis as 'non-Somali', Salafi-Wahhabism. [245]Sufism has traditionally blended partially with the clan system. Genealogical ancestors and founders of Sufi orders are in many places worshipped as saints.[246] One would observe that in Somalia, Shari'a is followed to the extent which is comfortable for the Somalis

4.2 Conclusion

It is thus clear that despite the fact that religion has an influence in the Somali conflict, one can not fully define it as the main cause of conflict in Somalia. Rather, religion has been used in Somalia as an instrument for political interests both by the Islamist movements and also by clans. The use of religion has been so as to acquire personal interests for the parties concerned.

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[245] Combating Terrorism Centre At West Point. Al Qaida's mis Adventures in the Horn of Africa. (Diane Publishing Company 2009),p.30.
[246] See Lewis ioan: Saints and Somalis: Popular Islam in a clan-based Society. The red Sea press, Inc. Lawrenceville and Asmara 1998 p7-25)

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

The purpose of the paper was to research the role of religion in the conflict and management in Somalia. In order to answer or carry out the research, the paper investigated the emergence of Islamic militancy, religion and conflict management and also the various factors that in a way contribute to the use of religion in conflict. The paper is a descriptive study focusing on the case study of Somalia. It is a qualitative study based on literature study and as such is not exhaustive wherein it comes to religion and the Somalia conflict.

Often people are passionate about their religious beliefs especially as religion forms part of one's identity. Due to this, it is often easy for religious institutions to mobilize support from the people when it comes to conflict in a bid to protect their belief. The Somali conflict, on the other hand may not necessarily be viewed as a religious conflict, but rather one that has been influenced by the use of religion in it. Various actors have taken part in the Somali conflict but recently it is the Islamist movements that have taken up a strong hold of the conflict. The use of religion has been observed through tactics that the Islamist movements use, especially in the ideology that they use as a motivation to carry out attacks in the country.

Religion can be and has been used to influence conflict through religious leaders. This has been both negative and positively. The religious leaders have been used to radicalize the society into accepting the various tactics used by the Islamist movements some which are rather barbaric.

They have been implemented also in training of the society through madrassas and dawaa sessions conducted by the religious leaders.

Religion has been used to sustain the Somali conflict. This is evident as once the demands of the Islamist movements for the inclusion of Sharia law was implemented, they still changed demand and are now pursuing a different agenda, that is, global jihad in an effort to create a global Islamic caliphate. The Somali conflict is not purely religious driven but rather is still influenced by other factors such as the anti-West sentiment, foreign intervention and also clan loyalties. Religion has been utilized as an instrument in mobilizing people to fight. The paper is thus of the opinion that much as religion has been used for mobilization to fight in the conflict, it can also be implemented in the search for peace in Somalia. Religion was also used to identify groups as being lesser than other such as the extremist Islamist movements saw of the moderates.

The only way to stop the conflict in Somalia would be to engage religious leaders in de-radicalizing the society.

5.2 Key Findings

It would seem therefore that much as it might be viewed that an Islamic state for Somalia is not the solution, it is important to note that, religion is central to the Somalis. Therefore the need to include religion in the governance of Somalia is essential. Repeated mistakes by those intervening in the Somali conflict have rendered the crisis in Somalia difficult to deal with. They have often centered their focus so much on the state and the establishment of a central government despite failure, and have overlooked on the identities that exist in Somalia and how these have caused the escalation and the sustenance of the conflict. It has been observed that

Islamists, religious leaders and clan elders indeed do influence the conflict. As such it is paramount that peacekeepers and peace builders ensure that they have a clear understanding of the social identities that are dominant in Somali before engaging them whether diplomatically or militarily. Moreover the establishment of governments that seem weak to the Somalis and are rendered foreign due to the lack of participation on the part of the Somalis also increases the popularity of the Islamist movements.

