IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY
ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS INSTITUTE
DEPARTMENT OF CIVILIZATION STUDIES

PH.D. THESIS

FOREIGN INTERVENTION, RADICALIZATION AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE: HARAKAT AL-SHABAAB AL-MUJAHIDEEN IN SOMALIA

HALIL IBRAHIM ALEGOZ

THESIS SUPERVISOR
PROF. TALHA KOSE

ISTANBUL, 2023

IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY
ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS INSTITUTE
DEPARTMENT OF CIVILIZATION STUDIES

PH.D. THESIS

FOREIGN INTERVENTION, RADICALIZATION AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE: HARAKAT AL-SHABAAB AL-MUJAHIDEEN IN SOMALIA

by

HALIL IBRAHIM ALEGOZ

A thesis submitted to the Alliance of Civilizations Institute in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Civilization Studies

THESIS SUPERVISOR
PROF. TALHA KOSE

ISTANBUL, 2023

APPROVAL PAGE

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that, in our opinion, it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Civilization Studies.

Thesis Jury Members

Title - Name Surname	Opinion	Signature
Prof. Talha Kose	_____	_____
Prof. Recep Senturk	_____	_____
Assoc. Prof. Huseyin Alptekin	_____	_____
Prof. Alev Erkilet	_____	_____
Prof. Ekrem Karakoc	_____	_____

This is to confirm that this thesis complies with all the standards set by the Alliance of Civilizations Institute of Ibn Haldun University.

Date of Submission Seal/Signature

ACADEMIC HONESTY ATTESTATION

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Halil Ibrahim Alegoz

Signature

ABSTRACT

FOREIGN INTERVENTION, RADICALIZATION AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE: HARAKAT AL-SHABAAB AL-MUJAHIDEEN IN SOMALIA

Alegoz, Halil İbrahim
PH.D. in Civilization Studies
Student ID: 195002011
Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORC-ID): 0000-0001-8035-8261
National Thesis Center Reference Number: 10559664
Thesis Supervisor: Prof. Talha Kose
June 2023, 227 Pages

This study investigates the development of the political violence phenomenon in Somalia between 2001 and 2009, with a particular focus on the radicalization process of Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahedeen. We assert that radicalization emerges as one of the potential outcomes on the part of an organization in a political struggle that unfolds in a complex, multifaceted, and contentious political setting. The main finding of this research is as follows: Radicalization dynamics exert their influence more within the two episodes of social interactions. The first episode refers to the "onset of radicalization," which can be traced back to the conflictual dynamics between the faction leaders, and other opposing forces, vis a vis the Islamic groups and other rivals between 2002 and 2006, as the violence in targeted form took place through the mechanism of *retaliation* and added an ideological dimension to the conflict. It resulted in emboldening a network of dispersed individuals who later came to be known as al-Shabaab. The study regards the second episode as the most decisive factor. It begins with the Ethiopian intervention of Somalia between 2005 and 2009, which opened the floor for al-Shabaab to expand its tactical repertoire of action and modify its target preferences in a more institutionalized and aggressive manner which we labeled as "intensified radicalization."

Political violence has been predominantly examined through security and terrorism studies perspectives, putting much emphasis directly on the 'stateless' environment and its consequences, i.e., anarchy and terrorism. Moreover, such approaches focus

on the radicalization tendencies of individuals with respect to their psychological dispositions, emotional tendencies, educational background, or certain characteristics transmitted through genetic inheritance. Nevertheless, these approaches do not allow us to capture the whole process of conflictual dynamics in violence at length, and Somali studies have been no exception. This research rather follows a distinct approach to the phenomenon under investigation. We argue that political violence unfolds from the ebb and flow of a collective claim-making and struggle for power on the part of a movement organization in the relational radicalization framework. Therefore this study analyzes the radicalization process within a broader political context across distinct arenas of interactions in which the mobilization of social movements takes place.

This study follows a mechanism-based research technique and embraces deductive and inductive reasoning. Regarding data collection, it relies on comprehensive face-to-face interviews carried out in Mogadishu, Somalia coupled with 12 months of the research program as a research scholar at the University of Minnesota, United States. Additionally, secondary resources have been used to identify and locate a diverse range of sub-mechanisms that contributed to the emergence and escalation phases of the violent political campaign of al-Shabaab. After all, explaining how and when the radicalization process unfolded on the part of al-Shabaab, referring to the timing and sequences, constitutes the central area of investigation of this research.

Keywords: al-Shabaab, Foreign Intervention, Political Violence, Radicalization Somalia

ÖZ

DIŞ MÜDAHALELER, RADİKALLEŞME VE SİYASAL ŞİDDET: SOMALİ'DE EŞ-ŞEBAB HAREKETİ

Alegöz, Halil İbrahim
Medeniyet Araştırmaları Doktora Programı
Öğrenci Numarası: 195002011
Açık Araştırmacı ve Katılımcı Kimliği (ORC-ID): 0000-0001-8035-8261
Ulusal Tez Merkezi Referans Numarası: 10559664
Tez Danışmanı: Prof. Talha Köse
Haziran 2023, 227 sayfa

Bu çalışma, 2001-2009 yılları arasında Somali'de meydana gelen siyasal şiddet olgusunun gelişimini, eş-Şebab hareketinin genel siyasi ortam içerisindeki radikalleşme süreçlerine odaklanarak incelemektedir. Radikalleşmenin, karmaşık, çok yönlü ve çekişmeli bir siyasi ortamda hak iddiasında bulunan bir sosyal hareketin uğradığı muhtemel sonuçlarından biri olarak ortaya çıktığını iddia ediyoruz. Bu araştırmanın temel bulgusu şu şekildedir: eş-Şebab'ın radikalleşme dinamikleri daha çok iki siyasi etkileşim süreci içerisinde ortaya çıkmıştır. İlk süreç "radikalleşme başlangıcına" atıfta bulunmakta olup, 2002-2006 yılları arasında İslami gruplara karşı muhtelif savaş ağaları ve diğer muhalif güçler arasındaki çatışmacı dinamiklere kadar geri götürülebiliriz. Çünkü bu dönemde şiddetin belirli bir hedefe yönelik biçimi 'misilleme mekanizması' aracılığıyla gerçekleşmiş ve çatışmaya ideolojik bir nitelik kazandırmıştır. Bu durum, daha sonra eş-Şebab olarak anılacak olan dağınık yapıdaki bireylerden oluşan sosyal ağın mobilizasyonunu tetiklemiştir. Bu çalışma "yoğunlaştırılmış radikalleşme" olarak tanımladığımız ikinci süreci eş-Şebab'ın radikalleşme dinamikleri açısından en belirleyici faktör olarak görmektedir. Bu süreç, 2005-2009 yılları arasında Etiyopya'nın Somali'yi işgaliyle başlamış olup, eş-Şebab'ın taktiksel eylem repertuarını genişletmesine ve hedef tercihlerini daha kurumsal ve agresif bir şekilde dönüşümüne zemin hazırlamıştır.

Siyasal şiddet ağırlıklı olarak güvenlik ve terörizm çalışmaları perspektifinden incelenmiş, yapılan araştırmalarda ise daha çok doğrudan 'devletsiz' ortama ve bunun örneğin anarşi ve terörizm gibi sonuçlarına vurgu yapılmıştır. Dahası bu disiplinler bireylerin bir takım psikolojik ya da ekonomik durumları, duygusal eğilimleri, eğitim seviyeleri ya da genetik aktarım yoluyla tevarüs eden birtakım özellikleri üzerinden radikalleşme eğilimlerine odaklanmaktadır. Somali üzerine yapılan çalışmalar da istisna değildir. Tüm bu yaklaşımlar şiddeti ortaya çıkaran çatışmacı dinamiklerin tüm sürecini daha kapsamlı bir çerçevede ele almamıza pek imkân vermemektedir. Dolayısıyla bizim ortaya koyduğumuz çalışmamız ele aldığımız konuya yönelik farklı bir yaklaşım ortaya koymak suretiyle siyasal şiddet olgusunun, ilişkisel radikalleşme çerçevesindeki bir toplumsal hareketin kolektif hak iddia etme ve güç mücadelesinin meydana getirdiği gelgitlerinden ortaya çıktığını iddia etmektedir. Dolayısıyla bu araştırmamız, radikalleşme sürecini daha geniş bir siyasi bağlam içerisinde toplumsal hareketlerin mobilizasyonunun gerçekleştiği münferit etkileşim alanlarında analiz etmektedir.

Bu çalışmada mekanizma temelli bir araştırma tekniği izlenmiş ve tümdengelim ve tümevarım yaklaşımları benimsenmiştir. Çalışmanın veri toplama yöntemi, Somali'nin başkenti Mogadişu'da çeşitli aktörlerle gerçekleştirilen kapsamlı yüz yüze mülakat süreçlerine ve Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nde Minnesota Üniversitesi'nde araştırma bursiyeri olarak geçirilen 12 aylık araştırma programına dayanmaktadır. Buna ek olarak, eş-Şebab'ın şiddet içeren siyasi eylemlerinin ortaya çıkışına ve şiddetlenme aşamalarına katkıda bulunan çeşitli mekanizma setlerini daha kapsamlı tespit etmek amacıyla ikincil kaynaklara yer verilmiştir. Sonuç olarak, radikalleşme sürecinin eş-Şebab bağlamında nasıl ve ne zaman ortaya çıktığını, bu süreci ortaya çıkaran mekanizmaların zamanlamasına ve dizilişlerine atıfta bulunarak açıklamalar getirmek, bu tez çalışmasının temel inceleme alanını oluşturmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Eş-Şebab, Dış Müdahale, Radikalleşme, Siyasal Şiddet, Somali

DEDICATION

To my mother and father for their unwavering love and support and for making me who I am today. And to my precious grandmother and grandfather, whose undying memories filled with joy, endless compassion, and generosity will keep living in my heart for eternity.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Much has changed in Mogadishu since my first arrival in 2012 as an enthusiastic master's degree student carrying out fieldwork. As time passes, I have had the opportunity to witness the gradual development of a city which once called the pearl of the Indian Ocean but whose beauty has been hidden lost in the past memories waiting to be unveiled. My academic interest and several visits to Somalia allowed me to think of interrelated concepts such as political violence and conflict. I came to realize that a scholarly investigation into these concepts must be needed to go beyond conventional methodologies and approaches. This study is a consequence of this intellectual curiosity. This research is an analytical investigation of how and when things went to what it is today - an intellectual search for a phenomenon that evolved from conflict into violence. It is my utmost hope that this research will be further improved by seekers of knowledge.

I am grateful for the tremendous help and encouragement provided by numerous friends, colleagues, and institutions, without whom this dissertation would not have been possible. I am filled with gratitude for the generous contributions of suggestions, ideas, and encouragement from everyone. First and foremost, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my academic advisor, Prof. Talha Kose, for his invaluable guidance, encouragement, and support throughout my research. The other four members of my dissertation committee, Prof. Recep Senturk, Associate Prof. Huseyin Alptekin, Prof. Ekrem Karakoc, and Prof. Alev Erkilet have provided outstanding guidance during the course of this project. Their collective expertise, insightful comments, and suggestions have significantly improved the quality and rigor of my research. One additional point that my academic advisors were correct about is that we acquire a greater amount of knowledge from our colleagues than from our supervisors during postgraduate studies. I like to thank all my colleagues who took part in the academic colloquium series under the guidance of Prof. Senturk and Erkilet.

I was fortunate enough to receive much help from various individuals and institutions during my stay in the USA, and I am incredibly thankful for their kindness and support. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to Professor Abdi Samatar for his generous openness to sharing his wealth of knowledge and expertise with me. I consider myself fortunate enough to work with him and benefit from his expertise. I am humbled and filled with the utmost respect as I extend my deepest gratitude to the University of Minnesota for kindly welcoming me as a visiting scholar for an entire year. This opportunity allowed me to benefit from a diverse range of academic environments and to exchange ideas with scholars from various disciplines. Last but not least, I would like to sincerely express my heartful thanks to Prof. Bilal Kuspinar for graciously offering me both intellectual and moral support.

This research has been fortunate to receive financial and moral support from various sources throughout its journey. I would not have been able to pursue my study project in the United States and Somalia if it were not for the generous funding provided by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkiye (TUBITAK) and Ibn Haldun University. I am grateful to have received support from each of these respective institutions, and I sincerely hope that they are satisfied with the outcomes of this project.

I am immensely grateful to have been given feedback from an exceptionally diverse group of people who kindly committed their valuable time to assist me in enhancing this project. I would like to express my sincere thanks to Prof. Doug McAdam, Prof. John Abbink, and Prof. Charalambos Demetriou for their insightful feedback regarding the explanatory soundness of relational radicalization and contentious political perspective in a non-Western political setting. I was aware that I was venturing into unfamiliar territory by applying this conceptual approach in the Somali context. Although it has presented numerous challenges, it also has brought forth several opportunities. Above all, I would like to express my gratitude to all of my interviewees, most of whom have chosen to remain anonymous, for generously sharing their time and trust with me. I gained much knowledge from their insights. It is my hope that this study can also provide valuable insights to others.

I cannot express enough how deeply grateful I am to my family for the unwavering love and support they have provided me with over the years. Their unfailing support and encouragement have been a constant source of motivation and inspiration.

Halil Ibrahim Alegoz
Istanbul-Minnesota, 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ..... **IV**
ÖZ ..... **VI**
DEDICATION ..... **VIII**
ACKNOWLEDGMENT ..... **IX**
TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... **XII**
LIST OF FIGURES ..... **XIV**
LIST OF TABLES ..... **XV**
LIST OF MAPS ..... **XVI**
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS ..... **XVII**
ABBREVIATIONS ..... **XVIII**

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION TO RELATIONAL RADICALIZATION PERSPECTIVE 1

1.1. Introduction 1
1.2. Radicalization: Reflections for the Global Security Architect 4
1.3. Different Approaches in Radicalization Research 12
1.4. State Failure and Terrorism: A Causal Relationship? 28
1.5. The Puzzle 33
1.6. The Argument 37
1.7. Conceptional Framework of Study 41
1.8. Dissertation Outline 44

CHAPTER II
TOWARD A RELATIONAL RADICALIZATION PERSPECTIVE IN EXPLAINING POLITICAL VIOLENCE **46**

2.1. Relational Reasoning in Understanding Contentious Interactions 46
2.2. Political Violence, Contentious Politics, and the Relational Radicalization Perspective 50
2.3. Methodology and Research Design 58
2.3.1. Relational Arenas of Interaction 61
2.4. Selection Logic: Applying Relation Radicalization Framework in Somali Context 69
2.5. Research Design 71
2.6. Contributions to the Literature 73

CHAPTER III
THE RADICALIZATION PROCESSES OF HARAKAT AL-SHABAAB AL-MUJAHEDEEN (2001 – 2009) **83**

3.1. Social and Historical Dynamics: 1991 – 2001 85
3.1.1. The disintegration of the Somali State 90

3.1.2. Operation Restore Hope and the UN Mission in Somalia: 1992 – 1994 94
3.1.3. Strategies for Peace and Peace Initiatives 95
3.1.4. Local Political Context: Warlordism, and the Sharia Courts 101
3.1.5. The Global War on Terror in Somalia 106
3.2. Development of Political Violence through Mechanisms: 2002 – 2009 110
3.2.1. National Political Dynamics: Threat Attribution in Local Contexts 112
3.2.2. Global and Local Security Dynamics: Global War on Terror and Local Alliance Formation 123
3.3.3. Regional Security Dynamics: Ethiopian Intervention of Somalia 144
3.2.4. Competition for Power within the UIC? 167

CHAPTER IV
COMPARISON THROUGH MECHANISMS 170

4.1. Comparison through Mechanisms 170
4.2. Policy Implications 178
4.3. Conclusion 180

REFERENCES 189

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Most active terrorist organizations worldwide in 2020 6
Figure 2. Total deaths since 2001 6
Figure 3. Moghaddam's Staircase to Terrorism 18
Figure 4. Two pyramid model (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011) 19
Figure 5. The NYPD's proposed four-stage radicalization process (NYPD) 21
Figure 6. Borum's four-stage model of the terrorist mindset 23
Figure 7. Wiktorowic's Model of Radicalization 24
Figure 8. The push and pull factors of violent radicalization in North Africa (Bourekba, Moussa, 2021) 26
Figure 9. Multilevel Model of Radicalization 27
Figure 10. Components of Contentious Politics (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015) 52
Figure 11. The Classic SMA for Explaining Contentious Politics (McAdam et al. (2001) 54
Figure 12. Typology of transformations of goal orientations and action repertoires of SMOs. (Kriesi, 1996: 157) 56

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Sub-Mechanisms Across Episodes 172
Table 2 Modalities of Radicalization 174
Table 3 Varieties of Radicalization 177

LIST OF MAPS

Map 1 Political Map of Somalia 84
Map 2 Somali Political Situation on December 2nd, 2006 140
Map 3 Ethiopian Intervention of Somalia 162

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustration 1 U.S. President George W. Bush chats with Meles during a meeting with Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi for talks on combatting 109

Illustration 2 The Speaker of the Parliament of Somalia meets with Sheikh Sharif Ahmad and Hasan Dahir Aweys 150

Illustration 3 Leader of Somalia Islamic Courts Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys (R) and European Union aid chief Louis Michel (front, L) walk in Somalia's capital Mogadishu December 20, 2006. (Reuters)..... 159

ABBREVIATIONS

AIAI	Al-Ittihad Al-Islamiyah
ARPCT	Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism
AU	African Union
CENTCOM	United States Central Command
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CJTF-HOA	Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa
GWOT	Global War on Terror
IGAD	International Authority on Development
POS	Political Opportunity Structure
SMO	Social Movement Organization
SNM	Somali National Movement
SPM	Somalia Patriotic Movement
SRRC	Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council
SSDF	Somali Salvation Democratic Front
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
TNG	Transitional National Government
UIC	Union of Islamic Courts
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
USC	United Somali Congress

“After hopelessness, there is so much hope,
and after darkness, there is a much brighter sun.”

Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO A RELATIONAL RADICALIZATION PERSPECTIVE

"That in a civil war there is continuous fighting, based on grievances that are forever changing."

Nuruddin Farah[1]

1.1. Introduction

How does political violence occur? Do we attempt to analyze it in an isolated criminal environment or interpret it within a broader political context? There is a general tendency in terrorism and security studies to investigate radicalization phenomena in an isolated criminal environment with a special focus on the 'group at risk' people. In this configuration, ideological preferences, cultural templates, or personal treaties predominantly posit the central starting point of any given analysis in making sense of the behavior of 'radicalized' people regardless of time and space. It came, therefore, no surprise that political violence has been predominantly examined through security perspectives, putting much emphasis directly on the 'stateless' environment and its consequences, i.e., anarchy and terrorism. Nevertheless, these approaches do not allow us to capture the whole process of conflictual dynamics in violence at length, and Somali studies have been no exception.

This study follows a rather distinct approach to the phenomenon under investigation. It aims to analyze the radicalization process of the Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahedeen in Somalia from a relational radicalization perspective. It first and foremost argues that political violence unfolds from the ebb and flow of collective claim-making and struggle for power on the part of a movement organization in the relational framework. Radicalization emerges as one of the potential outcomes on the part of an organization in a political struggle that unfolds in a complex, multifaceted, and contentious national political setting. Within this analytical framework, this study prioritizes relational reasoning by analyzing the radicalization process within a

[1] Farah, Nuruddin. *Links.* (Penguin Book, 2005), 30.

broader political context in which the mobilization of social movements takes place. It relates social movements to relational arenas of interaction, such as national political cleavages, rival local formations, and security forces, as they are policing the protest when the former is persuading their object of claims. External actors may also be actively involved in coercive powers in this geopolitical formulation. In this relational and political setting, this study attempts to analyze the radicalization process of the Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahedeen in Somalia. It was against this severely contentious political setting that the group evolved from what was once defined as a loose marginal network of ragtag militia under the umbrella of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) to a disorganized network of an Islamist insurgency that fought Ethiopia's military intervention and the African Mission of Somalia (AMISOM).

The occupation context is particularly critical in understanding the splintering process of the UIC's diverse composition of ethnic and ideological characteristics. Its executive military unit, al-Shabaab, began to operate more autonomously from the UIC's governing structure, whose authority over the youth militias became increasingly waned and questioned during the Ethiopian intervention. It could be argued that the Shabaab were able to leverage the occupation context to achieve their desired goal of institutional independence and autonomy from the Courts, thereby enabling them to establish Sharia-based rule and proclaim the Islamic Caliphate. However, in both circumstances, the cumulative outcome on the ground remained the same.

The UIC's organizational splintering dynamics can be found in the internal disagreements on ideological and tactical preferences. However, more importantly, it stemmed from the internationalization of regional rivalries, mainly between Ethiopia and Eritrea, as well as the penetration of global pressures in the ongoing Somali conflict within *the global war on terror* framework. The involvement of external forces resulted in unintended consequences, leading to widespread violence in Mogadishu, neighboring cities, and even beyond Somalia's borders. It led to the creation of insurgency structures based on already existing and evolving networks, among which al-Shabaab proved to be the most resilient, effective, and violent. From that moment on, the group underwent an organizational transformation and leaned toward a more extreme direction regarding ideological and tactical preferences that

secured a close collaboration with al-Qaida. The group has also enjoyed territorial gains that have implemented a *de facto* governance in the rural areas over the years.

The theoretical framework of this study is grounded on the broader social movement theory and, more specifically, located on the contentious politics paradigm and the relational radicalization perspective formulated by Charles Tilly, Sidney Tarrow & Doug McAdam. This formulation was developed further by Della Porta, Eitan Alimi, Hanspeter Kriesi, David S. Meyer, Stephen Malthaner, et al. by embedding the violent elements such as radicalization phenomenon in contentious political settings in a more detailed fashion. The influence of idea-centric behaviors, potentially violent ideologies, impulses, and reasons for aggression on the actual militancy is not excluded entirely in analyzing violent episodes and processes. They, rather, are moderated by the relational practices of contacts and bargaining among the contending parties. Therefore, this approach gives more emphasis on the dynamic and processual understanding of radicalization than on static and linear modeling.

Radicalization processes are demonstrated through the relational, cognitive, and environmental mechanisms concatenate to form particular paths or sequences of radicalization. This study follows a mechanism-based research technique and embraces deductive and inductive reasoning. Our conceptual and methodological framework clarifies that the focus of this study is to examine and analyze the processes that lead to political violence through mechanisms rather than the organizational structure or ideological aspects of the organization in question. Regarding data collection, it relies on comprehensive face-to-face interviews carried out in Mogadishu, coupled with 12 months of the research program as a research scholar at the University of Minnesota, United States. Additionally, secondary resources have been used to identify and locate a diverse range of sub-mechanisms that contributed to the emergence and escalation phases of the violent political campaign of al-Shabaab. After all, explaining how and when the radicalization process unfolded on the part of al-Shabaab, referring to the timing and sequences, constitutes the central area of investigation of this research.

Given the background information provided, this study aims to investigate the following set of questions:

How does the radicalization process unfold on the part of al-Shabaab?
When does it occur in terms of the timing and sequence of events?

This chapter will begin by addressing the significance of radicalization phenomena in political violence studies and their relevance to global security architects. Furthermore, we will address general concepts, approaches, and methodologies in radicalization studies and the underlying mechanisms that have made it a popular topic in security and terrorism studies. Last but not least, this section will also address the significance of this research within the broader radicalization literature and the distinctive perspectives it offers.

1.2. Radicalization: Reflections for the Global Security Architect

Over the past 50 years, there has been a noticeable shift in the nature of conflicts. In the past few decades, there has been a discernible shift in the nature of conflicts from inter-state or inter-national to more internal and violent forms. Research indicates that 97% of all armed conflicts between 1990 and 2018 can be categorized as internal disputes, and the majority of these internal conflicts, i.e., around 76%, were civil wars.[2] Political instability and economic inequality are widely recognized as the key factors for the emergence of internal conflicts that ensue between governing bodies and their respective communities.[3] Ethnic divisions, environmental changes, and social inequalities can also stand for contributive factors. The escalation of internal violent conflicts on a global scale presents a significant peril to both human security and development, as it results in extensive displacement, loss of life and assets, and a general state of social unrest.

It's worth emphasizing that conflict and terrorism are significantly interconnected. The vast majority of fatalities resulting from terrorism, specifically 95% in the year 2018, occurred within geographic areas that were concurrently undergoing some degree of violent conflict. It is worth highlighting that the phenomenon of "internal

[2] Institute for Economics & Peace. Global Terrorism Index 2019: Measuring the Impact of Terrorism, Sydney, November 2019. Available from: http://visionofhumanity.org/reports.

[3] DFID. *The Politics of Poverty: Elites, Citizens, and States: Findings from ten years of DFID- funded research on Governance and Fragile States 2001-2010*. London: (2010). DFID.

warfare" can manifest beyond national borders and domestic contexts. Research indicates that a significant portion, 55%, of rebel groups that have been operational since 1945 have established transitional ties. This can be attributed to the fact that civil wars frequently generate prospects and motivation for external actors to interfere.[4]

Internationalized conflicts that have occurred for the last 20 years, for instance, in Afghanistan, Yemen, Syria, and Somalia, accounted for 82% of all recorded battle-related casualties. Accordingly, terrorist attacks have increased fivefold since 2001 worldwide. The Middle East, the Horn of Africa, and the Sahel alone have 77% of conflicts with violent extremist elements, compared with 22% in 2001. According to the Global Terrorism Database, of the 26,445 deaths from terrorism, 95% occurred in the Middle East, Africa, or South Asia.[5] The following statistical data presents a ranking of the most active terrorist organizations globally in the year 2019, as determined by the frequency of attacks executed under their auspices. The militant organization al-Shabaab is ranked among the top five extremist movements in the world.[6]

[4] Checkel, Jeffrey T. (ed.) *Transnational Dynamics of Civil War*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139179089.

[5] Ritchie, H., Hasell, J., Mathieu, E., Appel, C., & Roser, M. (n.d.). *Terrorism*. Our World in Data. https://ourworldindata.org/terrorism

[6] Most Active Terrorist Organizations Worldwide 2020. Statista." www.statista.com/statistics/937553/terrorism-most-active-perpetrator-groups-worldwide. Accessed 29 Oct. 2022.

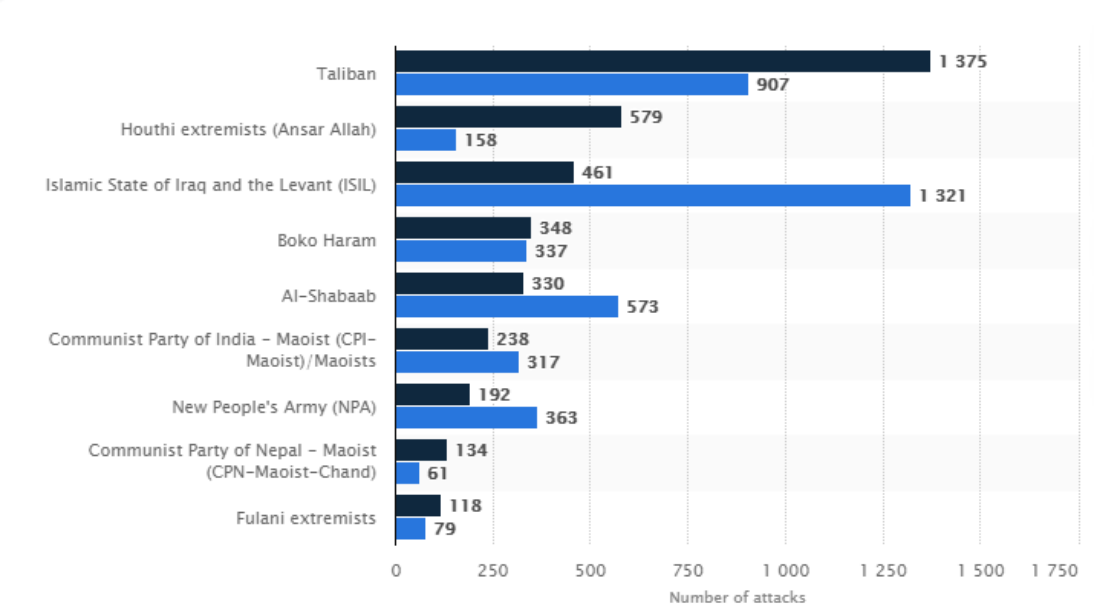


Figure 1. Most active terrorist organizations worldwide in 2020

There is a strong regional focus on terrorist activities, profoundly centered around only a few countries within these regions. Global Terrorism Index listed Somalia among the ten countries most impacted by terrorism worldwide.[7]

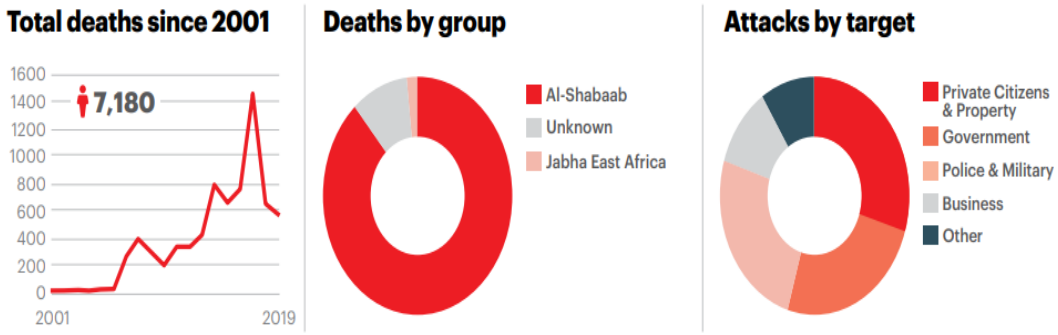


Figure 2. Total deaths since 2001

The data indicate that al-Shabaab has been linked to 1,923 occurrences and 5,233 deaths since its establishment in 2007.[8] Notwithstanding the provision of military aid and technical support from foreign entities, the group continues to be among the deadliest violent extremist organization in Africa and globally.

[7] Institute for Economics & Peace. "Global Terrorism Index 2019: Measuring the Impact of Terrorism", Sydney, November 2019. Pg. 3. Available from: http://visionofhumanity.org/reports

[8] Ibid.

If we consider radicalization as a potential precursor to terrorism rather than a requirement factor, how can we assess the radicalization process that took place within al-Shabab? The overall investigation focuses on the theoretical frameworks that are used to conceptualize the development of political violence and the context in which this concept is to be understood. The question is presented as follows: Do we attempt to understand the radicalization phenomenon in an isolated criminal environment or interpret it in a wider political context? This study stands for the latter. It aims to explore the political violence phenomena on the part of one of the most active armed organizations in Africa: al-Shabaab. This comparative research agenda aims to address two questions stated below that are incompatible with the relational radicalization perspective within the framework of the contentious politics paradigm formulated by Charles Tilly, Sidney Tarrow, and Doug McAdam.[9]

1) *What were the mechanisms and processes through which al-Shabaab went through radicalization?*
2) *During which specific moment in time and in what particular sequence of events did it unfold?*

The radicalization phenomenon has garnered considerable attention in global security studies and intellectual environments following the dissolution of the Cold War political structure. The term has gained worldwide popularity following the infamous September 11, 2001, bombings in European capitals, Madrid in 2004, and London in 2005.[10] Since then, it has become prevalent as an analytical paradigm to interpret and explain political violence phenomena, notably in research on jihadist terrorism and Western "foreign fighters" in Syria and Iraq.[11] Furthermore, the social sciences have increasingly focused on the phenomenon of radicalization, particularly in relation to the discourse surrounding "home-grown" violent extremists. This discourse has sought to understand the process by which individuals who appear to be ordinary

9 McAdam, Doug, Tarrow S., and Charles Tilly. *Dynamics of Contention*. (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2008)

10 U.S. Department of State. Bureau of Counterterrorism *Country Reports on Terrorism*. (2021). Retrieved July 9, 2023, https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2021/

11 Malthaner, Stefan. "Radicalization: The Evolution of an Analytical Paradigm." Archives Europeennes De Sociologie 58 (2017): 369-401.

citizens come to embrace terrorism.[12] The question asked is as follows: How did seemingly ordinary people (decide to) become terrorists?[13]

In light of the events of September 11 and the subsequent emergence of "homegrown" terrorism in Western countries, the phenomenon of "Islamist terrorism" has been recognized as a threat that is no longer solely external in nature. The terminology denoted a paradigm shift in a deeper understanding of the search for fundamental factors underlying acts of terrorism as well as the development and deployment of novel strategies and tools to combat it in a more inventive way. The phenomenon of political violence has been redefined with a specific emphasis on terrorism, leading to the expansion of research on radicalization. This approach has facilitated the development of counterterrorism strategies that are complemented by preventative measures aimed at addressing extremism, mainly at the individual, group, and mass levels. In addition, scholars have conducted inquiries into the impact of radicalization and extremism on the community, along with the strategies that policymakers and other interested parties could utilize to prevent or address such challenges. However, some scholars have claimed that anti-terrorism measures that put a high priority on military and law enforcement operations may be counterproductive and may even exacerbate the radicalization process.[14] Others, on the other, have pushed for a more comprehensive approach that targets the underlying reasons for radicalization and extremism, such as political, social, and economic related grievances.[15]

The search for soft policies and best practices to prevent radicalization has become of the uttermost importance for homeland security architects. Nonetheless, the threat of terrorism extended beyond the regulatory and legal structures that are associated with domestic concerns. Western security perception has extended towards weak and fragile states within the "war on terror" framework and later coupled with 'prevention strategies' and 'state-building' projects across parts of Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. Western policy circles have raised the state-building framework as an

---

[12] Martín Ramírez, Jesús. and Monaghan, Rachel. and Walters, Tali K. *Radicalization, Terrorism, and Conflict* (Cambridge Scholars Pub. 2013)

[13] Williams, Jennifer. "How Ordinary People Decide to Become Terrorists - Vox." Vox, November 20, 2015. https://www.vox.com/2015/11/20/9764078/paris-terrorist-radicalization.

[14] McCauley, C., & Moskalenko, S. (2017). Understanding political radicalization: The two-pyramids model. American Psychologist, 72(3), 205–216. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000062

[15] Krueger, Alan, B., and Jitka Malečková. 2003. "Education, Poverty and Terrorism: Is There a Causal Connection?" Journal of Economic Perspectives, 17 (4): 119-144.

issue of paramount importance for the global community. According to proponents of this perspective, weak or failed states are responsible for a multitude of the world's most pressing issues, including but not limited to poverty, AIDS, and terrorism.[16] One of the most pressing foreign policy concerns for the West has been the issue of conflict with violent extremist groups. This issue has had direct domestic implications, including a significant humanitarian crisis, migration flows, and international terrorist activities. They not only have the potential to disrupt regional order and stability but also pose a significant risk to the interests of the global West.[17] For instance, Jack Straw, the British Secretary of Foreign Affairs, made a clear statement that the tragic events of 9/11 could potentially lead to a particular outcome:

> "A future in which unspeakable acts of evil are committed against us, coordinated from failed states in distant parts of the world. [Places like] Somalia, Liberia, and Congo invoke the Hobbesian image of a ''state of nature'' without order, where continual fear and danger of violent death render life nasty, brutish, and short….As well as bringing mass murder to the heart of Manhattan, state failure has brought terror and misery to large swathes of the African continent. And at home, it has brought drugs, violence, and crime to Britain's streets. . . We need to remind ourselves that turning a blind eye to the breakdown of order in any part of the world, however distant, invites direct threats to our national security and well-being."[18]

For Straw, it was imperative to acknowledge that neglecting the disintegration of societal and political structure in any region, regardless of its geographical distance, constituted a direct menace to the security and welfare of a nation. He establishes direct causality between the occurrence of mass murders in Manhattan and widespread terror and suffering across various regions of the African continent and the state failure phenomena in Africa. Due to its distinctive geographical location and the absence of operational state institutions, Somalia has been at the forefront of these discussions. For example, the Al-Ittihad Al-Islamiyah (AIAI) in Somalia, which was active in the 1980s and mid-1990s, was held responsible for providing logistical support for the bombings of the US embassies in Tanzania and Kenya on August 7,

---

16 Fukuyama, Francis. "Preface." In *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century*, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2004)

17 United States Institute of Peace Report, "*Preventing Extremism in the Fragile States: A New Approach*," (Task Force on Extremism in the Fragile States, 2019), Pg. 11

18 Straw, Jack. "Failed and Failing States" the Guardian, October 22, 2001. Full text of Straw's speech available at http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2001/oct/22/britainand911.september11.

1998.[19] Additionally, Somalia's role as a failed state has been highlighted as a facilitator for the rise and spread of radical groups and individuals. According to that perspective, the absence of a functioning state has provided a conducive environment for such organizations to flourish and establish ties with external networks, allowing them to operate freely within Somalia and beyond its borders.[20]

As per the 2005 *Country Report on Terrorism* published by the U.S. Department of State, the absence of a functional central government in the southern regions of Somalia has led to the emergence of safe havens for terrorists and other unlawful activities.[21] This poses a significant threat to the security of the entire region. The report furthermore highlights the individuals accountable for the 1998 bombings of the U.S. Embassy in Kenya and Tanzania harbored in Somalia and received support from elements within the complex Somali clan structure.[22] In summary, it is contended that Somalia exhibits a proclivity for inadequately ensuring the safety and well-being of its populace, as well as struggling to uphold governance and stability within its territorial boundaries. The presence of failed states has been instrumental in enabling internationally supported terrorist networks and activities.[23]

Despite numerous counterterrorism-related operations conducted in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Somalia, radicalization has appeared to be more persistent and resilient. In some cases, military operations unsurprisingly backfired and contributed to the diffusion of radicalization in communities, among individuals and movements in multiple and complex ways. Military operations in the counter-terrorism context have proven, in a way, that while terrorism is a symptom, extremism is the disease.[24] Compared to 2001, today, the number of groups with Salafi-jihadist ideology was doubled and has established a presence in nineteen countries across the Sahel, the

---

[19] Al-Itihaad Al-Islamiya - AIAI | United Nations Security Council," www.un.org. Accessed October 31,2022, Https://Www.Un.Org/Securitycouncil/Sanctions/1267/Aq_Sanctions_List/Summaries/Entity/Al-İtihaad-Al-İslamiya/Aiai.

[20] Rotberg, Robert I. "Failed States in a World of Terror." Foreign Affairs 81, no. 4 (2002): 127–40. https://doi.org/10.2307/20033245.

[21] United States Department of State "Country Reports on Terrorism 2020," "Chapter 3 -- Terrorist Safe Havens," April 28, 2006, https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2020/.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Howard, Tiffany. *Failed States and the Origins of Violence*. (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016). Pg. 19.

[24] United States Institute of Peace Report, by Task Force on Extremism in Fragile States, "Preventing Extremism in Fragile States: A New Approach" 2019.

Horn of Africa, and the Near East.[25] As per the 2018 report published by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), it is estimated that the global count of jihadists may reach up to 230,000. It represents an increase of nearly fourfold in comparison to the number of casualties recorded at the onset of the United States' "Global War on Terror" following the September 11 attacks."[26] The existing research on terrorism tends to focus on the latter stages of violence while failing to integrate the initial phases into their analyses in a more comprehensive way.

In conclusion, it is crucial to emphasize that the notion of radicalization has garnered substantial importance in scholarly investigations and policy arenas pertaining to political violence, chiefly owing to its extensive ramifications for global security and stability. Gaining a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon and its relational mechanisms is of utmost importance in formulating effective policies and interventions that tackle underlying social and political mechanisms and prevent the growing incidence of violent extremism.

Definitions and Concepts

This study adopts the definition of radicalization proposed by Sidney Tarrow et al., which characterizes it as follows: "It is the expansion of collective action frames to more extreme agendas and the adoption of more transgressive forms of contention."[27] A similar explanation proposed by Alimi et al. also suggests radicalization as "the process through which a social movement organization (SMO) shifts from predominantly nonviolent tactics of contention to tactics that include violent means, as well as the subsequent process of contention maintaining and possibly intensifying the newly introduced violence."[28] The term "Contentious Politics" as referred to by Sidney Tarrow et al. denotes "episodic, public, collective interaction among makers

[25] Ibid.

[26] Jones, Seth G., Vallee, Charles et al. *The Evolution of the Salafi-Jihadist Threat: Current and Future Challenges from the Islamic State, Al-Qaeda, and Other Groups*, CSIS Transnational Threats Project, 2018.

[27] McAdam, Doug, Tarrow S., and Charles Tilly. *Dynamics of Contention*. (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2008), Pg. 69.

[28] Alimi, Eitan Y., Demetriou, Chares, Bosi, Lorenzo. *The Dynamics of Radicalization: A Relational and Comparative Perspective*. (NY; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015) Pg. 11.

of claims and their objects when: (a) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the claims, and (b) the claims would if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants or objects of claims."[29] Roughly translated, the definition refers to collective political struggle.[30] In a less technical language, it involves claim-making actions which directly have some impact on other actor's interests, including governments, non-state actors, or/and international actors, leading to coordinated efforts on behalf of shared interests or programs that is Collective Action, in which governments are involved as targets.[31] Our understanding of a *Social Movement* encompasses a comprehensive definition, which refers to a deliberate and organized group action aimed at advocating for significant transformations in the political or economic structures of society. Social movements are characterized by prolonged and coordinated efforts undertaken by groups that advocate for a particular type of social transformation.[32] From the resource mobilization standpoint, it means a set of preferences for social change within a population,[33] or, in other words, it refers to people who, at a given point in time, are not making contentious claims and start to do so.[34] These are the conceptual tools that we will call upon through our research strategy will prove to be helpful.

1.3. Different Approaches in Radicalization Research

Broadly speaking, by 'radicalization,' we mean the process that leads to and includes political violence. Alimi et al. define it as "the process through which a social movement organization (SMO) shifts from predominantly nonviolent tactics of contention to tactics that include violent means, as well as the subsequent process of

[29] Tarrow, S. (2013). Contentious Politics. In The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements (eds D.A. Snow, D. Della Porta, B. Klandermans and D. McAdam). https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470674871.wbespm051

[30] Tarrow, S. (2013). Contentious Politics. In The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements (eds D.A. Snow, D. Della Porta, B. Klandermans, and D. McAdam).

[31] Tilly contentious politics pg. 8

[32] Olzak, Susan, '*Ethnic and Nationalist Social Movements'*, in David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule & Hanspeter Kriesi (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (Blackwell/Malden, Oxford/Carlton, 2004, p. 666

[33] Edwards, B., and Gillham, P.F. (2013). *Resource Mobilization Theory* in *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements* (eds D.A. Snow, D. Della Porta, B. Klandermans, and D. McAdam).

[34] Tarrow, Sidney and Tilly, Charles. *Contentious Politics*. (Oxford University Press, 2015). pg. 38

contention maintaining and possibly intensifying the newly introduced violence."[35] Doug McAdam et al. define social mechanisms as "a delimited class of events that alter relations among specified sets of elements in identical or closely similar ways over various situations."[36] The definition of radicalization draws attention to its processual dimension and dynamic interactions between and among parties by identifying several social mechanisms and processes in the onset and escalation phases of the episodes of political violence.

Radicalization has been studied using a variety of theoretical frameworks and empirical methods, such as:

I. The process of radicalization can be explained through the lens of the psychological paradigm, which places emphasis on individual-level factors such as cognitive mechanisms, social identities, and personal grievances.[37]

II. The sociological perspectives examine the ways in which social networks, group dynamics, and socialization processes play a role in the process of radicalization.[38]

III. The third category of analysis pertains to political approaches, which involve an examination of the impact of state repression, global conflicts, and political grievances on the process of radicalization.

IV. The economic approaches entail an investigation into the correlation between radicalization and economic factors such as poverty, inequality, and unemployment.

---

[35] Alimi, Eitan Y., Demetriou, Chares, Bosi, Lorenzo. *The Dynamics of Radicalization: A Relational and Comparative Perspective*. (NY; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015) Pg. 11.

[36] Tarrow, Sidney. "*Comparison, Triangulation, and Embedding Research in History: A Methodological Self-Analysis*." Bulletin of Sociological Methodology no. 141 (2019): 7–29.

[37] F. M. Moghaddam, 'The Staircase to Terrorism: A Psychological Exploration', The American psychologist, Vol. 60(2), 2005, pp.161-169.

[38] Borum, Randy. "Radicalization into Violent Extremism I: A Review of Social Science Theories." Journal of Strategic Security 4, no. 4 (2011): 7–36. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26463910.

V. Multidisciplinary approaches involve the integration of knowledge from diverse fields, such as psychology, sociology, political science, and economics, to enhance the comprehension of the radicalization process.

The radicalization phenomenon is a much-debated concept in security and academic circles. It is perceived in many different ways and in different contexts[39] and has been used in a vague and ill-defined manner.[40] The term 'radicalization' became one of the most popular phenomena in political violence literature since the 9/11 and terror attacks in Madrid and London, respectively.[41] The concept has been defined by various entities, including governments, international agencies, and academic circles, with a multitude of definitions available. Currently, there is still no universally accepted definition in place, and reaching a consensus on this matter continues to be challenging. Political violence experts generally acknowledge that there is no standard description for radicalization, as it is a complex and multifaceted process.[42]

The term "radical" is highly problematic and context-depended, and its definition depends on what is "normal," "moderate," or "mainstream" has considerably changed over time. From a historical perspective, the word "radical" referred to movements, groups, or parties promoting democratic values and an institution primarily through nonviolent means. According to Neuman, the concept of radicalization is not a myth but rather has an ambiguous meaning. This ambiguity is the root cause of various controversies and debates surrounding the topic. He further states that the primary division lies in the conceptual understanding of radicalization, specifically between two perspectives: one that emphasizes extremist beliefs (referred to as cognitive radicalization) and another that prioritizes extremist behavior (known as behavioral

[39] Crenshaw, Martha. "Conclusion" in *Dynamics of Political Violence: A Process-Oriented Perspective on Radicalization and the Escalation of Political Conflict*. edit by Bosi, Lorenzo & Demetriou, C. & Malthaner, Stefan. (2014)

[40] Schmid, A. "*Radicalization, De-Radicalization, Counter-Radicalization: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*", The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism - The Hague 4, no. 2 (2013).

[41] Neumann, Peter R. "The Trouble with Radicalization." International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-) 89, no. 4 (2013): 873–93. Pg. 873.

[42] Schmid, A. "*Radicalization, De-Radicalization, Counter-Radicalization: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*", The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism - The Hague 4, no. 2 (2013).

radicalization).[43] Stefan Malthaner pointed out three intersecting conceptual fault lines concerning radicalization: the first one is related to the differentiation between the radicalization of beliefs and radicalization in behavior. In particular, the term radicalization has been related to the adaptation of extremist views or mindsets, resulting in violent behavior.[44] Some have argued, however, that violent actions do not necessarily associate with radical ideas and beliefs. It has been suggested that individuals who hold extreme beliefs may not necessarily resort to acts of terrorism, and some individuals who commit acts of terrorism may not follow a traditional path of radicalization despite being deeply committed to an ideological cause.[45] The adaptation of radical beliefs is linked to activism within extreme environments or milieus.[46] The second point pertains to the various types of actors and levels of analysis, including individual, group/movement, and mass levels, as well as the opposing sides involved in a conflict, such as oppositional movements and state actors. The latter refers to the processual dimension of radicalization, which could manifest and exert its impact in a different episode of violence, such as inter-group conflict or radicalization within the framework of social movements and escalating protests.[47]

According to the theoretical framework posited by Henri Tajfel and John Turner, the concept of group identification has the potential to engender intergroup strife, as it highlights the way in which individuals formulate their self-concept through their association with particular groups. The development of radicalization is a result of an individual's perception of self-becoming closely intertwined with a radical movement or ideology, thus may be giving rise to extremist beliefs and actions.[48] In his article, *Four Waves of Modern Terrorism*, David C. Rapoport proposed the concept of

---

[43] Neumann, Peter R. "The Trouble with Radicalization." International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-) 89, no. 4 (2013): 873–93. Pg. 878.

[44] Malthaner, Stefan. "*Radicalization: The Evolution of an Analytical Paradigm*." European Journal of Sociology 58, no. 3 (2017): 369–401. doi:10.1017/S0003975617000182.

[45] Borum, Randy. "*Radicalization into Violent Extremism I: A Review of Social Science Theories*." Journal of Strategic Security 4, no. 4 (2012): 7-36.

[46] Bjørgo, Tore & Horgan, John**.** *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement* (London | New York, Routledge, 2009)

[47] Malthaner, Stefan. "Radicalization: The Evolution of an Analytical Paradigm." European Journal of Sociology 58, no. 3 (2017): 369–401. Pg. 3-4. doi:10.1017/S0003975617000182.

[48] Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (2004). *The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior*. In J. T. Jost & J. Sidanius (Eds.), *Political psychology: Key Readings* (pp. 276–293). Psychology Press.

"waves" of terrorist activity.[49] According to Rapoport's assertion, the identification of periods characterized by terrorism can be attributed to the prevalence of a common ideology, strategy, and mentality among its participants. Usually, every wave begins with a triggering incident and persists for a period of around thirty years or longer. He maintains that the phenomenon of terrorism becoming transnational in nature is attributable to the proliferation of terrorist entities beyond their domestic boundaries, coupled with the establishment of international alliances among like-minded groups of people.[50] The global impact of terrorism has been intensified due to the facilitation of the cross-border distribution of ideologies, tactics, and resources.[51] The four phases include the following:

1. The Anarchist Movement, which attained its peak in the 1920s, was spearheaded by radical factions with the objective of removing the state and instituting a more collaborative society. They have formulated detailed methodologies to execute selective assassinations, detonate explosive devices, and employ other modes of physical aggression, all with the objective of fostering a sense of anxiety and disorder among government officials.[52]

2. The epoch spanning from the 1920s to the 1960s witnessed the emergence of the Anti-Colonial Movement, which was a reactionary movement against the imposition of colonial rule. The objective was to attain absolute self-governance for nations that had formerly been subjected to colonialism. In order to attain their objective, individuals or collectives who opposed colonial powers frequently resorted to terrorism as a means of strategy.[53]

3. Throughout the period spanning from the 1960s to the 1990s, the New Left underwent a notable expansion and fostered the rise of radical leftist factions that subscribed to Marxist-Leninist principles. This particular period is often

[49] Rapoport, D. C. "The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism." In A. K. Cronin & J. M. Ludes (Eds.), *Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy* (pp. 46–73). (Georgetown University Press, 2004)

[50] Chiangi, Michael Aondona, *Critically Examining David Rapoport's Four Waves Theory of Modern Terrorism in the Light of Factual Historical Events*. African Journal on Terrorism (2021) Vol.11 (1) Pp.11-29, 9.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid.

referred to as the Marxist or insurgent surge, with the objective of these movements being the replacement of capitalist administrations with socialist or communist systems. Prominent instances of such political movements encompass the Red Brigades in Italy and the Royal Air Force in West Germany.[54]

4. During the Religious Wave of the 1990s and subsequent years, there was a surge in the emergence of terrorist organizations that were founded on religious principles. These groups sought to establish a theocratic state or impose their religious beliefs on society. Prominent instances comprise Al Qaeda and ISIS.[55]

The perspective of the psychology-based approach is a commonly adopted approach to the scholarly investigation of radicalization. Moghaddam's "Staircase to Terrorism" model presents a distinct perspective on radicalization. This model classifies the process of radicalization into six distinct levels or floors, each representing a unique state of mind experienced by the individual. Stated differently, the aforementioned model delineates a lucid methodology comprising six successive stages that demonstrate discrete psychological facets. They are as follows: "a) physical interpretation of material conditions, b) perceived options to fight unfair treatment, c)displacement of aggression, d) moral engagement, e) solidification of categorical thinking and the perceived legitimacy of the terrorist organization and the terrorist act and sidestepping inhibitory mechanisms."[56] The theoretical framework posits that individuals may go up and down the staircase of radicalization due to a multitude of factors, such as individual life events and exposure to extremist indoctrination.[57] Each of these sequential actions results in the perpetration of an act of terrorism. The staircase analogy posits that with each successive step, an individual progressively distances themselves from conventional societal norms, leading to an increased propensity to rationalize and partake in acts of terrorism.[58]

---

[54] Ibid.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Moghaddam, F. M. "*De-radicalization and the staircase from terrorism*." In D. Canter (Ed.), *The Faces of Terrorism: Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (pp. 277–292). John Wiley & Sons Inc. 2009.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Lygre, R. B., Eid, J., Larsson, G., & Ranstorp, M. *Terrorism as a process: A critical review of Moghaddam's "Staircase to Terrorism".* Scandinavian Journal of Psychology, (2011) 52(6), 609–616

To summarize, the staircase model proposes a stratified framework comprising an initial stage and five subsequent tiers, with each tier signifying a unique behavioral phase that either advances or hinders an individual's trajectory toward terrorism. The proposed model posits that the progression toward terrorism is a multifaceted phenomenon that involves intricate interactions between psychological variables, societal contextual factors, and individual decision-making processes. These elements collectively contribute to shaping an individual's trajectory toward involvement in terrorist activities.[59]

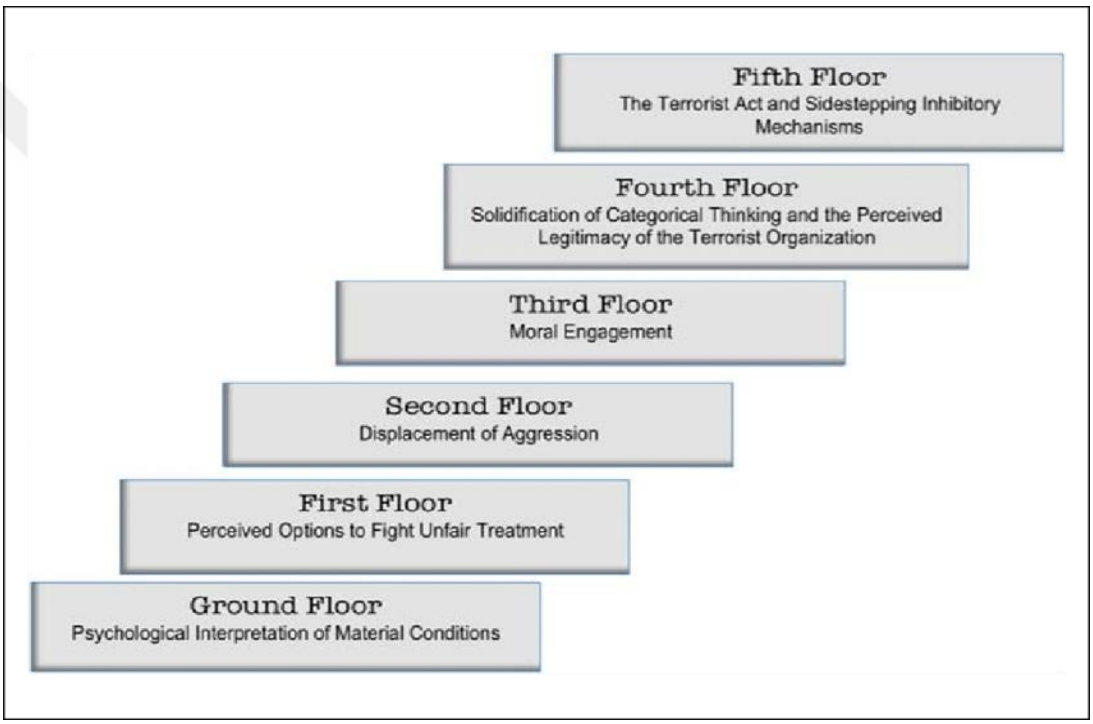


Figure 3. Moghaddam's Staircase to Terrorism

Marc Sageman posits that the decision to engage in violent behavior is a collective project, and radicalization is a collective event that takes place when individuals affiliate with a faction that espouses extremist beliefs.[60] Although there is no universally accepted definition of radicalization, the majority of scholars agree that it entails an intellectual transformation that results in a willingness to use violence to further political or religious objectives.

[59] Moghaddam, Fathali M. "The staircase to terrorism: a psychological exploration." *The American psychologist* vol. 60,2 (2005): 161-9

[60] Sageman, Marc. *Understanding Terror Networks.* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.)

As per the theoretical framework posited by McCauley and Moskalenko, the phenomenon of radicalization is subject to the influence of two discrete factors, specifically those pertaining to social and psychological areas. Theoretical in nature, the social pyramid explores the complicated interplay between group dynamics and social identity, ultimately shaping an individual's inclination towards extremist organizations. The emergence of this phenomenon can be attributed to a multitude of factors, encompassing social networks, peer pressure, and a collective affiliation with a faction that espouses a particular ideology.[61]

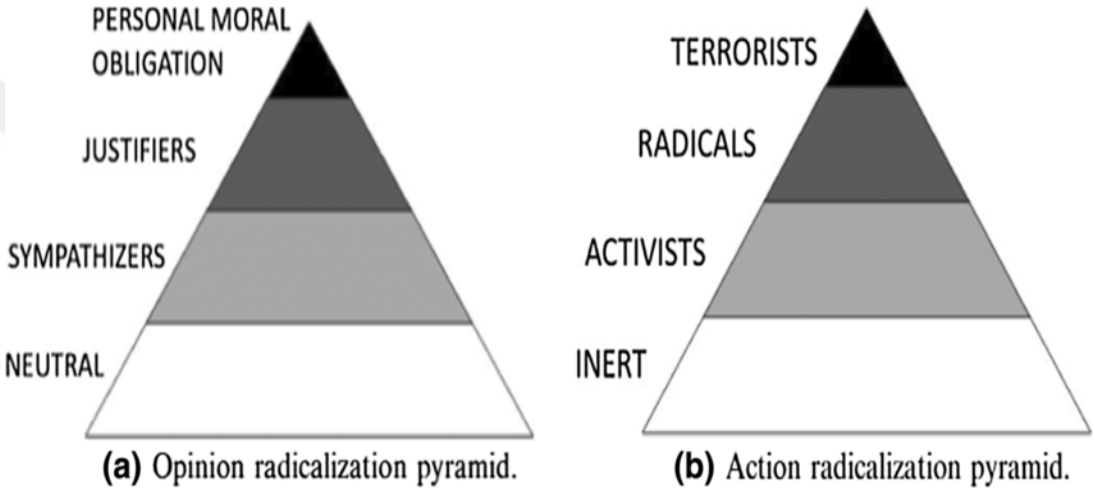


Figure 4. Two pyramid model (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2011)

The psychological pyramid model investigates the way in which individual beliefs and predispositions can potentially result in radicalization. The phenomenon may manifest as a result of various factors, including but not limited to a perceived sense of injustice or grievance, a yearning for purpose or significance, and a longing for retaliation or retribution.[62] Furthermore, the authors highlighted radicalization mechanisms at three levels: individual, group, and mass society.[63] At the individual level, they identified six mechanisms of political radicalization in that individuals are considered primarily responsible for their actions. Individual motivations such as

[61] McCauley, C., & Moskalenko, S. *Friction: How Radicalization Happens to Them and Us*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011)

[62] Moskalenko, Sophia, and Clark McCauley. *Radicalization to Terrorism: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2020)

[63] McCauley, C., & Moskalenko, S. *Friction: How Radicalization Happens to Them and Us*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011)

personal and group grievance and hatred in search of status, glory, love, and fame were given significant attention in contrast to environmental factors or social influences. Members of a group who view themselves as interdependent are experiencing group-level dynamics, whereby the actions of one member of the group have an impact on the other members as well. The phenomenon of mass radicalization is intricately linked to occurrences, episodes, or communiqués that possess considerable import for their respective audiences on a domestic or global scale. The majority of extremist organizations rely upon such a basis for intelligence, financial backing, logistical assistance, and new recruits. It is of utmost significance to acknowledge that these mechanisms do not function in isolation, nor do they exist autonomously. Numerous mechanisms exhibit interdependent interactions and mutual reinforcement.[64]

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in New York, the New York Police Department (NYPD) has put forth a novel approach to tackling radicalization. The conceptual framework known as the NYPD Model of Jihadization clarifies the process by which individuals undergo radicalization towards extremist ideologies, with a particular focus on the phenomenon of Jihadist extremism. The current model has been developed with the objective of aiding law enforcement personnel in comprehending the phenomenon of Jihadization and potentially detecting individuals who may be advancing through these stages.[65]

The NYPD Model of Jihadization delineates four distinct stages that an individual may undergo during the radicalization process.[66]

1. Pre-Radicalization: The preliminary phase precedes the onset of an individual's radicalization process.[67]

[64] Futrell, R., Simi, P. & Tan, A.E. "*Political Extremism and Social Movements"* in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (eds D.A. Snow, S.A. Soule, H. Kriesi and H.J. McCammon, (2018) pg. 621.

[65] Jytte Klausen, Selene Campion, Nathan Needle, Giang Nguyen & Rosanne Libretti (2016) Toward a Behavioral Model of "Homegrown" Radicalization Trajectories, Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 39:1, 67-83, DOI:

[66] Dahl, Erik J. "Local Approaches to Counterterrorism: The New York Police Department Model." Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism (2014. August): 81-97

[67] Ibid.

2. Self-Identification: In this particular phase, the individual undertakes a thorough examination of extremist ideologies, which personal or societal factors may instigate.[68]

3. Indoctrination: The individual has wholeheartedly embraced the extremist ideology and recognizes the moral obligation to conduct oneself in alignment with its principles.[69]

4. Jihadization: In the ultimate stage, the individual recognizes their individual accountability to advocate for the cause, which may culminate in the development or execution of a terrorist endeavor.[70]

The proposed model posits a linear progression of stages; however, it is imperative to acknowledge that the factual process may exhibit a significantly greater degree of complexity. Moreover, there is no guarantee that every individual will experience all the stages.[71]

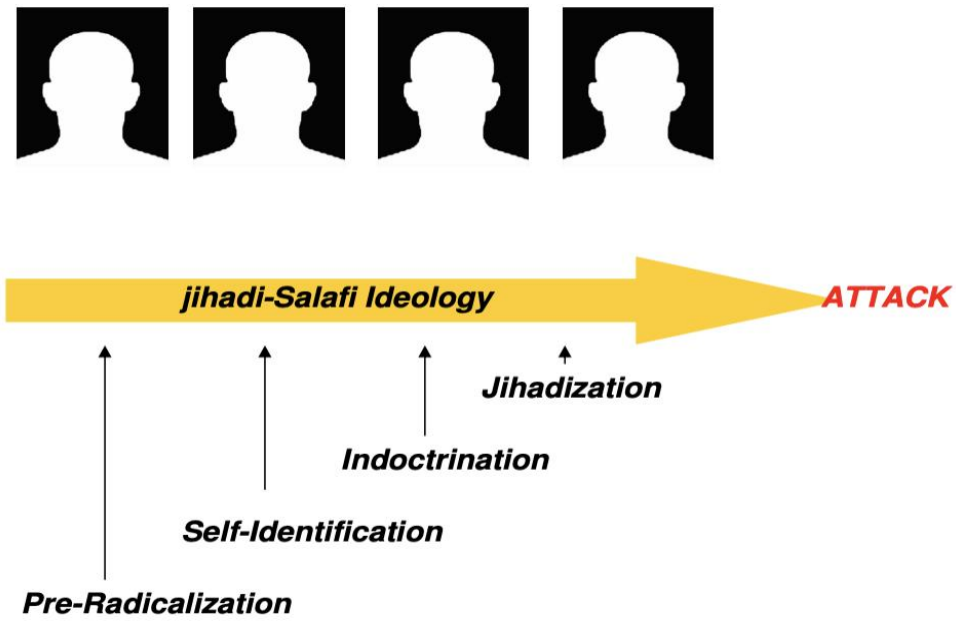


Figure 5. The NYPD's proposed four-stage radicalization process (NYPD)

---

68 Ibid.

69 Ibid.

70 Silber, Mitchell & Bhatt, Arvin. NYPD Police Department, *Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat*, 2007.

71 Torres, Julian A., "Exploring the Causes of Islamic Radicalization and Recruitment and the General Strain Theory in Identified Terrorists" (2013). All Regis University Theses. 231

Borum's model of the terrorist mindset offers a valuable framework for comprehending the psychological progression that individuals may undergo as they transition from perceiving injustices to perpetrating acts of terrorism. This model delineates four distinct stages that individuals potentially pass through.[72] The radicalization process, according to Randy Borum's model, consists of four stages:

1. Grievance: The radicalization process often begins with an individual or group's perception of injustice or injury. The subject matter being contemplated may arise from factors pertaining to societal, financial, governmental, or an amalgamation of these elements. The persisting perception of being the victim of mistreatment, whether on a personal or collective level, continues to exist within the psychological makeup of the individual.

2. Injustice: The second stage is the identification of the grievance as an injustice. This includes the belief that the grievance is not only unjust but also immoral, which exacerbates anger and resentment.

3. Target Attribution: At this point, the aggrieved party places blame on a particular organization or person for the problems they've encountered up to this point. In turn, they direct their hatred and hostility toward this community.

4. Distancing: The ultimate phase entails creating a psychological and emotional separation from the focal group and diminishing their significance. This phase frequently involves the act of dehumanizing the targeted group, thereby rendering the notion of perpetrating violence against them more acceptable.[73]

[72] Borum, Randy, "Psychology of Terrorism" Mental Health Law & Policy Faculty Publications. (2004), 571.

[73] Borum, Randy. "*Radicalization into Violent Extremism II: A Review of Conceptual Models and Empirical Research*." Journal of Strategic Security. 4. 10.5038/1944-0472.4.4.2.

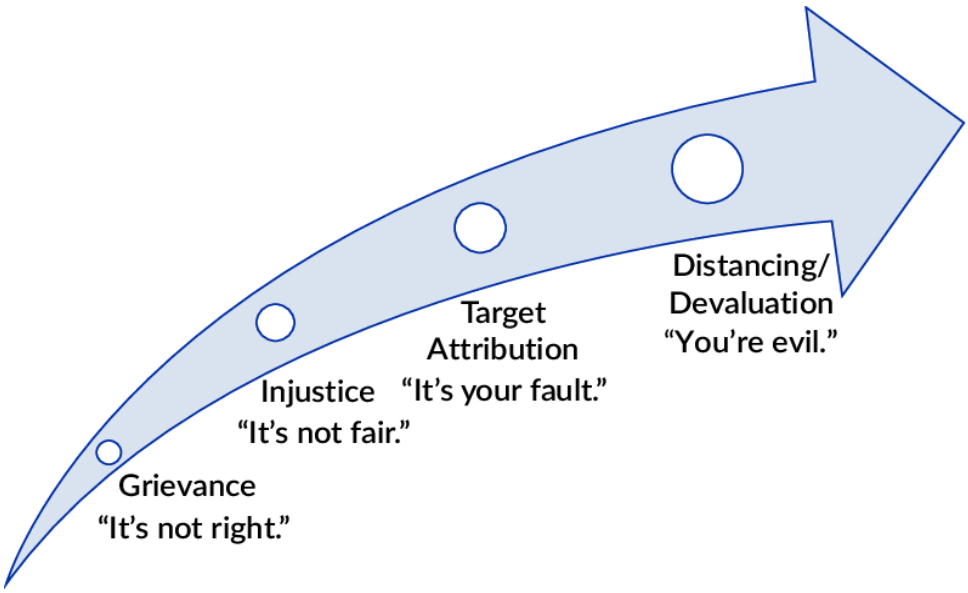


Figure 6. Borum's four-stage model of the terrorist mindset

The model developed by Borum was intended to provide law enforcement personnel with an understanding of the process of radicalization. The primary theoretical foundation of the model aimed to illustrate the process by which grievances can be transformed into animosity towards a specific group, culminating in violent behavior.

Quintan Wiktorowicz has proposed an alternative framework for investigating and comprehending the psychological mechanisms that underlie radicalization. His methodology stands out for its emphasis on the concept of "cognitive opening" and the extensive ethnographic research into Al-Muhajiroun.[74] His work puts significant emphasis on the notion of radicalization as a form of resocialization. This refers to the point or stage in an individual's life at which they are receptive to new ideas and perspectives, particularly those that are distinct from prevalent or orthodox ones. This pertains to the process by which individuals who are new to a radical group are integrated into the group, and their identities are reconfigured accordingly. It is the moment when an individual faces discrimination, socioeconomic crisis, and political repression, as they may experience a critical moment where they begin to question their beliefs and struggle to make sense of their experiences. This can leave them

[74] Michael King & Donald M. Taylor, "*The Radicalization of Homegrown Jihadists: A Review of Theoretical Models and Social Psychological Evidence*", Terrorism and Political Violence, 23:4, 2011: 602-622.

vulnerable to radicalized ideologies. A variety of factors, such as personal crises, social discontentment, or other significant life events, can trigger the activation of cognitive receptivity. Individuals may become vulnerable to the influence of radical ideologies during this time as they seek solutions that are not readily available within the constraints of the traditional structure.[75]

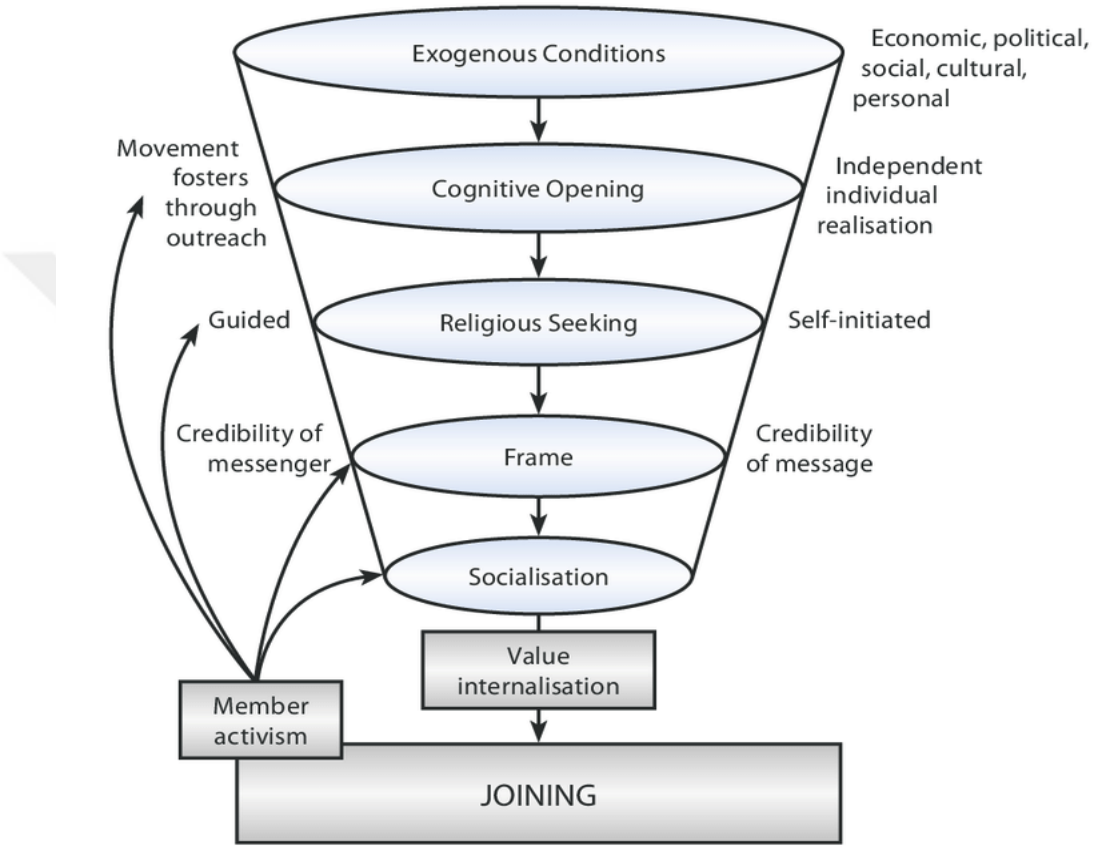


Figure 7. Wiktorowic's Model of Radicalization

The expert group on Violent Radicalization by the European Commission defined radicalization as "a context-bound phenomenon and a socialization to extremism which manifest itself in terrorism."[76] The definition of radicalization, as posited by the expert group, highlights its dynamic nature, characterized by a continuous process that can take place over an extended period of time. Moreover, it points out the

[75] Wiktorowicz, Q. *Radical Islam Rising: Muslim Extremism in the West*. (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005)

[76] Schmid, Alex. (2013). *Radicalization, De-Radicalization, Counter-Radicalization: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*. Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism Studies. 4. 10.19165/2013.1.02.

correlation between radicalization and terrorism, which is perceived as the most consequential and deadly consequence of extremist beliefs. Furthermore, it highlights the imperative for effective strategies to tackle the underlying factors of violent extremism and terrorism.

It goes without saying that in recent years, studies on online radicalization have also increased their weight within the scope of radicalization studies. An increasing amount of attention has been paid in recent years to how the internet and social media contribute to radicalization and extremism. For instance, some researchers, like J.M. Berger, Bill Strathearn, and Peter Neumann, have suggested that social media sites like Twitter and Facebook play an increasingly important role as channels for extremists to spread their message and coordinate their activities. They suggested that the internet has become an increasingly important platform through which extremist organizations may spread their message and attract new members.[77] The extent to which the internet and social media are responsible for radicalization and whether they represent a new kind of extremism, however, is still up for debate.[78]

It Is Imperative to emphasize that the process of radicalization does not Inevitably lead to acts of violence. However, in instances where it occurs, the outcome is that of a violent extremist. There is a clear distinction made between intentions and values justifying political violence and the actual engagement in political violence, on the other. Most people who hold radical ideas do not engage in terrorism, and many terrorists—even those who lay claim to a "cause"—are not profoundly ideological and may not "radicalize" in any traditional sense.[79] Therefore, we locate our analysis on this explicit and consistent distinction between the two attitudes and state that radicalization occurs at different stages. They are classified as micro or individual, collective (groups or movements), and mass level of analysis. Individual pathways toward militant activism have been a particular concern of scholars studying political

[77] Berger, J.M., and Bill Strathearn. "Who Matters Online: Measuring Influence, Evaluating Content and Countering Violent Extremism in Online Social Networks." International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation March 28, 2013.

[78] Bakker, Edwin, and Beatrice de Graaf "Towards a Theory of Fear Management in the Counterterrorism Domain: A Stocktaking Approach." International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, 2014. http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep29400.

[79] Borum, Randy. "Radicalization into Violent Extremism I: A Review of Social Science Theories." Journal of Strategic Security 4, no. 4 (2012): 7-36. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.5038/1944-0472.4.4.1

violence and terrorism.[80] Proponents of this level emphasize psychological or social "pathologies" of individuals as the sole driver of radicalization. For them, political violence results from a state of madness or innate predispositions of an individual. This line of argument is challenged by those who emphasize the role of social ties, radical networks, and milieus as "micro mobilization settings.[81] There are also group movements and mass radicalization levels of explanations. Drivers of violent extremism are varied and interrelated with economic, ideological, social, historical, and cultural dimensions. They engage and affect societies, groups, and individuals at local, national, regional, and international levels.[82] What usually drives people into violent extremism are categorized as structural '**push**' factors and **pull** 'individual' factors. Push factors are typically rooted in socioeconomic, political, and cultural causes, for instance, marginalization and fragmentation, government repression, human rights violations, ungoverned areas, endemic corruption, or cultural threat perceptions.[83] Whereas pull factors are associated with personal rewards with membership in a group or movement, participation in its activities may confer such as access to material resources, social status, and peers' respect. A sense of belonging, adventure, and a sense of glory, and fame.[84]

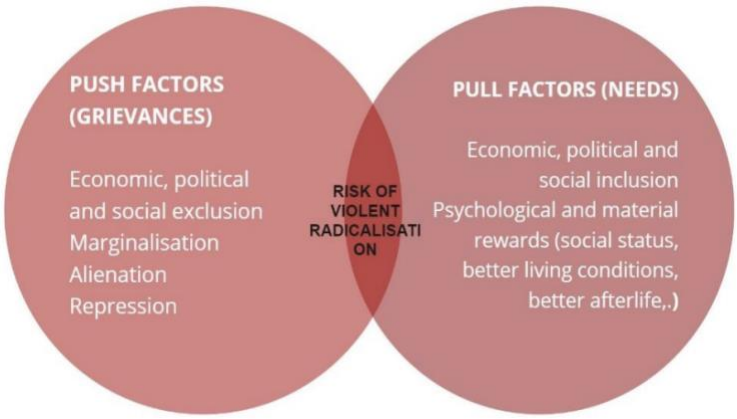


Figure 8. The push and pull factors of violent radicalization in North Africa (Bourekba, Moussa, 2021)

[80] Malthaner, Stefan. "Radicalization: The Evolution of an Analytical Paradigm." *Archives Europeennes De Sociologie* 58 (2017): 369-401.

[81] Ibid.

[82] UNDP Journey to extremism in Africa: Pathways to recruitment and disengagement, February 2023. https://www.undp.org/publications/journey-extremism-africa-pathways-recruitment-and-disengagement

[83] K. (n.d.). Counter-Terrorism Module 2 Key Issues: Drivers of Violent Extremism. https:////www.unodc.org

[84] Ibid.

The radicalization process of an individual is influenced by underlying factors that endure for an extended period, while trigger events are specific occurrences that may function as catalysts for radicalization. The preconditions commonly referred to as 'root causes' are frequently cited as such in the scholarly discourse on radicalization. The radicalization process is contingent upon a confluence of these factors. Nevertheless, the process of radicalization is not instantaneous and typically involves a series of events or incidents. The analytical observation of movements' radicalization process necessitates the occurrence of events that are characterized by broken negotiations, scattered attacks, and violent rituals. The literature review undertaken on behalf of the European Commission on Radicalization aimed to identify trigger events at different levels, encompassing micro-trigger events such as the loss of a loved one, changes in employment, and divorce, along with meso-trigger events such as recruitment. The review also examined the role of trigger events such as military actions, arrests of specific individuals, and attacks on the group.[85]

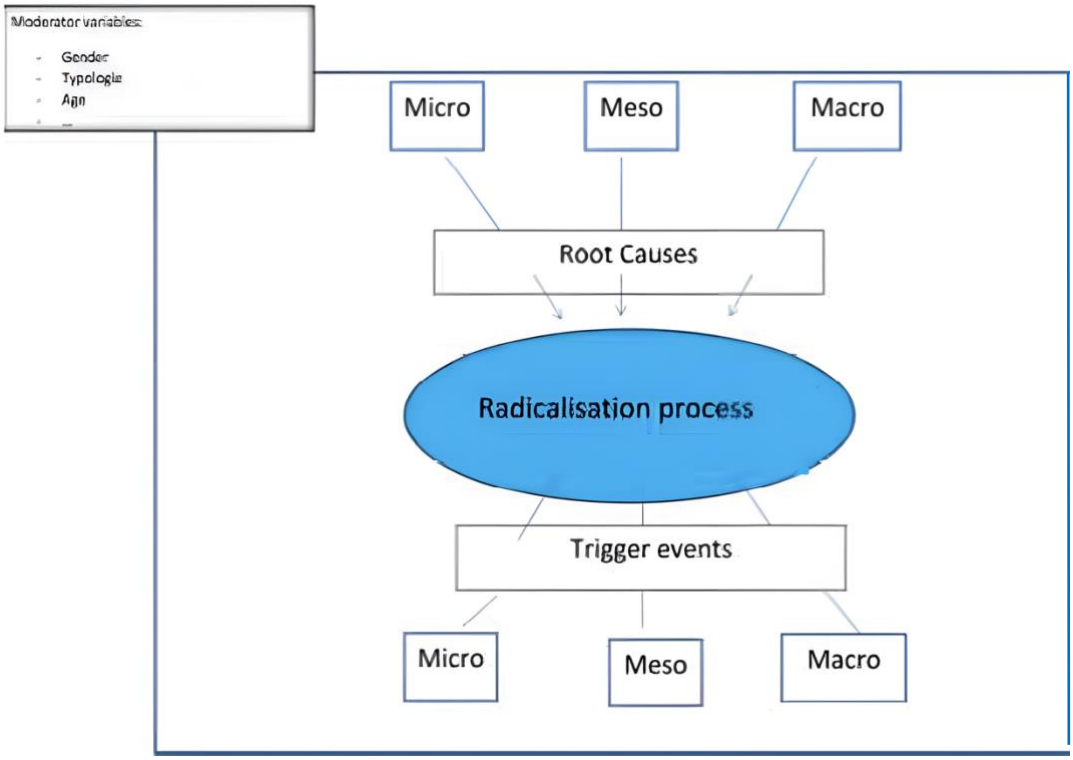


Figure 9. Multilevel Model of Radicalization (Moccia, 2019)

[85] Prof. Moccia, Luigi "Deliverable D2.1: Literature Review on Radicalization" March 2019.

1.4. State Failure and Terrorism: A Causal Relationship?

The post-1990 situation in Somalia has garnered significant attention and scrutiny within academic and policy circles, primarily through the lens of conceptual frameworks such as the "collapsed" and/or "failed state" narratives. Failed state narrative, also described as the “Orthodox Failed State Narrative,” systematically equates failed states with chronic anarchy and the exportation of terrorism and instability.[86] The overall reasoning suggests that `state failure` creates anarchy and a power vacuum that provides the opportunity for terrorists or extremists to infiltrate local networks and take advantage of the current political situation.[87] Furthermore, an increasing number of scholars and policymakers have expressed concern that failed and failing states pose a threat to international security since they foster an environment in which transnational terrorist groups can flourish.[88] In regions experiencing significant state failure, the legitimacy of executive power is often contested, and the capacity of the state to effectively address a range of obstacles becomes a source of controversy and difficulty.[89] Thus, failed governments are perpetually threatened by secession, civil conflicts, and large-scale violent internal struggles for control, and they are unable to manage their own borders or project power across their national territory.[90]

The predominant assumption put forward by the Western policy circles suggested that al-Qaida and its allies would find a safe haven in Somalia. The ‘safe heaven’ proposition was based on the fact that there had been no authority to flush them out, hunt them down, or bring them to justice.[91] In addition Somalia presented a place where “the Hobbesian hypothesis that in the absence of a political Leviathan, life for

---

86 Verhoeven, Harry. “The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy of Failed States: Somalia, State Collapse and the Global War on Terror,” Journal of Eastern African Studies 3, no. 3 (October 2009): 405–25.

87 Rotberg, Robert I. “Failed States in a World of Terror.” *Foreign Affairs* 81, no. 4 (2002): 127–40. https://doi.org/10.2307/20033245.

88 Piazza, James A. “*Incubators of Terror: Do Failed and Failing States Promote Transnational Terrorism?*” International Studies Quarterly 52, no. 3 (2008): 469–88. http://www.jstor.org/stable/29734247.

89 Zartman, William. *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1995)

90 Rotberg, Robert I. 2003. "Failed States, Collapsed, Weak States: Causes and Indicators." in *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

91 Farah, Nuruddin. Somalia Is No Hideout for bin Laden. https://www.nytimes.com/2002/01/09/opinion/somalia-is-no-hideout-for-bin-laden.html

individuals will be nasty, brutish, and short seems to be widely manifest in everyday life."[92] In the wake of September 11, 2001, this perspective gained the utmost importance in policy circles. Some decision-makers suggested that "Terrorists are greatest where nations are weakest" and that this means that security threats "do not derive from rival global powers, but from weak states."[93] Furthermore, *the 9/11 Commission Report* stated that ''terrorist organizations have fled to some of the least governed, most lawless places in the world'' to find sanctuary.[94] For instance, the "ungoverned spaces" argument, which contends that terrorism is more likely to happen in places where the state is weak or a failed one, is one of the most well-known hypotheses connecting terrorism with state failure.[95] Robert Pape posits in his literary work entitled "*Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*" that suicide terrorism is a strategic response to foreign military intervention in occupied territories. According to Pape's analysis, in instances where a state exhibits weakness or lacks the necessary authority to govern its own territory, a power vacuum is created, thereby providing an opportunity for terrorist organizations to exploit the situation.[96] Martha Crenshaw is another prominent scholar who has made important contributions to the discussion of terrorism and state failure. In her work titled "*Explaining Terrorism: Causes, Processes, and Consequences*," she posits that the destabilization of the state may serve as a precipitating factor for acts of terrorism. The contention posited was that in instances where a state is incapable of safeguarding its populace or providing for its basic necessities, it generates a feeling of vulnerability and instability that may culminate in the proliferation of radicalization and bolstering of extremist factions.[97]

Furthermore, Robert Rotberg posits that acts of terrorism often stem from the deep-seated resentment and outrage harbored by marginalized factions who perceive their

---

92 Buzan, Barry, and Ole Wæver. *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security***.** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2003)

93 Straw, Jack. "*Reordering the World: The Long-Term Implications of September 11*" (London: Foreign Policy Research Center, 2002).

94 The 9/11 Commission Report, Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003), 366

95 Council on Foreign Relations. *Are 'Ungoverned Spaces' a Threat?* (2022, November 4). https://www.cfr.org/expert-brief/are-ungoverned-spaces-threat

96 Pape, R. *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*. (New York: Random House, 2005)

97 Crenshaw, Martha. *Explaining Terrorism Causes, Processes and Consequences***. (**Routledge; 1st edition, November 22, 2010)

perspectives to be disregarded by the ruling authorities.[98] According to Rotberg, weak and collapsed states often lack the capacity to provide their populace with essential services and security, thereby augmenting the propensity of extremist factions to garner support.[99] This particular point of view suggests that terrorism is considered a symptom of state failure.

It has been argued, however, that a more in-depth examination of the emergence and stepped-up phases of political violence — the process by which political contention becomes violent — reveals that this line of reasoning does not entirely coincide with the Somali case in advance. While many researchers agreed that Somalia lacked functional national institutions, they had different opinions as to whether or not this indicated a lack of overall governance.[100] The breakdown of central authority had led to the emergence of distinctive forms of local governance structure at the neighborhood level across the country, which the al-Qaida network found hard to infiltrate and defined as an extremely hostile environment. According to Ken Menkhaus, for instance, the low number of non-Somali residents makes it exceptionally difficult for a foreign terrorist to go unnoticed in the country. Furthermore, Somalia's pragmatic political culture and oral tradition rendered it infertile soil for radical ideologies of any sort.[101] Even among failed states— Bruton Bronwyn argued, "those countries unable to exercise authority over their territory and provide the most basic services to their people—Somalia stands apart."[102] Somalia, in fact, had been able to create some form of local governance, conceptualized by Menkhaus as "governance without government," bottom-up responses to human security known as *sharia* clan courts under severe inhospitable conditions. Somalia is described as a society with varying degrees of regional political integration and no effective and legitimate central authority.[103]

---

98 Rotberg, Robert et.al. *Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa*. (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2005)

99 Ibid.

100 Menkhaus, Ken. "Governance without Government in Somalia Spoilers, State Building, and the Politics of Coping." International Security, vol. 31, no. 3, 2006, pp. 74–106. JSTOR, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4137508.

101 Docking, Tim. USIP, Terrorism in the Horn: Special Report. Somali Section by Ken Menkhaus

102 Brown, Tarnell, "Inner Crises: Globalization and the Development of Africa' (October 13, 2011). Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=1943816 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1943816

103 Weinstein, Michael "Intelligence Brief: Somalia." World Security Network, October 2005. https://www.worldsecuritynetwork.com/Africa/Weinstein-Michael/Intelligence-Brief-Somalia-1.

The events of 9/11 gave rise to identifying Islamic extremism with terrorism in the international media and in official discourse in such a way that Islamists have to be extremists, and differences between the two had been notional.[104] The Pentagon's counterterrorism efforts in Africa following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, have been characterized by a strategy of "aggregation," whereby various isolated insurgencies have been combined into a seemingly unified entity, albeit one that may not accurately reflect the complex realities on the ground.[105] Roland Marchal argues that local extremism must be evaluated with a historical background of a given country. He furthermore stated that Somalia, over the last two centuries, experienced jihadist movements and had its own national repertories of religious radicalism.[106]

Contrary to popular belief, Berschinski argued that the counterterrorism policies of the United States in Africa have had an adverse effect. By combining various localized threats, these policies have unintentionally encouraged extremist groups to make inroads that they were originally trying to prevent.[107] According to the report by the Harmony Project, an alternative argument was presented in contrast to the prevailing conventional wisdom suggested that Somalia, which was considered a failed state, could potentially serve as a secure refuge for al-Qaida during that period.[108] As per the Harmony project's findings, the complex circumstances that impede the state authorities' capacity to exert their influence in these areas have also presented significant obstacles for al-Qaida operatives. These conditions include poor infrastructure, scarce resources, and competition with tribal and other local authority structures.[109] Additionally, their analysis suggests that regions with weak governance, such as the coastal areas of Kenya, rather than failed states like Somalia, offer a more favorable environment for the activities of al-Qaida. It discovered a chaotic land of

---

104 Marchal, Roland. "Warlordism and Terrorism: How to Obscure an Already Confusing Crisis? The Case of Somalia." International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-) 83, no. 6 (2007): 1091–1106.

105 Captain Mboup, Moussa Diop, et al. *Misguided Intentions: Resisting Africom*,| The United States Army. 2010.

106 Ibid.

107 Berschinski, Robert G., "AFRICOM'S Dilemma: Global War on Terrorism, Capacity Building, Humanitarianism, and the Future of U.S. Security Policy in Africa." The Strategic Studies Institute, November 2007, available from https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=481206

108 United States Military Academy. Combating Terrorism Center. *Al-Qaida's (Mis)Adventures in The Horn of Africa* [electronic resource] / Harmony project, Combating Terrorism Center at West Point US Military Academy, Combating Terrorism Center [West Point, N.Y.] 2007

109 Shapiro, JN, C Watts and V Brown. *Al-Qaida's (Mis)Adventures in the Horn of Africa*. WestPoint, N.Y.: Combating Terrorism Center, July 2, 2007.

the constant shifting of alliances that lacked Sunni cohesiveness, in contrast to the tribal territories of Pakistan. While al-Qaeda was successful in gaining the support of a few smaller sub-subclans through certain means, it faced challenges in winning over the loyalty of the local populace. Moreover, the Somali norm of inclusive, consensus-based decision-making conflicted with al-requirement al-Qaeda for swift judgments. Additionally, the issue of inadequate privacy in Somalia has been identified as a concern by al-Qaeda. In the end, the efforts made by Qaeda to recruit and establish a unified coalition were impeded by the prevailing influence of the clan.[110] Their final assessment suggested that weakly governed states–not failed ones–provide the optimal operational environment for al-Qaida and similar terrorist organizations.[111]

Dr. Ken Menkhaus stated in the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations:

> "….non-Somalis running camps in Somalia would find it extremely difficult to keep such an operation secret in Somalia, both because Somalis would report them and because they would be easily detected by aerial and satellite surveillance now being undertaken in the country. They would also present themselves as an easy, fixed target for an aerial attack, which presumably they will no longer be foolish enough to do."[112]

Nuruddin Farah, a prominent Somali author, argued that Somalia was not a promising target for al-Qaida. He stressed that the very low level of secrecy and distrusts among clans, in fact, made barriers to Bin Laden or one of his associates being hidden and shielded in Somalia. Farah stated:

> "The misinformation should not fool the West doled out by both the Ethiopian regime and its allies in Somalia and by the untrustworthy men now leading Somalia's murderous factions. They can be expected to point censorious fingers at their rivals, describing them as associates of al-Qaeda."[113]

---

110 Shinn, D. H. "Al-Qaeda in East Africa and the Horn". Journal of Conflict Studies, vol. 27, no. 1, Nov. 2007, https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/JCS/article/view/5655.

111 Shapiro, JN, C Watts and V Brown. *Al-Qaida's (Mis)Adventures in the Horn of Africa*. WestPoint, N.Y.: Combating Terrorism Center, July 2, 2007.

112 Somalia: U.S. Government Policy and Challenges, Hearing Before the Subcommittee on African Affairs of The Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate, Second Session, (July 11, 2006)

113 Somalia is No Hideout for bin Laden, By Nuruddin Farah, Jan. 9, 2002 https://www.nytimes.com/2002/01/09/opinion/somalia-is-no-hideout-for-bin-laden.html

Farah recommended to the Western nations that they should exercise caution and refrain from being influenced by the spread of misinformation by the Ethiopian government and its allies in Somalia, as well as by the leaders of the opposing factions. For Farah, the aforementioned leaders lack credibility and have a track record of engaging in criminal behavior. He further states that the utilization of associations with al-Qaeda could potentially serve as a fear-inducing strategy employed by certain parties to vilify their opponents and garner backing from Western nations.

Contrary to prevalent perspectives and recommendations, the external interventions that took place in 2006, whether through direct military intervention or by proxies acting on behalf of external patrons, proved ineffective in thwarting Somalia's transformation into a safe haven for the al-Qaida network as they instated on that argument from the beginning. The outcome has been notably distinct from what was expected or previously observed. It did not only pave the way for alienating large parts of the Somali population but also polarized Islamist groups into moderate and extremist camps and propelled the indigenous Salafi jihadist group known as al-Shabaab to power.[114] The Shabaab emerged from a loosely affiliated network of people who operated in a hostile environment, caused not straightforwardly by the absence of state structures or political leviathan but as a result of a contentious political struggle in a contentious, repressive, and relational political context in which the faction leaders dominated the economic and political sphere from 1991 to 2006.[115] Our analysis of Somalia's internal governing structures will end here, for a comprehensive analysis of internal political dynamics will be present in the upcoming chapters.

1.5. The Puzzle

Social movements and militant organizations usually tend to break down and split apart. New groups emerge from the ranks of existing organizations. Throughout political history, it has been observed that various movement organizations have experienced fragmentation and proliferation, leading to the emergence of splintered

[114] Bronwyn E. Bruton. "*Somalia: A New Approach*" Council on Foreign Relations (March 1, 2010)
[115] Hansen, Stig Jarle. *Horn, Sahel, and Rift: Fault-Lines of the African Jihad*. HURST, June 8, 2022

groups.[116] It has been noted that this phenomenon has occurred in various regions, such as Germany, Italy, Syria, Iraq, and Somalia, which has added a layer of complexity to the conflict situation. This organizational splintering process has paved the way for the formation of some of the most violent organizations, including al-Shabaab, Black September, Red Brigades, Red Army Faction, and the IRA. In the Somali context, the fragmentation of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) in 2006 resulted in the emergence of al-Shabaab as one of the military components of the Courts in early 2005. Over the years, the group evolved into one of the most significant armed groups, demonstrating its ability to survive, govern, and employ violent tactics.[117] In line with the statements above, therefore, we raise the following question: What is the commonality among which these diverse organizations have in common? Regardless of their ideological justifications, motivations, geographical location, or differences in the severity of violence and targets, they present us with different instances of movement organizations shifting to violent extremism. The questions that are yet unanswered are "how" and "when."

This study argues that while acknowledging the influence of specific treaties, opportunities, and emotional motivations on the radicalization process, these factors alone are insufficient in comprehending continuing patterns in conflict dynamics. Therefore they fail to provide a broader investigation of movement organizations shifting toward the adoption of a more extreme direction. It would probably be appealing to pursue our research agenda by conducting a “greed & grievances” oriented approach. Due to their widespread usage and significance in the analysis of political violence research, it may be somewhat complex to arrive at a conclusion through this approach. It would have been possible to highlight the behavioral modifications[118] of a particular group of individuals in terms of their inclination towards participating in violent and aggressive political activities or “readiness to

[116] Perkoski, Evan James, "Organizational Fragmentation and the Trajectory of Militant Splinter Groups" Publicly Accessible Penn Dissertations. 1943. https://repository.upenn.edu/edissertations/1943

[117] A discussion on the splintering of the groups please visit: Aisha, Ahmad. *Going Global: Islamist Competition in Contemporary Civil Wars*, Security Studies, 25:2, 353-384, (2016) DOI: 10.1080/09636412.2016.1171971

[118] For instance visit Bacon’s latest report on al-Shabaab. “*Inside the minds of Somalia’s ascendant insurgents: an identity, mind, emotions, and perceptions analysis of al-Shabaab*”, Program on Extremism at George Washington University, March 2022.

engage" [119], which are commonly referred to as a "group at risk" in the terrorism literature. The alterations in the environment can also be attributed to external factors such as the degradation of the surroundings, exemplified by the incidence of forest fires and landslides. This is particularly notable in situations where state institutions have experienced a breakdown. These approaches are reflections or manifestations of the Hobbesian hypothesis, which suggests that "in the absence of a political Leviathan, life for individuals will be nasty, brutish, and short seems to be widely manifest in everyday life." [120]

One of the most prevalent and noteworthy challenges associated with these approaches is their establishment of a direct correlation between the breakdown of state institutions and the rise of terrorism. Frequently, such fatalistic approaches are prone to overlooking policies and initiatives that are locally owned and implemented at the sub-national level or assign some level of importance within the context of radicalization studies. As demonstrated in the following sections, an analysis of the radicalization process is conducted within a dynamic, process-oriented, and internationalized conflict environment that includes failed negotiations, violent rituals, sporadic attacks, coordinated destruction, and opportunistic behavior.

The breakdown of Somalia's local power structure has resulted in political disorder, which has facilitated the recognition of numerous warlords and faction leaders who have taken capitalized on the existing circumstances. The efficacy of their fighters and the loyalty of their supporters were significantly dependent on the relationships they established over a period of time. These faction leaders successfully 'persuaded' their subclans claiming that they were the most suitable representatives to advocate for their interests during the regional negotiations. In addition, there are numerous influential regional actors, specifically Ethiopia, Kenya, Eritrea, Djibouti, Egypt, and Sudan, whose security dynamics have converged due to their involvement with armed groups and faction leaders in Somalia, which have received support from both sides. Ethiopia, in particular, has been the most active in this regard.[121] Neighboring

---

[119] McCauley, C., & Moskalenko, S. *Friction: How Radicalization Happens to Them and Us*. New York: Oxford University Press. (2011)

[120] Buzan, Barry, and Ole Wæver. *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Pg.

[121] Buzan, Barry, and Ole Wæver. "Sub-Saharan Africa: Security Dynamics in a Setting of Weak and Failed States." in *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

countries forged alliances with the local power structures and individuals through asymmetrical power relations. On the global scale, the role of the U.S. is worth mentioning as a coercive power that entered this complicated and chaotic environment following September 11, 2001, under the context of the "War on Terror." As this thesis highlights and argues, the process of radicalization, in fact, proceeds through contentious interactions and mobilization campaigns between and among political actors at local, regional, and international levels in the case of Somalia, contrary to the works solely focusing on reductionist templates.

This thesis focuses on the radicalization process, in line with the conceptualization of violence in a contentious political paradigm embedded in a broader political environment that unfolded on the part of al-Shabaab. It implicitly stresses its broadness within the relational framework in contrast to the existing literature on political violence studies tends to privilege the "one-size-fits-all" approach for determining the root causes of terrorism, such as the role of poverty, relative deprivation theory, or explanations linking education status of combatants to terrorism. These explanations are often accompanied by facilitative causes such as environmental deterioration and precipitating events analyzed at either the micro or macro level. John Elster, for instance, argues that the commonly cited factors of poverty and illiteracy may not be the primary causes of suicide bombings. This is evident among Palestinian suicide bombers, who tend to have higher levels of income and education compared to the general population.[122] On the other hand, the inclusion of cultural considerations in discussions on radicalization does not necessarily serve as a decisive factor either. The geographical diffusion of the tactic has been widespread and rapid.[123] The novel tactic of suicide missions has diffused across many different, quite varied cultures and organizations, such as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a secular guerrilla movement in Sri Lanka.[124]

While the relational approach to radicalization does not reject personal treaties or systemic changes and developments in the process of radicalization; however, it

---

122 Elster, Jon. *Explaining Social Behavior: More Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences*. (2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015)., Pg. 45.

123 Bosi, Lorenzo & Demetriou, C. & Malthaner, Stefan. *Dynamics of Political Violence: A Process-Oriented Perspective on Radicalization and the Escalation of Political Conflict* (Routledge Press, 2014).,Pg. 293.

124 Overton, Iain. "A Short History of Suicide Bombing." AOAV, 23 Aug. 2020, aoav.org.uk/2020/a-short-history-of-suicide-bombings.

points out that these influences rise and fall within the context of movement organizations. To put it differently movement organizations are influenced by their political environment in as much as they contribute to its salience. It evaluates political violence phenomena within a broader political context where multiple actors, warring groups, and sets of strategies, creativities, and negotiations are in exchange for one another. The main theoretical argument of the study suggests that the radicalization process at the onset and escalation phases unfold due to the movement organization's contentious interactions with a wide range of political actors during repertoires of contention. Radicalization, thus, emerges out of these conflictual interactions. The relationship between violent extremism, militant environments, and foreign intervention is intricate, and the areas of convergence are inconsistent with respect to straightforward causal models.[125] Understanding what drives each of those elements holds significance not only in terms of theoretical implications but also holds practical implications for international security architects.

When addressing relational, cognitive, and environmental factors, social movements' contentious encounters with multiple sets of actors provide fertile ground for relational radicalization. The relational framework is a mechanism-based research strategy that enables us to trace a movement's violent interactions at the onset and escalation phases across different cases in the relational, and political context. The relational framework and its emphasis on mechanism-based research strategy open the floor, explaining how and when militancy is likely translated (triggered) into actual engagement on the part of al-Shabaab, which constitutes the central subject area of this research.