Moreover, only by the inclusion of religious leaders and institutions in the management of the Somali conflict would sustainable peace be seen as forthcoming. The inclusion of Shari'a law in the constitution of Somalia is a step in attempting to include religion in the governance of the State. This is especially as it has been observed that for the Somalis, religion is a safety 'net'. It is also noted that military efforts to the management of an ideological problem may turn out to be futile and no- rewarding. It has been noted also that the inclusion of the Islamist movements in the conflict management processes may aid in attainment of peace. It is also important to note that the inclusion of religion in managing the conflict may aid in countering the extremist interpretation of the religion so as to allow the application of Islamic principles as the basis of the state. Thus an entirely Islamic state for Somalia may not be the panacea to its problem however use of religion in part into the Somali governance may also aid in managing the conflict and acquiring ultimate peace.

Clan and Islamic identities have been observed to be applied instrumentally in the Somali conflict to fit the situation at a particular moment. The shifts in allegiances of the Somalis to their respective clans and various Islamist movements can be said to be protecting the Somalis

from entire and permanent radicalization. This in part also explains as to why the foreign and local Islamist movements have not had a total success in influencing and ensuring that Somalia is an Islamist state. Dawaa centers have been used by religious leaders not only to further propagate the Wahhabi ideology and their extremist values but also to aid financially Somalis who are mostly in poverty. This in itself then provides an easy access to most of the Somalis. This is also as most, if not all, of these Dawaa centers are sponsored by Islamist from the Middle East. Foreign Islamists have had to subordinate themselves to clan systems if they are to survive in Somalia and this also provides for easy recruitment amongst the Somalis.

Shifting of allegiances constantly between Islamist movements and clan ties in Somalia is not unique to them; rather it is in their nature. However it has been observed that ultimately the Somalis view their clan affiliation as a ' safe haven' and would often turn to it in times of distress. This then goes to show that religion in some extent has failed to defy the clan system. The political context it seems is the most important manner in which Somalis would choose their affiliation at the moment, that is, whether to turn to their clan-ties or the Islamist movements.

The geographical location of Somalia was observed to also influence the manner in which religion has been used in the conflict. The foreign Islamist movements from the Middle East, which is close in proximity to Somalia, in the country have influenced the emergence and growth of the Islamist movements. This is either, through the transfer of the Wahhabi ideology to the provision of arms and training to the Somali Islamist leaders and the Islamist groups such as Al Shabaab. The role of neighboring countries and intervening states should be limited to assisting the peace processes that leads to country attaining peace rather than imposing a government that

they feel fit for the country. This works contrary as it pushes forward the agenda of the Islamist movements.

Ultimately one can observe that Islam as an identity and its ability to unify Somalis stiil remains constrained by the clan system. However the rapid emergence and expansion of an Islamist ideology in Somalia coupled with domestic frustrations remains one of the factors that would slow the chances of Somalia attaining sustainable peace in the near future.

5.3 Recommendations

After analyzing the role of religion in Somalia, therefore it has led to various observations that if applied may lead to sustainable peace. It is important to note therefore that, for a conflict that involves religion, practical solutions need to emerge from a thorough analysis of the situation at hand, and then a view of the religious traditions should be looked into to understand how they have affected the conflict and how they can also resolve and mange it.

From the findings of this research the following recommendations are therefore suggested; firstly, that religious leaders should be involved in the conflict management and peacebuilding process in Somalia. The government and the International community aiding in the management of the Somali conflict should seek the traditional peace building approaches to counter the extremists, this is by the use of religious leaders and institutions.

Secondly, the moderate entity, that is scholars and religious leaders, should be assisted in propagating the religion as should be in an effort to de-radicalize the Somali society. A legitimate and authoritative interpretation of Islam can enable the possibility of a stable state and

sustainable peace. It is important therefore for those involved, that is the government and other states seeking to assist Somalia then focus on the way that they can counter radicalization in Somalia. This in an effort to work together with the religious leaders especially the moderate leaders in order to use religion in de-radicalization.

Last but not least, due to the influence that the Islamic identity has on the Somalis, it would be therefore appropriate to incorporate these structures in the conflict resolution processes. The Islamists should be given opportunity to participate in the effort towards governance

After the research, it was noted that there are other areas that still need to be fully understood. As such an area of further study would be; whether the inclusion of Islamist Movements in the Governance of Somalia would be possible or better in the hope for lasting peace in Somalia.

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