1.6. The Argument

In what manner and under what circumstances does political violence manifest itself? Do we attempt to understand it in an isolated criminal environment by focusing solely on the 'criminal minds' or interpreting it in the wider political context in which the mobilization of social movements takes place? The overall approach of this dissertation sits on the latter and argues that political violence unfolds from the ebb and flow of a collective claim-making and struggle for power on *the part of* a

[125] Crenshaw, Martha, "*Rethinking Transnational Terrorism: An Integrated Approach*" (n.d.). (US Institute of Peace, No. 158, 2020)., Pg. 3.

movement organization in the relational radicalization framework. It typically arises when individuals or groups resort to force or aggression to achieve their political objectives.

The theoretical framework of this study is grounded on the broader social movement theory, more specifically, located on the contentious politics paradigm and the relational radicalization perspective formulated by Charles Tilly, Sidney Tarrow & Doug McAdam, and further developed by Della Porta, Eitan Alimi, et al. by further embedding radicalization phenomena in social movement studies.

Social movements engaged in contention sometimes experience the adoption of violent forms of contention – a process commonly known as 'radicalization' defined by Alimi et al. as "the process through which a social movement organization (SMO) shifts from predominantly nonviolent tactics of contention to tactics that include violent means, as well as the subsequent process of contention maintaining and possibly intensifying the newly introduced violence."[126] Collective political violence is a projection of contentious interactions among claim-making groups in a complex and multifaced political setting that connects social movements to state authorities, governments, and security forces in a national context in which outside actors may be involved. It is, therefore, multiplex, intertwined, and processual.

Over the past thirty years, Somalia has been widely recognized as a state that has failed to establish a centralized government, leading to the fragmentation of the country into clan-based fiefdoms and a persistent pattern of violent conflict. Numerous initiatives have been implemented to establish a viable national government with the objective of achieving that goal, all of which proved unsuccessful. Following the collapse of political authority in 1991, Somalia has emerged as a notable illustration of recurring domestic conflicts that are frequently more tellingly intensified by external involvement and interests. These external actors may include regional or international powers, as well as transnational networks, which have transformed Somalia into a political stalemate or a site of conflict over their respective political objectives. It presented a political environment in which various

[126] Alimi, Eitan Y., Demetriou, Chares & Bosi, Lorenzo. **The Dynamics of Radicalization: A Relational and Comparative Perspective**, New York, NY; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. Pg. 11.

groups and actors competed with one another in a struggle for power to attain particular political objectives. It is in this contentious and repressive political context that we attempt to explain and analyze al-Shabaab`s overall transformation from what was once defined as a loose network of ragtag militia under the Union of Islamic Courts into a structured politico-military organization that effectively combines politics and terror.[127]

This study also adopts an understanding that emphasizes the processual logic of the radicalization phenomenon. In this context, it is fair to say that organizations that employ violence for political means are mostly a splinter of larger movement organizations that operate in the contentious political environment. Their tendency toward radical militancy is best understood, as this thesis argues, within this contentious politics and relational radicalization framework, contrary to cultural, rational, structural, or idea-centric explanations and models. This study argues that political violence cannot be fully understood in an isolated criminal environment, nor does it occur in a day, and must, instead, be interpreted in the context of contentious politics. The concept of relational radicalization has been observed to have applicability within the context of civil war, as well as being widely demonstrated in explaining the social processes that involve violent elements in the Western Europe and Latin America contexts.[128] Its primary focus centered around on the processual dimension of the violence, which means that shifting from predominantly nonviolent tactics of contention to predominantly sustained violent tactics that include civilians. It tends to capture the ongoing political processes, including that of violence at the onset and escalation phases, through a mechanism/process-based research strategy in a comparative perspective, which is defined in the literature by Alimi et al. as "relational radicalization."

In light of its relevance to our research, it is imperative to clarify and establish the components encompassing the pre-shift political milieu. The logic behind the distinction of "predominantly nonviolent from violent tactics" arises from the

[127] Toros, Harmonie, and Stephen Harley, 'Negotiations with Al-Shabaab: Lessons Learned and Future Prospects', in Michael Keating, and Matt Waldman (eds), War and Peace in Somalia: National Grievances, Local Conflict and Al-Shabaab (Oxford Academic, 2019)

[128] Johnston, Hank, & Paul Almeida. *Latin American Social Movements: Globalization, Democratization, and Transnational Networks*. (Rowman & Littlefield, 2006.)

interactions among the groups and to what extent the degrees of damage dominate the interaction. In *The Politics of Collective Violence*, Tilly states that "even in zones of civil wars and widespread brawling, most people and most of the time, interact in nonviolent ways." In this phase, damage occurs only intermittently or secondarily during transactions that remain predominantly nonviolent, which he calls *the low extreme*. At the escalation level, which he calls *the high extreme,* he continues almost every transaction that inflicts damage, as the infliction and reception of damage dominate the interaction.[129] Therefore, this thesis implements technics and approaches developed mainly in social movement studies, but most importantly, the contentions politics paradigm to explain the development and trajectories of political violence phenomena in Somalia with a particular focus on al-Shabaab.

There is a great deal of work from security and terrorism perspectives that treat the Union of Islamic Courts as a radical movement from its start by linking it with Al-Ittihad al-Islami affiliated individuals who took part in the Courts' ranks. According to the literature on social movements, it is posited that a movement organization can encompass multiple groups, thereby displaying diverse characteristics. Additional literature exists that distinguishes between individuals categorized as "moderates" and "hardliners," attributing the radicalization process to its broader political context. There are also works that begin their analysis by focusing on the criminal minds of radical people, attributing much emphasis on the emotions and psychological factors that drive insurgency movements into terrorism.[130] These works fail to demonstrate to capture the development of radical militancy in a more coherent, systemic, and analytical way throughout contentious episodes. They tend to focus on one relational area, such as "outbidding," through which they explain the whole process accordingly, or additionally, they mention one or two mechanisms.[131] This study aims to address the political violence process in both a coherent and analytical way by taking into

---

129 Tilly, Charles. *The Politics of Collective Violence*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Pg. 6-7.

130 Bacon, Tricia "*Inside the Minds of Somalia's Ascendant Insurgents: An Identity, Mind, Emotions and Perceptions Analysis of al-Shabaab*", Program on Extremism at George Washington University, March 2022.

131 Mohamed Haji Ingiriis*, "From Al-Ittihad to Al-Shabaab: how the Ethiopian intervention and the 'War on Terror' exacerbated the conflict in Somalia"*, Third World Quarterly, 39:11, 2033-2052

account several conflictual mechanisms and sub-processes which open the floor for tracing back cycles of violent episodes in time and space.

1.7. Conceptional Framework of Study

The implementation of a mechanism-based research approach is a prominent feature of both the relational radicalization framework and the contentious politics paradigm. This approach places considerable emphasis on the identification as well as evaluation of different mechanisms and their constitutive sub-processes. Where does that insist-on mechanism come from? What is the rationale for employing a mechanism-based research methodology? In their collaborative study titled *Contentious Politics***,** Tilly and Tarrow have identified three causal factors. At first, it is imperative to note that contentious interactions are not solely confined to social movements but rather encompass a wide array of phenomena such as riots, strikes, waves, rebellions, civil wars, and ethnic strife. In addition, it is noteworthy that certain manifestations of dissent may evolve into violent behavior, yet in alternative scenarios, such actions are assimilated into conventional political discourse. Finally, it became necessary to employ analytical instruments to facilitate a comparative analysis of the various manifestations of conflict across the cases under investigation.[132] Therefore, this research agenda, in fact, follow a comparative perspective of the radicalization process of movement organizations rather than making a comparison between movements in terms of organizational capacity, ideology, and so on and so forth. Therefore, our primary focus would be on mechanisms and their constituencies - which are sub-processes that become traceable in the process of radicalization across time and space. In overcoming these three analytical problems pointed out above, the contentious politics paradigm put forward common mechanisms and sub-processes that produce the former sequentially. Mechanisms proceed in different sequences and thus differ from one movement to another. This means that there has been an ideological change toward escalation in Somalia's political violence process, as well as an increase in the severity, modality, and diversity of political violence. They include the harm of civilian targets in a selective, collateral, categorical, or

[132] Tilly, Charles, Tarrow, Sidney, "*Preface"* in *Contentious Politics* (Oxford University Press; 2nd edition, 2015)

indiscriminate way[133] a process leads towards terrorism, which will be analyzed and compared in a relational perspective. Additionally, this study will examine the weight and gravity of mechanisms in the way of radicalization and the way in which the mechanisms concatenate to form a particular sequence.

This study situates the escalation phase within a wider framework that encompasses the pre- and post-onset of political violence in order to investigate the radicalization process as a whole. It is observed that a period of contention claim-making typically begins with nonviolent protests by the opposition movement, indicating that violent means are seldom employed at the outset and are certainly not initiated by the movement as a whole.[134] The Somali case, on the other hand, offers a distinctive and intriguing story that will be thoroughly examined in the upcoming chapters. It is common for radical organizations to originate from divisions within social movement organizations. Additionally, many members of underground organizations have prior involvement with these movements.[135] For instance, in her work titled *Clandestine Political Violence*, Della Porta conducted a comprehensive analysis of the evolutionary process of political violence in Germany and Italy. The research showcases the ability to comprehensively capture both macro and micro-level interactions in order to gain insight into the dynamic and process-oriented nature of political violence as carried out by movement organizations that have undergone a shift towards radicalization.[136]

The main emphasis of this research is on the processes and mechanisms with which we can trace violent episodes in contentious interactions. In this research, we argue that radicalization into violent extremism unfolds within a broader political context that operates through relational, cognitive, and environmental mechanisms. A shift to violent extremism can neither emerge in isolation nor occur in a day but rather in contentious political setting overlapping sets of ideas, interests, and emotions. The present study posits that the transition towards a violent militant attitude can be fully

---

[133] Alimi, Eitan Y., Demetriou, Chares, Bosi, Lorenzo, *The Dynamics of Radicalization: A Relational and Comparative Perspective*, New York, NY; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. Pg. 210.

[134] Alimi, Eitan Y., Demetriou, Chares, Bosi, Lorenzo, *The Dynamics of Radicalization: A Relational and Comparative Perspective*, (New York, NY; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). Pg. 38.

[135] Della Porta, Donatella. 2018. "Radicalization: A Relational Perspective." Annual Review of Political Science (May). Pg. 463.

[136] Della Porta, Donatella. *Clandestine Political Violence*. (Cambridge Studies in Contentious Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.)

understood most effectively through a relational lens, which takes into account various mechanisms and sub-processes. As previously stated, Alimi et al. emphasize the superiority of relational mechanisms over cognitive and environmental mechanisms at the emergence and escalation phases in a way that the last two gain salience in relation to relational interactions.[137] To be more precise, the impetus behind individuals and groups undergoing radicalization lies in the interplay of relational mechanisms and the manner in which they mutually contribute to each other's influence.[138] We will briefly explain the fundamental propositions of relational mechanisms proposed by Alimi et al. that set the ground for theorizing radicalization and its processual logic. Relational mechanisms consist of five arenas of interactions, of which the first three arenas are more determinant and recurrent in the process of radicalization across cases.[139] They also stand for the "similarities in dissimilarities" across episodes of contentious politics.

1) *Upward spirals of political opportunities* It arises within the context of the interaction between the social movement and its political surroundings. The term pertains to the potential risks and benefits that a movement organization may encounter.[140]

2) *Competition for power* takes place within the movement arena, which refers to differences in opinion regarding strategy and tactics, which may lead to a split in the movement.[141]

3) *Outbidding:* takes place between movement organizations and state security forces. [142]

[137] Alimi, Eitan Y., Demetriou, Chares, Bosi, Lorenzo. *The Dynamics of Radicalization: A Relational and Comparative Perspective*, (New York, NY; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015)., Pg. 15.

[138] Demetriou C., Alimi E.Y. (2018) Relational Radicalization. In: Dépelteau F. (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Relational Sociology*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-66005-9_28 pg. 572

[139] Alimi, Eitan Y., Demetriou, Chares, Bosi, Lorenzo, *The Dynamics of Radicalization: A Relational and Comparative Perspective***.** New York, NY; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. Pg. 41.

[140] Ibid.

[141] Ibid.

[142] Ibid.

4) *Dissociation:* refers to the growing social distance between organizations and the public.[143]

5) *Object shift:* refers to the movement-countermovement arena.[144]

1.8. Dissertation Outline

The forthcoming chapter will explain the theoretical and methodological frameworks that form the foundation of our research. This section aims to present a comprehensive overview of the relational arenas under consideration, delineating their unique characteristics and examining their role in the process of radicalization. The relational arenas of interaction through which violent repertoires of action exert their influence are comprised of five distinct yet interconnected episodes in which the mobilization of social movement takes place.

The third chapter will focus on an analysis of the radicalization process of al-Shabab, an armed group that originated in Somalia and has since extended its influence on other areas in East Africa. The present chapter will be examined through the employment of the five relational mechanisms that were previously introduced in the preceding chapter, specifically in the section pertaining to relational radicalization. The mechanisms mentioned above are fundamental areas in which social movements operate. It is crucial to comprehend these mechanisms in order to understand the process of radicalization. Our analysis will specifically concentrate on the onset and escalation phases of political violence and the effect of relational mechanisms in these processes. Through an analysis of multiple areas, it aims to gain awareness regarding the specific mechanisms that facilitated the group's overall radicalization and militant activism. Moreover, our objective is to enhance our comprehension of the process by which social movements undergo radicalization and the conditions that foster the emergence of political violence. Through the application of the relational radicalization perspective to a case study situated outside of Western contexts, the aim is to illuminate the complex dynamics of this phenomenon as well as provide a

[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid.

contribution to the theoretical development of the existing body of knowledge on the topic.

The conclusion part of our research will entail an examination of the diverse mechanisms that facilitated the process of radicalization within al-Shabaab. Specifically, we will look at the particularities, modalities, and varieties of radicalization that characterized the group's evolution toward a more extreme and violent manner. The radicalization process of al-Shabaab was a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, which is to be explained through the following four modalities**.** *The particularities of radicalization* refer to the unique composition of sub-mechanisms that constitute the mechanisms in a given episode of radicalization. *Modalities of radicalization* refer to the ways in which certain mechanisms may be assigned greater weight or gravity at particular stages in the radicalization process. For example, al-Shabab placed a significant emphasis on the use of violence and coercion to maintain control over its members and achieve its political goals. This modality of radicalization was particularly evident in the group's use of targeted assassinations, suicide bombings, and other acts of violence to intimidate and silence its opponents. *Varieties of radicalization* refer to the different ways in which mechanisms can concatenate to form a particular sequence of events. In the case of al-Shabab, this was made abundantly clear by the fact that the group employed violent tactics against civilians, which led to a significant number of casualties. The capability of the organization to carry out assaults on a large-scale and to establish a substantial presence in the region both contributed to the reputation of the group as being one of the most active extremist groups in the globe.

CHAPTER II

TOWARD A RELATIONAL RADICALIZATION PERSPECTIVE IN EXPLAINING POLITICAL VIOLENCE

The previous chapter presented a comprehensive overview of the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological aspects that are relevant to our investigation. We outlined the main points of our study and how it relates to the wider body of literature on radicalization studies. In this chapter, we have discussed the various conceptual, theoretical, and methodological approaches that we utilized to explain the phenomenon of political violence in our research. These approaches include contentious politics and the relational radicalization framework. Additionally, we presented a concise summary of the perspectives and viewpoints of several scholars who have made significant contributions to our understanding of relational reasoning.

2.1.Relational Reasoning in Understanding Contentious Interactions

Relational reasoning holds a significant place in the field of sociology that has been explored by many intellectuals and scholars, including but not limited to Norbert Elias, Emile Durkheim, J. Spiegel, P. Bourdieu, Charles Tilly, M. Foucault, and G. Simmel. The notion posits that an in-depth understanding of individuals and social phenomena necessitates an examination of their interactions and affiliations with other individuals and institutions.[145] To enhance comprehension of this concept, it is imperative to examine the literature and theories of select scholars engaged in studies on this subject matter. To begin with, Bourdieu states that the allocation of resources, encompassing economic, cultural, and social capital, fundamentally configures social interactions. It can be posited that the actions of individuals are not solely determined by their own

[145] Gamper, M. "Social Network Theories: An Overview'. In: Klärner, A., Gamper, M., Keim-Klärner, S., Moor, I., von der Lippe, H., Vonneilich, N. (eds) *Social Networks and Health Inequalities***.** (Springer, Cham, 2022).

actions but rather are influenced by their placement within the broader social framework. The profound impact of the social and cultural environment on shaping an individual's cognitive processes, emotional responses, and behavioral patterns was further emphasized by his concept of habitus. Bourdieu's work, in this regard, offered a more detailed and comprehensive comprehension of societal occurrences by incorporating these relational aspects.[146]

In addition to Bourdieu, George Herbert Mead advanced the notion that an individual's self-concept is shaped by their social interactions with others. According to Mead, how one makes use of language and symbols plays a pivotal role in social interactions, as individuals rely on them to understand and articulate meaning. The author's study highlights the significance of understanding one's relational context and the influence of communication and shared comprehension on the formation of social connections.[147] Goffman posits in his literature on social interactions that individuals continually manage their perceptions and present a carefully crafted representation of themselves to others, which is influenced by their interpretation of the social context. He asserted that assuming these roles facilitates the development of social connections and that one must navigate complex social conventions and anticipations to present oneself in diverse situations effectively. Goffman's emphasis on the relational nature of social interactions has contributed to our understanding of how individuals form and maintain social identities.[148]

Additionally, in accordance with Foucault's theoretical propositions, power circulates across the fabric of society in a complex web of interconnections rather than being exclusively vested in individuals or establishments. His epistemological stance posited that knowledge is not an objective entity but rather a construct that is shaped by power dynamics. Furthermore, he contended that individuals are molded by the social and cultural contexts that they inhabit. He offers a distinctive perspective on the complex

---

146 Maton, Karl. “Habitus.” Chapter. In *Pierre Bourdieu: Key Concepts*, edited by Michael Grenfell, 2nd ed., 48–64. (Acumen Publishing, 2012)

147 Aboulafia, Mitchell, and Scott Taylor, "George Herbert Mead", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2023 Edition), Edward N. Zalta & Uri Nodelman (eds.), URL <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2023/entries/mead/>.

148 Goffman, E. “*On face-work: An analysis of ritual elements in social interaction*” in *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior*. (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books, 1972)

nature of relational cognition, emphasizing the significance of power dynamics and the influence of knowledge on the formation of communal bonds.[149] Norbert Elias posits that human behavior is shaped by social structures and interactions, as per his perspective. The author's work, entitled *The Civilizing Process*, explored the evolution of societal exchanges and their impact on personal conduct. Elias is attributed with the origination of the term "figurations," which pertains to the social relationship patterns that arise among diverse individuals and groups. The author's work underscores the importance of social networks and establishments in understanding human conduct.[150]

Pierre Bourdieu's formulation of the notion of "social capital" pertains to the accumulation of resources by both individuals and groups through their social affiliations. The writings of Bourdieu emphasize the significance of social networks in forming an individual's capacity to acquire resources and exert authority within a particular community. Furthermore, he conceptualized the idea of "habitus," which examines the influence of societal engagements and establishments on the conduct and outlook of individuals. [151] Charles Tilly, on the other hand, examines how social ties influenced political and social processes. He argued that social relationships are important for political activity and mobilization since they are frequently the foundation of pre-existing social networks and relationships.[152] In contrast, George Simmel places significant emphasis on the concept of "social distance," which pertains to the extent of proximity or distance among individuals in their social affiliations. The work of Simmel highlights the significance of comprehending the contextual interconnections of social activities, in addition to the influence of social exclusion on the behavior and cognition of individuals.[153]

The depiction of social reality through relational reasoning is typically characterized by dynamic, continuous, and processual terms, in contrast to the substantial perspective. This perspective views social action and historical change as static

---

[149] Foucault, Michel. & Gordon, Colin. *Power Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1980)

[150] Elias, Norbert. *The Civilizing Processes*. (New York: Urizen Books. 1978.)

[151] Wright James D. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*. (Second edition. Elsevier, 2015)

[152] Tilly, Charles. *The Politics of Collective Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003)

[153] Simmel Georg and Kurt H Wolff. *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*. (Glencoe Illinois: Free Press. 1950)

"things" or substances, as is evident in rational-actor and norm-based models.[154] This approach criticizes holistic accounts of society or social structures as being distinct from the interactions of actors. Also, it undermines methodological individualism by showing the individual and their interactionist engagements in motion as being molded in the same relational process that constitutes social phenomena.[155] In his work titled "Manifesto for a Relational Sociology," Mustafa Bayer states that:

> "Relational theorists reject the notion that one can posit discrete, pre-given units such as the individual or society as ultimate starting points of sociological analysis (as in the self-actional perspective). Individual persons, whether strategic or norm-following, are inseparable from the transactional contexts within which they are embedded."[156]

According to Bayer's statements, the relational theory is characterized by its rejection of the concept that distinct entities, whether individuals or communities, can function as the fundamental foundation for the study of society. From this perspective, it is not practical to study individuals in isolation without considering the social network in which they are involved. The aforementioned statement suggests that social interactions and transactions hold significant importance in shaping and characterizing the conduct and encounters of individuals, irrespective of whether they are strategic or conform to established norms. Relational theorists posit that comprehending social behavior and processes necessitates familiarity with the interdependent connections and exchanges among individuals, as well as the broader social contexts in which they function. The scholarly works underscore the significance of comprehending social structures and relationships as a means to grasp social phenomena and human conduct. The authors illustrate how social relationships influence individual conduct, political mobilization, economic transactions, and the operation of social structures.

Io provide a concise overview., the notion of relational reasoning holds paramount significance in the field of sociology and has been extensively scrutinized by

---

154 Emirbayer, Mustafa. "Manifesto for a Relational Sociology." American Journal of Sociology 103, no. 2 (1997): 281-317. Pg. 282.

155 Abbott, Owen. *The Self, Relational Sociology, and Morality in Practice*. 1 ed. Palgrave Macmillan Ltd, 2019. (Palgrave Studies in Relational Sociology). Pg. 19.

156 Emirbayer, Mustafa. "Manifesto for a Relational Sociology." American Journal of Sociology 103, no. 2 (1997): 281-317. Pg. 287.

numerous scholars. Through the consideration of the relational context within which individuals operate, a more comprehensive and nuanced comprehension of social phenomena can be attained. The recognition of the complex web of social relationships that shape our interpretation of the environment is a matter of great importance, as evidenced by the viewpoints of scholars such as Bourdieu, Mead, Goffman, and Foucault.

2.2. Political Violence, Contentious Politics, and the Relational Radicalization Perspective

The study of political violence has made significant theoretical progress through the social movement perspective, particularly with the formulation of the contentious politics paradigm formulated by Charles Tilly et al..[157] This theoretical framework was utilized to explain the complex web of social interactions that underpin consequential societal phenomena, including social unrest, protest activism, and contentious political framework. The ongoing discourse surrounding the relationship between the contentious political phenomenon and social movement studies remains unsettled. However, there are some who argue that it relates to or concerns the sphere of interaction among collective actors, encompassing various forms of civil unrest such as riots, civil wars, revolutions, and protest activities.[158] In their essential work on contentious politics, Tilly et al. reject the expansion of the term "social movement" to encompass most or all contentious politics, its social bases, and its cultural context. The authors are thoroughly addressing the inquiry of defining the concept of a social movement. According to Tilly et al., a social movement is described as:

> "Sustained campaigns of claim-making, an array of public performances including marches, rallies, public meetings, and statements, repeated public displays of worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment by such means they draw on the organizations, networks, traditions, and solidarities that sustain these activities, meaning social movement bases."[159]

---

157 Bosi, Lorenzo & Demetriou, C. & Malthaner, Stefan**.** *Dynamics of Political Violence: a Process-Oriented Perspective on Radicalization and the Escalation of Political Conflict*, (Routledge Press, 2014) Pg. 1.

158 Tilly, Charles. & Tarrow, Sidney G. *Contentious Politics*. (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2006), Pg. 2.

159 Ibid pg. 11

The quote highlights that sustained campaigns are a crucial component of social movements, as they enable the movement to assert its demands and bring about transformative social change. They include a variety of public performances, including marches, rallies, and public meetings, as well as repeated demonstrations of worthiness, unity, and dedication. These political campaigns have their roots in the base of social movements, which comprise interconnected networks, organized groups, tradition, and unity. Through these campaigns, social movements intend to challenge the status quo by presenting alternative viewpoints and gaining public support. The success of these initiatives is contingent on the movement's capacity to keep up the routine, forge alliances with other organizations, and keep the public engaged over the long haul. Successful social movements have led to significant changes in social, political, and economic systems, demonstrating the effectiveness of sustained collective action.

The concept encompasses a broad spectrum of conflictual phenomena, ranging from strike waves and civil wars to revolutions and insurgencies, in addition to social movements. The emphasis is placed on the relational mechanisms within the subject matter of contention rather than on the objects of analysis.[160] In other words, the emphasis is placed on the mechanisms and processes that link the parties involved in making claims rather than solely on the input and output of the conflict situation or the interdependence between different variables. This is referred to as contentious politics. It is important to note that this line of research focuses primarily on the mechanisms and processes that connect challengers with their targets, such as the state and its apparatus, as well as third parties like the media and the public in sequences of interaction. It does not, however, exclude the involvement of social movement bases.[161] Contentious politics occurs when ordinary people- often in alliance with more influential figures and changes in public mood- join forces in confrontation with elites, authorities, and opponents.[162] Collective violence holds a precarious yet cohesive position within the context of contentious politics. It emerges from the ebb and flow

[160] Ibid

[161] Ibid pg. 14

[162] Tarrow, Sidney G. "Introduction" in *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, (3rd ed., Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Pg. 6.

of collective claim-making and struggles for power on the part of a social movement among contending actors at play.[163]

The contentious politics paradigm proposes that a set of mechanisms or processes are generative forces, which provide causal analogies for a variety of political phenomena ranging from cycles of protest, social movements, riots, protests, and civil war, and thus offer the key in understanding and explaining the unfolding process. Accordingly, Alimi et al. argue that the contentious political context in which social movements interact provides a promising starting point for analysis, especially since it allows for relational analysis.[164]

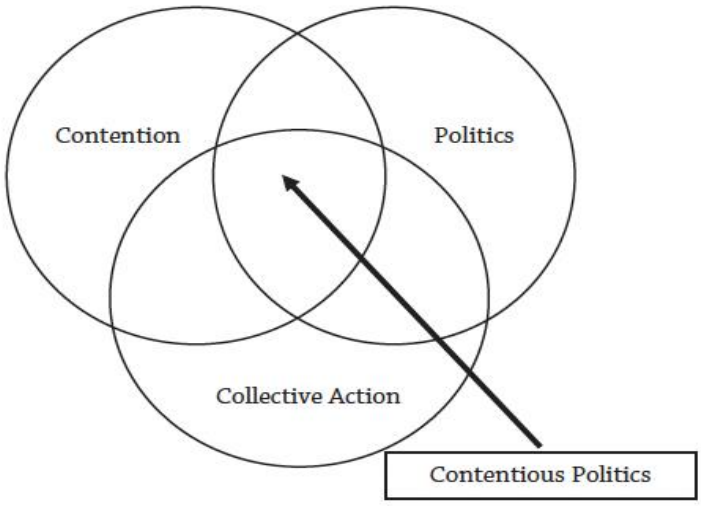


Figure 10. Components of Contentious Politics (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015)

According to Chares Demetriou, Tilly's understanding of social movements is associated with contentious politics that exhibit three distinct features: a campaign, a repertoire, and a performance.[165] The term "campaign" refers to a series of coordinated and repetitive assertions, as opposed to a singular act or occurrence. The term "repertoire," as used by the author, pertains to the cumulative presentations executed

[163] Tilly, Charles, *The Politics of Collective Violence*. (Cambridge Studies in Contentious Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003)., Pg. 114.

[164] Alimi, Eitan Y., Demetriou, Chares, Bosi, Lorenzo. *The Dynamics of Radicalization: A Relational and Comparative Perspective*, (New York, Oxford University Press), 2015 pg. 14

[165] Sidney Tarrow, "Charles Tilly and the Practice of Contentious Politics: From France to England and [Not quite] Back Again", Histoire@Politique. Politique, culture, société, N°10, janvier-avril 2010, www.histoire-politique.fr

in support of the contentions derived from pre-established modes of performance. The term "performance" in this context pertains to the public exhibitions that showcase the assertions made within collective performances.[166] Tilly's research has made significant contributions to the field of collective violence, including its various forms and the appropriate analytical methodologies for its examination. In his work titled *The Politics of Collective Violence***,** the author draws a comparison between collective violence and weather, highlighting their shared characteristics of complexity and unpredictability in certain instances. However, he posits that collective violence is a consequence of diverse causes that are combined in varying ways across different historical and spatial contexts. In addition, he asserts that organizing the causes, combinations, and contexts is instrumental in explaining group aggression and its diverse manifestations.[167] Tilly's conceptualization of violence can be broadly categorized into two distinct forms: individual and collective. He refutes the notion that various forms of violence serve as manifestations of inherent human impulses to cause harm to other humans.[168] Tilly posits that instances of collective violence cannot be solely attributed to heightened incidents of individual aggression. According to Tilly's argument, collective violence is a complex phenomenon that encompasses a range of social and political factors rather than just another manifestation of individual aggression.[169]

The development of collective violence is frequently attributed to complex societal circumstances, including economic instability, political oppression, and social inequality, rather than being solely driven by individual motivations. These underlying factors influence the formation of group identities and the mobilization of collective action.[170] It is crucial to establish an analytical bridge between collective action and political violence. Therefore we should ask the following question: When does collective action become a part of contentious politics? The phenomenon of collective action assumes a contentious nature when it is undertaken by individuals or groups

---

[166] Kriesi, H. *Charles Tilly: Contentious Performances, Campaigns and Social Movements*. Swiss Political Science Review, 2009 15: 341-349. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1662-6370.2009.tb00134.x

[167] Tilly, Charles. *The Politics of Collective Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Pg. 7. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511819131.001

[168] Ibid

[169] Ibid

[170] Tilly, Charles. *The Politics of Collective Violence*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Pg.4

who do not possess routine access to representative institutions, who act on behalf of new or overlooked demands, and whose conduct fundamentally challenges established norms or authorities.[171] According to Tarrow, contentious politics emerges in response to changes in political opportunities and threats when participants respond to a variety of incentives, be it material or ideological, partisan and group based, long-standing and episodic, but above all, and they are triggered by the ebb and flow of political struggle.[172] Furthermore, a contentions action keeps its sustainability even in contact with powerful opponents, contingent upon some factors, including dense social networks and effective connectivity structures, and draws on legitimate action-oriented cultural frames that are social movement base.[173]

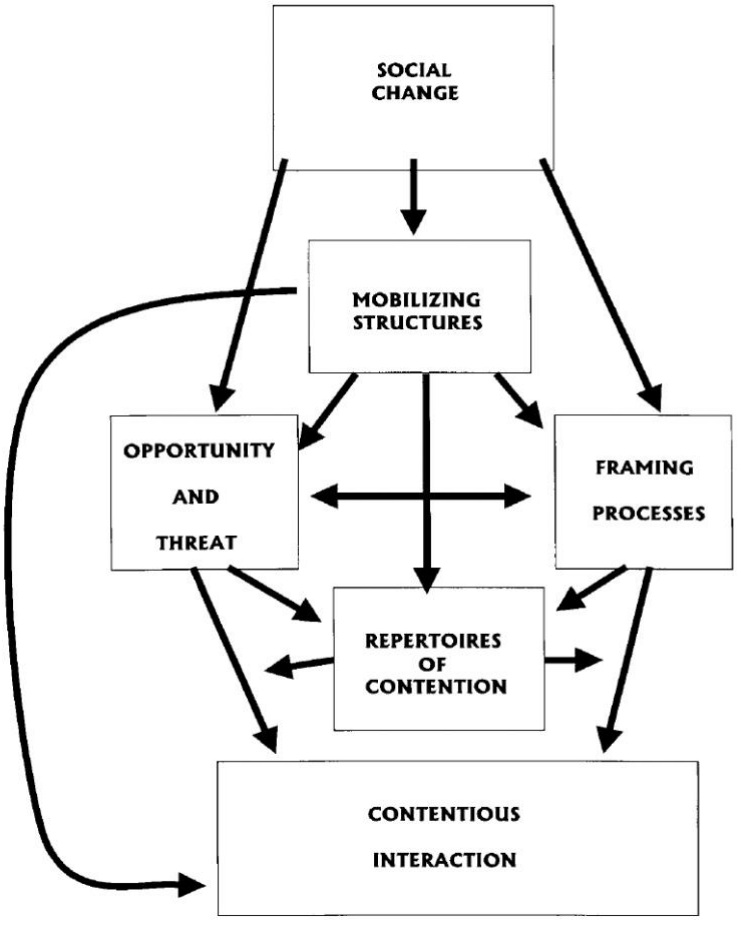


Figure 11. The Classic SMA for Explaining Contentious Politics (McAdam et al. (2001)

[171] Tarrow, Sidney**,** *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. (3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.) pg. 7

[172] Ibid. Pg. 16

[173] Ibid. Pg. 16

Collective violence consists of a vast body of social interactions that outcasted violent actions by individuals, non-material damage, accidents, and long-term or indirect effects of such damaging processes as dumping toxic waste, global warming, or air pollution. Contentious politics, which refers to "collective political struggle, is episodic, public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects when (a) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the claims and (b) the claims would if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants. (c) At least some parties to the conflict are newly self-identified political actors, and/or (d) at least some parties employ innovative collective action.[174] Another feature highlighted by this approach is its emphasis on the episodic rather than the continuous nature of the conflict." In Tilly's sense, collective violence, therefore, corresponds to a kind of conversation, regardless of how brutal or one-sided that conversation may be.[175]

"What happens to movement bases when movement campaigns come to an end," asks Kriesi in his essay titled "*New Social Movements in A Political Context*." In search of this inquiry, he has formulated four types of typologies pertaining to the dynamics of movement, which can potentially provide us with a solution to the question above.[176] One potential outcome that he considers is the institutionalization of a movement organization, a phenomenon that we observed in Somalia when a part of the UIC elements led by Sheikh Sharif negotiated an agreement in Djibouti and subsequently secured the presidency of Somalia through a parliamentary election in 2009. The above process entails the formalization of the internal structure of a Social Movement Organization (SMO), moderation of its objectives, adoption of a more conventional spectrum of actions, and integration into established government systems. Secondly Kriesi posits the potential for commercialization whereby a movement organization may evolve into a service organization. According to Kriesi, there exists a potential for involution, which entails a trajectory that prioritizes social incentives to the exclusion of other factors. Social movements organizations (SMOs) that undergo

[174] McAdam, Doug, Tarrow, Sidney, and Tilly, Charles. *Dynamics of Contention*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). Pg. 5

[175] Tilly, Charles. *The Politics of Collective Violence*. Cambridge Studies in Contentious Politics. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). pg.6

[176] Tilly, Charles, and Tarrow, Sidney and McAdam, Doug**.** *Contentious Politics*. (Second Edition, Oxford University Press, 2015) pg. 163-164.

involution tend to transform into self-help groups, voluntary associations, or clubs, as was the case with former members of al-Ittihad al Islami. Kriesi's fourth variant, which is radicalization or "reinvigorated mobilization," is evident in the escalation of collective violence in Italy after 1968, as well as in the actions of EOKA and the breakdown and transformation of the Union of Islamic Courts into a more moderate and a more violent faction.[177]

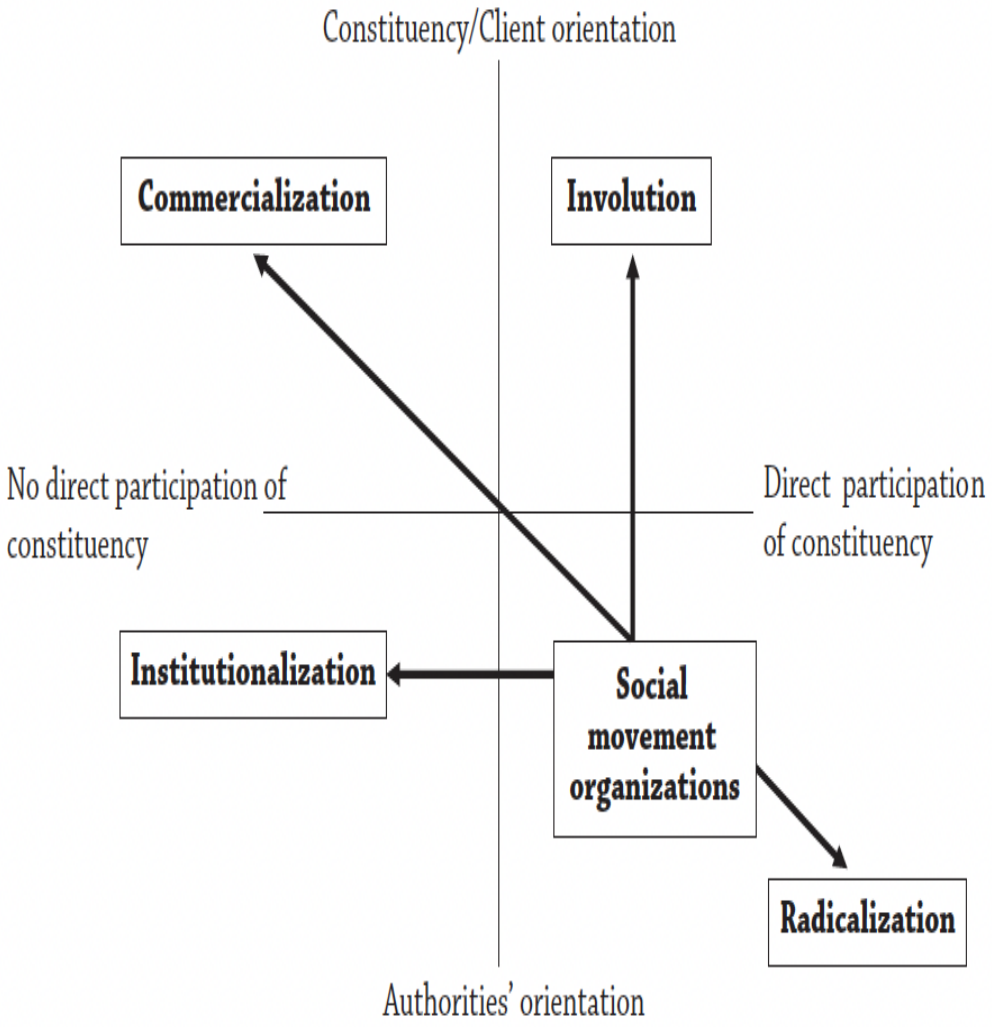


Figure 12. Typology of transformations of goal orientations and action repertoires of SMOs. (Kriesi, 1996: 157)

[177] Kriesi, Hanspeter. "*The Organizational Structure of New Social Movements in a Political Context*." In *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, edited by D. McAdam, J. McCarthy, and M. N. Zald, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996). Pg. 157.

Relational radicalization, both theoretically and epistemologically, is situated in social movement studies, and in particular contentious politics paradigm.[178] The concept encompasses social movement but also includes a wide range of conflictual phenomena such as strike waves, civil wars, revolutions, and insurgencies. One of its basic features is that it shifts the focus from the subject and objects of the contention to the mechanisms and sub-process that link them to each other and broader institutions and actors.[179] The relational emphasis in the contentious politics paradigm has undergone some theoretical and methodological modifications by Eitan Alimi, Chares Demetriou, and Lorenzo Bosi in their book titled *The Dynamics of Radicalization. A Relational and Comparative Perspective*. They elaborate on how relational mechanisms relate to and have primacy over cognitive and environmental mechanisms by identifying five relational mechanisms that are always present during contentions interactions.[180] The relational approach gives much emphasis on the recurrent mechanism, process, and sequences in meso-level events, contrary to the works that posit individuals, societies, or macro levels change at the center of analysis. The arena of contentious politics is characterized by the exchange of claims among actors, which have implications for the interests of others. This often results in the mobilization of collective action toward the advancement of shared interests or programs. Governments may play a role in this process as either the subject of claims, initiators of claims, or third-party actors. The phenomenon of contentious politics amalgamates three commonly observed facets of societal existence, namely: collective action, contention, and politics.[181] As the statement indicates, the claim to engage in contentious politics demonstrates two essential qualities: it is always collective and interactive.

Elements of relational reasoning have been adopted by several researchers who work on political violence phenomena either at the onset of violence or at the escalation

---

178 Tilly, Charles, and Sidney G. Tarrow. *Contentious Politics*. (Second Edition: Oxford University Press, 2015)

179 Tarrow, S. *Contentious Politics*. in *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements* (eds D.A. Snow, D. Della Porta, B. Klandermans, and D. McAdam, 2013).

180 Alimi, Eitan Y., Demetriou, Chares, Bosi, Lorenzo, *The Dynamics of Radicalization: A Relational and Comparative Perspective*, New York, NY; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. Pg. 15-16-17.

181 Tilly, Charles, and Sidney G. Tarrow. *Contentious Politics*. (Second Edition: Oxford University Press, 2015)

phases. Scholars may adopt an isolated procedure, such as competition for power dynamics, or pursue the identification of the most effective indicator of radicalization, either throughout the entire process or within a particular phase. Conversely, particular emphasis is placed on one mechanism while its interconnection with other mechanisms is underscored.[182]

2.3.Methodology and Research Design

This research follows a process-tracing logic and adopts a comparative case-study perspective in line with the theorization of the radicalization process conceptualized as the relational radicalization perspective. The argument posits that the process of radicalization is a result of confrontational interactions that involve a complex network of relationships among various actors across time and space. This study follows a mechanism-based research strategy to explain the process of radicalization (an explanandum) in a contentious environment by using a process-tracing research technique in order to help us to capture sub-mechanisms (the explanans) in each event that took place.

Mechanism-based research is a form of qualitative research technique that seeks to explore the underlying mechanisms of a given intervention or approach. The primary objective is to elucidate the fundamental mechanisms that give rise to the observed outcomes. It is grounded in the idea that social phenomena are not simply the result of a collection of variables. Instead, they are produced by underlying causal mechanisms that operate in specific contexts. This research technique seeks to identify various sets of mechanisms and understand how they interact with each other to produce observed social phenomena. It involves a deep engagement with context and requires researchers to identify and test causal mechanisms in specific cases. The logic behind mechanism-based research strategy versus causal law-like explanation is the idea that "to explain a social phenomenon (an explanandum) is to explain its constituents, which means to cite an earlier phenomenon, i.e., sub-mechanism (the explanans) that caused it."[183] The difference between a law and a mechanism is that between a static

[182] Alimi, Eitan, et al. *The Dynamics of Radicalization*. Pg. 49

[183] Elster, Jon. *Explaining Social Behavior: More Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007)., Pg. 7.

correlation (“if X, then Y”) and a “process” (“X leads to Y through steps A, B, C,). Causal mechanisms offer a more comprehensive and fundamental explanation, commonly known as "opening the black box," compared to general laws.[184]

The process-tracing methodology attempts to identify the causal chain and causal mechanism as well as causal processes between an independent variable and the outcome of the dependent variable. This research methodology has gained significant traction among scholars such as Charles Tilly, Jeffrey Checkel, Donatella Della Porta, and Jack Gladstone. This approach aims to establish cause-effect relationships by carefully selecting principles from a multitude of factors that may have contributed to the observed sequences of events.[185] The difference between the correlational approach and mechanism-based explanations resembles the differences between the physical and biological sciences. Variable-based explanations seek how two or more variables relate to each other. The technique demonstrates the correlation between the input and output; however, it does not visually represent the causal relationship. The concept of mechanism-based logic bears a closer resemblance to biological logic, as it focuses on the combination of various mechanisms to form small-scale processes like reproduction as well as large-scale processes like evolution. For instance, Till's notion of mechanisms refers to a specific set of changes that modify the relationships among elements in identical or closely similar ways across different situations. In this context, the evolution of a movement from nonviolent to violent strategies and tactics can be explained through mechanisms across different scenarios.[186]

Contrary to the idea or behavioral-based arguments, whether aggressive actions, personal treaties, culture and ideology or motives, impulses, and opportunities, these factors alone do not necessarily provide a comprehensive analytical depiction of conflict processes that evolve into violence.[187] The approach we have adopted acknowledges the potential influence of ideas and behaviors in the area of contentious

---

184 George, Alexander L., and Andrew Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences.* (MIT Press, 2005). Pg. 159.

185 Ibid. Pg. 231.

186 Tilly, Charles, and Tarrow, Sidney. *Contentious Politics* (Oxford University Press; 2nd edition, 2015)., Pg. 29.

187 Tilly, Charles. *The Politics of Collective Violence*, (Cambridge Studies in Contentious Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

politics. As Tilly noted, ideas about selection and uses of violent means or observed justice and injustices in a society undoubtedly shape people's participation or non-participation in collective violence. Similarly, behavioral features affect the readiness of different categories of people, no matter how poor or prosperous a person is in terms of economic activities, to impose violence on each other.[188] On the other hand, individuals who prioritize relationships, as opposed to those who prioritize ideas and behaviors, place greater emphasis on the interactions that occur within and between groups and individuals. The argument suggests that human personalities and behaviors are shaped by interactions with other individuals and that such interactions invariably entail a certain level of negotiation and creativity.[189] More specifically radicalization process in the early and escalation phases occurs through relational, cognitive, and environmental mechanisms, in which relational mechanisms mediate the salience of the two other types of mechanisms in various ways. This line of research examines the radicalization process, both at the onset and escalation phases of violence. Relational mechanisms are the processes by which social interactions influence the conduct and outcomes of political conflicts. Interaction, and negotiation are just a few of the characteristics that play a role in shaping the relationships between actors and, in turn, the outcome of conflicts. The environmental mechanism means externally generated influences on conditions affecting social life, which operates directly, such as resource depletion, migration, climate change, or rapid decrease in population growth. Cognitive mechanisms, as Tilly explains, refer to the alterations of individual and collective perceptions, for instance, when members of a fighting group decide collectively that they have mistaken an enemy for a friend.[190] The present discourse will provide a clear explication of each relational mechanism, which constitutes the fundamental unit of analysis in our thesis. This will be achieved by locating the Somali case within the broader context in which the mobilization of the Courts took place.

[188] Ibid. Pg. 6.
[189] Ibid. Pg. 5-6.
[190] Ibid. Pg. 20.

2.3.1. Relational Arenas of Interaction

1. Social Movement and the Political Environment Arena

Political opportunity structure is one of the relational mechanisms that refer to consistent but not necessarily permanent changes that a movement organization faces in the political environment. It alters a movement's goal attainment and strategy formation in the presence of constraints, possibilities, and threats. This arena consists of the movement's multiple, sequential relations with state and inter-state institutions, non-state elite centers of power, and symbolic configurations.[191] This form of engagement is characterized by mutual interaction, rendering it a dynamic and processual phenomenon rather than a static one. This suggests that the tactics employed by social movements can impact the approaches taken by governing bodies, resulting in a vicious cycle. Frequently, it arises from a clash of divergent perspectives promoted by supporters with opposing viewpoints, culminating in the emergence of a prevailing interpretation.

It is essential in shaping the ebb and flow of a movement's activity in its relations with the state and intra-state actors. When it comes to social movement mobilization, POS collectively decides the tactics to be used by the various actors within the political system and by political authorities in particular. As a result, actions may either choose moderation in their claim by, for instance, participating in institutional politics or radicalizing in response, as in the case of Al-Shabaab.[192] For instance, Tarrow underlines the significance of the current political climate, as well as the short-term fluctuations in political opportunities that may spark political unrest and lead to its demise. The factors of the political situation that may face alterations in the near term include the opening up of access to participation, shifts in ruling alignments, the availability of important allies, and cleavages both within and among elites.[193] It provides incentives for collective action by affecting expectations for the success or

[191] Alimi, Eitan Y., Demetriou, Chares, Bosi, Lorenzo. *The Dynamics of Radicalization: A Relational and Comparative Perspective*. (NY, Oxford University Press, 2015). Pg. 42.

[192] McAdam, Doug, Sidney Tarrow & Charles Tilly. *Dynamics of Contention*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). Pg. 66.

[193] Tarrow, Sidney. "Social Movements in Contentious Politics: A Review Article." The American Political Science Review, vol. 90, no. 4, 1996, pp. 874–83.

failure of the movement.[194] Rather than seeing "opportunities and threats" as objective structural forces, we view them as subject to attribution. Even if a window of opportunity exists, it won't inspire action unless it's both a) obvious to potential opponents and b) viewed as an opportunity.

The attribution of opportunity or threat is a process that helps mobilize populations that may otherwise be inactive or immobile. This process, therefore, consists of the attribution of opportunity or threat, the availability of potential allies, the formation of coalitions, both on the margins of and within the polity, and the framing of entire episodes of contention.[195] Krisei et al. have developed a framework for analyzing the Political Opportunity Structure (POS), which they have outlined in their study titled *The New Social Movements in Western Europe*. This framework divides the POS into four distinct components, which are national cleavage structures, institutional structures, dominant strategies, and alliance structures. He furthermore states that a country's political cleavage structures, which have their origins in that country's social and cultural cleavages, have a significant impact on the capacity of social movements to mobilize its citizens.[196] Yet this alone cannot be taken as an explanation for mobilization in its entirety, and some other mechanisms needed to be added up.

In the context of Somalia, the political opportunity structure (POS) played a crucial role in the rise of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) and al-Shabaab. Fragmentation, weak state institutions, and a complex web of national and regional cleavages have long marked the Somali political landscape. This environment provided a fertile ground for the growth of non-state actors such as al-Shabaab seeking to exploit the instability and chaos for their own economic or political ends. For instance, the UIC emerged as a response to the lack of state authority and governance in Somalia. The country's political cleavage structures, which stemmed from clan divisions, historical grievances, and religious affiliations, provided the UIC with a strong base of support.

---

194 Meyer, David S., and Suzanne Staggenborg. "Movements, Counter-movements, and the Structure of Political Opportunity." American Journal of Sociology 101, no. 6 (1996): 1628-660.

195 Tarrow, Sidney G. "*Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*", (3rd ed., Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics: Cambridge University Press, 2011.), Pg. 163.

196 Kriesi, Hanspeter, Ruud Koopmans, Jan Willem Duyvendak, and Marco Giugni. *Introduction* in *New Social Movements in Western Europe. A Comparative Analysis*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995)

The UIC initially aimed to restore law and order through the implementation of Sharia law, which resonated with large segments of the Somali population who were disillusioned with the status quo. As the UIC gained strength, it was able to capitalize on the weak institutional structures and the absence of a strong central government to expand its influence further. Al-Shabab, in the very first beginning, originated as an offspring of the UIC, went through a gradual radicalization process, and took advantage of the comparable, but not limited to, and not the exact manner, political opportunity structure that had enabled the UIC's ascent.

The political opportunity structure in Somalia was significantly influenced by external influences, which had an immense consequence on the overall transformation of the conflict trends and the balance of power in the country at large. The instability and deterioration in the country were further intensified by the active involvement of international actors and the power play of regional powers, which included Ethiopia and Eritrea. These external pressures not only hindered efforts to achieve national unity but also contributed to the proliferation of violence and the growth of insurgency groups.

2. Object Shift in the Movement: Counter-Movement Arena

The arena between movement and countermovement(s) refers to the field in which two opposing movements are confronted by one another. The success of an organization might endanger the interests of another group, which can lead to a backlash in the form of outbidding and counter-protests.[197] In Tilly's words, mobilization often leads to counter-mobilization. Object shift refers to a change in the relationships between claimants and the objects of their claims, such as when disputing parties and their brokers in a political setting begin searching for allies, i.e., battling gangs unite against the police, so promoting new definitions of their local conflict.[198] In some cases, it is symbolic and peaceful, but in other cases, the counter-mobilization escalates and radicalizes the conflicts between opposing actors and organizations.[199] Another

[197] Ibid. Pg. 168.

[198] Tilly, Charles. *The Politics of Collective Violence*, (Cambridge Studies in Contentious Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003)., Pg. 198.

[199] Tilly, Charles. *Contentious Politics*. Pg. 38.

significant characteristic of this area is that a social movement has the potential to generate political opportunities for the ruling elite, either in a positive or negative way. Their actions may potentially create an environment conducive to repression, thereby rendering their impact unfavorable It is noteworthy that politicians or counter-movements can effectively leverage the momentum generated by social movements to enhance their visibility and appeal to a broader audience, which can be regarded as a favorable outcome. A distinctive characteristic of this area is an opportunity for both movements and counter-movements to garner support from various entities such as state apparatus, non-state elite power centers, and the broader international community.

The interplay between the warlords' union, known as the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARCPT), and the UIC in Somalia was a complex one. The ARCPT was formed in 2006 by a group of faction leaders who were opposed to the UIC's growing influence in the country. The UIC on the other hand, was a union of Sharia courts that were providing a degree of law and order in areas of Somalia that had been without effective governance for many years. The preceding group perceived the latter as a potential challenge to their authority and influence. The ARPCT was founded or portrayed itself as such in order to receive US assistance, on the belief that the UIC was an extremist organization with the objective of imposing a radical interpretation of Islam on the people of Somalia.[200] Furthermore, the ARCPT sought to portray itself as a moderate alternative to the UIC, one that was committed to restoring peace and stability to the country. The latter, for its part, saw them as a collection of warlords who were opposed to any form of Islamic governance. They accused the group of being puppets of the United States and Ethiopia, who were seeking to undermine the UIC's efforts to bring stability to Somalia. Conversely, the UIC believed that their framework constituted an effective manifestation of local governance and that they were providing much-needed services to the people of Somalia.

[200] Secretary-General, U. (n.d.). *Letter, 20 June 2006, from the Secretary-General*. United Nations Digital Library System. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/577343

3. Competition for Power: within Movement Arena

There is a common tendency to treat social movements as homogeneous structures and to view them within a generalizing framework is quite widespread. Therefore, quite commonly, the differences within movement organizations are overlooked and are treated as unitary entities in reference to a shared collective identity. That line of thinking is quite problematic and counterproductive since it glosses over diversity among one's adversaries, thereby limiting understanding of them and indirectly affecting one's strategies for effectively combating and coping with the threats they pose.[201]

A number of points can be pointed out that led to the emergence of inter-group competition. This likely competitive arena may also be a factor contributing to an increase in violence as they try to outbid one another to attract public support. Opposition movements are composed of a network of individuals and groups that share specific aims and collaborate in order to participate in collective action; on the other hand, they may differ from one another in terms of ideological and tactical preferences and compete for material or non-material resources.[202] Competition may also result from increasing state pressure on opposition movements as well as from a lack of coordination which Eitan Alimi conceptualized as Infrastructure of Coordination (IOC) established between and within the contending parties.[203]

One of the most essential characteristics of opposition movements are their diversity and dynamic nature. It is uncommon for movements to remain entirely homogeneous and unified throughout their duration. Even if a movement initially presents as monolithic, divergent views regarding strategy and tactics are likely to surface. The actors in question may exhibit divergent ideological orientations, employ distinct methods and strategies, exhibit varying preferences for modes of action, and pursue

---

201 Snow, David; Byrd, Scott, "Ideology, framing processes, and Islamic terrorist movements," Mobilization: An International Quarterly, 12, 2,119-136, 2007," Pg. 119.

202 Bosi, Lorenzo & Demetriou, C. & Malthaner, Stefan. *Dynamics of Political Violence A Process-Oriented Perspective on Radicalization and the Escalation of Political Conflict*, (Routledge Press, 2014) Pg. 7-8.

203 Alimi, Eitan Y. "The Relational Context of Radicalization: The Case of Jewish Settler Contention before and after the Gaza Pullout." Political Studies 64 (2016): 910 - 929.

different goals. Intra-movement dynamics encompass a range of factors beyond mere resources, sets of attitudes and beliefs, leadership structure, rationalistic calculations, and pre-contest social ties. These factors may or may not be constrained by contentious interactions. Intra-movement power struggles have the potential to generate discord and discontent among members, ultimately influencing the trajectory and consequences of the movement.

Two competing perspectives emerge when it comes to the factors that influence the onset and diffusion of violence in relation to the role of social structure. Contrary to the dominant views that suggest that violence is also caused by competition between diverse groups within the social movement, it is argued that it results from mass protest and the disruptive consequences of protest. Tarrow's viewpoint regarding social movement organizations (SMOs) as instigators of disruption and aggression present a marked divergence from that of Piven and Cloward, who posited that such entities do not promote such behaviors. They stated that:

> "Whatever influence lower-class groups occasionally exert in American politics does not result from an organization but from mass protest and the disruptive consequences of protest……Protest wells up in response to momentous changes in the institutional order. Organizers and leaders do not create it."[204]

Therefore, the participation of groups and the rivalry that exists between them cannot account for the quick spread of demonstrations and the disruptive character they have. However, this in no way implies that groups did not play important roles in the later stages of the relational arenas. The radicalization of views is a characteristic that is shared by all of the competitors, regardless of the numerous sources that were mentioned before.

Radicalization, in this sense, refers to a shift in ideological commitments towards the extremes and/or the adoption of more disruptive and violent forms of contention. One of the striking features of cycles of contention is that the institutionalization process often accompanies radicalization at the same time. The term refers to the growing

---

[204] Fox, Piven Frances & Cloward, Richard A. *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed How They Fail.* (1st ed. New York: Pantheon Books, 1977)

distance and separation of a movement or some group of people from extreme ideologies and/or embracing more conventional and less riotous forms of contention by seeking accommodations with elites and electoral advantage, which leads to moderation in their goals.[205] Some groups in movement organizations take part in institutional politics by creating, for instance, political parties, and they gain enormous political and decision-making power by winning public office.[206] As we saw in the Court's experience, the "moderate" leader of the Courts, Sheikh Sharif Ahmad, a harsh critic of Al-Shabaab[207], was elected by the Somali parliament as the president of the expanded Transitional Federal Government of Somalia in 2009.

4. Outbidding in the Movement: Security Forces Arena

The third relational arena Alimi et al. identified bears on the interactions between movement activists and state security forces. The central mechanism in this area is "outbidding," which refers to the action-counter action dynamics that raise the stakes for the two sides as they struggle for control.[208] This area is distinguishable from other areas of interaction as security forces engage with movement activists on the field. This relational mechanism includes repressions by state security forces or a conflict situation between a movement and the state's military power. On the other hand, it may also refer to military interventions by third parties. For example, violent "outbidding" entails a dynamic in which militant groups receive increasing attention when they escalate violent attacks and sometimes gain approval from core followers for demands for militancy. At the same time, they face the risk of repelling broader audiences and provoking counterattacks that are harmful to their constituencies.[209]

---

[205] Tarrow, Sidney G. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 3rd ed., 2011). Pg. 207.

[206] Berti, Benedetta. *Armed Political Organizations: From Conflict to Integration*. (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013) Pg. 1.

[207] Speech of the Somali President H.E. Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, At the General Assembly of the United Nations September 25,2010 https://gadebate.un.org/sites/default/files/gastatements/65/65_SO_en.pdf

[208] Alimi, Eitan Y., Demetriou, Chares, Bosi, Lorenzo. *The Dynamics of Radicalization: A Relational and Comparative Perspective*. (NY; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015)

[209] Bosi, L., Demetriou, C., & Malthaner, S. (Eds.) *Dynamics of Political Violence: A Process-Oriented Perspective on Radicalization and the Escalation of Political Conflict*. (Routledge, 2014)

Studies have shown, for instance, that anti-regime groups also commit terrorist acts against individuals and organizations that support the government.[210]

The Ethiopian invasion/occupation of Somalia in 2006 played a significant role in the intensification of the radicalization process of al-Shabab and the radicalization of the political environment at home and diaspora. The invasion was prompted by the Ethiopian government's concerns about the growing influence of the Union of Islamic Courts (ICU) in Somalia, which it viewed as a threat to its own security. Ethiopian forces, supported by the United States, launched a military campaign against the UIC and other Islamist groups in Somalia. The invasion and subsequent occupation of Somalia by Ethiopian forces created a backlash among many Somalis, who considered it an encroachment on their nation's independence, hence leading to a negative response.

Al-Shabab, which had previously been a relatively small and localized group, could capitalize on this backlash and portray itself as a defender of Somali independence and Islamic values. This helped to increase its popular support and recruit new members. The invasion also had the effect of radicalizing the political environment in Somalia, which was widely seen as an attack on Islam and Somali identity, and this helped to create a climate in which radical Islamist groups like Al-Shabab could thrive. The Ethiopian forces engaged in repressive tactics, including targeted assassinations and indiscriminate attacks on civilian targets. This created a cycle of violence and retaliation, which helped further to radicalize al-Shabab and other Islamist groups in Somalia. The outbidding dynamic between the two sides escalated, with al-Shabab seeking to outdo the Ethiopian forces in terms of violent attacks and propaganda and the Ethiopian forces responding with even harsher measures.

5. Dissociation in the Movement: Public Arena

It refers to the growing distance between a movement organization, its adherents, and the public. Movement bases are essential because it is where the movement gains

[210] Choi, Seung-Whan, and James A. Piazza. "Foreign Military Interventions and Suicide Attacks." Journal of Conflict Resolution 61, no. 2 (February 2017): 271–97.

access to necessary resources for their mobilization in collective action. There are five distinct types of resources moral, cultural, social-organizational, human, and material.[211] Radicalization towards more sustained violent acts is also related to the arena between movement and its supportive environment. An organization's support base may alter at the onset and intensify the process parallel with the types of violence they use. Put differently, the process of radicalization can be affected by the interplay between the organization and its adherents. That is to say that an alteration in the nature of aggressive behaviors perpetrated by the organization may lead to a transformation in the mentality of adherents towards long-term and persistent violent activities. In the event that an entity engages in minor acts of violence, its constituency may limit its attention to nonviolent methods of effecting transformation. In the event that an organization escalates its use of violent tactics, such as bombings, there is a possibility that its support base may undergo a transformation into a more radicalized faction that endorses the use of violent means to attain its objectives. The correlation between mobilization and adherents may engender the standardization of physical force, culminating in persistent and escalated manifestations of hostility. Hence, it is imperative for organizations to take into account the consequences of their actions on their adherents and the likelihood of provoking radicalization towards more aggressive methods of achieving transformation.

2.4. Selection Logic: Applying Relation Radicalization Framework in Somali Context

Somalia has undergone substantial political instability and conflict in recent decades, encompassing a protracted civil war, conflicts at various group levels, and the emergence of violent extremist factions. Examining Somalia through the lens of a contentious political paradigm presents a distinct avenue for comprehending the intricate dynamics of political strife and mobilization within an African nation that possesses a distinctive geographical position. Although the utilization of this concept is prevalent in explaining social and political mobilization of social movements in North America and Europe, and to a certain extent, movements in Latin America, its

[211] Edwards, B., and Gillham, P.F. (2013). Resource Mobilization Theory. In The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements (eds D.A. Snow, D. Della Porta, B. Klandermans, and D. McAdam).

application to political conflicts in other regions, particularly in Africa, has not been extensively investigated. Hence, it offers a unique opportunity to develop and evaluate this approach within the specific context of Somalia. The choice of Somalia as a case study provides valuable insights into the applicability of the contentious political paradigm within a non-western political context.

As previously stated, the political environment in Somalia is characterized by a plethora of armed factions and militant groups, in addition to substantial participation from regional and global actors vying for power and influence. Through an analysis of the conflict and mobilization dynamics in Somalia, this research aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relational drivers of political violence in the broader political context. It is to say that unlike social movements in North America and Europe, which often focus on specific issues not limited to such as civil rights or environmental protection, the conflict in Somalia is driven by complex power dynamics related to the desire for personal rule, high-level politicization in clan cleavages to attain political control and economic resources. This work thus can provide a nuanced understanding of these dynamics and their impact on political outcomes. Furthermore, this approach can offer new insights and perspectives in understanding and explaining the evolving dynamics of conflicts regardless of the context and scope of analysis, which has the potential to suggest a holistic approach to the security and terrorism perspectives in analyzing political conflicts. While these perspectives, i.e., security and terrorism studies, are undoubtedly crucial in understanding the security implications of conflict, they often overlook the underlying broader societal and political dynamics of political violence. By using this framework, we are able to provide a more holistic understanding of the conflict, including its socio-political drivers.

In conclusion, the methodology that we employ in this study offers a significant framework to comprehend the complex mechanisms of political mobilization and conflict dynamics in Somalia between 2002 and 2009. Selecting Somalia as a case study, one can question the predominant emphasis on security and terrorism lenses in assessing political crises in Somalia and offer a more comprehensive understanding of the conflict's underlying causes and dynamics, taking into account the wider social and political context in which mobilization of social movements take place. We have

demonstrated that models of explanation developed from the Western experience, which reflects the propensity of social movements towards violence, could potentially be used to account for the violent incidents that have taken place in Somalia or elsewhere. Therefore, we have demonstrated that an additional way of studying violence, distinct from terrorism and security studies, is applicable in the Somali setting. On the other hand, the framework has potential applications in various political contexts, including the radicalization of groups such as EOKA, the Red Army, Brigade Rose, and al-Qaida. This has been analyzed in a recent work by Alimi et al., who have demonstrated the utility of the relational radicalization perspective. We believe that examining a non-western political realm will make a valuable contribution to the scholarship on political violence literature and theory-building aspects of this emerging line of theoretical and conceptual frameworks, as demonstrated through the case of Somalia.

2.5. Research Design

The research methodology embraces the "different" approach within a case study. While the exploration of similarities holds significance within this realm of research, it does not constitute the primary focus of inquiry. The primary focus is on conducting a simultaneous comparison of differences. Alimi and colleagues have presented four distinct forms of dissimilarities that can be utilized for the purpose of conducting comparative analyses of radicalization, which include:

⇒ Particularities of Radicalization: This term pertains to accumulations of sub-mechanisms that make up broader mechanisms.[212]

⇒ Modalities of Radicalization**:** The relative significance or magnitude of individual sub-mechanisms within the radicalization process may vary. Hence, the allocation of gravity amidst various mechanisms holds paramount significance.[213]

[212] Bosi, Lorenzo & Demetriou, C. & Malthaner, Stefan. **Dynamics of Political Violence A Process-Oriented Perspective on Radicalization and the Escalation of Political Conflict**, (Routledge Press, 2014) Pg. 175

[213] Ibid, pg. 187

⇒ Varieties of Radicalization: The selection of sub-mechanisms is a critical step in the overall process, and the way in which they are combined to form a particular sequence is of equal significance.[214]

The relational radicalization perspective essentially privileges deductive reasoning; on the other hand, in a fuller understanding of the radicalization process, one must resort to inductive reasoning as well. Accordingly, the sources we have used for this study are varied. This study relied on official documents such as the U.N. Security Council Monitoring Group on Somalia and U.S. Foreign Affairs sub-committee hearings, secondary resources, books, articles, and online media. The study was conducted through rigorous two-month fieldwork in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia. The research involved conducting interviews with various important sources, including former members of the Union of Islamic Courts, politicians, and businessmen. Additionally, representatives of civil society organizations, activists, and witnesses of the period were also interviewed. Furthermore, while residing in the United States, I had the privilege of engaging with numerous individuals from Somali communities, which facilitated my ability to make meaningful contributions to my research. In the course of this investigation, individual interviews were conducted with approximately 40 participants from diverse backgrounds, both in Somalia and the United States.

As mentioned earlier, we are conducting such research that examines the political violence phenomenon through relational mechanisms within the contentious political framework. In this context, the questionnaire we drafted for this study was formulated under four categories, considering the relational mechanisms in question. By including various questions under each relational mechanism, we have tried to analyze and identify the stages of the emergence and the diffusion of violence on the part of the movement organization in question. In short, our aim is to demonstrate the mechanisms and processes through which the radicalization phenomenon emerges and intensifies its power on the part of the organization.

[214] Ibid, pg. 198

2.6. Contributions to the Literature

The main finding of this research is as follows: Radicalization dynamics exert their influence more within the two episodes of social interactions. The first episode refers to the "onset of radicalization," which can be traced back to the conflictual dynamics between the faction leaders, and other opposing forces, vis a vis the Islamists between 2002 and 2006, as the violence in targeted form took place through the mechanism of *retaliation* and added an ideological dimension to the conflict. It resulted in emboldening a network of dispersed individuals who later came to be known as al-Shabaab. The study regards the second episode as the most decisive factor. It begins with the Ethiopian occupation of Somalia between 2005 and 2009, which opened the floor for al-Shabaab to expand its tactical repertoire of action and modify its target preferences in a more institutionalized and aggressive manner which we labeled as "intensified radicalization."

There is a general tendency in political violence literature to give importance to the role of culture, motivations, ideas, and behavioral aspects of people, commonly labeled as" group at risk," to analyze the root causes of terrorism and how it ends.[215] On the other hand, this study embraces a different approach embedded in broader social movement literature. This study does not exclude characteristic features of individuals, the role of cognitive conditions, and changes in a physical environment that may or may not alter the movement activities in a broader contentious context. My argument is that radicalization essentially unfolds within a broader political environment which consists of different sets of actors ranging from the state's security apparatus, the role of international and regional actors, and other movements/groups at the sub-state level.[216] As stated above, the role of cognitive and environmental elements is not excluded; they gain salience when the relational mechanisms are at work through cycles of interactions among claim-making actors.

---

[215] Stickings, J; Abaida, M; Nikolaishvili, M; Bakrania, S; and Fisher, A. (2019) *Identifying Groups Vulnerable to Violent Extremism and Reducing Risks of Radicalization*. London: Department for International Development.

[216] McAdam, Doug, Tarrow, Sidney, and Tilly, Charles**. Dynamics of Contention**. (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2008)., pg. 11.

Another contribution of this work is attributed to the processual dimension of political violence. On the issue of consistency, Kalyvas stated:

> "….many civil war descriptions make no effort "to link one episode to another. Each case is treated as isolated in time and space. Nor do these writers attempt to explain the disproportion that marks what superficially appears to constitute the relationship of cause to affect."[217]

According to Kalyvas, there's a lack of coherence among various accounts with respect to the observed causal connections and events, thereby making them lack a rationale. On the contrary, the events are regarded as distinct incidents lacking any cohesive connection. The methodology described above may lead to an insufficient understanding of the fundamental mechanisms involved in a civil conflict, as it obscures any overarching patterns or tendencies that may exist across multiple occurrences. Without such connections, evaluating the impact of individuals or institutions on the conflict and forecasting future outcomes becomes challenging. The coherence and cohesion of accounts associated with civil wars are of utmost importance, as they must establish a logical connection between events and clarify their interrelationships. This approach would enable scholars to understand the complexities of civil wars better and help with advancing the development of more effective strategies for mitigating or resolving conflicts.[218]

Political violence as a discipline and social movement studies generally tend to distinguish the emergence and escalation phases of violent conflict from one another. While social movement literature focuses more on the emergence and persistence of political violence, a vast body of literature in the political violence study, on the other hand, gives much emphasis on the intensification or escalation of political violence.[219] There emerged a keen interest in developing tools to examine them separately as if these two phases are distinct from each other. The relational approach pays attention to the processual dimension of the radicalization process, which opens the floor, analyzing both the onset and escalation phases of the conflict in order to capture the

---

[217] Kalyvas, Stathis N. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics: Cambridge University Press, 2006) pg. 21.

[218] Ibid.

[219] Tilly, Charles. "Preface." Introduction. In *The Politics of Collective Violence*, xi-xii. Cambridge Studies in Contentious Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511819131.001.

continuity of a given process that is radicalization. Rather than treating political violence phenomena as a pre-given unit of analysis, such as individuals, organizations, or society, a relational framework embraces a processual and dynamic approach in the study of radicalization. Our contribution would be linking the onset phases of political violence to escalation phases in a comparative perspective by implementing a mechanism-based research strategy.

One of the main characteristic features of this line of research is its applicability to all sorts of collective violence – be it riots, uprisings, civil war, or movement protests. It does not treat political violence phenomena as sui generis, "a separate variety of politics, or the work of a distinctive class of people" that calls for different methods and conceptual tools than a contentious politics paradigm. This work moves away from an approach that tends to give particular emphasis on the individuals prone to violence in nature. These culturally/ideologically oriented explanations seek correlations between specific cultural forms and their proximity to resort to violence. In this work, primary attention is given to the processual dimension and evolving nature of political violence from the relational perspective. Radicalization, therefore, at the onset and escalation phases unfolds through several contentions interactions and tends to privilege the meso-level of analysis rather than prioritizing "group at risk" people. This analysis centers on mechanisms that operate and exert their influence at the group/organization level rather than studying the radicalization process in a conflict environment at a macro level or a micro level. While the relational radicalization perspective does not reject the effects of micro and macro developments on the process of radicalization, these influences rise and fall within the context of the organization,[220], which links the national and societal cleavages, such as state failure and clan dynamics, with the individual-level motivations.[221] Breakdown of authority creates some incentives for individuals to join organizations or be part of existing ones. Additionally, the inclination or incentive to join a group might differ from one person to another.

[220] Alimi, Eitan Y., Demetriou, Chares, Bosi, Lorenzo, *The Dynamics of Radicalization: A Relational and Comparative Perspective*. (New York, Oxford University Press, 2015). Pg. 18.

[221] Christia, Fotini**.** *Alliance Formation in Civil Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Pg. 5.

Courts as Social Movements

It is imperative to emphasize that this analysis does not pertain to the examination of social movements, nor does it delve into a theoretical discussion regarding the existence of social movements in Africa, vis-à-vis those in Europe or North America. Instead, the study focuses more on the movement's mobilization capacity, where they receive the necessary support in terms of finance and recruitment, but also social solidarity to sustain their mobilization. It is important to note that studying the evaluation of the UIC from a social movement perspective is not a widespread intellectual pursuit. This is exemplified by Tilly's emphasis on the historicity of social movements. However, there are works by non-Somalis and Somali scholars, namely Abdi Samatar, I. M. Lewis, Roland Marchal, John Abbink, Aisha Ahmad and Abdi Elmi emphasize the Courts as being a grass-roots movement that had enjoyed massive public support, including from business and religious communities when it appeared in the social arena in the early 2000s.[222] These works express the Courts' ability, to some extent, to create a unified national identity based on religion, where the only other general bases for social cohesion were clan and clan segment identity and allegiance to a powerful protector with force at his disposal.[223] With the help of Islamic facilities and business communities, the UIC provided vitally needed social services and aid such as education and health for the community.[224] It is argued that the UIC provided an alternative as a state-like structure to the international fragmentation of civil war,[225] its social bases include human and financial resources and cultural frameworks of contention and collective action,[226] its sustainability,[227] and the role it played in Somalia's social and political environment at best. Therefore it shares standard features with the grass-root movements in the emergent phase of collective action owing to the fact that the tensions and frustrations had directly threatened

---

222 Ahmad, Aisha. Jihad & Co.: *Black Markets and Islamist Power*. (New York, NY, United States of America: Oxford University Press), 2017.

223 Lewis, I.M. *A Modern History of the Somali: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*. (Boydell & Brewer, 2002)

224 Interview with a head of civil society organization in Mogadishu.

225 Ahmad, Aisha. "*Taliban and the Union of Islamic Courts: How They Changed the Game in Afghanistan and Somalia?*" Policy Perspectives 6, no. 2 (2009): 55-72. Pg. 56.

226 Marchal, R. "The Rise of a Jihadi Movement in a Country at War. Harakat al-Shabaab al Mujahidin in Somalia." (2011).

227 Tarrow, Sidney G. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics* (3rd ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Pg. 16.

individuals, families, and communities with the adverse developments in their surroundings, or at worst, in the absence or lack of state authority and anarchy.[228] Grass-root movements, in contrast to the mass and professional protest model, combine strong participatory orientations with low levels of formal structuration. Its existence depends on its members' willingness to participate, through which different combinations of ideological and solidaristic incentives can be encouraged.[229]

Mobilization and Protest Activity in Somalia

It is fair to say that the processes of formation and mobilization trajectories of the Sharia courts of Mogadishu share some characteristics with the protest activities of social movements in Europe and North America. The variations lie in the intensity of mechanisms, the diffusion of contention, and, most importantly, the ways in which how social protests are put into practice – that is, the action repertoire of protest. After all, political mobilization is based on the interaction between three sets of factors: grievances, organizational structure, and opportunity mechanism, among which the former, as Kriesi explained, constitutes the starting point:

> "An exogenous shock like the financial and economic crisis creates a tremendous amount of popular discontent, which constitutes a latent mobilization potential. It is unlikely, however, that the crisis creates such mobilization potentials from scratch. …. People with grievances seek to express them, and they do so by raising their voices or by exiting. They raise their voice to the extent that they are organized and have an opportunity to do so. In democratic societies, citizens have the right to vote, and they have the opportunity to express their grievances as voters."[230]

Social movements that seek to bring about social change in their respective communities should, in fact, be assessed in light of their particular social and political contexts. In Western societies, the means of expressing dissent are typically channeled

---

[228] Horton, L. (2013). Grassroots Movements. In *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements* (eds D.A. Snow, D. Della Porta, B. Klandermans, and D. McAdam). https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470674871.wbespm299

[229] Della Porta, Donatella, & Diani, Mario. *Social Movements: An Introduction*. (3rd Edition, Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2020), Pg. 323.

[230] Kriesi, Hanspeter. "Mobilization of Protest in the Age of Austerity." in *Street Politics in the Age of Austerity: From the Indignados to Occupy*, edited by Marcos Ancelovici et al., (Amsterdam University Press, 2016, pp. 67–90.) Pg. 2.

through established institutional channels, norms and practices. This implies that the institutional space reserved for the privileged, commonly referred to as the privileged platform for voicing complaints, pertains to the electoral domain and is accessible to the direct democratic platform wherever applicable. In democratic societies, when citizens perceive that their voices are not being adequately represented through the electoral or direct democratic processes or when they recognize that their votes do not have a meaningful impact, they may resort to participating in protests.[231] It does not mean, however, that protest culture, including that of making a claim based on an actual or felt grievance, petitions, and mobilization of people into the streets, is exclusively a part and making of Western political culture. The Sharia courts of Mogadishu, which emerged in the 1990s in Somalia, possess distinctive historical, political, and cultural characteristics. They have given rise to a highly dynamic manifestation of social mobilization and protest culture in a threat-inducing environment. Nevertheless, it is imperative to acknowledge that this phenomenon cannot be equated with the strict and formal parameters of political culture in Western or other areas.

The collapse of Somalia's political institutions in 1991 laid the groundwork for the establishment of indigenously rooted expressions of social protests in Mogadishu, commonly referred to as the Islamic courts. Operated at the neighborhood level, the experiment of Sharia courts was quite *sui generis* in many respects compared to the protest culture in Europe and North America. This initiative originated in need of security at the personnel and community levels as well as for law-and-order mechanisms from which the local people had been dramatically deprived. The emergence of these courts can be traced back to the early 1990s, during which they emerged at the local level to address grievances. In order to capture a wider understanding, it is essential to look at how this bottom-up initiative took place in the first place. The inception of this initiative can be traced back to the assembly of a group of conscientious individuals residing in Mogadishu. These individuals would convene periodically in communal venues, including mosques, with the objective of collectively formulating strategies to address the challenges they encountered. Their intention was to seek guidance and support from respected community elders and

[231] Ibid.

religious leaders. Their concerns are then passed on to the respective community leaders, and they make decisions accordingly.[232] Therefore, it is fair to stress that, for example, activities that are part of the protest culture, such as demonstrations, marches, and collecting signatures, if not the appearance, but the very essence, were at play in the case of Somalia. In a nutshell, these developments should be interpreted and evaluated against the background of Somalia's own institutional, religious, and cultural practices and context.

How did the formation of such mobilization strategies and neighborhood-based collective action become possible in the midst of the ongoing civil war? There are a few explanation models in the literature which put emphasis on the role of Islam, which has been an essential part of Somalia's cultural and societal pattern through which it facilitated a secure environment in the "stateless" society. Adherents of this model focus on the role of Islam in mobilizing peoples and societies in a collective struggle against what they view as unjust.[233] On the other hand, there are studies that concentrate on the alliance formation strategies within the framework of the contributions of business elites that are an integral part of the mobilization process. These discussions, however, are beyond the scope of this study and will be addressed briefly in the following pages.

Islamic Courts of Mogadishu

The UIC, more commonly known as the Union of Islamic Courts, came to the public scene in the year 2004 in the city of Mogadishu. Its formation was marked by the amalgamation of diverse Islamic courts, thereby solidifying its presence and influence. The genesis of this formation can be attributed to the innate desire of the common people for substantial societal transformations and progressions within their respective communities. In his article, John Abbink, for instance, defines the UIC as a social-religious movement with a political program and locates it within broader social movement theory. He stresses the courts' responsive role regarding the needs among Somalis for public order and safety that was lacking since the breakdown of authority

[232] Interview with a former member of the UIC in Mogadishu.
[233] Visit Ahmad Ibrahim's work on Sharia Courts.

in 1991, which consequently paved the way for serious impedimentum for business and progress of all kinds. Therefore, he contradicts the views that consider the UIC from its beginning as a front for radical Islam.[234] Regarding Lewis' perspective, he emphasizes the importance of Islam as a significant foundation for broader communal connections or a unifying force that extend beyond clan affiliations. Islam, in fact, has traditionally played a central role in Somali society but has always remained embedded in cultural-traditional practices. It is fair to say that both clan and Islamic factors can inspire political and military action among Somalis in such a way that while Islam has been increasingly salient in facing external threats and challenges, clan dynamics play a major role in intra-clan dynamics in Somalia.[235] There have been instances in Somali history when both of these identities have overlapped. The line between the two has become less clear, as evidenced by the example of Ahmed Gurey, who rallied dispersed Somali tribes to defend against the Ethiopian threat during the 16th century.[236] Furthermore, Mohamed Abdullah Hassan successfully unified multiple Somali tribes and led a prolonged military campaign spanning two decades against colonial powers during the latter half of the 19th century.[237] In conclusion, Islam and clan phenomena serve as the "twin pillars" upon which Somali culture is built, and no organization is an exception to this rule in Somalia.[238]

In many respects, the resurgence of religion in Somalia was not connected to any theological or ideological developments that were taking place at the time. Instead, it was connected to the core tenants of Islam, which are honesty and social justice, despite the fact that some of the interpretations and practices have entered the public debate and displayed contradictories to the overall religious fabric of the society. Therefore, Muslim clerics and businessmen collaborated in promoting the restoration

---

234 Abbink, Jon. "The Union of Islamic Courts: The Ebb and Flow of a Somali Islamist Movement" in Movers and Shakers: Social Movements in Africa, (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2008) doi: https://doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004180130.i-260.32

235 Menkhaus, Kenneth. "Political Islam in Somalia," Middle East Policy 9, no. 1 (2002): 109-123. https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-4967.00045.

236 Tasci, Ufuk Necat. "Ahmad Gurey: A Somali Muslim Ruler Who Repelled Portuguese Invasions." Accessed November 5, 2022. https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/ahmad-gurey-a-somali-muslim-ruler-who-repelled-portuguese-invasions-33121.

237 Hess, Robert L. "The 'Mad Mullah' and Northern Somalia." The Journal of African History 5, no. 3 (1964): 415–33. doi:10.1017/S0021853700005107.

238 Grant, Andrew. "*Clan Identity and Islamic Identity in Somalia: An Examination of Non-State Armed Groups in Regional and Sub-Regional Context*," in *Clan and Islamic Identities in Somali Society*, ed. David Last, and Anthony Seaboyer (Toronto: Defense R&D Canada, 2011), 34-43.

of law and public order by establishing Sharia Courts with their own paid militias.[239] This study also considers the Union of Islamic Courts as a social movement – concerning social movement literature in general and works of John Abbink and others in particular.[240]

Conclusion

In the first section of the study, we emphasized the analytical connection between social movement studies and contentious politics and the relational radicalization perspective on the other. We argued that collective political violence unfolds due to claim-making processes on the part of movement organizations in a contentious political setting. In addition, we further argued that radicalization occurs during the initiation and escalation phases as a consequence of the aforementioned contentious interactions.

In the following chapters, we introduced causal mechanisms through which radicalization processes at the onset and escalation phases will be explained. Alimi et al. presented a tripartite classification of mechanisms encompassing relational, cognitive, and environmental factors. The primary role is attributed to the former in relation to the cognitive and environmental mechanisms, which serve to increase the salience of the latter in connection to the relational mechanism.

In the second section of the research, we provided a detailed account of the main approaches and trends in radicalization studies. We also explained the methodological elements of the mechanism-based research technique, which focuses on process-tracing logic. The research design is primarily concerned with comparing dissimilarities with similarities simultaneously. Alimi et al. suggest four forms of dissimilarities, including particularities, modalities, varieties, and degrees of radicalization, which will be utilized for comparative analysis. This section also provided a theoretical foundation for the research and underscores the importance of a process-based approach to understanding radicalization. The process-tracing logic,

---

239 Lewis, I.M. *A Modern History of the Somali: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*. Boydell & Brewer, 2002. Pg.297.

240 Abbink, Jon. "The Union of Islamic Courts: The Ebb and Flow of a Somali Islamist Movement". In *Movers and Shakers: Social Movements in Africa*, (Leiden: Brill, 2008) Pg. 87 – 113.

in particular, is a valuable method for analyzing how the mechanisms of radicalization unfolded over time and how they interacted with other factors to produce different outcomes in a context-dependent environment.

CHAPTER III

THE RADICALIZATION PROCESSES OF HARAKAT AL-SHABAAB AL-MUJAHEDEEN (2001 – 2009)

In this section, we briefly overviewed the main political developments prior to the outbreak of the Somali civil war and the unfolding local developments which led to the disintegration of state institutions and the following episodes. Furthermore, in the following pages, a substantial amount of emphasis is placed on power struggles at the local level, which was frequently aggravated by external interferences. This section also discussed diplomatic efforts and local formulations designed to address and confront these challenges, which the Union of Islamic Courts ultimately overcome.

The distribution of power underwent a substantial transformation during the post-civil war era in southern Somalia. While the influence of national political elites, including General Aided and Ali Mahdi, were declining, new local power structures emerged. In the first phase of the civil war, episodes of coordinated destruction took place between the forces loyal to President Siad Barre and the rebellious forces in the North, which ultimately resulted in the latter's breakaway from Mogadishu. With regard to power distribution, furthermore, the power play between Ali Mahdi and Aided, the two most prominent figures of the USC leadership, had significant implications for the distribution of power within the region. In other words, when the first phase of the civil war ended, the scale of the conflict shifted into competition over Mogadishu. These sporadic power struggles paved the way for the *de facto* rule of fragmented and protracted Warlordism. It suggests that while their authority was waning, new power circles emerged out of the power vacuum that continued until the rise of the UIC in 2006.

Map 1. Political Map of Somalia

3.1. Social and Historical Dynamics: 1991 – 2001

Starting from the early 1990s, a series of exclusive yet interconnected local developments unfolded and played a crucial role in shaping Somalia's recent political history. Following the ouster of President Barre, the capital witnessed a tragic power display between the forces loyal to Ali Mahdi and General Aided on the other. These prominent figures established authority over specific neighborhoods and asserted their political power by setting up numerous checkpoints across the roadways and strategic intersections, which were supervised by their local militias.

The second significant advancement pertained to the implementation of reconciliation and peacemaking initiatives among the conflicting parties. In pursuit of this objective, numerous peace conferences have been convened outside Somalia under the auspices of both regional and international brokers. However, none of the peace processes delivered a peace settlement among the warring parties. It was only the Arta Peace Conference in 1999 that led to the formation of the Transitional National Government in Djibouti. The new government was constituted by different segments of society ranging from members of civil society, Islamic courts and Islamists, intellectuals, and women's organizations. Despite its diverse composition, the TNG has encountered significant challenges in establishing political authority in the capital, Mogadishu, and its sphere of power has only been limited to a few neighborhoods. This was primarily due to the lack of political support from the major faction leaders sidelined from the negotiation process.[241] Seizing the authority vacuum in the capital as an opportunity to advance its geo-political power play in the Horn, Ethiopia played a leading role in the formation of an opposition group which was later known as the SSRS. This newly formed opposition was none other than the faction leaders but was not limited to those who were excluded in the political settlement. Having been modified, the SSRS evolved into the Transitional Federal Government after two-year-long discussions in Kenya. The TFG, like its successor, failed to galvanize popular support and received only tepid backing from the international community after the Union of Islamic Courts ascended to the national arena.

[241] Interview with a former Somali MP in Mogadishu.

The third local development refers to culturally-rooted innovations embedded in the interpretations of Islamic beliefs and practices and Somali customary law. Many scholars regarded Islamic courts as a practical response to community-level insecurity and injustices that were immensely lacking in the civil war environment.[242] More explicitly, the Islamic court system was a combination of customary law known as xeer and Islamic law, through which religious authorities took decisions. This initiative attracted the support of clan elders and was backed by some members of the business community and had strong public support. It was an expression of organic forms of local governance grounded in the practices, concepts, and discourses of the historically rooted Islamic tradition of the community from which the courts emerged.[243] Mogadishu's pre-existing network of Islamic courts turned into a collective structure in 2004, which evolved into a proto-state after they defeated the Warlords alliance known as the ARPCT in June 2006. Claiming to be at once fed up with polluting warlord shenanigans and inspired and tightly held together by an Islamic zeitgeist rather than kin loyalty or hunger for egotistical glory through personal rule, the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) changed immediate history.[244] The Courts named themselves the Supreme Council of Islamic Courts and rapidly expanded its territories across the southern part of Somalia until the Ethiopian occupation of Somalia in late December 2006. It was in this occupation context that al-Shabaab was transformed into a structural organization, recruiting foreign fighters, including that of the Somali diaspora, thus leading to the creation of the organization.[245] At the same time, the group gained territorial control by filling the areas that the UIC forces and Ethiopian military left.

Aggressive military tactics used by the Ethiopian army, as Ken Menkhaus argued, pushed a network of Islamist groups into the institutional structure and aided its recruitment.[246] In some cases, members of an organization tend to get closer when facing repression from external threats, such as the case with the al-Jamaa al-

---

[242] Interview with members of civil society groups in Mogadishu.

[243] Ibrahim, Ahmed. *The Sharia Courts of Mogadishu: Beyond "African Islam" and "Islamic Law*"" (2018). CUNY Academic Works. https://academicworks.cuny.edu/gc_etds/2520

[244] Samatar, Ahmed I. (2008) "*The Porcupine Dilemma: Governance and Transition in Somalia*," Bildhaan: An International Journal of Somali Studies: Vol. 7, Article 6. 6

[245] Pape, Robert A. Pape, Robert A. *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014., https://doi.org/10.1604/9780801431340.

[246] Ken Menkhaus. "*Somalia: 'They Created a Desert and Called it Peace(building*)'", Review of African Political Economy, (2009) 36:120, 223-233, DOI: 10.1080/03056240903083136

Islamiyah and al-Jihad in Egypt.[247] The external threat might refer to opposing groups in a context in which insurgency or riot takes place, or it may be well related to foreign forces. Occupation context provided the conditions in which the al-Shabaab network exploited and enjoyed the opportunity to access various funds and recruited fighters, including foreigners, which in turn contributed to the group's institutionalization process. It is tellingly critical, as Mueller stated that it was after Ayrow's death that a number of foreign fighters who had joined al-Shabaab in the previous year began integrating into the leadership structure. Ahmed Godane emerged as the new emir of the organization. He further stated that "the long-term consequences of the removal of Ayrow and rise to power of Godane were reflected in tactical and targeting choices that caused some tension within the organization."[248]

It is noteworthy to mention that a group of Afghanistan returnees constituted the backbone of this militant organization. Their very initial formation can be traced back to indiscriminate violent attacks orchestrated by faction leaders during the years 2002–2005, when they targeted Islamists and other opposing individuals. They were pursuing and advocating for their own agenda, which was not in opposition to the broader US counter-terrorism initiative in the Horn region. These certain individuals exaggerated local conditions to attract financial support and misused US assistance to advance their political interests in the country.[249] However, as the rank-and-file organization rapidly expanded in 2007– 2008, there were new recruits consisting of clan fighters, unemployed youth, nationalists, and fortune seekers, even coopting new leaders[250], which caused internal fighting and defections within the group.

This study argues that the radicalization of the al-Shabaab is best understood within the relational framework that took place in local political dynamics. Notwithstanding, it should be noted that the influence of global events on the internal developments in Somalia is not to be overlooked. On the contrary, demonstrating how external influences and interventions can influence and shape the local political environment

247 Malthaner, Stefan. *Mobilizing the Faithful: Militant Islamist Groups and Their. Constituencies* (Campus Verlag, 2011)

248 Mueller, Jason. "*The Evolution of Political Violence: The Case of Somalia's Al-Shabaab*." Terrorism and Political Violence. (2016). 30. 1-26. 10.1080/09546553.2016.1165213.

249 Interview with a Somali politician in Mogadishu.

250 Hansen, Stig Jarle. *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group*. (London: Hurst and Company, 2016.), Pg.9.

gravely is, in fact, an integral part of this study. The group's global jihadist discourse began to unfold and embolden within the relational radicalization framework, which traced back to the prior formation of the ARPCT on the one hand and the Ethiopian occupation on the other. The establishment of a counter-terrorism alliance by the Warlords was presented in a manner that led the Somali population to perceive it as a direct challenge to Islam and Somali-Muslim culture. Consequently, this development contributed to the emergence of a new ideological divide within the heavily militarized local context.[251]

There were other indigenous religious movements characterized by Salafism with national orientation represented most notably by Al-Ittihad Al-Islami (AIAI) movement. The group came into being in the early 1980s through the merger of Salafi groups that enjoyed popularity in the 70s. AIAI operated actively in providing social and educational services thanks to their connections to the larger Arab world.[252] The movement dissolved after several attacks by the Ethiopian army in the Gedo region of Somalia and left militant activism in 1997. During the early 90s, the group tried to make its inroad to Kismayo, a lucrative coastal town and conflicted with Abdullahi Yusuf of the Somali Salvation Democratic Front in Bosaso. The movement was disintegrated by a joint effort of Abdullahi Yusuf's militias and the Ethiopian forces, which led to its dissolution in 1997. Many of its supporters went into charity activities and security areas, and some joined Sharia courts. In addition, there were Islamic charity movements like the al-Islah movement that received funding from Gulf and Saudi Arabia to provide social services, including education and healthcare. Religion has historically been of great significance to Somali society, yet, it has always been firmly embedded in cultural and traditional practices. It explains the logic of why Islamic social activities became highly popular among citizens and appeared as the only credible institution left when the state institutions collapsed.

The fourth development is closely related to the 9/11 terrorist attacks and their relevance to the counter-terrorism initiatives in Somalia. The principal concern for the United States since 9/11 has been the fear that Somalia might become a safe haven for al-Qaeda to launch attacks in the region and even conceivably against the U.S.

[251] Interview with a Somali diplomat in Mogadishu.
[252] Interview with a religious cleric in Mogadishu.

homeland.[253] The US support for the ARPCT added a religious dimension to the local conflicts and facilitated a new ideological boundary across social cleavages. International efforts to prevent Somalia from becoming a safe haven for al-Qaida alienated large segments of society, polarized diverse Islamist movements into moderate and extremist camps, and propelled indigenous Salafi jihadists group to power.[254] Ethiopia's occupation of Somalia faced unchallenged resistance in open warfare against hundreds of undisciplined youngsters within the first weeks of occupation. However, the real struggle began in Mogadishu's neighborhoods in guerilla-style attacks until the Ethiopian army withdrew from Somalia. Ethiopia's military response created strong grievances and triggered a severe backlash among Somalis at home and abroad. Al-Shabaab built itself from the legacy of the Courts; the lack of its structural integrity facilitated a power vacuum filled by the group. From that on, Al-Shabaab's violent tactics turned out to be more extreme and varied in target selection, the one that transcends national borders.

In his book *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold. War and the Roots of Terror***,** Mahmoud Mamdani undertakes a deconstruction of the complex and often uneasy relationship between politics and religion. He emphasizes the critical significance of distinguishing between culture and politics in this context. He claimed that greater historical interactions, rather than focusing simply on Islam, from which bin Laden and al-Qaeda emerged, should be considered.[255] Kriesi's comparative study yielded a comparable result. In his comparative analysis titled *New Social Movements in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis*, he argued that the increase in protests was a result of the involvement of professional social movement organizations (SMOs), external allies, and terrorist groups rather than being the cause of it.[256] Based on the logical progression of their argument, it could be contended that the manifestation of violent movements in Somalia, as politico-military entities, as well as their violent activism, are the consequences of broader historical events within the contentious political landscape rather than being the root cause. The relational arena

[253] National Commission on Terrorist Attacks. *The 9/11 Commission Report*. WW Norton, 2004.

[254] Bruton, Bronwyn. "In the Quicksands of Somalia: Where Doing Less Helps More." Foreign Affairs 88, no. 6 (2009): 79–94. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20699717.

[255] Mamdani, Mahmood. *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror*. (New York: Three Leaves Press, 2005)

[256] Kriesi, Hanspeter, Ruud Koopmans, et al. *New Social Movements in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995) Pg. 131.

in which our study sits, therefore, evaluates the political violence phenomena within a broader political context in which a variety of warning actors, alliances, broken negotiations, and bargains that display their power through sub-mechanisms have some degree of influence over one another. In this sense, it is a dynamic and relational process rather than static and unilateral. Terrorism, therefore, as a form of violent tactic, is not a *sui generis* phenomenon. It occurs as a continuation of contentious political struggle between social movements and their political rivals, of which a possible outcome is a radicalization.

In conclusion, prolonged violent power struggles and political crises between faction leaders on the one hand and a dozen of failed peace initiatives on the other hand, further disappointed the peaceful environment. They exacerbated the level of insecurity and vigilantism in most of southern Somalia. It was in this context that the Sharia courts appeared as a grass-roots response to deal with the criminal activities of young marauders known as *mooryaans* at the community level. The Court's success in dealing with criminal activities reached such a level that their popularity and growing influence had begun to encroach upon the authority of the warlords. Indiscriminate violent tactics employed by the CIA-backed warlords not only provoked the facilitation of the emergence of a military force known as al-Shabaab, made the network more visible before the public but also led to the mobilization of various Islamists, including the minority Shabaab militias under the banner of the UIC. Heavy clashes broke out between the ARPCT and the Courts Union in January 2006, which ended with the Courts' victory in June 2006. The Courts' growing power beyond Mogadishu not only threatened Baidoa-based TFG but also unnerved their principal backer, Ethiopia.[257] The Arab League took the initiative to break a deal between the two parties in Sudan between June 2006 and September 2006, which failed to bring a settlement among the parties.

3.1.1. The disintegration of the Somali State

The Ogaden War that took place between Somalia and Ethiopia in 1977–1978 came to an end with Somalia's defeat, which paved the way for a broad variety of public

[257] Cedric Barnes & Harun Hassan (2007) *The Rise and Fall of Mogadishu's Islamic Courts*, Journal of Eastern *African* Studies, 1:2, 151-160, DOI: 10.1080/17531050701452382

criticism and demonstrations across the country during the 1970s and 1980s. In 1978, a faction of army officers led by Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf, who was based in the northern region of the country, made an attempt to overthrow President Barre following a series of internal developments. During the 1977-78 conflict, some 500,000 individuals were displaced and sought refuge elsewhere.[258] It has been claimed that a group of people benefited financially from the distribution and misappropriation of foreign aid intended for these refugees. Ethiopian support was channeled to form the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF), and they served as the head of the Puntland administration with the backing of the former.[259] General Barre responded with heavy measures in the form of collective punishment targeted at the entire sub-clan. In 1981, a collective of individuals comprising students, entrepreneurs, civil society advocates, and former political figures hailing from the Northern parts of the country residing in the United Kingdom founded the "Somali National Movement in London."

The breakdown of the bipolar global power structure subsequent to the conclusion of the Cold War was followed by the fragmentation of the Somali nation-state and its central institutions in the year 1991. In the late 1980s, a large number of clan-based militant organizations emerged, which played a crucial role in the toppling of President Barre. Medani stated that by 1991 the tendency was for "every major Somali clan to form its own militia movement.[260] These groups included the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF), Somalia Patriotic Movement (SPM), United Somali Congress (USC), and Somalia National Movement (SNM). They challenged the state's exclusive control over the use of force and orchestrated a rebellion aimed at overthrowing the administration led by President Siad Barre. Following the ousting of Siad Barre and his subsequent departure from the country in January 1991, the absence of a unified leadership among the existing factions hindered the formation of a centralized authority, not a strict sense, that could effectively maintain functional institutions. Consequently, state institutions were dismantled, leading to the breakdown of law enforcement and judicial systems.

---

258 Ethiopia/Ogaden 1948-present. (2001, May 6). https://uca.edu/politicalscience/dadm-project/sub-saharan-africa-region/69-ethiopiaogaden-1948-present/

259 Reno, William. *Somalia And Survival in The Shadow of The Global Economy*. Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, QEH Working Papers. (2003). Pg.35.

260 Medani, Khalid Mustafa. *Black Markets and Militants: Informal Networks in the Middle East and Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021. doi:10.1017/9781108961011.

The primary focus of competition among the major armed factions has been to establish dominance over one another, whereas smaller groups have been engaged in conflict to ensure their survival. In January 1991, the SNM was able to gain control of North-Western Somalia, which included Hargeisa and other cities. Subsequently, the SNM leadership concentrated on its local problems largely through the efforts of the traditional clan elders in the SNM national congress, which took place in May 1991 and declared its independence from the south, taking the title 'Somaliland Republic.'[261] Lewis and others give much emphasis on the clan structure and the interplay between them in explaining how a political settlement was established in the North. In contrast, Professor Samatar presents a distinct perspective regarding this issue, contending that the success of the Boromo conference in 1993 can be attributed to the leadership of Ibrahim Egal and his political astuteness. He furthermore gives significant emphasis on Egal's leadership approach, the resources at his disposal, and his status as Somalia's final prime minister during the period spanning 1967 to 1969.[262]

The United Somali Congress played a pivotal role in the toppling of the Barre government on January 26, 1991, subsequent to its establishment in 1987. However, the group was unable to achieve a political resolution with its adversaries. Following the collapse of Barre's government, intense armed conflict ensued in the city of Mogadishu. This "key shift," as Kapteijns argues, represents the USC leadership intentionally arming neighbors against other clans portrayed as outsiders based on a particular construction of the group identities divided as "them (as in previous governments remnants vs. us" – allochthonous… outsiders with no rights to reside in the capital.[263] However, perspectives that exclusively analyze conflict dynamics through categorical or ethnic identities fall far short of providing a comprehensive framework. It is imperative to stress that it was not a clan (or clans) identity itself that perpetrated such violent actions but rather the politicization of clannism at the hands of political leaders who mobilized and organized ordinary people to commit violence

[261] Lewis, I. M. *Understanding Somalia, and Somaliland: Culture, History, Society*. (Columbia University Press, November 8, 2011)

[262] Samatar, I. Abdi. *Framing Somalia: Beyond Africa's Merchants of Misery* (Red Sea Press: U.S. 2022) pg. 36

[263] Kapteijns, Lidwien. *Clan Cleansing in Somalia: The Ruinous Legacy of 1991*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013)

in the name of the clan.[264] They were driven chiefly by greed, such as grabbing one's property and material resources, and faction leaders lost the ability to control.[265]

Violence sometimes occurs in the course of power struggles within categories and for control over the public representation of those categories.[266] After 1991, a split occurred within the USC, and the conflict in the national arena shifted to the competition faction leaders. They managed to mobilize their constituencies in their political power struggle, in which clan identity became an instrument for mobilization.[267] Ali Mahdi, a businessman, and member of the USC, declared himself interim president. This move faced a furious objection from General Mohamed Farah Aidid, leader of another faction of the USC. The rift between the two increasingly widened as they fought for control over state[268] for nearly four months without respite.[269] What followed was that hunger, famine, and deaths ravaged the country and deteriorated the humanitarian situation immensely.

The collapse of Barre`s rule increased the intensity of the already ongoing power struggle and competition for power between militias. In the following years in 1992 and 1993, rival militias used food as a weapon against the population, causing widespread starvation. The famine stands out as something of significance not only in the history of the country but also in Africa during the 21st century. Tragically, it resulted in the loss of nearly half a million lives.[270] The famine was also exacerbated by severe drought, triggering a series of partially successful international humanitarian followed by military interventions. It finally produced a new round of militia competition and protection rackets, which came basically from the inflow of

---

264 Afyare Abdi Elmi. *Understanding the Somalia Conflagration: Identity, Islam, and Peacebuilding*. (London: Pluto Press. 2010), Pg.154

265 Menkhaus, Ken. The Journal of Modern African Studies, vol. 52, no. 4, Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp. 679–81, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43302128.

266 Tilly, Charles. *The Politics of Collective Violence*. Cambridge Studies in Contentious Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511819131.

267 Elmi, Afyare Abdi, and Abdullahi Barise. "The Somali Conflict: Root Causes, Obstacles, and Peace-building Strategies." African Security Review, vol. 15, no. 1, Informa UK Limited, Jan. 2006, pp. 32–54. Crossref, https://doi.org/10.1080/10246029.2006.9627386.

268 Bamfo, Napoleon A. "*Ethiopia's Invasion of Somalia in 2006: Motives and Lessons Learned*". African Journal of Political Science and International Relations 4 (2010): 055-065.

269 Interview with a Somali academician in Mogadishu.

270 UN "United Nations Operation in Somalia (Unisom II) - Background (Full Text)," Un.org, 2019. https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/past/unosom2backgr2.html.

international aid[271] and intervention which subsequently paved the way for a new beginning within Somalia's civil war period. While the intensity of civil war declined in 1992, constant fighting among the faction leaders and criminal gangs had begun so did the humanitarian disasters.

3.1.2. Operation Restore Hope and the UN Mission in Somalia: 1992 – 1994

What started initially as an internal war between main faction leaders and groups soon gained a wider dimension with the involvement of the United Nations in response to the dire humanitarian situation. Nearly 300,000 people starved to death caused by sectarian politics and not by drought alone. By August 1992, Somali refugees that had settled in neighboring countries were estimated at 500,000 in Ethiopia, 300,000 in Kenya, 65,000 in Yemen, 15,000 in Djibouti, and about 100,000 in Europe. The epicenter of that famine was in Bay, one of the country's most productive agricultural regions, and starvation was induced by warlords who used food as a weapon against farmers and pastoralists.[272] A joint delegation from the U.N. arrived in Mogadishu in 1992 and held intensive negotiations with both interim President Ali Mahdi and General Aidid which both parties signed an agreement on the implementation of a ceasefire. It also included the acceptance of UN humanitarian involvement in Mogadishu. The first elements of the Unified Task Force (UNITAF), spearheaded by the United States, were deployed in Mogadishu on 9 December 1992. In the following weeks, UNITAF forces expanded their operations to significant relief centers in Somalia. UNITAF's principal goal was to establish in Somalia a secure environment for urgent humanitarian assistance. However, the US-led international community withdrew from Somalia subsequent to a confrontation between US rangers and General Aided's loyal militias, which resulted in the loss of numerous US soldiers and thousands of Aided militants.

The United States and the United Nations have played a substantial role in shaping Somalia's political, economic, and security infrastructure, indicating their considerable impact on the region. This was also the case when the Peace Keeping

[271] de Waal, Alex. Somalia's Disassembled State: Clan Unit Formation and the Political Marketplace, Conflict, Security & Development, (2020) 20:5, 561-585, DOI: 10.1080/14678802.2020.1820160

[272] Samatar, Abdi Ismail. Genocidal politics and the Somali famine https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2011/7/30/genocidal-politics-and-the-somali-famine

mission withdrew its forces from Somalia following the disastrous "Black Hawk Down" incident in October 1993. The absence of the international community's interest exaggerated the suitable environment for lawful activities committed by factions to become widespread in the absence of functioning political order; on the other hand, it accelerated intra-clan competition as well.

3.1.3. Strategies for Peace and Peace Initiatives

The peacebuilding agenda in Somalia has not always yielded constructive outcomes despite the implementation of extensive external interventions, whether initiated regionally or internationally. In certain instances, external entities pursue their own interests, thereby exacerbating the prolongation of a crisis. It had become more salient in cases when regional countries played a proxy-wars in Somalia and maintained patron-client relations with Somali elites. Many analysts, for instance, draw attention to the role of Ethiopia as a destabilizing factor in Somali politics.[273]

Since the collapse of institutions in 1991, a dozen reconciliation conferences have been conducted outside the country, just five of which were backed by the international community. Yet they have all failed. None of them succeeded in bringing stability and peace to Somalia. There are, however, a few notable reconciliation processes, among them are Ethiopia's Sodore Process in 1996, Egypt's Cairo Process in 1997, and Ethiopia's "buildings block" plan in 1998. Building block strategy was a federative approach to political reconstruction via international support to existing Somali authorities, such as the governments of Somaliland and Puntland, the administration of the Hiiran region, and the Supreme Governing Council set up by the Rahanweyne Resistance Army in the Bay and Bakool regions. The proposal advocated for a decentralized state model that recognizes the autonomy of regions like Somaliland and Puntland, allowing them to exercise their governing authority and prevent the concentration of power. According to this approach, it is suggested that creating peace at the local level referring to the federal system is a crucial step towards achieving peace at the national level.

[273] What Ethiopia's crisis means for Somalia | Brookings. (2017, November 28). Brookings. https://www.brookings.edu/articles/what-ethiopias-crisis-means-for-somalia/

Somalia adopted a peace-making strategy that involved a centralized, top-down approach, which was implemented during the UN-sponsored Addis Ababa Conferences and subsequently during the Ethiopian-sponsored Sodere talks in 1996. The approach taken was to prioritize the inclusion of various factions and warlords in the process, which could be described as a top-down approach. The reasoning behind it was that they were the individuals who had their boots on the ground. According to Ken Menkhaus, Somalia experienced a prolonged phase of "neither war nor peace" from 1995 to 2006, characterized by sporadic armed clashes, low-intensity war, and ongoing insecurity. It is important to recognize the various peace initiatives that have taken place at both local and national levels. Additionally, it is worth noting that local developments cannot be fully understood through the lens of conflictual terms alone.

Arta Peace Process in Djibouti: Formation of the TNG (1999 – 2004)

After dozens of failed peace plans, the Arta peace conference was the first bottom-up peace strategy that produced the Transitional National Government (TNG) hosted by Djibouti in 2000. In contrast to previous unsuccessful conferences, this particular endeavor marked the initial effort to incorporate a diverse range of stakeholders, including representatives from civil society, business leaders, Islamic scholars, traditional clan elders, and women's advocacy groups. However, it failed to incorporate the participation of warlords and faction leaders. Additionally, the Rahanweyne Resistance Army attended the conference but withdrew their support later. Individuals linked to Sharia courts and members of the al-Islah movement took part in the new government.[274] For instance, the chairman of the Joint Islamic Courts Council (2000) - created the first significant non-warlord-controlled and pan-Hawiye military force[275], Hassan Sheik Mohamed Abdi, had been elected a member of the 245-strong Transitional National Assembly[276] of which about %60 were said to be constituted of former members of Siyad's elected parliaments.[277]

[274] Islam and Somali Social Order | Conciliation Resources," www.c-r.org, accessed October 30, 2022, https://www.c-r.org/accord/islam-and-somali-social-order.

[275] Cedric Barnes & Harun Hassan. *The Rise and Fall of Mogadishu's Islamic Courts*, Journal of Eastern African Studies, 1:2, 151-160, (2007) DOI: 10.1080/17531050701452382

[276] The New Humanitarian | IRIN Interview with Islamic Courts Chairman Hassan Sheik Mohamed Abdi." The New Humanitarian, 24 Aug. 2000, www.thenewhumanitarian.org/fr/node/173678.

[277] Lewis, I. M. *Understanding Somalia, and Somaliland* (C. Hurst, 2008). pg. 82.

The international community, a loose coalition of Arab countries, and the IGAD members supported the Arta initiative. Although warlords' participation in the conference was welcomed, they would not have been given a leading role, nor were they considered ideal delegates. Ali Mahdi Mohamed, one of the main faction leaders from north Mogadishu, attended, but Hussein Aideed, a leading figure from southern Mogadishu, and Osman Atto refused to participate. Other warlords, including Mohammad Hirsi "Morgan," attended but later withdrew. Its objection resulted primarily from the redistribution of occupied lands and resources as well as the sense of a few powerful positions in the government he was offered. Ethiopia also partially resisted the conference considering it as a Djiboutian project and participated in the inauguration. Somaliland had also rejected the initiative, stating that it had no role in Somalia's problems.[278]Abdilaqasim Salad, who served as the minister of interior in Barre's government, was elected the new president of the national government. However, local political dynamics on the ground did not look promising for Abdilqasim's government since warlords who were controlling most of the capital either refused to participate or felt excluded from the process. In other words they turned become spoilers of peace. It is pointed out as one of the potential reasons as to why the TNG failed to expand its authority in the country.[279] One of the factions, for instance, had taken control of the region where Villa Somalia was located, which serves as the seat of the government's presidency. TNG's rule was limited to only a few streets in the capital and had never become even remotely functional and went unrecognized by most of the world.[280]

The Transitional National Government was involved with the Sharia court system, which became a key institution in the formation of governmental institutions, in particular security and justice sectors. However, the security situation deteriorated in Mogadishu when Sharia courts integrated with the TNG institutions. It was mostly due to the re-positioning of violent entrepreneurs engaged in the Mbagathi process. In a way, while the TNG struggled for internal and external legitimacy and recognition, especially after 9/11, the courts' popularity grew even more. The TNG's major

[278] The New Humanitarian "Somali Faction Leaders Boycott Talks." The New Humanitarian, 1 May 2000, www.thenewhumanitarian.org/report/14132/djibouti-somali-faction-leaders-boycott-talks.

[279] Interview with a former Somali MP in Mogadishu.

[280] Menkhaus, Ken. *Elite Bargains and Political Deals Project: Somalia Case Study*, (Stabilization Unit February 2018)

opposition came from Ethiopia, which viewed it as a Trojan horse for Arab and Islamic domination of the Horn. Ethiopia also accused the TNG of being a front for al-Qaida, especially after the 9/11 attacks, and of harboring radical Islamic elements in their ranks. The lack of widespread endorsement from the global community towards TNG can be attributed to the aforementioned factors. President Salad viewed the IGAD-led talks as an Ethiopian-orchestrated process with which shared by many Hawiye constituencies in Mogadishu, including Islamist groups. He further viewed it as an attempt to marginalize his government inside the country and international arena.

Mbagathi Peace Process in Kenya: Formation of the TFG (2001 – 2004)

Following the formation of the TNG in 2000, it swiftly gained recognition from Arab states, was admitted to the Arab League and the OIC, and took over Somalia's seat in the UN. This new situation pitted two major African powers, Ethiopia, and Egypt, who were already on very uneasy terms, on opposite sides. Without losing time, Ethiopia mobilized and engineered a group of militia leaders, mainly from Hawiye clans, who felt excluded from the Arta Process. Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi, initiated an anti-government meeting of all the groups who opposed the Arta Peace Process at the place called Awasa.[281] They announced the formation of the Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council" (SRRC) in Ethiopia in 2001. The SRRC claimed that the Arta process was flawed as not all Somalis were represented[282], although it was more broadly representative than past national reconciliation talks. The group also included Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf. It was an opposition group that mobilized against Salad's government. It later secured a national institutional body during the Mbagathi process. The SRRS did not only receive moral and diplomatic support in their new initiative but also a chain of arms supply to challenge the new government.[283]

---

281 Interview with a Somali diplomat in Mogadishu.

282 "Somali Warlords Form Unity Council." BBC News, 22 Mar. 2001, news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1235434.stm.

283 UN Security Council, Report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia pursuant to Security Council resolution 1425 (S/2003/223) Pg 20.

President Abdilqasim Salad's "the Government of Reconciliation" flew to Kenya and met his counterpart President Moi requesting him to help organize a reconciliation meeting between his government and the opposition group. Some of the factions who took part in the meetings later joined the Government. The Nairobi Process began in October 2002 under the patronage of the subregional Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) with international support, especially from the European Union and the United States. It started mainly to reconcile the TNG with its opponents. However, it rapidly became clear that Addis Ababa was steering the process toward the formation of an SRRC-dominated government. The reconciliation conference took place in the town of Eldoret in Kenya in October 2002. The Kenyan government sent an invitation to President Abdikassim as the leader of 65 members of the delegation of the TNG, similar to the invitation sent to the various factions. The invitation was specifically directed towards an individual rather than being extended to a larger audience or representing a national scope. The invitation was declined by the TNG accordingly. Kenyan diplomats meditated on the long peace talks with external assistance from the UN and Western states. However, Ethiopia ended up playing a decisive role in the Mbagathi talks in the end. After a series of power-sharing phases in order to constitute the new federal government, a deal was reached under external pressure, particularly from Ethiopia. The delegates selected a 275-MPs for transitional parliament in 2004 based on the 4.5 clan formula, such that each of the four-ethnic grouping and minority clans selected their own representatives to Parliament. Abdullahi Yusuf was selected as the new president of TFG of Somalia. The new president was no stranger to the new rulers in Addis Ababa. He had enjoyed Ethiopian support in his fight against Siyad Barre and again in the early 90s against the al-Ittihad movement headed by Sheikh Hasan Dahir Aweys in 1993.

The securitization of state-building is one external component that is occasionally emphasized in the Mbagathi peace process. Following the events of September 11, 2001, the United States began to perceive areas lacking effective governance, commonly referred to as "ungoverned space," as a probable site for the exploitation of terrorist organizations such as al-Qaida.[284] Hence prioritized state-building projects

[284] Bacon, Tricia, and Daisy Muibu, 'Al-Qaida and Al-Shabaab: A Resilient Alliance', in Michael Keating, and Matt Waldman (eds), War and Peace in Somalia: National Grievances, Local Conflict and Al-Shabaab (2019; online edn, Oxford Academic, 20 June 2019)

as part of their broader national security strategy. Some members of the TFG and faction leaders accused the Courts of harboring "terrorists" in their ranks and deemed their activities as terrorism to exploit the "terrorism agenda" for their own benefit. The Harmony project suggested that:

> "…weakly governed regions such as coastal Kenya, not failed states like Somalia, provide an environment more conducive to al-Qaida's activities. In Somalia, al-Qaida's members fell victim to many of the same challenges that plague Western interventions in the Horn. They were prone to extortion and betrayal, found themselves trapped in the middle of incomprehensible (to them) clan conflicts, faced suspicion from the indigenous population, had to overcome significant logistical constraints, and were subject to the constant risk of Western military interdiction."[285]

Southern Somalia's post-civil war yet contentious political environment roughly began to polarize along two major and not mutually exclusive camps between the SRRC and the Mogadishu Group in the early 2000s. These were the political groups actively supported by Ethiopia on the SRRC, and Hawiye dominated business elites and clan interests on the latter. It was partly due to the failed peace efforts of the late 1990s, which exposed a fault line of enduring significance between the two broad coalitions.[286] The Mogadishu group was based in the capital, centered mostly on Hawiye political leadership and their allies, centralist in orientation, with at least some ties to a rising Islamist movement, and increasingly suspicious of Ethiopia's meddling in Somalia's affairs. The SRRC had strong ties with Ethiopian, anti-Islamist sentiment, and an incline towards federalism. A number of opportunistic Mogadishu-based warlords floated back and forth between the two coalitions as well.[287] Ethiopia and its local allies viewed TNG as a Trojan horse of Arab countries, a continuation of regional rivalries reflected on local proxies and replicated by political cleavages inside the country and the tendency of regional powers to use local militias to advance their

---

[285] United States Military Academy. Combating Terrorism Center. Al-Qaida's (mis)adventures in the Horn of Africa [electronic resource] / Harmony project, Combating Terrorism Center at West Point US Military Academy, Combating Terrorism Center [West Point, N.Y.] 2007

[286] Menkhaus, Ken. Elite Bargains and Political Deals Project: Somalia Case Study, Stabilization Unit February 2018.

[287] Ibid.

goals.[288] Ethiopia and SRRC alliance further claimed that the TNG sheltered "Islamic terrorism." On the other hand, some members of the Islamic Courts viewed Abdullahi Yusuf as a Trojan horse for the Darod clan interest and a puppet of Ethiopia and accused Ethiopia of meddling in Somalia's internal affairs.[289] In the following years, local conflicts gained an "ideological" dimension with the announcement of the formation of the ARPCT.[290] During this period, competition among different factions and groups became more exaggerated with the outside interferences. It facilitated the widening ideological cleavages across boundaries.

According to Menkhaus, the unlikely tactical alliance between Hawiye clans and militia leaders on the one hand and Islamic activists on the other posed a challenge to the Mbagathi process elite bargain. He further claimed that they both prevented the TFG from relocating to the capital in 2005 and 2006.[291] Abdullahi Yusuf of TFG, on the other hand, was reluctant to locate in Mogadishu. He expressed his opinion that while there may be some concerns regarding security and order in the capital, Abdullahi Yusuf had a desire to avoid being controlled by the local elites in Mogadishu, where many of the armed ministers were based.[292]

3.1.4. Local Political Context: Warlordism, and the Sharia Courts

Christopher Clapham identifies three dimensions of Warlordism: personal rule, the monopolization of economic resources and markets, and the absolute need for coercion, expressing the lack of a hegemonic project. The theory of Warlordism, as proposed by Christopher Clapham, delves into the notion of non-state actors and their capacity to exercise governance through the application of force and coercion. Clapham's definition of Warlordism pertains to the formation of governing systems in situations where the state is either weak or absent, leading to the emergence of individuals or groups who take charge in the absence of a centralized authority.[293]

---

[288] International Crisis Group (ICG), Somalia: Countering Terrorism in a Failed State, 23 May 2002, available at: https://www.refworld.org/docid/3de77c924.html [accessed 30 October 2022]

[289] Interview with a former member of the UIC in Mogadishu.

[290] Interview with a Somali academician in Mogadishu

[291] Menkhaus, Ken. Elite Bargains and Political Deals Project: Somalia Case Study, Stabilization Unit February 2018.

[292] Menkhaus, Ken, The Crisis in Somalia: Tragedy in Five Acts. African Affairs, Vol. 106, Issue 424, pp. 357-390, 2007. http://dx.doi.org/adm040

[293] Christopher, Clapham, *African Guerrillas*. (Indiana University Press, 1998.)

When it comes to Somali context, Roland Marchal makes the distinction between political leaders with large constituencies beyond their evident support base, such as Ali Mahdi and Mohamed Aidid, and defecting military commanders with no political background, such as Omar Finish, Abdi Qaybdid, and others.[294] Their identification of Warlordism shed some light on the much of political realities that unfolded with Somalia's descent into civil war and the rise of faction leaders at neighboring levels consequently. Whilst national political figures vied for power on a national scale and exercised their authority over significant constituencies, less influential figures were considerably more engaged with the day-to-day activities at the local level. When the civil war started, militiamen emptied the Barre regime's arsenals and obtained guns on the black market. They further became more prominent during the international humanitarian intervention by depicting themselves as clan representatives – even though some clans did not have sultans or higher representatives – for the sake of getting access to foreign banking, getting a share from foreign aid, and serving as protecting rackets. In addition, these individuals who serve in militias often transform into faction leaders or in Tilly's words 'violent entrepreneurs of civil war' by recruiting young soldiers to monitor specific regions and seizing the military's arsenals.[295] They set up checkpoints on key roads, junctions, and busy intersections and demanded payment from those who traveled from one neighborhood to another either to meet relatives or to trade goods and services. This opportunism further facilitated opportunities for warlords to obtain more weapons and recruit more soldiers, known as *mooryaans,* and established what I call the *de facto* rule of fragmented Warlordism in Mogadishu. They were operating illegal "administrations" and collecting "taxes" at gunpoint, forcing people to submit their will.[296] Thanking the military capacity that they managed to establish through the years, the faction leaders constituted the most powerful entities in the country. TNG had failed partly because it did not include faction leaders.[297] International community-led peace initiatives and Ethiopia-supported reconciliation conferences included Somali

[294] Marchal, Roland. "Warlordism and Terrorism: How to Obscure an Already Confusing Crisis? The Case of Somalia." International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-) 83, no. 6 (2007): 1091–1106. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4541912.

[295] Masoud, Mark Fathi. "Restoring Sharia: Islamic Courts in a Shattered Somalia." Chapter. in *Sharia, inshallah: Finding God in Somali Legal Politics*, 159–207. (Cambridge Studies in Law and Society. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021). pg. 162.

[296] Interview with a local teacher in Mogadishu.

[297] Interview with a former member of the Islamic Courts in Mogadishu.

warlords and faction leaders. The inclusion of warlords and the leaders of various factions in peace strategies, such as the building-block approach and the bottom-up approach, was justified on the grounds that the peaceful environment would be much more precarious in the absence of these individuals due to the fact that they possess significant military and economic power. Otherwise, they would have acted as spoilers of peace – at the time, it was the predominant view by mainly external powers. Dr. Samatar's note on the inclusion of warlords in the peace process suggests that:

> … the warlords do not have the power to make peace, only the capacity to disrupt and destroy. Their power and influence solely depend on the dynamics of war. Therefore, they have no interest in a peaceful settlement because it would lead to the diminution of their power.[298]

Dr. Samatar's assessment was shared by many, including academics, intellectuals, civil society members, and members of Islamist groups who criticized the warlords for not having a collective outlook and peace vision but only self-interest. UN-led peace initiatives and dozens of regional conferences, including the Mbagathi conference that led to the formation of TFG in 2004, included warlords and factions' leaders. How did action leaders manage to take advantage of these situations and become important figures in the peace conferences? Stig Harle Johnson claimed that:

> "..outsiders' insistence on holding high profile, centralized peace conferences for Somalia gives warlords incentives to continue to fight. If they are disruptive enough to defeat peace proposal, they get included in talks, which subsequently increases their reputation and consolidates their position… thus the international community empowers the violent warlords."[299]

The Crisis Group argued that in the absence of external recognition and resources, warlords had seen their power dim, and a new business elite was on the rise simultaneously, including Hussein Aidid and General Morgan, who depended on

---

[298] Samatar, Said S. "The politics of poetry." Africa Report 38, no. 5 (1993): (accessed December 30, 2021).

[299] Hansen, Stig J. "Warlords and Peace Strategies: The Case of Somalia". Journal of Conflict Studies 23, no. 2 (February 21, 2006). Accessed May 5, 2023. https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/JCS/article/view/217.

external allies.[300] These faction leaders made alliances with one group to another, enough to sustain their power, and did not want to be dominated by other groups or alliances. They persuaded, most of the time, their own interest at the expense of a collective interest.

When the Somali state disintegrated, the southern part of the country went through localized efforts to the establishing rule of law. Governance and dispute management are reinforced by the authority of clan elders based on customary clan law or *xeer* and sharia system. Although the concept of sharia applied in Mogadishu is still a course of ongoing debate and it is beyond the scope of our research. Their source of inspiration was derived from Islam, which served as the sole trustworthy institution and an essential social bond for numerous individuals. The history of Islam in Somalia goes back to the 7th century. Before the Western colonization of Somalia in the late 1800s, the Somali culture – *xeer*- and Islam were the primary sources of knowledge for most Somalis.[301]

Somalia has been predominantly studied and analyzed through lack of state capacity and state of anarchy perspectives. In this particular setting, there is evidence that certain leaders have found ways to benefit from these circumstances. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that this has not necessarily led to widespread disorder and turmoil in everyday activities. As the civil war evolved into protracted local conflicts, alternative societal structures emerged throughout the country, including Sharia courts, in response to the ongoing conflicts. In an effort to restore order and security in Mogadishu, a locally driven *ad hoc* coalition was formed. The alliance worked together to disarm the various militias and facilitate the trade. While businessmen provided the funding for the Courts, clan elders used their customary authority to encourage youngsters to disarm, and Islamic ulema employed flexible interpretations of Sharia to stop impunity and constant predation.[302]

---

300 International Crisis Group (ICG), Somalia: Countering Terrorism in a Failed State, 23 May 2002, available at: https://www.refworld.org/docid/3de77c924.html [accessed 30 October 2022]

301 Abdi Elmi, Afyare. Understanding the Somalia Conflagration: Identity, Islam, and Peacebuilding. (London: Pluto Press. 2010)

302 De Waal, Alex, et al. **Islamism and Its Enemies in the Horn of Africa**. (London: Hurst, 2004)

The following statement came from a former member of the UIC in Mogadishu.

> "Islamic Courts appeared first in the Somali social setting as a locally owned response to the lawless environment by which the inter and intra-ethnic conflict was created and sustained over limited resources of the country and of Mogadishu. The first Islamic court was established in northern Mogadishu in 1991 by Sheikh Ali Dheere. However, it was a short-lived experience and eventually failed. Numerous experiments were conducted throughout the 1990s. Several minor courts amalgamated; however, their collective strength was deemed insufficient."[303]

Their legitimacy was steamed mainly by religious figures, political elites, clan elders, and the business community, who for many years deprived them of a justice system and local order in their respective communities or neighborhoods. A prominent local leader whom we interviewed gave the following account regarding the emergence of Islamic courts:

> "In 2003, the Transitional Federal Government was established, incorporating numerous warlords into the political process, and subsequently integrating them into the government. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of this nascent administration had been hindered by the warlords. The emergence of the Union of Islamic Courts can be attributed to but not limited to this parameter. They addressed the most important issue in local politics, which was 'security.' People were able to freely walk during the nighttime hours of their choosing without any safety concerns."[304]

The establishment of the Union resulted in a renewed feeling of security and trust that had been lacking in the region for many years. People were able to move around at night without fear of being physically attacked or harmed. The Union of Islamic Courts's popularity among the populace can be partially attributed to the Transitional Federal Government's inability to provide sufficient security measures for its citizens. The emergence of the novel initiative presented a viable alternative for those who had grown disillusioned with their government's inability to address their basic needs. Additionally, the Courts were supported by business elites who gradually gained significant prominence and independency in society starting from the mid-'90s, thanks to the additional business transaction and flows from Gulf countries and Saudi Arabia.

---

[303] Interview with a former member of the UIC in Mogadishu.

[304] Interview with a local leader in Mogadishu.

Business elites did manage to create their own militias to protect their booming business and channeled their support to Islamic Courts at the same time while also compelled to pay protection money and taxes to the warlords.[305] However, there had been a gradual shift in power distribution starting from the mid-'90s in Mogadishu. The influence and power of many of the dominant warlords and faction leaders began to diminish as the new business elites or, as Aisha Ahmad puts it, the "Salafi Club" began to emerge as an independent political force. They constituted the most powerful political block, which constituted a major building block for the creation of a transitional national government in Arta.[306] The amalgamation of Islamic Courts and the warlords' lack of commitment to promoting stability within the country led to a shift in the balance of power during the 2000s. The business community expressed dissatisfaction with the increased tax burden imposed by factional leaders who established multiple checkpoints to facilitate their mobility. The outcome was a rise in the prices of commodities and a surge in inflation rates, while the level of security obtained was comparatively lower.

3.1.5. The Global War on Terror in Somalia

With its dense population, rich cultural heritage, and resources, Africa is located at the intersection of geo-strategic locations. It links North Africa to Europe through the Mediterranean Sea. It hosts "The Bab-El-Mandeb" strait, which finds between Yemen on the Arabian Peninsula, Djibouti, and Eritrea in the Horn of Africa which connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden. The Bab-El-Mandeb is a strategic link between the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea via the Red Sea and the Suez Canal.[307] East Africa, the Horn of Africa in particular, had played an essential arena in the confrontation between the US and the USSR in the cold war rivalry. During the Cold War, Somalia and Ethiopia received a highly considerable amount of technical and financial support from their external backers, the USSR, and the US, respectively.

[305] Interview with a religious cleric and a civil society leader in Mogadishu

[306] Ahmad, Aisha. Jihad & Co.: *Black Markets and Islamist Power*. (New York, NY, United States of America: Oxford University Press), 2017.

[307] Remnek, Richard B. "The Strategic Importance of the Bab El-Mandeb and the Horn of Africa." *Naval War College Review* 43, no. 4 (1990): 6–30. http://www.jstor.org/stable/44638483.

However, their strategic importance diminished in the early 90s with the collapse of the bipolar world order.

The United States has regarded the Horn of Africa as a significant source of global terrorism for over two decades. Within this particular context, Somalia occupies a special position in relation to the US foreign policy and its counter-terrorism framework. In 1992, Somalia gained significant media attention due to its dire humanitarian situation, prompting international communities to take an interest. However, subsequent to the "Blackhawk Down" incident in 1994, the US and UN missions gradually withdrew their extensive involvement from Somalia.[308] The process which leads to the withdrawal of international engagement can be traced back to the death of 18 American military personnel in Mogadishu while carrying out an operation against General Aided in the Bakaara Market. Some experts have gone so far as to associate this event with Islamic extremist groups and acts of terrorism.[309]

Somalia garnered renewed attention in light of a sequence of significant events, such as the August 1998 attacks on the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, as well as the actions of individuals associated with al-Qaida who targeted Israeli aircraft. It is believed that in all these cases, Somalia was used for logistical purposes, which implied that local cooperation was available, given the fact that Somalia is considered a 'collapsed' state without a centralized authority to oversee any illegal activities within and across its boundaries.

Following the 9/11 attacks, the Horn has come under increased scrutiny as a strategic focal point by U.S. counter-terrorism specialists in the war against terrorism.[310] Despite conducting at least 20 military operations in Africa during the 1990s, nevertheless Washington maintained that the United States had "very little traditional strategic interest in Africa." Only a year before 9/11, then a presidential candidate, George W. Bush, responded to a question from PBS's Jim Lehrer about whether Africa fit into the strategic interest of the United States: "While Africa may be

---

[308] Sgt. Maj. Dos Santos, Clayton & Mr. Perdue, James Battle of Mogadishu: The Mission Command Perspective. NCO Leadership Center of Excellence. February 14, 2022.

[309] Docking, Tim. Special Report on "Terrorism in the Horn of Africa," United States Institute of Peace n.d. Tuesday, January 13, 2004, https://www.usip.org/publications/2004/01/terrorism-horn-africa.

[310] Ibid.

important, it doesn't fit into [American] national strategic interests, as far as I can see them."[311] Since the beginning of the 21st century, Africa has once again become strategically important for US policymakers in the energy and security sectors.

Following the events of 9/11, the United States underwent a reassessment of its approach towards Africa, with a particular focus on security and state-building considerations signaling a return to US strategic interest in the Horn of Africa. In August 1998, a group of individuals affiliated with al-Qaeda perpetrated assaults on the United States embassies located in Kenya and Tanzania, resulting in the loss of 224 lives and injuries to almost 5,000 individuals.[312] Four years later, the same group was held responsible for the killing of 16 individuals in Mombasa and came close to downing an Israeli airliner with a shoulder-fired surface-to-air missile. The U.S. has taken various measures to confront terrorist activities and extremism in the Horn, with special attention to Somalia. In the view of Washington, statelessness and a civil war environment would provide the conditions for 'Bin Ladens' to set up shop and plan attacks on Western interests around the world.[313] Somalia was first considered a place from which al-Qaida operates as a base of support or where they seek refuge. The U.S. even considered a possible military approach to Somalia; however, it channeled its activities to Iraq. The main idea was that; Somalia would be a safe haven for terrorism when the US military stepped up in Afghanistan and destroyed al-Qaida camps. The United States has assembled a multinational naval flotilla off the coast of Somalia and in the Arabian Sea to intercept fugitive terrorists from al-Qaeda who are fleeing Afghanistan.

311 Interview on the NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, 2001-2009. state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2003/22102.htm. Accessed 26 Oct. 2022.

312 "Report of the Accountability Review Boards on the Embassy Bombings in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam on August 7, 1998, | Office of Justice Programs." 1 Jan. 1999, www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/report-accountability-review-boards-embassy-bombings-nairobi-and.

313 Elmi, Afyare Abdi. *Understanding the Somalia Conflagration: Identity, Political Islam, and Peacebuilding* (London; New York: Pluto Press; Oxford, 2010).

Illustration 1. U.S. President George W. Bush chats with Meles during a meeting with Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi for talks on combatting

The United States has increased its efforts to gather intelligence on potential al-Qaeda strongholds in Somalia through aerial reconnaissance missions and ground-based intelligence-gathering activities. Evidence suggests al-Qaeda terrorist cells are present in Somalia, which is a "serious concern," stated General Tommy Franks, head of U.S. Central Command, which is fighting terrorism in the Middle East, Southwest Asia, and the Horn of Africa.[314] Considering that perspective, the United States has initiated a task force with a specific focus on counter-terrorism measures in Djibouti.

In light of the unfolding circumstances in Afghanistan, it has become evident that Somalia has not materialized into the anticipated safe haven that was once envisaged. Instead of pursuing direct military engagement, the US opted to engage in surveillance and information-gathering activities while also working alongside authorities in Somaliland and Puntland.[315] US broader engagement also included community work and provided the Ethiopian army with assistance and training. As a component of counter-terrorism strategies, the United States terminated the operations of the al-Barakat company, which is Somalia's most extensive financial institution and telecommunications corporation, along with a number of its subsidiary

[314] General Tommy Franks, exclusive interview with the BBC, "U.S. Watches Somali al-Qaeda links," BBC News Online, March 17, 2002, at http://news.bbc.co.uk/low/english/world/africa/newsid_1877000/1877878.stm

[315] ICG, “Counter-Terrorism in Somalia: Losing Hearts and Minds?”, September 14, 2016

establishments. The US Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill went as far as to say, "al-Barakat companies are the money movers, the quartermasters of terror."[316] In response to the allegations, the chief executive officer of the organization refuted all claims and extended an invitation to the United States government to conduct an audit of its financial records. Following years, the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the US released a report and concluded that its investigation did not find evidence linking al-Barakat to al-Qaeda.[317]

3.2. Development of Political Violence through Mechanisms: 2002 – 2009

The preceding chapter expounded upon the major political events, both internal and external, spanning from the dissolution of the Somali state institutions in 1991 to the formation of the Federal Government of Somalia in 2004. We examined the evolution of Somalia's internal security dynamics along with how they have become intertwined with regional power struggles. We also analyzed the way in which internal conflicts transpired as a result of external interventions that had an impact on the balance of power at the local level. In particular, we further focused on how regional and international powers address Somalia's internal security dynamics and examined the implications of the measures they have taken in this direction in shaping internal security dynamics.

In this section, we have analyzed the formation and evolution of the al-Shabaab network as an organized movement and the mechanisms through which it has resorted to violence in its political actions in relation to the political environment in which it operated. This chapter first and foremost examines the ebb and flow of the UIC vis a vis the political environment it is embedded. What is the process(es) by which members of the al-Shabaab movement adopted violence as a means to achieve the movement's goals? What is the process that has sustained violence for ten years (and continuing) since its initial emergence, and how does this process explain variations in violence? Through an analysis of the political context in which the mobilization

316 Roth, John and Greenburg, Douglas and Wille, Serena. *9/11 Monograph on Terrorist Financing: Staff Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States* (12th Media Services, 2019)

317 Elmi, Afyare Abdi. *Understanding the Somalia Conflagration: Identity, Political Islam, and Peacebuilding* (London; New York: Pluto Press; Oxford, 2010).

process occurs, we have identified sub-mechanisms of threat attribution and brokerage that are relevant to understanding the relationship between social movements and their environment.

It is important to highlight that we make a clear distinction between two different sets of threat attribution mechanisms under examination in this study. The first one was closely related to Somalia's environmental and moral deterioration which facilitated the mobilization of Islamic courts. It was extremely consequential in the initial mobilization stage of the movement and tied to some extent to the abduction process at the hands of militia leaders in an indirect way. The latter was mostly formed and gained salience in the context of Ethiopia's military presence in Somalia and was consequential in the radicalization of the al-Shabaab network in particular. The former is superior and has more explanatory power over the latter in explaining the early stage of the mobilization process of the courts across Mogadishu. The latter, on the other hand, played a critical role in the outbidding section. We will address the relevant arguments covering both mechanisms in the literature on this subject.

We must stress that the formation of the threat attribution sub-mechanism was influenced by a series of interconnected events. This mechanism demonstrated its influence initially when Ethiopia orchestrated bringing together a political alliance known as SSRY, which turned into the TFG after two-year-long discussions in Kenya. Former faction leader Abdullahi Yusuf, a close ally of Ethiopia, became president of the newly installed government. In the Capital, these political developments were considered a sign of Ethiopian meddling in Somalia's internal affairs. For the Islamists, in particular, it was clear that he was not in favor of Islamist groups, given the fact that the former launched a military campaign at Yusuf's forces in Bosaso in the early '90s. These developments, while significant, did not appear to have a significant impact on the mobilization of the movement. The threat attribution mechanism exerted its influence mostly in the context of the deployment of Ethiopian troops in Somalia, which was seen by many as a clear indication of foreign occupation.

Amidst increasing pressure from faction leaders, as will be discussed in the following chapter, several Islamic factions intensified their collaboration with one another. It

was around this time that the brokerage sub-mechanism made its influence in the context of threat attribution. Hassan Dahir Awes became the advisory leader of the newly formed group, while al-Shabaab constituted the executive military wing of the UIC.[318] It is noteworthy to mention that clans also contributed fighters to the courts. Moreover, following the war with the warlords, some members of al-Shabaab secured a seat in the supreme council. In short, the increasing external threat (Ethiopian and warlord pressure) brought these factions closer to each other in an organizational sense.

3.2.1. National Political Dynamics: Threat Attribution in Local Contexts

The Transitional National Government (TNG) was succeeded by the Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC), a coalition of alliances that received support from Ethiopia and eventually transformed into the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) following the conclusion of the Mgahabati Peace and Reconciliation process in October 2002. This process was facilitated by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and resulted in the adoption of the "Declaration on Cessation of Hostilities and the Structures and Principles of the Somalia National Reconciliation Process."[319] This development also emphasized the ongoing competition for regional influence between Djibouti and Arab governments visa a vis Ethiopia.

Threat Attribution in National Context

Argumentation I

It clearly indicates that Ethiopia had a significant role in the formation of the TFG. Following their exclusion from the new government, some Islamists and business elites decided to seek their interests through the Islamic Courts in an effort to counteract what they perceived to be a threat to the lucrative business interests in

[318] Hassan Dahir Aweys | Profile | Africa Confidential. "Hassan Dahir Aweys | Profile | Africa Confidential," n.d. https://www.africa-confidential.com/profile/id/4708/page/4.

[319] Tavolato, Umberto. "Somalia: Djibouti to Mbagathi: Making or Breaking the Peace,". Nairobi, 12 January 2004.

which they were involved. As a result of the new government's decision to remove Sharif Hassan Sheikh Aden from his position as speaker of the TFG parliament, the Mogadishu leadership was enraged. Sharif Hassan was considered to be the "chief figure of the Mogadishu commercial class" despite the fact that he was a member of the Rahaweyn.[320] International concerns concerning Iraq, Palestine, and Afghanistan, on the other hand, encouraged a perception that Islam was under attack and that it needed defensive Jihad. However, Ethiopia's growing influence and meddling in Somalia's affairs, rather than emerging global developments, posed the most acute and immediate threat.

The TFG, which was inaugurated in 2004, has excluded numerous individuals with Islamist views from its formation. Therefore, the sub-mechanism *marginalization* seemed to be at play given the TFG's exclusionary approach. However, the major challenge for this attempt rests not in tribal politics nor Islamic connections. Ethiopia's leading role in establishing the SSDF and Addis Ababa's proximity to the SSDF leadership was threatening enough to trigger a backlash from certain leadership in Mogadishu and Islamic groups alike. Many Somalis considered the TFG as an instrument for Ethiopian hegemony over Somalia and believed it was ruled rather by clan interests.[321] Moreover, it also included the commercial and economic interests between various competing groups, as well as the confrontations during the civil war in the early 1990s. While the sub-mechanism of marginalization was operational during the process, it was first and foremost the threat attribution sub-mechanism that exerted its influence in the face of Ethiopia's growing interest in Somalia. This was not essentially a cognitive implication on the part of movement leaders. Still, rather, it represented a process that would acquire a relational character in relation to the deployment of Ethiopian troops in Somalia, as will be seen in later chapters on -outbidding. This development, in other words, triggered *attribution of threat*—a cognitive sub-mechanism defined as the construction of a shared definition concerning the likely negative consequences of possible actions, or failure to act, undertaken by a political actor.[322]

---

320 Ashley Elliot & Georg-Sebastian Holzer, `The Invention of 'Terrorism' in Somalia: Paradigms and Policy in US Foreign Relations, South African Journal of International Affairs, 16:2, 215-244, DOI: 10.1080/10220460903268984

321 Hansen, Stig Jarle. *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group*. (London: Hurst and Company, 2015)

322 McAdam et al. 2001, pg. 95.

From this time, Marchal and Menkhaus, among many other analysts, shared a view that a strong Somali desire to minimize foreign influence and interest has unified disparate clans and Islamic factions alike. In response to an inquiry regarding the potential correlation between the integration of warlords into the TFG by Ethiopia and the amalgamation of Islamic courts, a local leader provided the following statement:

> "The two aforementioned occurrences are potentially associated with each other in an indirect manner, if not a direct one. The Warlords have handed over captured Islamists to the Ethiopian authorities. The objective of Ethiopia was to establish a Somali state that would be subject to its authority— Hence, they assisted in the consolidation of warlords. The Islamic Courts perceived this as a potential threat. In response, they approached each other."[323]

As per the statements of the local leader who was interviewed, the optimal approach toward establishing a unified court system is contingent upon the local security architecture, and a significant causality exists between the two. The situation also exhibited an indirect connection with Ethiopia's involvement in Somali affairs through the utilization of faction leaders as proxies. The unification effort was an attempt to address the state disorder and lawlessness in Mogadishu, which would later diffuse to the surrounding provinces.[324] It was closely attached to local security concerns rather than an externally driven collective security initiative. In any case, these developments demonstrated that the sub-mechanism *brokerage* was in operation. The election of Abdullahi Yusuf as president by the transitional parliament in October 2004 was unexpected. Yusuf, a close ally of Ethiopia, secured 189 of 270 votes cast, while Abdiqassim Salad Hassan and Mohamed Addow divided the Hawiye clan vote. Yusuf appointed Mohamed Ghedi as his prime minister. In the current administration, the leadership, and political figures most closely associated with the previous TNG have been sidelined. In this configuration, President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed swiftly came to be seen as a puppet of Ethiopia and a trojan horse of the Darood-clan interest. His close proximity to Somalia's historical rival Ethiopia and his long-standing enmity towards particular Islamist groups[325] were among the salient

[323] Interview with a local leader in Mogadishu.
[324] Interview with a former member of the UIC in Mogadishu.
[325] Interview with a former MP in Mogadishu.

factors that undermined Abdullahi Yusuf's legitimacy from the outset.[326] The planned deployment of foreign forces, notably Ethiopians, to 'pacify' Mogadishu, and the proposed relocation of the seat of government to a temporary capital Baidoa or Jowhar, on the grounds that Mogadishu was too unstable caused instant division in parliament. The opposition in Mogadishu angrily opposed President Yusuf's plans. Without protection from his Ethiopian backers, Yusuf would be severely outgunned in Mogadishu and could only reign as the opposition's "guest."[327] The Mogadishu Group refused to relinquish this influence. For them, the notion of Mogadishu's 'pacification' by the TFG and Ethiopian soldiers seemed more like a declaration of war than an endeavor to establish the rule of law. In March 2005, the discussion about peacekeeping and the site of a temporary capital culminated in a televised chair-throwing riot in parliament.

The failure of the TFG, and the prominence of external forces in its politics, led directly to the resurgence of the Islamic courts' movement after 2004 in a more militant incarnation. The Courts were reinforced by capable and well-equipped militias by 2006. The use of militias was deemed to be necessary to maintain authority in the more fraught and factionalized politics of Mogadishu after 2005, but it also represented a greater militarization of Somalia's local politics in response to external influence. Moreover, it is argued that the newly established military wing - al-Shabaab, was considered a counterweight to the power of the other clan-based coalitions, which was believed to have Ethiopia`s backing.[328] Among those supporting the Courts at this time were several militant Islamists, alienated from other politics and keen to use the Courts as a political platform.[329] The introduction of the brokerage mechanism has more to do with local security dynamics than with regional political competition at play.[330] Thus, by 2006, the perceived external threat to Somali independence, as shown in the upcoming chapters, had become more significant in determining political affiliation than either clan or religion. It is, therefore, the first and foremost sub-mechanism ***threat attribution*** that demonstrated its influence in the

[326] J. Peter Pham, **Clan and Islamic Identities in Somali Society,** Defense R&D Canada Contract Report DRDC Toronto CR 2011-080 November 2011.

[327] Interview with a former MP in Mogadishu.

[328] Hansen, Stig Jarle. **Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group**. London: Hurst and Company, 2015.

[329] See ICG 2005b; Marchal 2007, 2009; and Menkhaus 2007a.

[330] Interview with a former member of UIC in Mogadishu.

political process arena on the part of some Islamist groups and business interest vis a vis the TFG certificated by Ethiopia.

Threat Attribution in Local Context

Argumentation II

The collapse of the central national institutions of Somalia in 1991 gave birth to regional administrations such as Somaliland and Puntland in the North and South, as well as led to the formation of clan-based sharia court systems in Mogadishu. The Sharia courts in Somalia first appeared shortly after the disintegration of political order associated with the state breakdown; hence, disruptions of the "quotidian" – that is, the taken-for-granted routines and attitudes of everyday life – in the social environment. Islamic *Sharia* law is not a new phenomenon in Somalia and was officially incorporated into the Somali governance system through the colonial as well as the post-independence area until the fall of the Siad Barre government. The faction leaders, nevertheless, weren't concerned with the well-being of the communities and often their fellow kinsmen, who lived in the areas they controlled. Rather, they viewed the areas they controlled and the people residing in them as their racketeering fiefdoms from which income was to be generated. Checkpoints were established in various locations within the city to generate revenue from individuals who passed through between neighborhoods for purposes such as trade, business, or daily activities. Furthermore, the local populace experienced a sense of insecurity and fear due to the prevalence of criminal acts such as abductions, sexual assault, and money extortion. The quality of life for the inhabitants of Mogadishu progressively deteriorated, presenting a multitude of challenges and complications.

It was in this context and in response to these problems that the Sharia courts of Mogadishu first appeared. Specifically, Sharia courts operated within the societal and political context at the neighborhood level and were characterized by the distinct clan-led response to severe disruption of every-day-life activities, which were facilitated and exaggerated by *mooryaans* criminal activities. Constant fighting paved the way for the routinization of violence and an increase in criminal activities committed by *mooryaans* and faction leaders. Routinization, as well as the diffusion of criminal

activities, had deeply affected communities' everyday life both behaviorally and cognitively. It posed an actual face-to-face threat to the citizens in such a way that they committed to delivering their grievances through institutional channels. Communities led by religious scholars *ulama* and with the blessings of their clan elders along with ordinary people mobilized within clan structure led to the facilitation of an indigenous collective action in the form of Islamic *sharia* courts across Mogadishu. Some of the business elites also supported this initiative. The communities that established and ran the Sharia courts were also close kinsmen, which explains why the Sharia courts were known as "clan courts." Somali citizen explains the rationale behind the establishment of Sharia courts:

> "Faced with the challenges of the new urban environment, the traditional system failed to solve the political problems as well as the security problems that the armed gangs associated with the clans presented. In desperation, the elders turned to the only available other system – religion. They established Sharia courts to control the gangs, which had started to present a danger even to their own clans."[331]

In response to our question regarding the factors that facilitated the formation of the Union of Islamic Courts in 2004 at the local and regional levels, the informant identified three primary catalysts, namely two local and one regional. He stated that:

> "The country experienced a notable shortfall in terms of both political stability and public trust. The courts gathered together with the objective of preventing abductions, hostage-taking, unjustifiable homicides, and illegal seizure of assets. The courts were originally instituted at a regional level. They gathered to improve the consolidation of security."[332]

Islam, according to M. Lewis, was the only credible institution left on which people relied after the outbreak of the civil war. Clan identity and regulations and the traditional Islamic faith have been the most common denominators through which the Sharia court system was formulated. It was as much a communal collective self-defense mechanism as a means to deliver justice in daily life activities. In addition to

---

[331] Grubeck, Nikolaus **Civilian Harm in Somalia: Creating an Appropriate Response**, Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict (CIVIC) UNHCR 10 Nov. 2011 https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4ec4bec02.pdf

[332] Interview with a public leader in Mogadishu.

courts' activities, Islamic charities whose activities went back to Siyad's time became widespread in Mogadishu, where national educational institutions no longer existed.

However, social mobilization of the courts can not solely explain by the protest activities of the citizens, religious groups, or clan elites who were fed up with the level of environmental and moral deterioration of their respected neighborhood. A second explanation comes from the role of business elites in social mobilization. The business community grew increasingly frustrated with the skyrocketing costs and high level of interest in their business transactions. They began to invest in an Islamist alternative to the costly warlords in the hopes that this would increase their profit margins. Aisha Ahmad's work analyzed in depth the motives of the business community's support of the Islamic Courts. She states that neither religious nor tribal sentiments provided a clear explanation as to why the business community decided to support the UIC. She arrived at the conclusion that it was security & cost balance rather than ideology that played a crucial role in shaping the preferences of the business class at a critical juncture.[333]

The popularity of the courts soon after diffused across southern Mogadishu and was copied in the same way by other sub-clans. As stated earlier, it was because, during the 90s, Sharia courts succeeded in providing a degree of law and order in daily life activities in northern and southern parts of Mogadishu. Karaan courts, for instance, were established to deal with the criminal activities of mooryaans within the limitation of a given district. Its opening was permitted by Ali Mahdi, who found the courts to be useful mechanisms to prevent internal divisions and the spread of conflict with the neighboring clans, as well as a means to maintain public support, given the fact that local security conditions did not improve. This initiative was backed by sub-clan elders and supported by the business community operating in the same area. However, it was dissolved by Ali Mahdi himself when he felt threatened by the growing popularity of its leader, Sheikh Ali Dheere, in 1997.

[333] Ahmad, Aisha. **Jihad & Co.: Black Markets and Islamist Power.** (Oxford University Press New York, NY 2017), Pg. 139

Al-Ittihad Al-Islami Movement

The death of General Mohamed Farah Aideed in 1996 turned out to be the critical juncture that allowed it possible for the short-lived successes of the courts in northern Mogadishu to spread to areas of southern Mogadishu. His absence resulted in the creation of a political void, which opened the door for an experiment with Sharia courts in the South. Within a short period of time, a number of courts emerged, all of which followed the same basic formula. It is argued that the link with political Islam came via former members of Al-Ittihad Al-Islami since the Courts in the south were far more influenced by former militant figures and transnational flows and business finance networks than their predecessors in the north of the city.[334] As per Roland Marchal's analysis, the Islamic Courts were not inherently fundamentalist in nature. Additionally, notable individuals from al-Ittihad played a crucial role in facilitating coordination and enhancing the group's efficacy.[73]

Al-Ittihad al-Islami was considered the first armed movement of contemporary Somalia with a religious background. The movement was created in the 1980s by merging several Salafist movements. The group took up arms after the downfall of Siad Barre, and none of the Islamist groups had demonstrated militant behavior prior to the fall.[335] A group within the AIAI began militant activism in Kismayo and Bosaso and despite its resilience, al-Ittihad counted no more than 700 fighters then.[336] They fought against the forces of General Aideed in Kismaayo in 1991 and Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf in Bosaso in 1992. Upon its defeat at the hand of two leaders, AIAI moved its activities to the Gedo region bordering Ethiopia. Ethiopia believed that the Gedo region was used to orchestrate attacks in its territory and took military action against al-Ittihad and destroyed its military capacity in 1996. Al-Ittihad lost many of its members, which led them to organize a conference to discuss the future of the movement and the way ahead. Religious activities such as Dawa were favored over militant activism, which was later abandoned. The group decided to move away from militant activities. Many of its members returned to civilian life and took part in

334 Cedric Barnes & Harun Hassan. The Rise and Fall of Mogadishu's Islamic Courts, Journal of Eastern African Studies, 1:2, 151-160, (2007) DOI: 10.1080/17531050701452382

335 Elmi, Afyare Abdi. Understanding the Somalia Conflagration: Identity, Islam, and Peacebuilding. (London: Pluto Press. 2010)

336 Marchal, Roland. “The Rise of a Jihadi Movement in a Country at War. Harakat al-Shabaab al Mujaheddin in Somalia.” (2011)

charity activities in the northern and southern parts of the country. Others became instrumental in establishing Sharia courts in south Mogadishu; among them was Hassan Dahir Aweys, who took the initiative to open a new Sharia court in the South of Mogadishu and named it Ifka Halane court. Apart from the militant strategy, it is reported that the movement left a positive impression on the general public during the time they operated in Bossaso city in 1992 and in health clinics they operated in Luuq in the Gedo region.[337] Ken Menkhaus stated that:

> "Al-Ittihad in Luuq unquestionably provided a much safer environment than existed in almost any other region of Somalia during the turbulent and anarchic period of 1991-92. International agencies were able to work there, and some found the fundamentalists preferable to deal with – more professional, better able to maintain security, and less likely to extort. The Luuq hospital, which al-Ittihad administered, was frequently cited as a model of good organization and accountability at a time when virtually all hospitals in Somalia were plagued by corruption and theft."[338]

In 2000 these dispersed courts of the south Mogadishu formed "the Joint Islamic Courts Council" and were represented as a social movement at the Arta Conference in Djibouti.[339] The authority of the Sharia judges and militia diminished following the establishment of the Transitional Federal Government, as a significant number of them were integrated into the TNG's judicial framework. The Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC) expressed opposition towards the TNG political movement. The assemblage comprised of leaders of clan-based militias hailing from diverse regions of the nation and was supported by Ethiopia right from its inception. The Ethiopian government and the SRRC alliance have alleged that the Transitional National Government (TNG) is providing shelter to extremist elements (terrorists) within its institutional framework and promoting the Islamization of Somalia. On the other hand, Andre le Sage argued that the TNG, in fact, attempted to undermine the Sharia courts in an effort to eliminate organized challengers to their legal supremacy by hiring Sharia judges and a percentage of their militia that were integrated into a cross-clan force. The TNG, afterward, convinced businessmen to withdraw their

337

338 Menkhaus, Ken. "Political Islam in Somalia.". Middle East Policy, vol 9, no. 1, 2002, pp. 109 123. Wiley, https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-4967.00045.

339 Somalia: IRIN Interview with Islamic Courts Chairman Hassan Sheik Mohamed Abdi

armed ‘technical’ battlewagons from the courts and sell them to the TNG. As a result, the Sharia courts lost their implementation.[340] TNG’s rule was only limited to a few blocks in the Capital, and most of the city was under the authority of faction leaders and warlords. Despite the formation of TNG, fighting between faction leaders continued in order to consolidate their strength to become the sole representative at the table from their respective clans before the Nairobi peace talks in 2002.[341] Sharia courts in Mogadishu regained their prominence following the fall of TNG, and a primary reason is attributed to the fact that abduction and crime rates increased dramatically after TNG’s dissolution.[342]

The beginning of the threat mechanism on the part of the political elites in Mogadishu, the business community, and the Islamists in particular vis a vis their political environment dates back to the waning power of the TNG government and the installation of the Ethiopian-backed government in its place in 2004, and even a little before that. It is, therefore, quite noteworthy as well as intriguing that, as Menkhaus stated, the formation of the Union of Islamic Courts coincided with the official establishment of the TFG in 2004. However, a former executive member of the UIC stated that the two events are not interconnected, and it was the local context that was searching for a peace settlement in Mogadishu that led to the formation of the court’s union.[343] Ethiopia's significant support for the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) from the very beginning, particularly for reasons related to, most notably, the security environment and business and commercial interests, was highly threat-inducing on the part of Mogadishu elites. To begin with, as stated above, Abdiqasim Hassan was replaced by Abdullahi Yusuf, which gave rise to legitimate concerns over the possibility that the Mogadishu residents might be evicted from their homes in Mogadishu if and when the new administration arrived there.[344] This anxiety was fueled in part by the competition that existed between some genealogical groups in Mogadishu, dating back to the 80s and early 90s in particular. There was a genuine worry on the part of some of Hawiye's constituents that Abdullahi Yusuf's TFG might

[340] Sage, Andre Le, *Stateless Justice in Somalia: Formal and Informal Rule of Law Initiatives*, (Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Geneva, 2005)., Pg.46.

[341] Somalia: Fresh fighting in Mogadishu ahead of peace talks https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-fresh-fighting-mogadishu-ahead-peace-talks

[342] Interview with a former member of UIC in Mogadishu.

[343] Interview with a former member of UIC in Mogadishu.

[344] Interview with a member of civil society group in Mogadishu.

serve as a vehicle for Darood's interest. The backing that the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) received from the Ethiopian government, which is widely regarded as the most powerful foreign player in Somalia, was the second but more threat-inducing factor that caused alarm among the elements of the UIC and many others in Mogadishu. The TFG had a reasonable prospect of escaping purgatory in Kenya thanks to Addis Ababa's support because it would have the military support to establish itself in Somalia.[345] This was in contrast to previous internationally backed governments that were created after Barre's ouster, which were supported by other countries. This fact became apparent in June of 2005 when the TFG made its way back to Somalia and re-established itself in Baidoa under the protection of the Ethiopian army. Since Ethiopia was adamantly opposed to Islamism in Somalia and planned to use the TFG to fight against these elements, the ever-more-powerful alliance between the TFG and Ethiopia posed a real threat to the other constituent units of the UIC as well. It is known that the Ethiopian connection to the TFG was largely established as a result of the fact that Abdullahi Yusuf, the leader of Puntland, who openly opposed Islamist ideology, had been a close ally of Ethiopia's for a very long time, dating back to his period as chairman of the Somali Democratic Security Forces (SDSF).[346] It is also important to stress that another point of contention between parties seemed to be of concern to Somalia's territorial and administrative structure. Ethiopia, and hence some of senior members of TFG, favored a federal model of governance, whereas Mogadishu elites opposed this model and instead advocated for a more centralized administration. Therefore, many Mogadishu Hawiye elites were at the forefront of political resistance to "Ethiopian-backed" federalism, a position wrapped up in terms of Somali nationalism and a heavy dosage of anti-Ethiopian animus.[347] As of 2004, a new unification process was driven by four courts: the Ifka Halane, the Shircole, the Towfiq, and the Sii Sii. Two of these courts—the Shircole and the Ifka Halane, the strongest of them all—saw significant activity from Al-Shabaab militants. As stated previously, there had been a number of reasons which led to the in-group brokerage on the one hand between Islamic Courts and the Business community on the other. Brokerage mechanisms had been secured under the

[345] Woldemariam, Michael. "The Long War in Somalia" in **Insurgent Fragmentation in the Horn of Africa: Rebellion and Its Discontents**. Cambridge University Press, 2018. Pg. 240-241.

[346] Interview with a former MP in Mogadishu.

[347] Woldemariam, Michael. "The Long War in Somalia" in Insurgent Fragmentation in the Horn of Africa: Rebellion and Its Discontents. Cambridge University Press, 2018. Pg. 240-241.

common threat posed by Ethiopia's growing meddling in Somalia's internal affairs, which reached an unprecedented level when the Ethiopian troops stationed in Baidoa secured the TFG against the UIC. The Al-Shabaab network had been incorporated into the military cadres of the UIC.

3.2.2. Global and Local Security Dynamics: Global War on Terror and Local Alliance Formation

Following a brief introduction of the relational arenas and mechanisms in the previous section, the present study aims to conduct a comprehensive and nuanced examination of the process of radicalization, with a particular focus on the key role played by the al-Shabaab network. This analysis will also explore the influence of faction leaders, as well as the extent to which external interferences and interests have contributed alterations in the national political landscape by supporting these violent entrepreneurs. The events that unfolded from 2001 until June 2006 had particular effects on the militarization of the opposing political and social groups, in particular on the radicalization of the al-Shabaab network towards a relatively organized, sustained, and violent direction.

The most significant starting point of this episode should be evaluated against the historical developments related to Washington's decision to open a new front in the GWOT in the Horn of Africa, with a special focus on Somalia. From this now on, Somalia's internal security dynamics were essentially evaluated from the "global war on terror" framework and through securitization lenses. This involvement, to some extent, triggered a new cycle of a violent contentious episode which subsequently had a bearing on the balance of power among political cleavages and created new ones in the local political structure. As elucidated in the subsequent chapters, the infiltration of global and regional politics into Somalia was not the sole factor at play yet a major one. Local power brokers, namely faction leaders, and regional powers, also leveraged the international climate to safeguard and promote their interests through the exploitation of the terrorism paradigm within the country. This mechanism, therefore, was in this episode mainly constituted by two sub-mechanisms: ***repression by proxy,*** a relational sub-mechanism defined as informal by state actors to non-state

actors of law-and-order activities, and ***retaliation*** - a relational sub-mechanism defined as reprisals by an actor of wrongs experienced by the actor or members of its constituency.

The relational process under investigation had displayed a series of reprisal killings by al Shabaab–affiliated individuals after a series of assassinations, indiscriminate violence, and abductions targeted at members of Islamic organizations, ordinary citizens, and non-Islamist political figures conducted by Mogadishu's faction leaders and some extent regional actors.[348] It led a dozen of loosely affiliated Afghanistan returnees to form a militant unit to counter the warlords' assault in a responsive manner. It was pointed out by many as one of the initial reasons why the group came into being. Until this time, the extreme views of the nascent al-Shabaab had prevented any serious alliance with those seeking to build consensus through the Union of Islamic Courts.[349] However, it changed in February 2006, and its cause was, once again, the unifying impact of foreign interference. As claimed by Muktar Robow, then spokesman of the group, the need for better and more united organizations than had previously existed also seems to have been a reason for the initiators of Al-Shabaab to come together.[350] The threat attribution sub-mechanism in the political process area, which we discussed in the previous section, continues to be effective in this episode as well.

Radicalization Dynamics in Early Phases

The initial reason for the birth of young militias was rooted in need to enforce law and order without regard for clan rules, which prohibited full cooperation among nearly ten courts of Mogadishu in 2004. However, a cluster of militants who had been to Afghanistan had a more grandiose ambition.[351] They constituted, nevertheless, an insignificant minority within the broad base of Islamic networks and, in particular, among Salafists. On the other hand, in the following years, from an organizational

348 Interview with a religious leader in Mogadishu.

349 Dagne, Ted. Somalia: Current Conditions and Prospects for a Lasting Peace Specialist in African Affairs August 31, 2011

350 Hansen, Stig Jarle. Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group. (London: Hurst and Company, 2015)

351 Marchal, Roland and Zakaria M. Sheikh. "Salafism in Somalia: Coping with Coercion, Civil War and its Own Contradictions." Islamic Africa 6 (2015)

point of view, it pushed the UIC and the "Shabaab" beyond a mere association into a military alliance of their own.[352] Similarly responding to the question of the extent to which the warlords' violent actions against Somalis and Islamists have generated discussions among Islamic groups, a local authority responded as follows:

> "The warlords were apprehending several individuals who identified as Islamists and transferring them to foreign nations. So not only did the Islamists unite among themselves in response to this behavior, but they also took the initiative to prepare for any attacks coming from them. They soon asked themselves how we can take measures and how we can respond to attacks from them. So they sought to increase the number of resources they had. Within this broad structure, there are people of different opinions, but what they all agree on is the need to oppose the policies of the warlords."[353]

In order to explain unfolded violent episode between the warlords and the Courts, this chapter argues that one needs to take into consideration the internalization of the global events after 9/11, the ways in which they approached the ongoing Somali conflict that defined and structured within counter-terrorism framework, and the nature of prolonged local conflicts and contentious political dynamics in Somalia. The movement-counter-movement dynamics in the radicalization process of al-Shabaab, therefore, eventually generated clashes and created a new line of radicalization which underwent from the early 2000s to 2006, one which was intense. In the beginning, it appeared to be one of Mogadishu's tugs of war among rival factions and power brokers. However, there was also a new ideological and political undercurrent to the rivalry. This dynamic also fed the animosity and formed a new boundary between the two camps, and facilitated a nationwide mobilization campaign against the APRCT, a loose alliance consisting of faction leaders of Mogadishu, when the latter announced its formation in January 2006 and declared war on the Courts. In later stages, the object of contention shifted to the TFG of Abdullahi Yusuf, for there was no authority standing between the two camps.

The September 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and Pentagon in Washington marked the beginning of the renewed U.S. interest in the

---

352 Joseph, Dan, and Harun Maruf. **Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally**. (Indiana UP, 2018)

353 Interview with a public leader in Mogadishu.

Horn. It was in 1993 when U.S. special forces engaged in conflict with the forces loyal to General Aided, which paved the way for the US withdrawal from Somalia. After the infamous 9/11 incident, the US and its allies in the Horn shared the common perception that since there was no central authority to oversee domestic as well as international criminal activities within and across its border, Somalia seemed to be provided a safe haven for al-Qaida and its allies to operate with impunity. The US believed that *stateless* Somalia contained certain risks and threats which could undermine not only its interest in the Horn but also the West in general. Furthermore, it was believed that al-Qaida-affiliated suspects, who were accused of behind the attacks against US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, took shelter among Islamists in Somalia. This perception from the beginning was further supported and carried out by Ethiopia for its internal as well as geopolitical concerns, as well as some elements within the TFG, including the President and clan-based militias in Mogadishu. Kenya and Ethiopia have expressed their willingness to receive additional counter-terrorism assistance from the United States. The support included military instruction and financial backing, which would be provided in exchange for intelligence sharing with American authorities. In sum, since 9/11, 'Ethiopia has been the United States' closest ally in the Greater Horn,' which was reinforced by the Zenawi government's own domestic struggles against Islamic insurgents, including the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and AIAI.[354] Within this framework, Ethiopia has not only received significantly increased US military assistance and training privileges but also received $16 billion in foreign military financing from 2002 to 2005, more than twice the amount received during the previous 11 years.[355] Their strong opposition towards the TNG and Islamists found resonance in the US counter-terrorism circles. The assumption that Somalia turned into an international hub for terrorism and related activities was refuted by various entities, including the Somali diaspora, the Transitional National Government of Somalia, and Islamic factions within Somalia. For instance, the Pan Somali Council for Peace and Democracy - an advocacy group in the US, Canada, and the UK, issued a letter to President Bush in order to reject allegations that Somalia had become a terrorist hub

[354] Quaranto, Peter J. *Building states while fighting terror: Contradictions in United States strategy in Somalia from 2001 to 2007*. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies (ISS), 2008

[355] Centre for Defense Information 2007).

and denied that Somalis were religious fanatics, insisting they were just pious people and urged the US to help the poor in Somalia. The council further stated that:

> "Some warlords in Somalia were making allegations of terrorism in Somalia just to score political points against adversaries. We beseech you (President Bush) to reject this…establishment of a simple child-health center in a village will make that village off-limits to bloodthirsty terrorists. Terrorism and violence thrive in the swamps of human misery."[356]

In late September, the Bush administration added Al-Ittihad Al-Islami to a list of entities related to terrorism whose assets were frozen by a presidential Executive Order. The administration accused al-Ittihad of having links with al-Qaida for planning several attacks in Ethiopia and contributing to the preparation of the attacks against the American embassies. They also claimed that their relations dated back to the US presence in Somalia during Operation Restore Hope in 1993. ICG report stated that there was little hard evidence to suggest that his network played more than a peripheral role in those events, and al-Ittihad forces may have been a part of that fighting, but they were not the dominant element.[357] Ted Dagne, furthermore, noted that the Administration did not offer evidence to prove its allegations, adding that some observers are skeptical about the alleged links between the two entities. Citing opposite views on that issue, he further noted that al-Ittihad, which was disbanded in 1997, never targeted U.S. interests in Somalia or Africa and did not have a global reach, let alone a regional one.[358] Moreover, apart from the movement's domestic militant behavior and jihadist-nationalist rhetoric, al-Ittihad at the time been no more violent than that of many other Somali factions, and its rejection of the legitimacy of any other state than a state ruled by sharia law is not itself a recipe for terrorism.[359] Al-Ittihad gained prominence for restoring law and order in key areas where it has maintained a short-lived presence, most notably in Bossaso, Kismayo, and Luuq areas between 1991 and 1995. For instance, ICG 2002 report stated that al-Ittihad did not

---

356 Advocacy group lobbies President Bush https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news/2001/10/09/advocacy-group-lobbies-president-bush

357 International Crisis Group "Somalia: Countering Terrorism in a Failed State,", May 23, 2002, https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/somalia/somalia-countering-terrorism-failed-state

358 Dagne, Ted. Somalia: Current Conditions and Prospects for a Lasting Peace Specialist in African Affairs August 31, 2011

359 International Crisis Group "Somalia: Countering Terrorism in a Failed State,", May 23, 2002, https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/somalia/somalia-countering-terrorism-failed-state

control local populations or territory and was not structurally integrated with al-Qaida as was the Taliban.[360]

As part of its counter-terrorism measures, Washington had frozen assets of the al-Barakat company, which was the largest international banking system and telecommunication company in Somalia and accused its founder of being closely linked to Bin Laden and his organization. The White House further stated that "al-Barakat offices 'raise, manage and distribute funds for al-Qaeda; provide terrorist supporters with Internet service and secure telephone communications; and arrange for the shipment of weapons and use company offices to transmit funds, intelligence, and instructions to terrorist cells"[361] Al-Barakat which was found it 1989 became a key player in the money transfer business for the Somali people at home and abroad after the collapse of the central government of Somali in 1991. Its closure had a "devastating impact" on Somalia's fragile economy and Somali families whose daily incomes were mostly generated from remittance from the Somali diaspora through the al-Barakat system, which, at the same time, employed many Somalis.[362] Its closure, more specifically, further caused rising prices of staple foods.[363] In sum, the total absence of centralized state institutions that needed to implement preventative measures in the fight against terrorism, unfavorable political and economic conditions for the large segments of the population and unmonitored airports, and the plethora of unmonitored spaces were singled out as the factors that made Somalia vulnerable as a haven for terrorist groups for the US policymakers. For instance, following the September 11 attacks, there were rumors expressed by counter-terrorism officials of potential al Qaeda training camps in Ras Kamboni, a coastal town about two miles from the Kenyan border. Moreover The United Nations Panel of Experts Report described the organization not only as intact but also actively plotting chaos in Somalia, running at least fifteen terrorist training camps and procuring arms in order

360 Ibid.

361 Terrorist Financial Network Fact Sheet: Shutting Down the Terrorist Financial Network https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/11/20011107-6.html.

362 Parry, John. "Credit Crisis to Have Broad, Lasting Impact-Kaufman." U.S., n.d. https://www.reuters.com/article/credit-crisis-economist-idUSN1733850120090717.

363 Aid group warns of increased warlord power https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/report/29288/somalia-aid-group-warns-increased-warlord-power.

to acquire "ultimate control of the people and territory of Somalia."[364] However, investigations found no clear evidence of al-Qaeda ties or presence in Somalia. The most likely place for a terrorist base, a camp at Ras Komboni on the southern tip of the country, was found abandoned.[365] Moreover, aside from a few individuals, no proof was found of ties between AIAI and al-Qaeda.[366]

Initially, Washington considered a military approach to Somalia and established – the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF–HOA), a semi-permanent troop presence at Camp Lemonier in neighboring Djibouti with more than 1500 US military and civilian personnel in residence[367] to coordinate regional counter-terrorism initiative. This decision derived from the assumption that the US military involvement in Afghanistan would create a flood of terrorists from the Middle East and Afghanistan to more comfortable and ungoverned zones such as Somalia or Yemen and use it as their base of operations as they did in the 1990s in Sudan. However, as the CJTF-HOA mission progressed, it soon became clear that the Afghanistan invasion did not produce the high volume of fleeing terrorists to the Horn of Africa region that CENTCOM had anticipated. In fact, the Horn of Africa region contained less terrorist activity than originally feared.[368] As Washington's focus shifted to Iraq, partly because of insufficient intelligence, the US decided not to follow a direct military approach, and the original mission of "capture and kill the fleeing terrorists" was dissolved. The mission, instead, followed increased surveillance on hostile activities in the region, training friendly units in Ethiopia, and, most significantly, initiated a covert CIA proxy war in Somalia in order to chase particular foreign jihadists elements, including Fazul Mohamed, Abu Talha al-Sudani, and Saleh Nabhan who were believed behind the terrorist attacks against US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania that were seeking refuge in the country. This shift in counter-terrorism policy from grand-scale engagements to a more indirect effort situated within the

364 J.E Tambi, M.E. Holt Jr., C. Li, and J. Salek, "Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia pursuant to Security Council resolution 1558 (2004)", United Nations Security Council (S/2005/153), 8 March 2005, p. 7.

365 De Waal, Alex, et al. Islamism and Its Enemies in the Horn of Africa. London: Hurst, 2004.

366 Menkhaus 2004:65

367 Blanchard, Lauren Ploch. Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa. [Library of Congress public edition]. Washington, D.C: Congressional Research Service, 2018.

368 Bates, Ted. *The Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa: The Other Front on the Global War on Terror*. Civilian Research Project. 2008. Pg. 3.

'gray zone' enabled local powerbrokers to become more capable of fighting insurgents, policing their population, and governing more responsibly, which appeared to offer a new way forward.[369] These factors may, however, have contributed to U.S. overconfidence about the threat from Somalia, as attention was directed to covert anti-terrorist operations, while the dynamics of Somalia's political and religious landscape were overwhelmingly ignored.

One of the main premises of this research suggests that political violence develops on the part of an organization in relation to and within its wider political and social context, including government authorities, security officials, and other opponents. In the wider political context, the formation of the Federal Government of Somalia in 2004 put the Nairobi-based government in an awkward position and questioned its legitimacy in the eyes of the Somali public, including the Islamic Courts. Following a prolonged two-year negotiation process at Mbagathi, the warlords of Mogadishu, who were widely perceived by the Somali public as the main perpetrators behind the country's devastation and the proliferation of Warlordism rule, succeeded in obtaining key seats in the government. They served as members of parliament in the Ethiopia-backed internationally recognized government. Furthermore, some groups of people viewed TFG as a trojan horse of the Darod clan interest created and supported by Ethiopia.[370] The ongoing spiral of dirty war between militant groups further pushed the country towards extremist violence as polarization and tension in the wider political framework between the ruling elites in the TFG administration and Mogadishu's leading figures and business elites increased. The call made by President Yusuf to deploy foreign forces within the country has resulted in significant polarization within the TFG and the wider public. Furthermore, this proposal has faced strong opposition from the Courts. It created a schism in the parliament between the president and the speaker, further weakening an already fragile government in exile. It is noteworthy to stress that Somalis have long regarded many Ethiopia as a historical adversary that dates back to the 16th century, one of the leading external drivers of their political unrest and a factor that undermines Somalia's

[369] Louise Wiuff Moe, Counterinsurgency in the Somali Territories: The 'Grey Zone' Between Peace and Pacification, (International Affairs, Volume 94, Issue 2,) March 2018, Pg. 321.

[370] Interview with a former MP in Mogadishu.

political unity. Yusuf's plans pushed the courts into a tactical alliance with other Islamic leaders, Yusuf's political rivals, and Somali nationalists.[371]

Beginning in early 2003, teams of CIA case officers flew into Somalia from Nairobi to gather intelligence, and "they soon expanded to include working independently with a dozen of warlords to chase al-Qaida members, tapping cellphones, purchasing [back] anti-aircraft missiles and, ultimately, developing a deeper understanding of al-Qaida's East African franchise and how it fits into the wider al-Qaida network."[372] This action, however, was not without scrutiny and faced criticism from American officials in Kenya as well as a variety of scholars and Transitional National Government (TNG) officials. The general argumentation was that the collaboration with the highly unpopular warlords would not only push the wider Somali people and communities abroad to side more closely with the Islamist groups but also undermine US's "winning hearts and minds" policy in the region, as many would possibly regard the American led war on terrorism as an assault on Islam. For instance, one of the authorities from the TNG stated that instead of strengthening the Somali government, they started cooperating with the warlords, thinking that the best way to combat terrorism was to help the warlords become stronger and chase away the fundamentalist from Somalia, which eventually backfired."[373] Somali government insist that the United States deal solely with the TFG rather than working with the warlords were ignored by the US officials because the former had the following view that Somalis "view the [Islamic] courts as the product of clan elders, and they have a good reputation compared to the warlords."[374]

Warlords' violence also took on a central role in militarizing the scattered local conflicts with an ideological underpinning. In response to the violence, certain Islamist groups were driven to take measures to safeguard themselves through self-defense. It was in such a setting that the sub-mechanism of retaliation first exerted its influence on the radicalization process of the individuals who later founded al-

371 ICG, Somalia's Islamists, pg.21.

372 *Clandestine Somalia Missions Yield AQ Targets* — the Third in a Series Looking at U.S. Military Operations in the Horn of Africa After the Sept. 11, 2001, Attacks, 2013.

373 Scahill, Jeremy. **Dirty Wars : the World Is a Battlefield**. (New York :Nation Books, 2013.)

374 McGregor, Andrew. "Warlords or Counter-Terrorists: U.S. Intervention in Somalia - Jamestown." Jamestown, May 31, 2006. https://jamestown.org/program/warlords-or-counter-terrorists-u-s-intervention-in-somalia/.

Shabaab, at an early stage of actual violence. Beginning in 2002, citizens of Mogadishu in various neighborhoods witnessed unexplained assassinations and kidnappings against local Islamic clerics and non-Islamist court leaders. The citizens attributed the source of high-level crime to Mooryaans as they took hostages and stole cars which kept them in a place until they were sold in an auction. The gathering of criminals from various parts of the city on a weekly basis to engage in auctions of hostages and stolen goods served as a clear indication of the extent of the issue of crime and abduction. Additionally, it highlights the necessity for increased law enforcement measures within the urban area to mitigate such criminal activities. One of the citizens explained that:

> Every Friday night, all the criminals came from all over the city, and they bought and sold the hostages and stolen property among themselves. It was an auction. The hostages were forced to auction themselves. They were forced to describe their wealth and their health. The hostage would say, 'My health is fine, my family can pay this much, we have such and such property. I have a daughter and a son in the diaspora. I will talk to them; they will send money.' He auctions himself like that. Kidnapping was a big business. There was internal kidnapping and external kidnapping.[375]

Internal kidnapping is attributed to the kidnapping by common criminals in the city, while external kidnapping is associated with a group of warlords operated as the US's counter-terrorism proxies. After making their deal with the CIA, western-backed counter-terrorism networks initiated what many labeled as a "dirty war" characterized by a shadowy and complex process based on intimidation, abduction, and assassinations aimed at capturing al-Qaida suspects hiding out in Somalia. Their campaign soon turned into a small industry in abduction. However, they targeted anyone – Somali or foreign- they suspected of being a supporter of any Islamic group. Stig Harle argued that there was an element of opportunism as warlords tried to convince the Americans to support them financially, 'since they were in the frontline against Al-Qaeda'[376] they began policing by using violent, repressive measures across their overreaching neighborhoods. They, nevertheless, exploited the small-peripheral jihadi presence for their own political means and attempted to capture and sell

---

375 Ibrahim, Ahmed, "The Sharia Courts of Mogadishu: Beyond "African Islam" and "Islamic Law"" (2018). CUNY Academic Works. pg. 175.

376 Hansen, Stig Jarle. **Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group**. (London: Hurst and Company, 2015)

foreigners, mainly but not exclusively Arabs living in Mogadishu, non-Islamists, ordinarily citizens, and their political rivals to the CIA in the hope that they might be on a wanted list.[377] According to one militia leader who has worked closely with the Americans in counter-terrorism operations, as many as seventeen suspected terrorists have been apprehended in Mogadishu alone since 2003 -- all but three apparently innocent.[378]

In March 2003, Suleiman Abdallah, an alleged al-Qaida member from Tanzania, was one of the first significant targets captured by militia leaders. He was taken to Djibouti and was released after more than five years in custody.[379] In July 2004, a raid was carried out by militiamen loyal to one of Mogadishu`s factional leaders Mohamed Qanare on a home belonging to Aden Hashi Ayro upon receiving a tip by the CIA that bomb-maker Abu Taha al-Sudani was holed up in Ayro`s compound in Mogadishu. The raid aimed at capturing Abu Talha al-Sudani, whom the US wanted in connection to East Africa embassy bombings. Neither al-Sudani nor Ayro was there; instead, Ayro's brother-in-law did lose his life during the conflict. The network also managed to kill one of the leaders of Habr Gedir Court, …… soon was replaced by Aden Ayrow as commander in chief of the Ayr Court. Ayro soon after launched a clandestine recruiting campaign in Mogadishu "in order to safeguard Islam and save the Somali country from unbelievers." It appears that many of the clan elders saw the initiative as nothing more than an attempt by Ayro, who did not lead a militia, to assemble a squad of personal bodyguards. As a result, the clan elders did not respond with worry immediately.[380]

Clandestine operations were not the only making of warlords, Ethiopian intelligence services also maintained a significant presence throughout much of Somalia, in particular monitoring and targeting members of al-Ittihad and Oromo ethnic groups in Mogadishu.[381] For instance, Sheikh Mohamed Samantar, an anti-Ethiopian

---

377 Interview with a religious leader in Mogadishu.

378 ICG, "Counter-Terrorism in Somalia: Losing Hearts and Minds?" Crisis Group, September 14, 2016, Pg. 16.

379 Joseph, Dan, and Harun Maruf. Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally. (Indiana UP, 2018)

380 Author is anonymous, Somalia's al-Shabab Reconstitutes Fighting Force (CTC Sentinel, February 2008, Volume 1, Issue 3)

381 Interview with a religious leader in Mogadishu.

religious scholar in Mogadishu, did not survive his attempted abduction, identified as a gunman loyal to one of the militia leaders then allied with Ethiopia. He received funding from Islamic charities and ran schools for the Oromo community in Mogadishu.[382] Other Oromos figures have also been assassinated in the following years. Indiscriminate killings created an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty in Mogadishu's communities which reached up to the degree that Mogadishu citizens who had long beards shaved off out of fear in order to avoid as an object of abduction and assassination.

According to the arguments put forth by Hafez and Wiktorowicz, it can be posited that violent contention arises from a strategic assessment of the repressive context rather than being driven by the commonly held perception of Islamic radicals as irrational, deviant, and unpredictable actors.[383] They pay attention to at least two dimensions of repression on movement behavior that deserve a close examination: timing and targeting. They further claimed that reactive and indiscriminate repression is likely to encourage violent contention, which may push occasional activists and known supporters of the movement to seek the protection of violent groups. It also pushes the spiral of escalation in arms races where each side escalates its violent contention as a defensive measure while viewing the opponent's actions as offensive and provocative, thereby reinforcing perceptions about the need for continued violence.[384]

The violent contention, however, was not only committed by warlords during what many call a "dirty war." Once they realized that the warlords were working with the CIA, young militias who began to emerge in the early 2000s whose membership numbers were in the tens and pro-ICU figures launched reprisal attacks to kill enemy warlords and their suspected collaborators. The new Salafists adopted the same violent tactics employed by warlords against them, assassinating figures associated with the CIA's warlord alliance.[385] It was in this repression context that units were

---

382 International Crisis Group (ICG), "Counter-Terrorism in Somalia: Losing Hearts and Minds?" Africa Report N°95, 11 July 2005

383 Hafez, M.M. & Wiktorowicz, Quintan. *Violence As Contention in the Egyptian Islamic Movement* in **Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach** (Indiana University Press, 2004)., Pg. 62.

384 Ibid. Pg. 61-80.

385 Scahill, Jeremy. **Dirty Wars : the World Is a Battlefield**. (New York :Nation Books, 2013.)

then established inside the Courts, which later amalgamed into the military and administrative structure of the UIC. They specialized in the use of violence as a way to counter repression and resist violent attacks from the warlords. Roland Marchal stated that the pro-Shabaab figures adopted the same tactics as Ethiopian security forces and initiated campaigns of targeted killings (which until then had not happened to any great degree). Many potential Ethiopian agents were killed, and foreigners were anymore seen as potential hostages who could provide fat ransoms but as spies who should be eliminated.[386] Their operations were not limited to warlords and their gunmen alone but extended to presumed collaborators of counter-terrorism networks as well. "They targeted anyone they thought was helping the Americans," said one of the warlords of the counter-terrorism network.[387] They were associated with the killing of several people who worked for counter-terrorism officials and several community activists who enjoyed links with international aid agencies, and a peace activist named Abdulkadir Yahya, who was a former staff member at the US embassy. Moreover, the group retaliated against the abduction of Mohamed Abdi Isse from Ayro's house several weeks ago. They clashed with Qanyare's militias, with whom they were held responsible for the abduction. The group legitimized their operations from defensive and responsive terms as they were collaborators with a "far enemy" – the U.S. – in a global war against Islam and can be killed legitimately in self-defense."[388] Units were then established inside the UIC that specialized in the use of violence as a way to counter repression and resist violent attacks from the individuals associated with the clan-based militias as was in the case the establishment of the BR inside Left-wing militant organizations in Italy.[389]

It was in this context, as claimed by Mukhtar Robow, who served as the deputy leader of the group, that the need for better and more united organizations than had previously existed also seems to have been a reason for the initiators of Al-Shabaab to come together. According to Al-Shabaab itself, this was one of the reasons why it came into being, and defectors support this view.

---

386 Marchal, Roland and Zakaria M. Sheikh. "Salafism in Somalia: Coping with Coercion, Civil War and its Own Contradictions." Islamic Africa 6 (2015): 135-163.

387 Joseph, Dan, and Harun Maruf. **Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally**. (Indiana UP, 2018), Pg. 33

388 International Crisis Group, *Somalia's Islamists* Africa Report N°100, 12 December 2005

389 Alimi et al. The dynamics of Radicalization

> "Some officials of the Islamic movements who were in the country at the time held a meeting having felt that their groups were not that active as far as jihad was concerned. There were various Somali Islamic movements that have in the past tried to carry out jihad, but they were faced with many obstacles and dropped their operations altogether. The men who were previously in these groups held a meeting and decided to form a movement and take part in the jihad and spread the religion. They decided to spread the religion alongside the jihad."[390]

Therefore, movement – the counter-movement dynamic triggered sub-mechanism ***repression by proxy*** and activated the sub-mechanisms ***retaliation.*** Indeed, the escalation of hostilities with individuals associated with clan-based militias and the rising dependence on vigilante actions on the side of Islamist violent activism in more severe and "routinized" forms of militarism. As the al-Shabaab network gained strength and confidence, also thanks to the bounty collected by the degraded a colonial-era Italian cemetery in the Huriwa district,[391] the group became bolstered and increasingly relied on targeted violent attacks against clan-based armed entrepreneurs known commonly as warlords. The UIC began to unite across clan boundaries and build a significant militia force derived from the clans, business elites' own militias, and young militias known later as al-Shabaab. The growing influence of the Islamic Courts backed by Mogadishu's prominent businessmen had begun to encroach upon the authority of the Warlords. In other words, the Courts' growing authority challenged the powerful warlords' hegemony and undermined their lucrative protection rackets. Islamic Courts were gradually becoming an alternative to the *status quo* in Mogadishu as the previously dominant warlords and political factions saw their influence diminish as the business class emerged as an independent political force. They began investing in courts militias as sub-contractors for neighboring watch[392] as, simultaneously, they carefully and gradually withdrew their support from the Warlords. The Somali population also had grown disillusioned not only with the persistent menace of warlords who created chaos in their local milieu but also with the gradual erosion of their confidence over time. The loss of trust among the wider

---

390 Hansen, Stig Jarle. **Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group**. (London: Hurst and Company, 2015)

391 BBC NEWS | Africa | Somali Militias Target Cemetery." news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/Africa/4187097.stm. Accessed 26 Oct. 2022.

392 International Crisis Group. "Somalia: Countering Terrorism in a Failed State." (2002, May 23). https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/somalia/somalia-countering-terrorism-failed-state

population was notably influenced not solely by the repressive practices of the factional leaders but also by their close cooperation with Ethiopia.[393] As the power and jurisdiction of the communal Sharia courts grew, Mogadishu`s powerful clan-based militias, who by then acted independently on behalf of their own interests, attempted to formalize the informal coalition known as the 'Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter Terrorism' (ARPCT) to counter the "radical Islamist threat" to take advantage of the funding opportunity provided by the "war on terror."[394] Similarly, I was told by a communal leader during my fieldwork in Mogadishu that the consolidation of the courts caused unease among the warlords, who perceived them as a challenge to their authority. The elimination of the existing structure became a primary objective of warlords who engaged in collaborative efforts with different actors, particularly Ethiopia.[395] The alliance had been formed as a bulwark against Western counter-terrorism concerns on 18 February 2006 when they realized that Adane and the UIC might have the upper hand in Mogadishu. It was, in fact, aimed at eliminating the Court's growing popularity. However, the public had already viewed the Courts as their best hope. The newly formed ARPCT were also local rivals, and their militias frequently clashed, which meant that there was little collaboration among them. US agents pressed their local partners to work together.[396] That move consequently pushed the Courts and Somalis at large in an unprecedented direction. US's counter-terrorism strategy, stated General Downing, followed "a low-to-invisible American profile in the region" and not to "inflate the appeal of (al-Qaida's) rhetoric or the resonance of their extremists' ideology."[397] However, The February 2006 formation of the ARPCT and the unsavory warlords' violent strategy for personal gain brought to light the connection between them and the US. This led many to believe that the warlords were indeed working for the CIA, providing evidence that supported their suspicions.[398] It was later revealed that the CIA was financing the warlords with cash payments of about $100,000 to

---

393 Interview with a Somali teacher who witnessed that particular event.

394 Ahmad, Ibrahim the Sharia Courts of Mogadishu, in **War and Peace in Somalia: National Grievances, Local Conflict and Al-Shabaab**, eds. Michael, Keating, Waldman, Matt (Oxford University Press, 2019) Pg.150

395 Interview with a community leader in Mogadishu

396 Menkhaus, Ken. "The Crisis in Somalia: Tragedy in Five Acts." *African Affairs* 106, no. 424 (2007)

397 Scahill, Jeremy. **Dirty Wars : the World Is a Battlefield**. (New York :Nation Books, 2013.)

398 Wax, Emily, and Karen DeYoung. "U.S. Secretly Backing Warlords in Somalia." May 2006. https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/05/16/AR2006051601625_pf.html.

$150,000 per month.[399] Many Somalis doubted there were terrorists on Somali soil and believed their country had been wrongly targeted and framed as the war on terror is, in fact, a war on Islam. Moreover, it was perceived that the U.S. had singled them out not on the grounds of terrorism, but rather as a retaliatory measure for the deaths of the U.S. Rangers during the Mogadishu battle in 1993, as a way of settling old scores. According to various sources, Somalia could potentially provide a safe haven for Somali warlords; however, it may not be a viable option for global terrorists.[400] A Somali civil society activist told Crisis Group counterterrorism efforts were beginning to generate a dangerous backlash: "Even those who support the Americans, those who are secular, become very angry."[401]

The international community directed its focus toward the developing events that appeared to hold greater significance in Afghanistan and Iraq while comparatively neglecting Somalia, which was characterized as "chaotic." [402] Therefore, in the long term, the consequences of counter-terrorism strategies in relation to the radicalization of the Islamists and the Somali public and their growing popularity were mostly ignored. With the announcement of the formation of the ARPCT, Somali public opinion quickly sided with the Islamic Courts, which were perceived to have "a proven track record of restoring security and was associated with the provision of other social services and charitable works," whereas most Somalis saw the ARPCT as self-serving, corrupt, and a "pawn" of the United States."[403] Furthermore, there were a number of high-ranking TFG ministers among the warlords who fought under the ARPCT banner.[404] During this phase, the ideological distance between the two increasingly became salient. Muhammad Dhere, who was a prominent actor in the anti-terrorism alliance, accused a number of members of parliament of belonging to

---

399 Morgan, David. "US Funding Somali Warlords-Intelligence Experts Say - Somalia." ReliefWeb, June 5, 2006. https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/us-funding-somali-warlords-intelligence-experts-say.

400 Dagne, Ted. *Somalia: Current Conditions and Prospects for a Lasting Peace* Specialist in African Affairs August 31, 2011

401 International Crisis Group (ICG), "Counter-Terrorism in Somalia: Losing Hearts and Minds?" Africa Report N°95, 11 July 2005

402 Prendergast, John. "The Perilous Chaos of Forgotten Somalia" International Crisis Group, 2005. www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/somalia/perilous-chaos-forgotten-somalia.

403 Nikolaus Grubeck, Civilian Harm in Somalia: Creating an Appropriate Response, Civilians in Armed Conflict Series

404 Cherian, John. "Return to Civil War." Frontline, June 15, 2006. https://frontline.thehindu.com/world-affairs/article30209713.ece.

al-Qaeda, and he also alleges that seventy members of parliament work for countries that are hostile to Afghanistan. It has become increasingly common for warlords to accuse their opponents of having links to al-Qaeda as a means of undermining their credibility.[405] The Somali public perceived the Alliance members as having grossly overstepped their boundaries, having attacked all devout Muslims, not just minority extremists. These developments made the existing boundaries become more salient and apparent between political cleavages as the latest developments led southern Somalia to enter a period of 'tri-polar' politics defined by the rival camps of the TFG located in Baidoa, the ARPCT of Mogadishu, and the UIC.[406]

From the time it was founded in the latter half of 2004 until the beginning of 2006, the Union of Islamic Courts (ICU) did not make any attempts to expand its political authority outside the Banaadir area. Instead, it appeared to be satisfied with concentrating its power within the city of Mogadishu. However, the cold war between the parties that had been going on for some time was about to escalate into intermittent clashes. The war of Mogadishu broke out on January 2006 between the ARPCT and the Courts as the two Business families of Mogadishu, namely Bashir Raghe – Abukar Umar Adani clashes which occurred prior to the formation of ARPCT, crystalized the emerging line between the two coalitions. Adani family was controlling the El-Ma'an area, which has served as Mogadishu's port since the closure of the city's main port in 1995 by faction leaders. He was reportedly close to the Islamic courts, while Raghe was a member of a newly created Alliance.[407] Raghe asked for the Alliance's assistance, while Adani was assisted by members of the Courts in which Al-Shabaab militias came to the rescue of those defending a Somali political identity.[408] Adane's move also opened up new channels of financial support for the Sharia Courts coalition, enabling them to pay for new militias and encouraging the remaining warlords serving as sub-lieutenants to switch allegiances or to withdraw from fighting. Considering Adane's strategic importance for the movement, the UIC rushed to his

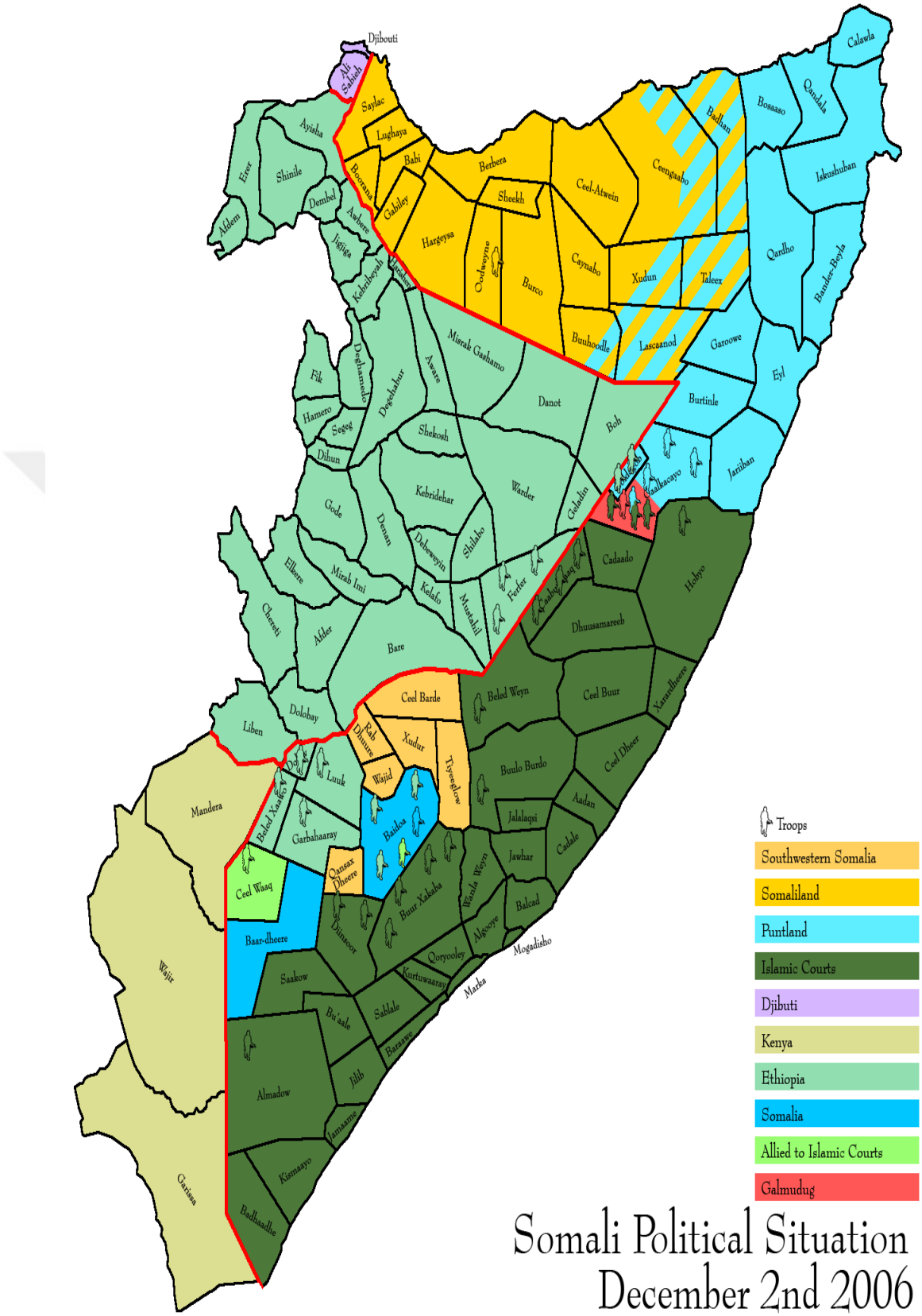
---

405 McGregor, Andrew. "Warlords or Counter-Terrorists: U.S. Intervention in Somalia- Jamestown." May 31, 2006. https://jamestown.org/program/warlords-or-counter-terrorists-u-s-intervention-in-somalia/.

406 Hansen, Stig Jarle. **Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group**. (London: Hurst and Company, 2015)

407 United Nations' S/2006/418 Security Council. Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia

408 Defense R&D Canada Contract Report DRDC Toronto CR 2011-080 November 2011 Clan and Islamic Identities in Somali Society



Map 2 Somali Political Situation on December 2nd, 2006

aid, inflicting the initial blow to the warlords in a struggle that ultimately resulted in the warlords being driven out of Mogadishu.

This new conflict explained Abdullahi Shirwa, a member of Civil Society in Mogadishu, “was not between clans on which previous clashes have based, but between two groups with different ideologies."[409] Mediation efforts by elders and civil society groups to end the conflicts became unsuccessful, mainly because of this new type of war which complicated the issue for clan elders. Another division of line between warlords and the Islamists, according to Ken Menkhaus, was tied to the end of the marriage of convenience between Mogadishu’s Islamists and its warlords. The Transitional Federal Government (TFG) lost its significance and ceased to pose a formidable challenge to the Mogadishu Group due to the TFG's weakened state, which resulted in the dissolution of the cohesive force that had previously bound the Mogadishu Group. A dispute between the Islamists and a prominent faction leader, Musa Sude, regarding the management of a municipal administration in Mogadishu led to a visible schism between the militia leaders and the Islamists.[410] Although the TFG was formally recognized as the government of Somalia, it did not have any genuine presence anywhere else in the nation other than Baidoa. The warlords of Mogadishu, on the other hand, were formally allied with the TFG and regarded as the TFG's representatives in the city. As the influence and authority of the UIC increased, it became increasingly apparent that the UIC and the warlords were headed toward a head-on intra-clan collision with one another.

Islamic courts waged an extensive grass-root mobilization campaign in Mogadishu through public speeches on the streets, talking to people through radios which were broadcast all over Somalia, mobilizing in the mosques during daily prayers and on Fridays, and holding public demonstrations in order to seek public support and attention. One traditional leader provided the following information on the mobilization of Islamic courts:

---

409 The New Humanitarian, From clan fighting to ideological battleground, 11 May 2006 https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news/2006/05/11/clan-fighting-ideological-battleground

410 Menkhaus, Ken. “The Crisis in Somalia: Tragedy in Five Acts.” *African Affairs* 106, no. 424 (2007): 357–90.

> "The mobilization process involved multiple facets, including finance, weapons, and recruitment. The level of support from both tribal leaders and business elites was substantial. The Islamic Courts effectively utilized propaganda methodologies, which encompassed the utilization of local media. This process received significant support from the general public. Speeches were delivered by Court representatives in mosques and during Friday sermons. Briefly stated that the Islamic Courts enjoyed the backing of the populace, commercial entities, and tribal leaders. There was a popular perception that the warlords were selling out Muslims in collaboration with the unbelievers."[411]

The Somali diaspora communities also provided significant financial assistance. Individuals identifying with the Islamist cause and those pursuing personal gains and opportunity seekers came from various regions of Somalia and amalgamated with the Courts Union. Additionally, the Courts received substantial backing from both the business community and the general public in their confrontation with the ARPCT. The courts additionally received some support from Eritrea, seemingly not on the basis of ideological affinity but rather due to their opposition to Ethiopia during their border dispute spanning from 1999 to 2002.[412] The general public attributed the actions of faction leaders to their opposition towards the Islamic faith and religion rather than perceiving it as a mere struggle for local dominance over Mogadishu.[413] The defense of Islam appeared to be a subject of contention. Upon inquiring about the underlying motivations of the faction leaders, it was conveyed to me that their actions were primarily motivated by material gains rather than ideological convictions. Conversely, the UIC soldiers appeared to be motivated by religious and ideological beliefs.[414]

The war, which started in February, ended in January 2006 with the Courts' victory that left more than 360 people dead and over 2,000 wounded.[415] Courts' influences rapidly spread across Southern Mogadishu within six months, thanks to clan network dynamics and affiliations and, more importantly, the growing popularity of the courts.

---

411 Interview with a community leader in Mogadishu.

412 Interview with a Somali academician in Mogadishu.

413 Interview with a Somali academician in Mogadishu.

414 Interview with a former member of UIC in Mogadishu

415 Wanted cleric gets key Somali post. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2006/6/24/wanted-cleric-gets-key-somali-post

The UIC managed to consolidate its power over a large portion of south-central Somalia, including important metropolitan areas such as Mogadishu and Kismayo, and had established the most cohesive government that these regions had seen since the collapse of Siad Barre. It was the first time since 1991 that Mogadishu had fallen under a unified administration. Following the overwhelming triumph of the UIC in Mogadishu in 2006, the Hawiye, Menkhaus state, was able to form a more or less unified political front, although one that took on an Islamist orientation rather than a purely clannish one.[416] It should be noted that the UIC, in fact, was a heterogenous movement composed of various factions and clans.

Numerous scholars, including I.M. Lewis, Ken Menkhaus, Aisha Ahmad, Afyare Elmi, and Abdi Samatar, describe the 6-month period of UIC's rule as the golden age of Somalia. Not only these scholars but also a Westerner named Terry, who was in Mogadishu at the time, says, "For the six months they ruled Mogadishu—during that period, it was amazing. There were no checkpoints, and people wandered freely, unconcerned about being robbed or raped or the general lack of order that had prevailed for so long."[417]

As stated earlier, this relational process object shift activated sub-mechanism *repression by proxy* at the hand of faction leaders and triggered *retaliation* sub-mechanism. In this process, the Courts not only became politicized but also gave the opportunity for some of the new Salafists to be represented in the Courts structure. Eventually, of the 18 members of the UIC's Executive Council, five were active members of al-Shabaab. The creation of the warlords' alliance pushed the UIC and the "youth" beyond mere association into a military alliance of their own.[418] According to al-Shabaab's former secretary general and spokesperson, Mukhtar Robow, it was at this stage, in August 2006, that Al-Shabaab was created formally. The new formal positions within the Courts, as well as their relative unity, also meant that Al-Shabaab got access to funding from the supporters of the Courts and the

[416] Menkhaus, Ken, *The Crisis in Somalia: Tragedy in Five Acts*. African Affairs, Vol. 106, Issue 424, pp. 357-390, 2007. pg. 374.

[417] Joseph, Dan, and Harun Maruf. **Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally**. Indiana UP, 2018.

[418] Cedric Barnes & Harun Hassan. *The Rise and Fall of Mogadishu's Islamic Courts*, Journal of Eastern African Studies, (2007) 1:2, 151-160, DOI: 10.1080/17531050701452382

business community.[419] Now that the ARPCT lost the battle and most of the alliance militia surrendered and joined the Islamists, their leaders fled to Ethiopia and Kenya. The Courts remained the only powerful military actor in Mogadishu by which the TFG of Somalia felt threatened.

The outside involvement had the exact opposite effect of what was desired in the first place. The Islamists were not only not restrained but instead gained the upper hand, and Mogadishu was consolidated under a singular governing body, marking the very first instance of such unification since the collapse of Siyad Barre's regime. Furthermore, the Islamist factions rapidly extended their sphere of influence across a significant expanse of southern and central Somalia, spanning from the southern border of Kenya to the southern limits of Puntland. This left the Transitional Federal Government with tenuous control solely over Baidoa, with the assistance of Ethiopian military forces. The Islamists transformed the alliance into an administrative structure referred to as the Council throughout the course of the process.

To conclude, it is imperative to emphasize that during the period spanning from 2002 to 2006, the participation of the ARPCT and the tactics employed by the warlords played a pivotal role in the process of radicalization among certain factions of the Islamist groups, as well as the broader Somali populace. The aforementioned strategies deepened internal rifts and accelerated the trajectory of violence in the nation while also militarizing the confrontation between the ARPCT and the UIC. The resulting atmosphere of unrest and unpredictability created an environment that made it simple for extremist beliefs to establish themselves and thrive.

3.3.3. Regional Security Dynamics: Ethiopian Intervention of Somalia

The 2006 Ethiopian occupation of Somalia was a highly controversial move that received significant criticisms from various regional stakeholders and a substantial portion of the Somali populace within and abroad. The purpose of the occupation was to remove the Union of Islamic Courts (ICU) from power in a large part of southern Somalia, including the city of Mogadishu. The occupation was swift and

[419] Hansen, Stig Jarle. **Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group**. (London: Hurst and Company, 2015)

overwhelming, and it succeeded in dislodging the UIC from power within the first weeks. However, the intervention faced substantial resistance from Somalis at home as well as abroad, as they perceived the Ethiopian presence as an occupation force.

The Ethiopian government viewed the UIC as a threat to its own stability and considered the occupation as a necessary measure to prevent the spread of Islamic extremism in the region and saw the rise of the UIC as a potential threat to regional stability.[420] On their part, it was a proactive measure taken in response to the growing threat of Islamic extremism in the Horn and to prevent the TFG from collapsing. If put in a regional context, it has been posited that Ethiopia perceived Somalia as a potential threat under the UIC's administration due to the fact that there is a significant ethnic Somali population in Ethiopia which share a long-standing border dispute.[421] The Eritrean factor was also a serious concern for Ethiopia. Ethiopian forces responded with their own heavy-handed tactics, including aerial bombardments and indiscriminate killings of civilians, which only served to radicalize further and alienate the Somali population. This created not only a fertile ground for al-Shabab to expand its influence and prey on nationalistic sentiments but also the radicalization and recruitment of young Somali men into Al-Shabaab. As a result, the group positioned itself as the only viable alternative to foreign intervention and secular governance.

How did the occupation context further contribute to the militarization of the political landscape in Somalia? The intervention was met with strong resistance from various Somali groups known as *Muqawama,* which means resistance in Arabic, including the newly-formed Al-Shabaab. The organization was founded by a group of young militants who opposed to Ethiopian intervention and the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) supported by Ethiopian troops. The group went through an institutionalization process as a result of the Ethiopian occupation. Initially, it focused on guerrilla warfare against occupation forces, with a particular emphasis on targeting Ethiopian military convoys and checkpoints. The group also carried out a number of suicide bombings and explosions in Mogadishu and other areas of Somalia, becoming

[420] Al-Shabaab | Council on Foreign Relations. "Al-Shabaab," November 4, 2022. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/al-shabaab.

[421] Interview with a members of the UIC in Mogadishu.

one of the most powerful insurgent groups as their ideology became more radicalized over time.

The process we are investigating was seen as a violation of Somalia's sovereignty and sparked widespread anger and resentment among the Somali population. Al-Shabaab was able to exploit this sentiment and portray itself as a defender of Somalia against foreign aggression. The group's ideology also emphasized the need for jihad and the establishment of an Islamic state in Somalia, which resonated with many disaffected young Somalis. It can be argued that the intervention in Somalia marked a significant turning point in the history of both Al-Shabaab and the country as a whole. The reason mentioned earlier provided the group with a motive to receive substantial support of any kind and a justification for its assertive tactics. As a result, Al-Shabab adopted increasingly radical and belligerent tactics in their efforts to confront the Ethiopian armed forces. The perpetrators executed suicide bombings, deployed roadside bombs, engaged in guerrilla warfare, and conducted focused assaults against Ethiopian soldiers and their associates within Somalia, including civilians. The group utilized hit-and-run tactics, whereby they launched attacks on Ethiopian army bases and subsequently withdrew to rural areas.

Outbidding Dynamics

The United States, especially its ally in the GWOT Ethiopia, watched with great scrutiny and concern as the Union of Islamic Courts unexpectedly and decisively defeated the clan-based factions of Mogadishu or the Alliance and expanded their sovereignty to cover all of southern Somalia in a short period. The Union of Islamic Courts (ICU), which managed to some extent to avoid clan politics, seized control of Mogadishu in 2006. With the enthusiastic backing of the Somali business community, the UIC quickly brought relative order and economic improvement to their expanding areas of control after the TFG failed to overcome the predatory warlord politics that had predominated for 15 years.[422]

[422] Rosen, Nir. “How Did al-Shabab Emerge from the Chaos of Somalia?” TIME.com, 20 Aug. 2010, content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2010699, 00.html.

In six months, the Union of Islamic Courts was able to establish stability in a significant portion of southern Somalia. The group was able to exert its authority by dismantling checkpoints in various neighborhoods, resulting in a considerable decrease in crime rates throughout the city. This development enabled the populace to engage in their daily-basis activities and move around safely, even during nighttime.[423] The UIC's rule was expected to bring about positive changes in various ways, even among those who did not fully support all of the UIC's objectives. A significant number of people from diaspora communities have been repatriated to their homeland, contributing valuable technical knowledge, foreign currency, and financial resources.[424]

In a larger context, the groups and individuals that comprised the constituent parts of the Union of Islamic Courts agreed on two main objectives despite the ideological diversity that they share. The first was to end the presence of Ethiopian troops in the country, regardless of their number or motivations, and to establish functioning state mechanisms through the implementation of Sharia law. The armed intervention of Ethiopia, which led to the disintegration of the UIC, paved the way for the integration of some of its core members into the ranks of the TFG and opened the door for a new process during the peace talks that took place in Asmara and Djibouti, respectively. In this process the faction known as al-Shabaab, which originated as an element of the resistance mechanisms referred to as al-Muqawama against Ethiopian military presence in the area, persists in adhering to the two crucial principles that were present prior to 2006, notwithstanding the emergence of diverse objectives and incentives over the course of time. The guerrilla movement and associated tactics that were initiated during the Ethiopian occupation of 2007 persisted beyond the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces in 2009, contrary to popular belief. Following the withdrawal, the African Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was deployed to assume responsibility for safeguarding the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and to address the subsequent power vacuum.

The incursion of the Ethiopian military into Somalia and its capital city in the latter part of 2006 served as a crucial turning point in the radicalization trajectory of the al-

423 Interview with a religious cleric in Mogadishu.
424 Interview with a leader of civil society group in Mogadishu.

Shabaab movement. This group, which originated as a small cohort of militants, subsequently emerged as the most potent military element within a coalition that successfully eliminated tribal-based factions from Mogadishu in 2006. Although al-Shabaab has been shaped by various external forces, its initial period of militarization and radicalization emerged due to direct foreign intervention, particularly Ethiopia's occupation of Somalia.[425] However its militarization process can be traced back to the severe repressive and violent tactics employed by the militia leaders as it was discussed in the movement-counter movement dynamics. As a result of the Ethiopian invasion, the group underwent a process of radicalization and subsequently evolved into a prominent guerrilla movement. The military involvement of Ethiopia has been restricted in scale and scope, with its origins dating back to the 1990s and early 2000s. Notably, Ethiopia conducted military operations in the Bosaso and Gedo regions during the early 1990s to support its ally, Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf, in his fight against the al-Ittihad al-Islami movement.[426] Despite facing the ongoing unpopularity of religious manifestations and practices among a significant portion of the populace, these advancements facilitated the establishment of the al-Shabaab movement within Somali society.[427]

The Ethiopian occupation is essential in the context of al-Shabaab's overall transformation and radicalization since the organization abandoned its conventional military tactics and replaced them with a more unconventional hit-and-run guerilla approach. Moreover, the group has expanded the scope of its activities as it faces a broader spectrum of targets that employ increasingly sophisticated tactics. In light of these developments, al-Shabaab has gradually become increasingly decentralized and seemed to adopt a transitional character, positing itself alongside the al-Qaida network. As Roland Marchal stated that the longer the war, the stronger the ideological links with other crises in terms of jihad.[428] Therefore, this mechanism constituted most centrality by sub-mechanisms boundary control and *attribution of*

[425] Wise, Rob. "Al Shabaab." AQAM Futures Project Case Study Series, Center for Strategic & International Studies. Homeland Security & Counterterrorism Program Transnational Threats Project. July 2011.

[426] Council on Foreign Relations, "Timeline: Al Shabab (2004–2020)," November 17, 2021. https://www.cfr.org/timeline/al-shabab.

[427] Marchal, Roland. The Rise of a Jihadi Movement in a Country at War: Harakat al-Shabaab al Mujaheddin in Somalia. [Research Report] Sciences Po. 2011, pp.75

[428] Ibid.

similarity. In order to understand and explain the radicalizing effect of this mechanism on al-Shabaab and Somali society in general, we need to address the stages leading up to this process. Therefore, I will first discuss the mechanism of provocation in the background, which leads to the occupation process. Subsequently, the effects of the boundary control mechanism will be examined. Additionally, I will provide explanations regarding how the boundary control mechanism increased the organization's assertiveness and efficacy in achieving its objectives with respect to the tactical preferences that the movement adopted.

From a historical point of view, the long-standing enmity between Ethiopia and Somalia goes back to the 16th century. However, the actual occupation phenomenon is rather new in a contemporary historical-political context. When it comes to regional dynamics, Somali elites, and people, to a great extent, are in consensus on Ethiopia's long-standing influence over the region. More specifically, there has long been a developing perception over the centuries among the Somali public that Ethiopia has been meddling in Somalia's internal affairs due to the fact that a centralized and unified Somali nation would pose a security threat to Ethiopia in accordance with its own national security and regional interests.[429] For instance, the legitimacy of the Transitional Government of Somalia, which was formed in Kenya in 2004 with the strong support and blessing of Ethiopia, has been viewed with deep skepticism by plenty of people, most notably of the Hawiye clan in Mogadishu. One of the main criticisms was that the whole process was not carried out in line with a national consensus and agreement that would involve large segments of society, but rather a top-down approach was followed and implemented. The fact that some of the faction leaders in Mogadishu had been granted ministerial positions in the newly formed government as a part of an inclusive approach. It nevertheless further fueled suspicions and mistrust towards the government on the part of the public and the UIC itself. Moreover, Abdullahi Yusuf's clan allegiance was perceived as a highly provocative move, given the background of the major faction leaders' different clan affiliations in the early 1990s. Although Prime Minister Ali Gedi belonged to the Hawiye clan, nevertheless, the election of Abdullahi Youssef, a former clan-based militia leader in the Puntland region and a long-standing Ethiopian ally during the Siad Barre era, as President of the TFG was considered a deeply controversial move.

[429] Interview with a former MP in Mogadishu.

However, it was more of the role of Ethiopia behind the formation of the TFG than the clan factor with which Abdullahi Yusuf was affiliated that caused suspicions and unrest.

In 2004, a coalition of Islamic Courts in Mogadishu established an umbrella organization to broaden the scope of their community-based initiatives, which had previously been limited to their respective neighborhoods. During this period of time, the Islamic Courts experienced a notable expansion in their organizational structure, accompanied by a substantial increase in their social backing and a solid basis. On the other hand, a significant obstacle that faced the TFG administration in Kenya included the establishment of a global reputation and the achieving widespread recognition in the country.

Illustration 2. The Speaker of the Parliament of Somalia meets with Sheikh Sharif Ahmad and Hasan Dahir Aweys

Somalia had developed a tripolar military and political order by the year 2004. The situation in Somalia was characterized by the presence of various militia groups, including those based on tribal affiliations, as previously discussed. Additionally, there was the Transitional Government of Somalia, which was recognized by the United Nations and established in Kenya. Another significant group was the Union of Islamic Courts, which had gained widespread support and credibility among the local

population due to their efforts to restore peace and social order in the areas where they operated. Although the international and regional stream favored the TFG considering the material and moral support from the international partners and institutions, local developments seemed to be even more challenging and contentious. Perhaps the main object of contention that the Union of Islamic Courts and its constituents had vis-à-vis the Somali government had been the relocation of the capital to Baidoa in 2005, accompanied by Ethiopian troops. The presence of Ethiopian military personnel, irrespective of the justification, was perceived by many as a clear violation of the territorial sovereignty of Somalia.[430] Initially, the boundary control mechanism gained influence in 2004 when Abdullahi Yusuf requested IGAD for military protection from the courts. Many Somalis – especially those who support the Islamic Courts, perceived the TFG as a faction rather than a legitimate national government. They viewed any direct support for it as a provocation.[431] Thus, following the entry of Ethiopian troops into the country to escort and protect the TFG government became a new object of contention on the part of the Union of Islamic Courts and its various constituent structures.

Following 9/11 and its aftermath, the international environment did not favor various Islamic institutions, groups, and individuals in Somalia. Moreover, the growing and covered violent operations and indiscriminate assassinations against Islamic figures across the country have led to deep unrest. It then triggered violent confrontations and counter measurements by a minority of people belonging al-Shabaab network. The diffusion of the GWOT doctrine into the Horn of Africa doubtlessly injected security challenges into the Somali sociopolitical context, creating a provocative environment that allowed various groups to take advantage in order to fulfill their political ends. In other words, local alliance dynamics were shaped and forged in a way that was hardly independent of the global counterterrorism doctrine. The TFG and Ethiopia's accusations against the UIC of harboring international terrorists responsible for the US's embassy bombings in East Africa contributed significantly to the overlapping alliance formations linking local, national, and international levels. Lyons stated that:

[430] Interview with a community leader in Mogadishu.

[431] International Crisis Group (ICG), Can the Somali Crisis be Contained? 10 August 2006, Africa Report N°116.

> "The convergence of internal uncertainties within a country, tensions between different states, and worldwide strategies give rise to regional "security complexes" where the safety of each participant is inherently interconnected with that of others and cannot be analyzed in isolation."[432]

The shifting dynamics of the international security architecture and the lines of tension that these dynamics created contributed to shaping the political alliances in Somalia and to the militarization of the political context to a great extent. The deployment of Ethiopian troops to Baidoa to protect the TFG was not well received by many in Mogadishu and beyond. It was more than enough to aggravate the current stalemate further.

Ethiopia deployed troops in the new capital of the TFG government to secure its asset. That would be the third move that many Somalis felt threatened and provoked**.** The first one is the belief that a) TFG is a Trojan horse, which was created and supported by Ethiopia, b) the government included Mogadishu's unsavory warlords who were primarily held responsible for the destruction of the country and Warlordism rule, c) recent deployments of Ethiopian troops to protect the TFG.[433] The presence of foreign troops, especially Ethiopians, therefore, posed a significant subject of contention between the TFG and the Union of Islamic Courts. The sense of invasion (noting that the Ethiopian arm was already in Baidoa) further heightened the polarization of the country and radicalization of the public. Conversely, the Somali parliament encountered internal challenges, primarily referring to the presence of Ethiopian military forces within the country. Subsequently, the Ethiopian factor engendered altercations and contentious discussions within the Parliament, resulting in an unofficial split within the government known as the 'Mogadishu Group,' led by the speaker of the parliament.[434] Somalia's new government refused to move government to the capital Mogadishu, insisting that it remain in Nairobi until it moved to Jowhar. A significant group of Members of Parliament, which included the Speaker of the Parliament, expressed their dissent towards the aforementioned resolution and advocated for the continuation of their activities in Mogadishu. The complex impasse

---

[432] Lyons, Terrence. "The Ethiopia-Eritrea Conflict and the Search for Peace in the Horn of Africa." Review of African Political Economy 36, no. 120 (2009): 167–80.

[433] Interview with a Somali academician in Mogadishu.

[434] Mbaria, John. "Somalia: The Ethiopia Factor in the Rise of the Union" - Allafrica.com, accessed November 2, 2022, https://allafrica.com/stories/200612051026.html. December 05, 2006

within the government was resolved through the attainment of a consensus between the President and the Speaker of Parliament in Yemen, which entailed the relocation of the capital from Jowhar to Baido. However, this decision failed to garner significant global backing.

Military Intervention of Somalia: 2005 – 2009

Between June and October of 2006, the UIC gained authority over a total of seven out of ten regions located in the south-central region of Somalia. They restructured the Islamic Courts into the Somali Council of Islamic Courts (CSIC), creating an advisory council under the chairmanship of Sheikh Aweys and an executive body headed by Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed. Despite establishing communication channels aimed at mitigating potential conflicts and tensions between the two parties, the mechanism of provocation persisted and was further exacerbated by the inflammatory statements and actions of both parties. The very appointment of Sheikh Aweys has further alarmed both Ethiopia and the United States, which had placed Sheikh Aweys on a sanctions list in 2001 due to his alleged links to terrorism. Indeed, nationalist statements by some ICU leadership have further fueled Ethiopian fears that the UIC hopes to amalgamate ethnic Somali communities in neighboring northern Kenya and Ethiopia's Ogaden with Somalia. Ethiopia was also concerned about the potential impact of the Islamic Courts' effort to establish a political order ruled by Sharia on Ethiopia's own large Muslim and Somali population. The military emergence of the UIC as a threat in 2006 prompted the Ethiopian government to strengthen its political and military support to the TFG[435]. Ethiopia emerged as the primary source of arms provision to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), also extending its support to faction leaders. However, other regional actors also made contributions in the form of components and other supplies. Following the UIC's triumph over the warlords in June 2006, Ethiopia escalated the deployment of troops and military resources to Baidoa, the TFG's fortified location, with the aim of safeguarding it against any potential ICU assault. It was followed by The US administration's backing of its ally Ethiopia.[436] In other words, the emergence of the UIC as a dominant political force in

[435] Shell-Shocked: Civilians under Siege in Mogadishu, Human Rights Watch, August 13, 2007, https://www.hrw.org/report/2007/08/13/shell-shocked/civilians-under-siege-mogadishu.

[436] Ibid.

southern Somalia in June 2006 enabled regional and international actors to view the TFG as a more acceptable form of Somali leadership. The Ethiopian government believed that the UIC was attempting to establish its rule over all Somali-speaking regions in East Africa by consolidating and expanding its authority. Ethiopian government officials accused the UIC of its irredentist claims over Ethiopia's Somali territory. Furthermore, Ethiopian officials claimed that the UIC was resurrecting the Siad Barre administration's expansionist intention to establish a "Greater Somalia" discourse in the Horn of Africa and their claims on the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, which was already a conflict-ridden area due to the Ogaden National Liberation Front's (ONLF) claims for independence. That line of thinking was closely associated with the 'irredentist strategy' of the Barre administration that caused a military conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia. Ethiopian authorities also stressed that this old ambition was invalid as it contradicted the binding decision of the Organization of African Unity that colonial borders should be preserved. [437] Allegations regarding the UIC's adherence to a nationalist ideology have been accompanied by assertions that it is a "disruptive entity" that lacks foresight and strategic planning. The presence of this duality has led to a certain level of ambiguity and evident tension within the Ethiopian government's portrayal of the UIC. During the course of my interviews conducted in Somalia, two distinct perspectives regarding Ethiopia's incursion into Somalia were brought to the forefront. The initial viewpoint underscored the apprehended threat presented by the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) towards the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), which had been instituted with the aid of Ethiopia and had been provided with military support from its inception. The second proposition posited that in the event of the UIC's capture of Baidao, the former would share a border with Ethiopia. This would have further intensified the pre-existing border issue between the two nations. Due to these two factors, Ethiopia proactively escalated the scope and magnitude of its transnational military campaign.[438]

In summary, Addis made an accusation that the Courts had formed an alliance with Eritrea, suggesting that regional geopolitical factors were in play. Additionally, the Courts were accused of providing a safe haven for Wahhabi extremists and engaging in cross-border military activities. The Ethiopian government exhibited a strong

[437] Regional War May Loom in Africa, NBC News, accessed October 31, 2022, https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna16200852.

[438] Interview with a former MP in Mogadishu.

resolve to undertake all requisite measures to prevent the resurgence of a consolidated Islamic Somalia that could potentially pose a threat to its regional dominance.[439]

Broken Negotiations: June 2006 – October 2006

> "A shift from broken negotiations to coordinated destruction results from causal mechanisms in our activation cluster; they increase the salience of damage done within all interactions by activating available boundaries, stories, and relations. Rising stakes of the conflict, increasing uncertainty across boundaries, and entry of violent specialists into action all promote activation."

According to Charles Tilly's assertion, there may be certain circumstances in which efforts to engage in negotiations with the aim of achieving peaceful resolutions between opposing factions may not yield productive results, potentially leading to negative outcomes. This can be attributed to various factors, including the heightened significance of the conflict, the escalating uncertainty surrounding the circumstances, and the involvement of individuals who engage in violent activities for personal gain. Consequently, parties involved in a conflict may engage in coordinated destruction as they place greater emphasis on retaliatory measures rather than pursuing diplomatic and non-violent means of resolving the dispute. This statement highlights the multifaceted character of conflict and the numerous ways in which diverse elements can affect one's responses to and resolutions of such situations.

On June 22, 2006, the two sides reached an agreement on mutual recognition and decided to negotiate in Khartoum after Sudan agreed to serve as the host country. With an agreement on integrated security forces and a promise to discuss power-sharing arrangements, the second round of negotiations, held under the auspices of the Arab League, made further apparent progress in September 2006, which occurred on September 18 and was an attempt to kill President Abdullahi Yusuf. Leaders of the UIC denied being behind the assault. Abdullahi Yusuf was reportedly reluctant to negotiate and enter the power-sharing process with the UIC authorities in the first

[439] Verhoeven, Harry, "The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy of Failed States: Somalia, State Collapse and the Global War on Terror," Journal of Eastern African Studies 3, no. 3, 2009: 405–25. Pg. 411.

place.[440] A decisive military triumph against the UIC seemed to be the most logical course of action.[441] In addition, some factions within the ranks of the UIC were overshadowing the peace talks with their provocative statements and military actions on the field. The Khartoum peace initiative secured some progress at the beginning. Both parties, for instance, recognized each other, agreed to create a unified national army, and discussed further power-sharing.

The initiative came to a halt as leaders of AU/IGAD proceeded with their plans to deploy African troops in Somalia. The perceived encirclement was an important turning point that generated strong emotions and reactions from certain factions within the UIC, resulting in an escalation of the situation and increased aggression against the TFG. Both the UIC and the TFG/Ethiopia stepped up their military readiness throughout the negotiations. Beginning in June 2006, both sides engaged in a race to accumulate an increasing number of weapons. While shipments arrived for the Courts from the Eritrean government, supplies arrived for the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) from Ethiopia.[442] One week after the UIC declared victory in Mogadishu, Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi told US diplomats in Addis Ababa that "if Baidoa were endangered, we would strike." On the 20th of July, a group of Ethiopian forces, numbering between several hundred and several thousand, entered the region and established themselves in and around Baidoa with the aim of safeguarding their associates from the UIC factions that are in charge of the capital. On the 20th of July, a group of Ethiopian forces, numbering between several hundred and several thousand, entered the region and established themselves in and around Baidoa with the aim of safeguarding their associates from the UIC factions that were marching toward the capital.[443] The UIC forces stopped their advancement at a distance of approximately twenty-five kilometers from the town while simultaneously proceeding with their progress in other areas.[444] In the run-up to the third round, the

[440] Interview with a former MP in Mogadishu

[441] Interview with a former MP in Mogadishu

[442] UN Security Council (61st Year: 2006), "Resolution 1725 (2006) Digitallibrary.un.org, (December 6, 2006) pp. 15, Pg. 22-23. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/588110

[443] Olad Hassan, Mohamed. "Ethiopian Force Enters Somalia" Washington Post, July 2006. https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2006/07/21/ethiopian-force-enters-somalia-span-classbankheadtroops-set-up-in-city-of-baidoa-to-protect-interim-governmentspan/38806558-5783-4ac2-8af1-980070c2c084/.

[444] Joseph, Dan, and Harun Maruf. Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally. (Indiana UP, 2018), Pg. 41.

UIC maintained its territorial advance by seizing the strategic southern town of Kismayo, despite calls from Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed to end all military activity and recognize the interim government.[445] But Some factions within the UIC, convinced of its political and military advantage, were reluctant to concede to such an arrangement with the dysfunctional and politically isolated TFG, and the TFG, confident of Western backing, was equally unwilling to negotiate.[446] Over the course of the next few months, negotiations faced additional challenges as a result of the rapid rise of hardline elements on the part of the UIC under the occupational context. In summary, the UIC had concerns about accepting the proposed arrangement with the TFG, as they were experiencing political challenges and isolation. However, they acknowledged the potential political and military advantages that could come from the agreement. The TFG seemed to strongly believe in the support of Western powers and was not interested in engaging in negotiations with others. Over the next few months, negotiations faced challenges due to the growing influence of extremist factions within the UIC.[447] This was primarily in relation to battlefield circumstances that were taking place on the ground.

It was around this time that disagreements began to emerge openly among the components of the UIC, which implied that a new phase of struggle is taking place internally. Traditional Sufi leaders like Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, together with Salafists and Jihadists like the Shabaab, were vying for dominance under the "great tent" of the Islamic Court movement.[448] The struggle within the group, in the wake of the Ethiopian threat, ended in favor of the more belligerent and less compromising factions. However as Harry Verhoeven puts it labeling the UIC as terrorists and extremists and analogizing[449] with the Taliban discourse undermined any attempt to

---

445 Sudan Tribune, "Somali Islamic militia says willing negotiate with government" https://sudantribune.com/article16892/.

446 Bronwyn E. Bruton. "Somalia: A New Approach" (Council on Foreign Relations, Council Special Report No:52, 2010) Pg.145

447 Bronwyn E. Bruton. "Somalia: A New Approach" (Council on Foreign Relations, Council Special Report No:52, 2010) Pg.8.

448 Ashley Elliot & Georg-Sebastian Holzer, `The Invention of 'Terrorism' in Somalia: Paradigms and Policy in US Foreign Relations, South African Journal of International Affairs, 16:2, 215-244, DOI: 10.1080/10220460903268984

449 Samatar, Abdi Ismail. "Ethiopian Invasion of Somalia, US Warlordism & AU Shame." Review of African Political Economy 34, no. 111 (2007): 155–65. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20406369.

reach out to moderates who initially outnumbered the radicals within UIC ranks.[450] The third round of talks was supposed to take place on October 30, 2006. Yet, it was postponed due to the first suicide bombing in Somalia on September 18, 2006, which was aimed at President Abdullahi Yusuf and ultimately ended the talks. The incident killed eight people, including the president's brother. This incident further contributed to violence and hostility between the parties.[451] It was the first suicide attack on Somali soil, for which the Union of Islamic Courts has not claimed responsibility and distanced themselves publicly from the attack. These instances may suggest that al-Shabaab was evolving into a radical international jihadist group, but this was not always the case. Unemployed Somali youth who made up the bulk of al-Shabaab ranks had vague beliefs about the persecution of Islam on a worldwide scale but were more committed to the concept that the Sharia Courts and Islam would put an end to warlords, injustice, and violence.[452] That was their primary motives. Nevertheless, although the international community led by the UN special representative to Somalia, Francois L. Fall, had initiated some mediation efforts to reconcile the parties.[453] Furthermore, European Union Development Commissioner Louis Michel traveled to Somalia to engage in diplomatic discussions with leaders from the Islamic Courts Union and the transitional government in order to encourage their active involvement in the ongoing fourth round of peace negotiations, which was facilitated by the Arab League in Khartoum.[454]

---

450 Verhoeven, Harry, "The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy of Failed States: Somalia, State Collapse and the Global War on Terror," Journal of Eastern African Studies 3, no. 3, 2009: 405–25. Pg. 411.

451 Yusuf, Muuse. The Genesis of the Civil War in Somalia: The Impact of Foreign Military Intervention on the Conflict. (I. B. Tauris, 2021). https://brill.com/abstract/journals/aas/21/4/article-p395_6.xml

452 Hansen, Stig Jarle. Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group. (London: Hurst and Company, 2015)

453 Special Representative on Somalia, Briefing Security Council, Says Crisis "Escalated Dangerously", Fighting Expanded Across 400-Kilometre Front | Un Press. (2006, December 26)

454 The New Humanitarian. EU to present memorandum to Somali parties. (2006, December 19). https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/report/62796/somalia-eu-present-memorandum-somali-parties

Illustration 3 Leader of Somalia Islamic Courts Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys (R) and European Union aid chief Louis Michel (front, L) walk in Somalia's capital Mogadishu December 20, 2006. (Reuters)

However, the United States-backed resolution had, in effect, destroyed any hope of ever happening.[455] The deployment of foreign forces marked the beginning of the conflict, despite the UIC's firm opposition to any foreign troops and in taking into account the report from the monitoring group.

A number of circumstances contributed to the breakdown of negotiations between the TFG and UIC in Khartoum in 2006. The primary factor is that regional powers would not accept an agreement that was not reached under their auspices,[456] which bred distrust among Somalia's neighbors and ultimately led to a military invasion by Ethiopia.[457] Although the new resolution excluded frontline states, it tacitly encouraged Ethiopia to continue its intervention in Somalia. Since Ethiopian forces were already deeply involved in Somalia, giving support to the TFG angered the UIC cadres. The CIA and State Department gave Meles the green light to combat terrorism

[455] An Interview with Elizabeth Schmidt "the US Helped Destroy Modern Somalia." (n.d.). https://jacobin.com/2022/11/somalia-cold-war-war-on-terror-us-intervention-destabilization

[456] Toros, Harmonie, and Stephen Harley, 'Negotiations with Al-Shabaab: Lessons Learned and Future Prospects', in Michael Keating, and Matt Waldman (eds), War and Peace in Somalia: National Grievances, Local Conflict and Al-Shabaab (2019; Oxford Academic, 2019)

[457] Bacon, Tricia and Daisy Muibu. 2019. "Foreign Fighter Influence in Al-Shabaab: Limitations and Future Prospects." In War and Peace in Somalia: National Grievances, Local Conflict and Al-Shabaab, eds. Michael Keating and Matt Waldman. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

as a regional proxy conflict of the GWOT, despite the fact that most Somali analysts dismissed the UIC -Qaeda link and estimated the number of international terror suspects on Somali territory to be no more than half a dozen[458]. Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, Jendayi E. Frazer, stated that:

> "the Council of Islamic Courts was controlled by al-Qaeda in East Africa….. We remain deeply troubled that foreign terrorists associated with al-Qaida have succeeded in establishing a safe haven in Somalia. Somalia's continued exploitation by terrorist elements threatens the stability of the entire Horn of Africa. We will therefore take strong measures to deny terrorists safe haven in Somalia, as well as the ability to plan and operate from Somalia. In this regard, the US continues to work with East African countries to build their capacity to counter terrorism and criminality that originates in Somalia."[459]

There are varying interpretations of the recent policy shift by the United States towards Ethiopia. Some analysts have perceived it as a potential indication of a permissive stance or the "green light" towards Ethiopia's military actions. This shift contrasts with the previous emphasis on engaging with the 'moderate' factions in the UIC and promoting communication with the TFG. The recent events in Baidao suggest a shift in policy from deterrence to coercion, as evidenced by the presence of Ethiopian soldiers. As the boundary control mechanism gained more salience and threat-inducing, the UIC leadership called for a defensive jihad blended with nationalism which resonated inside and outside Somalia.[460] A Somali peace activist told the Crisis Group: "We will all go and fight. I have never picked up a weapon in my life, but by God, I will be on the front line if the Ethiopians invade my country."[461] Despite being later targeted by US Special Forces and losing several of its top members, al-Shabaab came out of the conflict with its political objective emboldened and justified. The appeal for Jihad, which was triggered by the incursion of foreign troops, was met with a response throughout the country and among diaspora communities. Sheikh Sharif Ahmad stated in October 2006 that:

---

458 Gyampo, Ransford. (2012). Somalia: An Anti-Thesis of the Western Conception of Failed States? Ghana Journal of Development Studies. 8. 10.4314/gjds.v8i2.1.

459 Frazer, Jendayi E. ''Testimony before the US Senate.'' https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-110shrg39987/html/CHRG-110shrg39987.htm

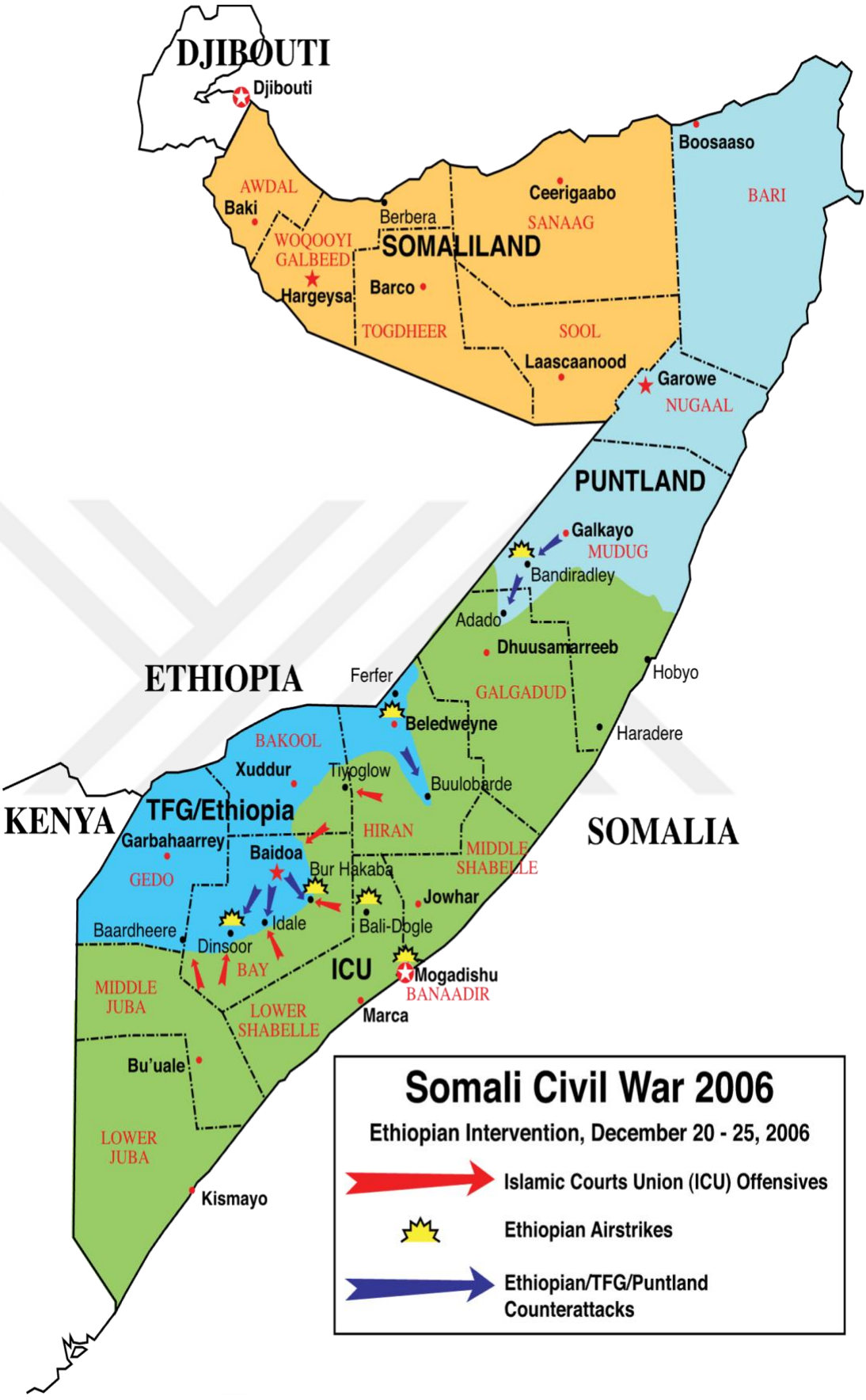
460 Yusuf, Muuse. **The Genesis of the Civil War in Somalia: The Impact of Foreign Military Intervention on the Conflict.** (I. B. Tauris, 2021).

461 International Crisis Group (ICG), *Can the Somali Crisis be Contained?* 10 August 2006, Africa Report N°116.

> "Heavily armed Ethiopian troops have invaded Somalia. History shows that Somalis always win when they are attacked from the outside. We will counter them soon. I urge all the Somali people to wage holy war against the Ethiopians.''[462]

This resulted in a political climate that fostered the proliferation of extremism and militant radicalism due to the scale of the invasion, duration, and brutality of the conflict environment in Mogadishu.

[462] Robinson, B. M., (2006, October 10) Call for Jihad as Ethiopian Troops Go into Somalia. https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1531095/Call-for-jihad-as-Ethiopian-troops-go-into-Somalia.html



Map 3 Map of the initial Ethiopian advancements in December 2006

The war in Mogadishu was characterized by intense fighting and violence. During the Ethiopian military intervention in Somalia from 2006 to 2009, all parties involved in the armed conflict in Mogadishu were found to have committed various violations and war crimes, as documented by Human Rights Watch. The available records suggest that foreign forces were involved in a widespread and non-selective bombardment of densely inhabited areas of Mogadishu, utilizing rockets, mortars, and artillery.[463] During my stay in Mogadishu, we conducted interviews with numerous Somali individuals whose perspectives aligned with the observations made by Human Rights Watch. The Ethiopian military's invasion of Somalia has led to the recruitment of a significant number of Somali individuals into al-Shabaab. It pushed hundreds of Somali citizens into the ranks of al-Shabaab. Moreover, the utilization of excessive and non-selective strategies by the Ethiopian armed forces has been assimilated by al-Shabaab militants in alignment with their available repertoire of aggressive actions. The incursion intensified the progression of al-Shabaab's strategic and ideological development, which was evident in their tactical choices during the subsequent part of the Mogadishu conflict. Foreign militants, such as those affiliated with al-Qaeda, perceived a unique opening to internationalize the conflict in Somalia and expeditiously provided assistance to the Shabaab.

The process of attribution of similarity, as proposed by Eitan Alimi, played a key role in al-Shabaab's ability to attract foreign fighters and introduced new warfare tactics against Ethiopian forces in Somalia. By framing their struggle as a defensive one against foreign aggression, the group was able to appeal to a broader audience and mobilize support from both Somalis and foreign fighters who saw themselves as part of a larger movement to defend Muslim lands against Western and foreign intervention. Over the last six years, approximately 1000 ethnic Somalis and 200 – 300 non-Somalis have been recruited to al-Shabaab.[464] During this particular period of time, the group's selection of targets underwent a transformation, which was indicative of the organization's defensive framing and larger appeal. Ethiopian military, Transitional Federal Government (TFG) institutions, and African Union Somali-based groups targeted a range of individuals and interests, including Mission

[463] Somalia: War Crimes in Mogadishu | Human Rights Watch. "Somalia: War Crimes in Mogadishu," August 14, 2007. https://www.hrw.org/news/2007/08/13/somalia-war-crimes-mogadishu.

[464] Lights, Camera, Jihad: al-Shabaab's Western Media Strategy - ICSR. https://icsr.info/2012/11/21/icsr-report-lights-camera-jihad-al-shabaabs-western-media-strategy/

in Somalia (AMISOM) troops, Western interests, and individuals suspected of collaborating with foreign forces. The group's shift in target selection demonstrated their commitment to safeguarding Muslim territories and resisting Western intervention, which aligned with the broader narrative they sought to convey.[465] Al-Shabab conducted a series of attacks, including suicide bombings, targeted assassinations, and ambushes against Ethiopian forces and TFG authorities. Their primary objective was to undermine the TFG, which they viewed as illegitimate, and oust the Ethiopian forces occupying Somalia. The group has been found to have engaged in attacks against not only members of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the international community but also peacekeepers from the African Union, foreign aid workers, and civilians associated with either group.

In response to the Ethiopian intervention, al-Shabaab organized attacks against Ethiopian forces and adopted a more aggressive and violent strategy. The group exploited the prevalent anti-Ethiopian sentiment among Somalis, framing its struggle as a defense of Somalia's independence and religion. This narrative resonated with numerous frustrated youth and other individuals opposed to foreign intervention, resulting in an increase in recruitment and support for al-Shabaab. It should be noted that these fighters, primarily drawn from the Middle East, North Africa, and other countries with significant Muslim populations, have been attracted to Somalia by the group's ideological commitment to jihad and the establishment of an Islamic state. While foreign fighters have been present in substantial numbers, native Somali fighters make up the vast majority of al-Shabab's membership.[466] Notwithstanding the prevalence of indigenous militants, the involvement of foreign combatants has been instrumental in bolstering the operational proficiency of al-Shabab and has facilitated the group's efforts in terms of recruiting new members and promoting extremist ideologies. The involvement of foreign fighters has contributed to the legitimization of al-Shabab's agenda and has attracted more local and international supporters who perceive the group as an integral part of the global jihad movement.[467]

---

[465] Al-Shabaab attack kills 4 Ugandan troops in Somalia. (n.d.). World Bulletin / News From Turkey and Islamic World. https://www.worldbulletin.net/africa/al-shabaab-attack-kills-4-ugandan-troops-in-somalia-h200582.html

[466] Al-Shabaab | Council on Foreign Relations. (2022, November 4). https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/al-shabaab

[467] How many IS foreign fighters are left in Iraq and Syria? (n.d.). BBC News. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-47286935

Previously the group primarily relied on conventional guerilla warfare tactics, such as hit-and-run attacks and ambushes. However, with the influx of foreign fighters, they adopted more sophisticated tactics, including the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), suicide bombings, and targeted assassinations. This shift in tactical orientation suggested that the group modified its repertoire of action in response to the realities on the ground. According to Robert Pape's analysis, suicide terrorism can be viewed as a calculated and tactical reaction to the encroachment of foreign military forces in territories that are under occupation. He further proposed that suicide missions have proven to be effective in expelling foreign occupiers of a different religious affiliation. Therefore, the rationale behind the emulation of this tactic may be attributed to its success rate, particularly in instances where insurgents are confronted with foreign military intervention.[468]

The implementation of newly introduced violent tactics by al-Shabaab enabled them to cause substantial harm to Ethiopian troops and other perceived adversaries, as well as non-combatants. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that al-Shabab's recruitment and radicalization endeavors have been significantly aided by foreign fighters of non-Somali origin, including but not limited to Omar Hammami, who have leveraged online platforms to propagate their extremist ideology. The group has leveraged its ideological convictions and affiliations to enlist additional foreign combatants, thereby augmenting its membership and enhancing its operational capabilities. Moreover, the existence of foreign combatants has served to validate the raison d'être of al-Shabab and attracted further local members who perceived the group as a constituent of a broader worldwide jihadist campaign.

The arrival of foreign fighters has served as a catalyst for the escalating level of ideological radicalism within the al-Shabab doctrine. The impact of these jihadists has engendered a shift towards a more strict and rigorous posture, given their propensity to espouse more extremist doctrines than the native militants. Consequently, there has been a surge in hostile and indiscriminate attacks on civilian targets, coupled with a growing sense of alienation from the local population. The execution of a suicide

---

[468] Robert A. Pape, **Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism** (New York: Random House, 2005)

bombing by Adam Salad Adam on March 26, 2007, marked a significant departure from the conventional tactics employed by various factions in general and al-Shaabab in particular. Prior to 2006, there existed no recorded instances of suicide attacks within the record of Somalia's history. During the period spanning from 2006 to February 2010, it has been documented that no fewer than 20 instances of suicide attacks were verified, with several additional alleged incidents. Moreover, the 2009 suicide bombing incident that transpired at an African Union peacekeeping outpost in Mogadishu, which was being utilized by Ethiopian troops, is widely regarded as one of the most notable assaults carried out by al-Shabaab against Ethiopian military personnel. The assault culminated in harm inflicted upon a number of Burundian military personnel, regrettably leading to the death of 11 soldiers. The militant group known as Al-Shabaab has asserted accountability for the assault, citing the existence of outside military forces within Somalia as the reason for their act of retribution. Moreover, in the year 2010, a residence located in the area of Beledweyne occupied by Ethiopian troops was subjected to a terrorist attack in the form of suicide terror. This particular occurrence indicates yet another significant aggression by al-Shabaab towards Ethiopian military personnel. The assault ended in the deaths of a minimum of 30 individuals, encompassing both civilians and military personnel of Ethiopia. The collective carried out a range of assaults against non-combatants and Ethiopian armed forces, encompassing the activation of explosive devices in public marketplaces, hotels, and restaurants. Moreover, the Mogadishu attack that occurred on the 26th of March resulted in the demise of 63 Ethiopian military personnel and caused harm to 50 other individuals. The primary aim of these assaults frequently entails instilling terror and chaos while simultaneously undermining the support for the Somali administration and its allies. The cited incident has effectively demonstrated the effectiveness and deadly capability of the strategy in the matter. The documentation regarding the incident and its subsequent propagation on the internet serves as evidence of the group's intentional effort to spread their actions and demonstrate their power. Moreover, it served as a mechanism for recruitment and propagation of information, enhancing its prestige as a formidable entity in the ongoing conflict in Somalia.

3.2.4. Competition for Power within the UIC?

As previously delineated, the Union of Islamic Courts functioned as a grassroots movement that operated as an umbrella organization, encompassing a diverse range of Islamic groups, members of civil society, and business elites. Some analysts give much emphasis on clan dynamics in order to make sense of the success of the UIC, saying that fundamentally, the Hawiye clan played an essential role in the formation of the movement. However, it is important to note that the group was not entirely identical in its composition, and its sudden appearance cannot be solely attributed to its clan affiliation. The cohesive force behind this popular movement was their shared criticism of the prevailing social unrest and moral deterioration in the community, with the primary attribution of blame being directed toward armed militia factions. Their initial objective, in the short term, was to bring an end to the societal disruption at the neighboring level by introducing the practical solution to daily-bases issues. Their long-term objective was to establish a governance model that follows the principles of Islamic law and is governed by Sharia rule. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, the perception of external threats, notably that from Ethiopia, was another reason that kept the I UIC together at the later stages. The authorities of the UIC held the view that the TFG had been brought to power by Ethiopia and was therefore perceived as a puppet government.

This study has suggested that there was a lack of evidence indicating significant factional fragmentation among the UIC elements that could have compromised the movement's integrity prior to the military occupation. It is cited that there were some disagreements among Islamists on several issues ranging from a possible peace deal with the TFG in Sudan and amalgaming foreign fighters into the UIC structure which could upset institutional integrity. It is true that not all the individuals who participated in the peace deal were on the same page, and certain disagreements surfaced during the process.[469] Nevertheless, the potential for tension within the organization was only exacerbated by developments in battlefield circumstances, which in turn altered the basis for cooperation. Within this framework, it is noteworthy to highlight that the discussions held within the governing body of the UIC were focused on two interconnected occurrences that have garnered significant attention and debate. One

[469] Interview with a former Somali diplomat in Mogadishu.

significant event was the decision made by Abdullahi Yusuf to invite Ethiopian forces into Somalia. This move was intended to provide protection for the Federal Government of Somalia, which had set up itself in Baidoa. The presence of foreign troops cast a shadow over the peace talks between the parties in Sudan. This event constituted the first serious instance of divergent viewpoints within the Islamists.[470] However, in spite of the circumstances, the group not only maintained its structural integrity during this stage, but also certain measures were implemented to enhance its institutional and governance structure aimed at transforming itself from a broad base Islamist coalition into a proto-state. The second significant event being referred to is the peace process that was initiated with the Ethiopian invasion and culminated in the ascension of UIC's executive leader Sheikh Sharif to the presidency during the Djibouti peace negotiations.

In this analysis, the concept of marginalization is understood as encompassing all political processes that erode the institutional unity of a group and fragment it into disparate factions rather than being limited to policies that specifically target a particular group for exclusion. Undoubtedly, the foremost event among these is the Ethiopian invasion and the following process. It involves the categorization of ICU forces into two broad groups, namely the resistance forces that remained stationed on the ground and the factions that ventured overseas to partake in the negotiations. However, it should be noted that this particular process was not necessarily irreversible, and it would have been possible to start negotiations prior to the emergence of more pronounced divisions among the parties involved. As per Harry Verhoeven, "labeling the UIC as terrorists and extremists and analogizing[471] with the Taliban discourse undermined any attempt to reach out to moderates who initially outnumbered the radicals within UIC ranks." Furthermore, counter-terrorism strategies have been proved counterproductive, alienating large parts of the Somali population and polarizing Somalia's diverse Muslim community into "moderate" and "extremist" camps.[472]

---

[470] Interview with a former Somali MP in Mogadishu.

[471] Samatar, Abdi Ismail. "Ethiopian Invasion of Somalia, US Warlordism & AU Shame." Review of African Political Economy 34, no. 111 (2007): 155–65. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20406369.

[472] Bronwyn E. Bruton. "Somalia: A New Approach" Council on Foreign Relations, Council Special Report No:52, 2010. Pg.3

First and foremost, competition for power among the components of the UIC influenced and was influenced by threat spirals and outbidding mechanisms and exerted its influence through the mechanism of marginalization resulting in tactical and ideological differences among the Islamists, despite the absence of direct confrontation among the parties. As a result, there has been an emergence of more assertive factions in the Somali political landscape, among other contributing factors. It was subsequent to this phase that the noticeable and apparent schisms in the UIC materialized. Following the invasion, the UIC experienced a fragmentation of its organizational structure, prompting its leaders to seek refuge in neighboring countries and pursue their campaigns from abroad. As a result of this development, members of al-Shabaab began to perceive themselves as being in a state of isolation in their conflict with Ethiopia. Elite members of the Sharia Courts were angry at the Al-Shabaab group, blaming it for giving the Ethiopians a pretext to enter Somalia, while members of Al-Shabaab were angry at the Courts leaders for being out of the country when the main fighting occurred.[1]

As previously stated, the al-Shabaab faction, which was previously an isolated network of people under the great tent of Islamic courts and lacked its own unique organizational structure, underwent a process of outbidding, and subsequently emerged as an autonomous entity. It was during the period spanning from 2007 to 2009 that al-Shabaab began to establish its distinctive organizational identity. It is worth mentioning that during the initial years of the occupation, al-Shabaab did not manifest a clear demarcation from other affiliates. One could posit that this particular procedure was founded upon the rhetoric espoused by the involved parties during the peace negotiations held in Djibouti. The pivotal moment transpired in 2009 when al-Shabaab orchestrated a bombing assault on a graduation ceremony attended by medical scholars, civilians, and high-ranking officials. The attack caused a significant amount of concern and frustration among Somalis, with some attributing the blame to individuals who are foreigners within the al Shabaab. This attack subsequently created divisions within al-Shabaab and led to assassinations as part of the struggle for power within al-Shabaab. During the following years, President Sheikh Sharif unambiguously articulated his stance on the matter in his address to the United Nations General Assembly.

CHAPTER IV

COMPARISON THROUGH MECHANISMS

4.1. Comparison through Mechanisms

The process of radicalization is both a complicated and multi-faceted phenomenon that has been the focus of a great deal of research and examination. Understanding the episode-specific composition of sub-mechanisms constituting the process is an essential component of this research design. While previous chapters have discussed sub-mechanisms and the way in which they reinforce each other's influence, this comparative section offers a more analytical and within-case comparative approach, highlighting the most central sub-mechanisms and the significant differences in their composition in the radicalization process in al-Shabaab. These variations are closely related to the starting points of each episode outlined in the preceding chapters.

The initial conditions presented in each episode are critical in shaping the differences that are discovered in the composition of the sub-mechanisms. These conditions, which include the political, social, or economic environment, function as a catalyst for the emergence of particular sub-mechanisms that ultimately contribute to the radicalization process under investigation. By analyzing these initial conditions, we hope to gain a better understanding of how the composition of sub-mechanisms changes over time and how it contributes to the emergence of radicalization.

In this final chapter, we seek to demonstrate our within-case analysis through the four components of the analytical framework. They are as follows: *Particularities of Radicalization*: The term pertains to collections of sub-mechanisms that comprise a larger mechanism. *Modalities of Radicalization*: Not every sub-mechanism has the same weight or gravity in the process of radicalization. Therefore, assigning gravity among mechanisms becomes important. *Varieties of Radicalization*: The process of

selecting sub-mechanisms is crucial, and equally significant is the manner in which they are combined to create a specific sequence.

Particularities of Radicalization

The sequential order of the radicalization mechanisms of al-Shabaab is presented in the figure below. The chronological structure of the mechanisms offers significant perspectives on the development of political violence in Somalia. To be more precise, it offers a clear visual representation of the process and sequence in which political violence unfolds. It is imperative to highlight that the analysis did not attempt to comprehensively cover all relevant sub-mechanisms that constitute the main arenas of interactions. However, it did address the most crucial ones among them.

In the first arena of interaction, it is important to deliver a clear description of the political environment in order to make sense of the mobilization processes of Sharia courts and the Shabaab network in particular. The al-Shabaab episode unfolded at the national level of engagement to a greater extent but did not exclude the role of outside interferences. Upward spirals of political opportunities have been instrumental in the mobilization process of Islamist groups, business elites, and clan elders in response to the social disorder and unrest that unfolded with the breakdown of state institutions. It was more of an activation of threat mechanisms than the response to the opportunity mechanisms in the absence of state authority since local conditions have been considered highly threat-inducing. The emergence of Islamic Sharia courts can be attributed to the conditions of the civil war, as they were established as a means of addressing everyday issues at the neighborhood level. During that particular era, owing to the lack of functional state institutions to regulate violence and enforce justice in a practical manner, the courts assumed the lead role at the local level. The central point of the issue relates to the structural framework of the governance model. On the one hand, the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) garnered international support yet faced limitations in expanding its reach and impact domestically. On the other hand, warlords held significant military and economic influence within the country but were met with dissatisfaction and criticism from the local population, including the Islamists. These two factions thus represented opposing poles. However, it is important to acknowledge that this partition was not distinctly demarcated. In

addition, it is worth noting that certain individuals who held positions of power within the government also had ties to various armed factions and were also represented in the parliament.

SUB-MECHANISM DIVERSITY ACROSS EPISODES

Table 1. Sub-Mechanisms Across Episodes

Arenas and Mechanisms / Episodes and Sub-Mechanisms	**Sub Mechanisms: Al-Shabaab (2002 – 2009)**
Between Movement and Political Environment / Upward Spirals of Political Opportunities	Threat Attribution Brokerage
Between Movement and Counter-Movement / Object Shift	Repression by Proxy Retaliation
Between Movement Activists and Security Forces / Outbidding	Boundary Control Attribution of Similarity
Between Movement Actors / Competition for Power	Marginalization

What were the factors that contributed to the consolidation of the dispersed network of clan-oriented Sharia courts into a unified system in 2004 as an umbrella organization? First and foremost, it is worth considering focusing on the challenges and obstacles related to local governance rather than prioritizing regional or international developments that may have influenced the Islamic courts' move towards a unified stance. Hence, it is possible to deliberate upon two distinct categories of

brokerage mechanisms within this particular phase. The foremost and essential mechanism, as perceived from our standpoint, is the formation of the Union of Islamic Courts. This umbrella organization was formed with the aim of enhancing the efficacy of the several community-oriented Islamic court systems, as previously demonstrated. The second aspect may attribute to the behavior and attitude displayed by certain members of Islamic groups but not limited to and extend beyond them, notably the al-Shabaab faction, in reaction to the escalating aggression episodes directed towards Islamic groups. It is worth mentioning that Islamist groups, including the al-Shabaab network, may have been driven to encourage internal solidarity as a means of safeguarding themselves from the threatening and aggressive tactics employed by certain warlords. As a result of these aggressive incidents, members of al-Shabaab have resorted to retaliatory measures involving violent actions.

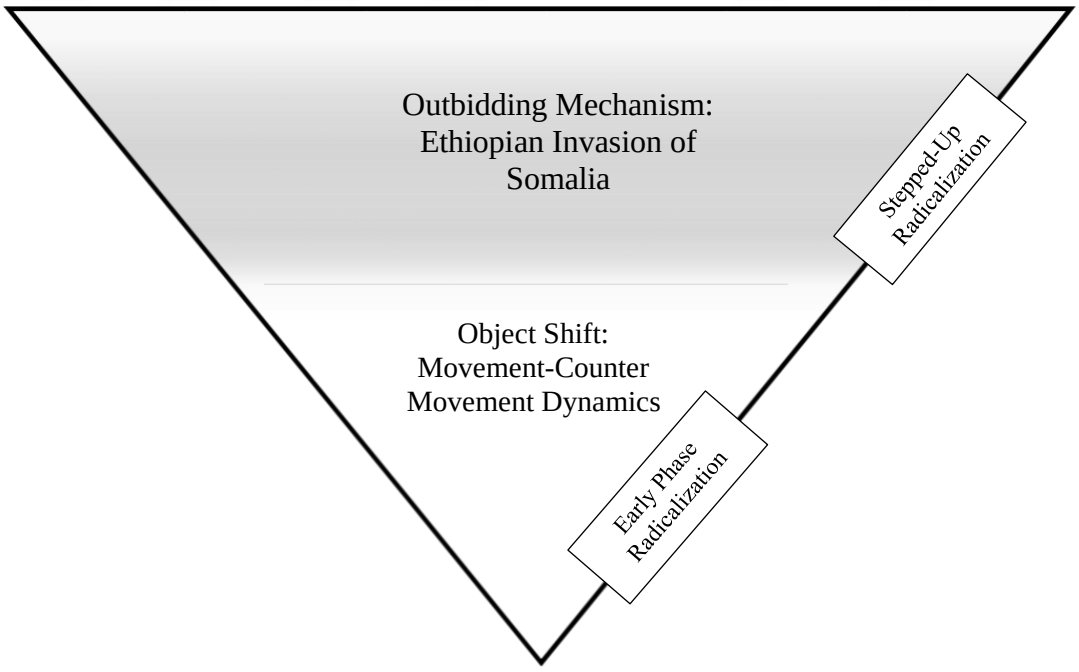
Modalities of Radicalization

According to the figure below, the mechanism of object shift had the most significant impact during the stepped-up phase of radicalization processes in the al-Shabaab episode. During the latter stage of radicalization, subsequent to the initiation of political violence, the process of outbidding assumed a more significant role in intensifying the radicalization of al-Shabaab. With regard to the distinctive political structure of the Somali state during that period, which was characterized by fragmented governance under Warlordism, the specific political and territorial scope of the al-Shabaab episode may shed light on the emergence of reciprocal actions from both sides of the political spectrum as a significant sub-component of object shift.

The radicalization of al-Shabaab during its early phase was primarily influenced by the dominant social boundary associated with the legitimization of the state and its distinct political style, which resulted in the object shift being the most significant factor. It can be attributed to a combination of factors, including but not limited to the absence of an effective state mechanism to mitigate the ongoing hostilities. Nevertheless, this episode showcased a sequence of retaliatory killings carried out by individuals associated with al Shabaab in response to an ongoing series of assassinations, indiscriminate violence, and abductions that were directed towards members of Islamic organizations, ordinary citizens, and non-Islamist political figures

by Mogadishu's faction leaders and certain regional actors. A number of people who had returned from Afghanistan formed a militant unit in order to respond to the assault of the warlords in a similar manner using the same tactics of warlords. Several individuals have noted that this was among the primary factors that led to the formation of the group. Up until this point, the strong opinions held by the emerging al-Shabaab group had hindered any significant collaboration with individuals striving to establish agreement through the Union of Islamic Courts. Tellingly, it is noteworthy to mention that some faction leaders, which held a ministerial position in the Somali government, played a role in exacerbating the reciprocal violence. The growing concern is that the perception of the state's legitimacy among the al-Shabaab has been put under scrutiny. Throughout 2007 and the subsequent years, al-Shabaab persistently raised concerns regarding the legitimacy of the government on similar grounds. On the other hand, following their triumph over the warlords in 2006, the courts, which had previously been limited to administering local governance at the neighborhood level, emerged as the most influential and powerful force in the national arena.

Table 2. Modalities of Radicalization



The stepped-up radicalization of al-Shabaab was triggered by the incursion of the Ethiopian military into Somalia. In contrast to prevailing assumptions, it should be noted that this particular process can be traced back to the early 2005s rather than late 2006. The initial phase of this process took place upon the arrival of the Ethiopian military in Baidoya with the intention of safeguarding the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) against the UIC forces. Additionally, it should be noted that peace negotiations that took place between the UIC and the TFG in Sudan in June 2006 occurred during the activation of a boundary control mechanism which ultimately failed to yield any positive results. On the other hand, the occupation process accelerated the radicalization dynamics of al-Shabaab. The occupation resulted in two significant consequences, specifically the consolidation of the organization's institutional structure and the broadening of its repertoire of aggressive strategies. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the development of an autonomous structure on the part of al-Shabaab throughout the period of occupation is frequently overlooked in diverse analyses. It is noteworthy that al-Shabaab was formerly a marginal entity within the Union of Islamic Courts that successfully exercised authority over the constituents of the al-Shabaab network. Nevertheless, the boundary activation mechanisms weakened that bound, which ultimately led to the dismantling of it. For instance, in May 2007, al-Shabaab militants carried out terror attacks despite the unsuccessful attempt by tribal leaders to persuade them to desist from such actions.

A number of non-native foreign combatants answered the call for Jihad during the outbidding process and subsequently made their way to Somalia, where they played an active role in the hostilities as affiliates of al-Shabaab. Although foreign fighters were not as numerous as their Somali counterparts, their expertise and abilities were significant, leading to the prolongation and escalation of the conflict. The mechanism known as "Attribution of Similarity" exerted a significant influence on the conflict environment at the hands of foreign fighters involved in the al-Shabaab episode, resulting in the identification of two essential factors. The primary factor pertains to the ability of the organization to leverage social media efficiently. The group successfully broadened its recruitment endeavors by establishing social media accounts, and visual presence through this strategy. An additional and most striking aspect that calls for consideration is the increasing utilization of al-Qaeda tactics in Somalia and their widespread application within the framework of armed conflict.

Varieties of Radicalization

As previously mentioned in the chapter pertaining to the theoretical framework, it is observed that while each mechanism has its own impact on radicalization, the collective influence of all mechanisms provides the most comprehensive understanding of the process's dynamics. In order to have a broader understanding of the overall radicalization process on the part of the al-Shabaab episode, it is imperative to examine the diverse sub-mechanisms and main arenas of interaction and how they combine to produce specific sequences.

What was the process by which the mechanisms in the al-Shabaab episode combined to create a specific path of radicalization? The upward spiral opportunities mechanism was consequential in the initial mobilization process of the Sharia courts. To begin with, the emergence of the Sharia courts was directly influenced by the destructive conditions arising from the civil war. Thus, the mechanism of threat attribution has gained significant prominence at this juncture. In response to the threat attribution mechanism, the Sharia courts were supported by a range of entities, including Islamic factions, civil society members, clan leaders, women organizations, and business figures, who took part either directly or indirectly within the framework of the threat attribution mechanism. The mechanism of object shift stands out as the most prominent factor in the early phase of radicalization due to its violent character that was in motion on both sides of the parties in retaliatory form. What led to its emergence as the most prominent mechanism, and what were the fundamental factors that underpinned it? During the 1990s and early 2000s, Somalia experienced the emergence of several warlords within the context of a civil war. These warlords have held influential positions in the local political arena partially owing to their extensive networks of connections with both regional and international actors. Since the early 1990s, Islamic courts have come to prominence as a locally-rooted security phenomenon in Somalia’s political and social environment. Due to their inventive approaches to addressing daily-base problems ranging from extortion to kidnapping within local communities, they progressively garnered widespread recognition and popularity among the general public. Subsequently, they secured a prominent position within the context of Somalia's recent political history, garnering widespread support

from the populace as a grassroots initiative. It appears that the Islamic courts have effectively combined three key components. The group has been successful in gaining support from tribal authorities, which has helped to ensure their safety. Additionally, they have received recognition from the public for their innovative methods of combating crime, although some have expressed concerns about the appropriateness of their tactics at times. Additionally, they were able to secure the support of prominent business elites operating in Mogadishu's security marketplace.

Table 3. Varieties of Radicalization

Al-Shabaab	2001-2002	2003-2004	2005-2006	2007-2008	2009-2010
Upward Spiral Opportunities	Threat Attribution				
		Brokerage			
Object Shift			Repression by Proxy		
			Retaliation		
Outbidding			Boundary Control		
				Attribution of Similarity	
Competition for Power				Marginalization	

The introduction of the brokerage mechanism resulted in an increased influence of the Union of Islamic Courts, potentially creating a challenge to the interests of faction leaders. The fact that in early 2006 a number of warlords came together against the Islamic courts to form a counter-terrorism alliance had been the most significant manifestation of the object shift mechanism. During the intermittent conflicts that persisted for a period of five months, the Islam Courts Union emerged as the prevailing group in June 2006. During the early phase, radicalization dynamics had a greater impact on the "object shift" arena. The origins of this process can be attributed to the complex dynamics between the faction leaders and other opposing forces,

particularly in relation to the Islamists, during the period of 2002-2006. The violence that occurred in a targeted manner was often driven by retaliatory actions and was further complicated by the introduction of an ideological component into the conflict. The outcome was the strengthening of a group of individuals or ragtag militia who eventually became recognized as al-Shabaab. As stated above, the study put much emphasis on the "outbidding mechanism" as the primary determinant in the escalation phase of the radicalization process. The onset of intensified radicalization in Somalia can be traced back to the period of Ethiopian occupation from 2005 to 2009. This occupation created an opportunity for al-Shabaab to expand its tactical capabilities and modify its target preferences in a more institutionalized and aggressive manner.

4.2. Policy Implications

Contextualization of Political Violence

The conceptualization of political violence from an analytical standpoint plays a crucial role in understanding and explaining the radicalization phenomenon and the underlying processes that contribute to it. Hence, it is imperative to look into the mechanisms through which political violence occurs and conceptualize it within a broader analytical framework. The following question becomes relevant for decision-makers and practitioners with regard to formulating preemptive policies and implementing measures in the ongoing battle against terrorism: Do we attempt to analyze it in a criminal environment by focusing on the people and/or group at risk or interpret it in a dynamic and processual environment? Our methodology aligns with the former throughout the course of this investigation, and we strongly maintain the belief that it offers a more comprehensive and rigorous analytical framework for explanation. It has been suggested that the distinct events of civil war, transnational terrorism, and foreign military intervention have been subject to individual scrutiny, yet their interrelatedness has not been frequently explored. The interplay among terrorism, civil war, and military intervention is complex, and simplistic causal frameworks are inadequate in explaining their intersections.[473] Therefore, an

[473] Crenshaw, Martha. "*Rethinking Transnational Terrorism: An Integrated Approach*." United States Institute of Peace (2020, February). https://www.usip.org/publications/2020/02/rethinking-transnational-terrorism-integrated-approach

integrated and dynamic approach in contrast to the static and linear models is desirable in order to discover and explain the paths and mechanisms which may lead to violence and terrorism.

This study has examined the diffusion and evolution of political violence in three distinct yet interrelated political contexts, with a particular focus on social movements and their mobilization processes. To put it differently, social movements have exhibited a tendency to resort to violent means as a result of their political interactions within different relational contexts. These are organized into three primary categories: the global context, the regional context, and the local context. Social movements have been known to operate within various political environments, leading to modifications in the tactical patterns of these structures or even within the movement itself. It is important to note that radicalization is one of the potential outcomes of this complex web of interactions. This event-episodic and overlapping process highlights the dynamic character of the relational radicalization framework.

Emotion and Public Perception Matter

Somalia has undergone a prolonged period of internal strife and turmoil spanning numerous decades. A commonly held notion posited that warlords exerted a notable influence in engendering an unfavorable political milieu. The Islamic Courts, despite some of their practices that may have provoked responses from specific segments of society, were widely embraced by the masses, including those of Somali diaspora communities.

A salient factor that played a role in this phenomenon was the exertions and strategies implemented by the Islamic courts in their respective jurisdictions, which encompassed tackling illicit conduct and dispensing judicial processes. Given the complicated nature of the political landscape, the decision of the international community to lend support to a faction leader who lacks widespread popularity, rather than the Islamist groups, may have presented certain obstacles and proved less efficacious. One could posit that the hostilities between parties, which were initially rooted in domestic factors, ultimately acquired an ideological character as a result of external backing and interventions within the counter-terrorism measures. To put it briefly, the conflicts have evolved into a multifaceted situation that encompasses both

religious and ideological dimensions, alongside widespread public discontent with the Warlords.

The policies implemented between 2002 and 2006 in the context of the war on terrorism have had unintended consequences, as they appear to have exacerbated the conflict environment. In such instances, it may be advantageous to explore diplomacy and negotiation tools and innovations by including highly respected local figures in society rather than purely relying on local agents in a proxy war. Furthermore, implementing such measures could potentially hinder the emergence of extremist factions within the group and discourage their radical beliefs from being embraced by society. In the absence of a resolution, these conflicts have the potential to engender extremist factions, whose proliferation within the broader societal fabric may conceivably become an inevitability. The emergence of al-Shabaab following the Ethiopian military incursion stands out as a striking example of this phenomenon.

4.3. Conclusion

The present study draws upon a theoretical framework firmly rooted in the broader social movement theory, the contentious politics paradigm, and the relational radicalization perspective. This framework places considerable emphasis on the dynamic and process-oriented facets of radicalization, transcending the constraints of static and linear models. The present study has utilized a methodology rooted in mechanism-based research, thereby enabling a concentrated examination of the interrelated cognitive, relational, and environmental mechanisms that play a role in the development of trajectories or sequences of radicalization. It effectively incorporated both deductive and inductive forms of reasoning.

The present study aims to propose fresh ideas and perspectives in addition to the dominant approach to terrorism and security studies, which has traditionally examined radicalization phenomena in isolation, focusing predominantly on 'group at risk' individuals and the stateless environment. Researchers frequently fail to consider the complicated interaction of variables that contribute to political violence, particularly in complex cases like the Somali conflict, when they rely solely on physiological or behavioral perspectives. These types of approaches often place emphasis on

ideological preferences, cultural templates, or personal traits as the primary drivers of the radicalization process. However, it may overlook the wider political context and conflict dynamics that are in play. The predominant emphasis on stateless environments and their ramifications, including anarchy and terrorism, ultimately constrains our understanding of the fundamental causes and motivators of radicalization.

The Somali conflict indeed illustrates the limitations of traditional security-focused perspectives on radicalization. By solely concentrating on the stateless environment and its consequences, researchers may overlook the complex interplay of factors contributing to the radicalization of al-Shabaab.[474] A broader approach that takes into account the political landscape, local power struggles, and, most importantly, the role of external actors can provide a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of the conflict dynamics and the radicalization process in Somalia. For example, clan politics, state-society relations, and international intervention are all factors that undermine stability in the country and allow radical ideas and individuals to infiltrate over the border from Somalia.[475] It is obvious that the limitations of these approaches have become evident in their inability to fully capture the complex and dynamic nature of conflictual dynamics that lead to violence, as exemplified in the case of Somali studies.

In light of the aforementioned constraints, this study has employed a relational methodology to examine radicalization and political violence phenomenon in the Somali context. The contentious political framework has previously been utilized to investigate political violence by focusing on political campaigns of social movements in North America, Europe, and to a certain degree, Latin America. The proposed framework suggests instances of political violence stemming from the efforts of movement organizations to assert their claims and engage in power struggles with various actors within a multifaceted and contentious national political environment. This study acknowledges that radicalization is considered one of the possible consequences of these ongoing struggles. The proposed analytical framework places

[474] ICG, Kenya's Somali Northeast: Devolution and Security, Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°114 Nairobi/Brussels, 17 November 2015

[475] Ibid

emphasis on the importance of relational reasoning that seeks to understand the process of radicalization within the wider political context in which social movements are mobilized. The perspective in question has been frequently employed to elucidate the mobilization of individuals and social collectives beyond the African continent. However, this study evinces the validity and effectiveness of the relational approach when applied to the Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahedeen case in Somalia, thereby showcasing its usefulness in providing novel insights into political violence and mobilization studies.

Through an analysis of the Somali case, this study underscores the significance of taking into account the occupational context, the dynamics of organizational fragmentation within the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC), and the internationalization of regional rivalries and global pressures in comprehending the transformation of political dynamics in Somalia. According to this study, the presence of Ethiopian forces played a crucial role in the disintegration of the UIC, ultimately leading to the emergence of al-Shabaab as a more autonomous and radicalized orientation. In addition, the UIC's attempts to promote national unity were impeded by the internationalization of regional rivalries and global pressures, which also played a role in the widespread proliferation of violence in the area. Furthermore, the deployment of foreign troops in Somalia facilitated an atmosphere conducive to radicalization and recruitment, thereby enabling al-Shabaab to expand rapidly and emerge as a significant power in the area. Additionally, it employed propaganda as a means to radicalize and recruit new followers. They propagated audio-visual materials and informational publications that depicted Ethiopian military personnel as merciless and uncivilized, leveraging these resources to galvanize support among the Somali populace for their agenda. In addition, in Somalia's security marketplace, al-Shabaab views itself as the most legitimate and superior provider of security, based on a higher religious code in which leaders consider themselves to be at the "vanguard" of Islam, Sharia rule, Somali nationalism, and Muslims in general.[476] Furthermore, African officials told the Committee staff that there had been a marked change in al-Shabab's

[476] Bacon, Tricia. *Inside the Minds of Somalia's Ascendant Insurgents: An Identity, Mind, Emotions and Perceptions Analysis of Al-Shabaab* (Program on Extremism, The George Washington University, 2022), Pg. 37.

tactics over the past five years, as the Somalis have adopted al Qaeda's more lethal strategies.[477]

Over the years of research and scholarly contributions from different disciplines to understand political violence, and in particular terrorism, there have emerged four interrelated areas of explanatory inquiry into terrorism: the one dealing with the effectiveness of terrorism as a strategy of the opposition, counter-terrorism politics and its consequences,[478] strategies, and tactics to end terrorism,[479] and evaluating terrorism within broader theoretical framework[480] either focusing on studies that are comparative nature or that locates the specific case of terrorism in a general perspective.[481] Therefore, research on political violence has been transforming in terms of "quantity, scope, and variety."[482] Dominant perspectives, such as the school of terrorism studies, are not only being challenged but also different perspectives and approaches have begun to collaborate and share theoretical perspectives and engage in comparative projects.[483] For instance, according to Colin Beck and Eric Schoon, the theoretical poverty of terrorism studies provides an opportunity for the social movement area that emphasizes mobilization dynamics, framing, and social opportunity structures.[484] Hence, it can be argued that the gap in theoretical frameworks between studies on terrorism and those on social movements with respect to their causes, mechanisms, and outcomes is less expressed than it was previously.

---

477 Report to the Committee on Foreign Relations, "Al Qaeda in Yemen and Somalia: A Ticking Time Bomb" (United States Senate, One Hundred Eleventh Congress, Second Session, 2010. Washington, U.S.

478 Crenshaw, Martha, & Gary LaFree. "Preface." In Countering Terrorism, Vii-Xii. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2017.

479 Cronin, Audrey Kurth. "How al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups." Quarterly Journal: International Security, vol. 31. no. 1. (2006) 7-48. Also see: G. Jones, Seth, C. Martin "How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qaida. Libicki, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008)

480 Crenshaw, Martha. Terrorism in Context (University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995.)

481 Crenshaw, Martha, Terrorism Research: The Record, International Interactions, 40:4, 556-567.

482 Crenshaw, Martha. "The Causes of Terrorism." Comparative Politics 13, no. 4 (1981): 379-99.

483 Bosi, Lorenzo & Demetriou, C. & Malthaner, Stefan. Dynamics of Political Violence: A Process-Oriented Perspective on Radicalization and The Escalation of Political Conflict. (Routledge Press, 2014) Pg. 1.

484 Beck, Colin and Schoon, Eric. "Terrorism and Social Movement", in "The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Social Movement" pg. 698

As it is stated above, terrorism studies have extended their scope at different levels and various geographies, particularly following September 11, 2001. On the contrary, social movement discipline traditionally has tended to exclude violent elements in its research inquiries.[485] This tendency began to change thanks to Charles Tilly, Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, Della Porta, and Mario Diani, whose works have included elements of political violence in social movement studies. These works are interested in explaining collective violence phenomena from an interactionist perspective on the part of the organization level, in contrast to individual or macro level explanations, and follow mechanism-based research techniques. Followingly, this persuasion in explaining social events through an interactionist prism led Alimi et al. to give much emphasis on its mechanisms which paved the way for examining all sorts of movement organizations shifting to political violence, with a particular focus on radicalization phenomena, regardless of North-South differentiation.

Until recently, social movement scholars had concerned themselves with the elements of violence in the political struggle; in other words, they adopted a similar scope of inquiry as works in political violence literature. These studies, however, are regionally focused mostly on North America, Europe, and Latin America to a lesser extent. There are works covering social movement organizations that adopted violent elements in the MENA region. While there is some literature on extremist movements in Africa from a social movement perspective, it remains limited in scope and significance. It bears the question of whether social movements are considered a global phenomenon that happened to be situated on the African continent or is it unique to Africa, which makes it challenging to analyze from a comparative perspective.[486] Another critique is related to analyzing social movements in Africa or the Global South in general, with the tools and techniques developed in the West to explain social processes peculiar to the West. Although this study does not aim to reflect a social movement perspective in its entirety on the evolution of violent extremism, we will highlight movement bases from which movement organizations provide necessary resources for their survival and mobilization. This work aims to shed light on violent interactions

485 Della Porta, Donatella. Clandestine Political Violence. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.)

486 Ellis, Stephen, & Ineke Kessel. **Movers and Shakers: Social Movements in Africa**. (Leiden" Brill, 2009). Pg. 1.

between movement organizations and states as well as competition for power within the movement organization by linking violence at the onset to the escalation phases.

The relational analysis offers a suitable framework to understand and analyze the development of a violent environment in both cases. One of the striking features of the relational approach is that it de-exceptionalize violent repertories by locating them within a broader perspective, comprised of complex processes.[487] Contextualization of violent actions demonstrates itself in three respects: It considers political violence as one of several forms of engagement in a broader repertoire of actions and strategies. Secondly, it acknowledges that militant groups are embedded within the broader field of actors involved in the conflict. Third, its recognition of violent interactions as embedded in the broader process of political contention.[488]

The first chapter of our dissertation involved a brief examination of the phenomenon of radicalization, which serves as the analytical foundation of our research. This section provided a concise overview of the different methodologies employed in the field of radicalization research. Following that, we engaged in a discussion concerning the relevance and importance of this concept, specifically with regard to the global security structure. In this particular context, an analytical examination was carried out to investigate the connection between the phenomenon of radicalization and terrorism and then to explore the likely connection between state failure and terrorism with reference to the unfolded political developments in Somalia starting in 2001. We stated that the actual demonstration of terrorism manifested itself in Somalia following the Ethiopian occupation, which the country had never experienced until then. Furthermore, we seek to understand the process through which political violence occurs. We argued that the present study posits that political violence arises as a result of the rise and fall of collective claim-making, coupled with a struggle for power on the part of a movement organization within the context of a relational radicalization

---

487 Della Porta, Donatella. 2018. "Radicalization: A Relational Perspective." Annual Review of Political Science (May). Pg. 463. https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/abs/10.1146/annurev-polisci-042716-102314

488 Bosi, Lorenzo & Demetriou, C. & Malthaner, Stefan. **Dynamics of Political Violence A Process-Oriented Perspective on Radicalization and the Escalation of Political Conflict**, (Routledge Press, 2014). Pg. 2.

framework. This section, moreover, includes the puzzle, argumentation, and conceptual framework of our research.

In the second part of our study, we elaborated on the relational radicalization and contentious politics perspective, which constitutes the theoretical and conceptual framework of this study. We argued that political violence is a phenomenon that emerges as a result of the interaction of multiple actors within the framework of relational radicalization. Therefore, we included relational radicalization and contentious political perspectives within the general realm of political violence. In this chapter, we also discussed the methodological approach and research design of our study. This study employed a process-tracing methodology and utilizes a comparative case-study approach consistent with the relational radicalization perspective's conceptualization of the radicalization process. The proposition suggested that the phenomenon of radicalization is a consequence of contentious interactions that entail a multifaceted web of connections among diverse agents over a span of time and space. The present investigation employed a mechanism-based approach to elucidate the phenomenon of radicalization (i.e., the explanandum) in a context marked by political violence. To this end, process-tracing research methodology is utilized to identify the sub-mechanisms (i.e., the explanans) operative in each event under examination. Finally, this chapter centered on our scholarly contribution to the existing body of literature. Specifically, we have employed a methodology that has previously been used to explain political violence processes in Northern Europe and America and have applied it to the Somali context.

The third chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, we provided a concise overview of the key political events that occurred prior to the onset of the Somali civil war, as well as the subsequent local developments that ultimately resulted in the breakdown of state institutions and the following episodes. Specifically, we placed significant emphasis on power struggles that occurred at the local level, often exacerbated by external interventions. This section expounds on the diplomatic endeavors and indigenous strategies aimed at tackling and countering these obstacles, which the Union of Islamic Courts eventually surmounted. The post-civil war era in southern Somalia witnessed a significant transformation in the distribution of power. As the political influence of national elites such as General Aided and Ali Mahdi waned, novel regional power arrangements emerged. During the initial stage of the

civil war, there were instances of organized destruction that occurred between the factions aligned with President Siad Barre and the insurgent groups located in the northern region. As a result of these events, the northern forces ultimately seceded from Mogadishu. Regarding power distribution, the power dynamics between Ali Mahdi and Aided, who were the foremost figures of the USC leadership, had noteworthy consequences for power allocation in the region. To clarify, subsequent to the cessation of the initial phase of the civil war, the nature of the hostilities evolved into a contest for control over Mogadishu. The sporadic conflicts for power created favorable conditions for the emergence of a de facto governance system characterized by fragmented and prolonged Warlordism. The statement posits that during a period of declining authority, alternative spheres of influence emerged in the absence of centralized power, which persisted until the ascent of the UIC in 2006.

In the second part of this chapter, a broader analysis has been conducted on the formation and evolution of the al-Shabaab network as an organized movement. The focus has been given to the mechanisms it has employed to resort to violence in its political actions, taking into account the political environment in which the group operated. The second part of this chapter primarily focuses on analyzing the relationship between the UIC and the political context in which it operates. We elaborated more on the factors that led members of the al-Shabaab movement to resort to violence in pursuit of their objectives. We also analyzed the process that has led to the persistence of violence for a decade and beyond and how this process accounts for the differences in the levels of violence observed. After carefully examining the political context surrounding the mobilization process, we have identified certain sub-mechanisms which played crucial roles in comprehending the relationship between the movement organization under examination and their political environment.

In the final chapter of our study, we have demonstrated the radicalization processes of al-Shabaab in a more analytical way. The main findings of this section have suggested that understanding the radicalization dynamics of an organization through a single process or indicator is impracticable from an analytical standpoint. It does not allow us to capture the whole process leading to political violence. The influence of radicalization dynamics is more prominent during two episodes of social interactions, as this study suggested. The initial episode pertains to the beginning of radicalization, which can be attributed to the conflicting dynamics among the faction leaders and

other opposing entities in relation to the Islamists during the period of 2002 to 2006. The violence, which demonstrated itself in a targeted manner, occurred through the means of retaliation and introduced an ideological aspect to the conflict. The outcome of this event was the reinforcement of a network of ragtag militia and scattered individuals, who subsequently became identified as al-Shabaab. The study considers the second episode to be the most critical determinant. The onset of intensified radicalization by al-Shabaab can be traced back to the Ethiopian occupation of Somalia from 2005 to 2009. This occupation provided al-Shabaab with an opportunity to broaden its tactical capabilities and alter its target preferences in a more institutionalized and aggressive manner.

The conclusions drawn from this dissertation hold noteworthy ramifications for forthcoming research and policy development in the fields of terrorism and security studies. This study suggests a need to shift the focus toward the wider political context in which such incidents take place. It emphasizes the significance of a relational approach to comprehending radicalization and political violence. A change in focus has the capacity to yield a more refined and all-encompassing comprehension of the factors that foster radicalization, thereby impacting the creation of more efficacious methods to address and prevent political violence. Additionally, the results of this study emphasize the importance for researchers and policymakers to carefully consider the intricate relationship between internal and external factors that contribute to the process of radicalization. This study highlights the significance of analyzing the impacts of regional rivalries, global pressures, and occupation contexts in comprehending and resolving the underlying causes of political violence within the multifaceted and contentious national political settings where radicalization processes take place.

We hold the belief that this study has made a noteworthy contribution to the field of terrorism and security studies. This is due to its advancement of a relational approach to the analysis of radicalization and political violence in the Somali context. Through the application of this approach to explain and understand the development of political violence in Somalia, the study has effectively showcased the usefulness of this framework in providing fresh insights into the complicated and continually evolving mechanisms that contribute to radicalization.

REFERENCES

Abbink, Jon. "5 The Islamic Courts Union: The Ebb and Flow of a Somali Islamist Movement". In Movers and Shakers: Social Movements in Africa, (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2008)

Abbott, Owen. *The Self, Relational Sociology, and Morality in Practice*. 1 ed. Palgrave Macmillan Ltd, 2019.

Afyare Abdi Elmi. *Understanding the Somalia Conflagration: Identity, Islam, and Peacebuilding.* London: Pluto Press. 2010

Ahmad, Aisha *Going Global: Islamist Competition in Contemporary Civil Wars*, Security Studies, 25:2. 2016.

Ahmad, Aisha. "Taliban and the Union of Islamic Courts: How They Changed the Game in Afghanistan and Somalia?" *Policy Perspectives* 6, no. 2 (2009)

Ahmad, Aisha. *Jihad & Co.: Black Markets and Islamist Power*. New York, NY, United States of America: Oxford University Press.

Alimi, Eitan Y. "The Relational Context of Radicalization: The Case of Jewish Settler Contention Before and after the Gaza Pullout." *Political Studies* 64 (2016).

Alimi, Eitan Y., Demetriou, Chares, Bosi, Lorenzo. *The Dynamics of Radicalization: A Relational and Comparative Perspective*, New York, NY; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Ancelovici, Marcos, et al., editors. *Street Politics in the Age of Austerity: From the Indignados to Occupy*. Amsterdam University Press, 2016.

Anonymous, "A Diagnosis of Somalia's Failing Transitional Government" (CTC SENTINEL, 2009)

Ashley Elliot & Georg-Sebastian Holzer, `The Invention of 'Terrorism' in Somalia: Paradigms and Policy in US Foreign Relations, *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 16:2, 215-244.

Bacon, Tricia. Inside the minds of Somalia's ascendant insurgents: an identity, mind, emotions, and perceptions analysis of al-Shabaab. *Program on Extremism at George Washington University*, March 2022.

Bacon, Tricia, and Daisy Muibu, 'Al-Qaida and Al-Shabaab: A Resilient Alliance', in Michael Keating, and Matt Waldman (eds), *War and Peace in Somalia: National Grievances, Local Conflict and Al-Shabaab* (Oxford Academic, 20 June 2019)

Bakker, Edwin, and Beatrice de Graaf. Towards a Theory of Fear Management in the Counterterrorism Domain: A Stocktaking Approach. *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism*, 2014

Bamfo, Napoleon A. Ethiopia's invasion of Somalia in 2006: Motives and lessons learned. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*

Barnes, Cedric & Hassan, Harun. The Rise and Fall of Mogadishu's Islamic Courts. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*.

Beck, Colin and Schoon, Eric Terrorism and Social Movement, in *The Wiley Blackwell companion to the social movement*.

Berger, J.M., and Bill Strathearn. Who Matters Online: Measuring Influence, Evaluating Content and Countering Violent Extremism in Online Social Networks. *International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation*.

Berschinski, Robert G. AFRICOM'S Dilemma: Global War on Terrorism, Capacity Building, Humanitarianism, and the Future of U.S. Security Policy in Africa. *The Strategic Studies Institute*, November 2007.

Berti, Banedetta. *Armed Political Organizations: From Conflict to Integration*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013.

Bjørgo, Tore, and John Horgan. *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement*. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2009

Blanchard, Lauren Ploch. Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa. [Library of Congress public edition]. Washington, D.C: *Congressional Research Service*, 2018.

Bloom, Mia. *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. New York, Columbia University Press, 2007.

Borum, Randy, *Psychology of Terrorism.* Mental Health Law & Policy Faculty Publications. 2004.

Borum, Randy. Radicalization into Violent Extremism I: A Review of Social Science Theories. *Journal of Strategic Security* 4, no. 4 (2012)

Borum, Randy. Radicalization into Violent Extremism II: A Review of Conceptual Models and Empirical Research. *Journal of Strategic Security*.

Bosi, Lorenzo & Demetriou, C. & Malthaner, Stefan. *Dynamics of Political Violence: A Process-Oriented Perspective on Radicalization and the Escalation of Political Conflict*. Routledge Press, 2014.

Bronwyn E. Bruton. Somalia: A New Approach. Council on Foreign Relations. *Council Special Report* No:52, (2010).

Bruton, Bronwyn. In the Quicksands of Somalia: Where Doing Less Helps More. *Foreign Affairs 88*, no. 6 (2009).

Buzan, Barry, and Ole Wæver. *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2003).

Checkel, Jeffrey T. (ed.) *Transnational Dynamics of Civil War*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2013).

Choi, Seung-Whan, and James A. Piazza. Foreign Military Interventions and Suicide Attacks. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61, no. 2 (February 2017).

Christia, Fotini. *Alliance Formation in Civil Wars*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2012).

Christopher, Clapham. *African Guerrillas*. Indiana University Press. (1998).

Clarke, Walter, and Jeffrey Herbst. Somalia and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention. *Foreign Affairs.*

Council on Foreign Relations Are 'Ungoverned Spaces' a Threat?| (2022, November https://www.cfr.org/expert-brief/are-ungoverned-spaces-threat

Country Reports on Terrorism 2020," United States Department of State, "Chapter 3 -- Terrorist Safe Havens," April 28, 2006, https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2020/.

Crenshaw, Martha. Rethinking Transnational Terrorism: An Integrated Approach. (n.d.). *US Institute of Peace*, No. 158, 2020.

Crenshaw, Martha, and Gary LaFree. Countering Terrorism. Vii-Xii. Washington, D.C.: *Brookings Institution Press*, (2017).

Crenshaw, Martha, *Conclusion* in "*Dynamics of Political Violence: A Process-Oriented Perspective on Radicalization and the Escalation of Political Conflict*" edit by Bosi, Lorenzo & Demetriou, C. & Malthaner, Stefan. (2014).

Crenshaw, Martha. *Terrorism Research: The Record. International Interactions: Empirical and Theoretical Research in International Relations* (July 2014).

Crenshaw, Martha. The Causes of Terrorism. *Comparative Politics* 13, no. 4 (1981): 379–99. https://doi.org/10.2307/421717.

Crenshaw, Martha. *Terrorism in Context*. University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, (1995).

Cronin, Audrey Kurth. How al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups. *Quarterly Journal: International Security*, vol. 31. no. 1. 2006.

D. McAdam, J. McCarthy, and M. N. Zald. *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1(996).

D. Schindler, International Humanitarian Law and Internationalized Internal Armed Conflicts. *International Review of the Red Cross*. Cambridge University Press: 01 October 1982.

Snow, David A., Della Porta, Donatella, Klandermans, Bert, Mcadam, Doug (editor/s) *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements*. Chichester; Malden : Wiley-Blackwell, 2013, SSEZ - Blackwell Encyclopedias in Social Sciences[COSMOS]

Dagne, Ted. Somalia: Current Conditions and Prospects for a Lasting Peace Specialist in African Affairs. *CRS Report for Congress* Prepared for Members and Committees of Congress. 2011.

David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule & Hanspeter Kriesi (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*. (Blackwell/Malden, Oxford/Carlton, 2004.

De Waal, Alex, et al. *Islamism and Its Enemies in the Horn of Africa*. London: Hurst, 2004.

de Waal, Alex. Somalia's Disassembled State: Clan Unit Formation and the Political Marketplace, *Conflict, Security & Development*, (2020) 20:5, 561-585, DOI: 10.1080/14678802.2020.1820160

Deforche, Robrecht. Stabilization, and Common Identity: Reflections on the Union of Islamic Courts and Al-Ittihad. *Bildhaan.* 2014.

Della Porta, Donatella, and Mario Diani. *Social Movements: An Introduction*. 3rd Edition, Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2020.

Della Porta, Donatella, DONKER, et al., *Social Movements and Civil War: When Protests for Democratization Fail*. London: Routledge, 2018.

Della Porta, Donatella. Radicalization: A Relational Perspective. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2018.

Della Porta, Donatella. *Clandestine Political Violence*. Cambridge Studies in Contentious Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Demetriou C., Alimi E.Y. Relational Radicalization. In: Dépelteau F. (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Relational Sociology*. Palgrave Macmillan

DFID. The Politics of Poverty: Elites, Citizens, and States: Findings from ten years of DFID- funded research on *Governance and the Fragile States 2001-2010*. London: (2010)

Docking, Tim. Terrorism in the Horn of Africa. *United States Institute of Peace*. January 13, 2004.

Edwards, B., and Gillham, P.F. (2013). Resource Mobilization Theory. In *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements* (eds D.A. Snow, D. Della Porta, B. Klandermans, and D. McAdam.

Elias, Norbert. *The Civilizing Processes*. New York: Urizen Books. 1978.

Ellis, Stephen, & Ineke Kessel. *Movers and Shakers: Social Movements in Africa*. Leiden. Brill, 2009.

Elmi, Afyare Abdi, and Abdullahi Barise. *The Somali Conflict: Root Causes, Obstacles, and Peace-building Strategies*. African Security Review, Volume 15, 2006 - Issue 1.

Elster, Jon. *Explaining Social Behavior: More Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Emirbayer, Mustafa. Manifesto for a Relational Sociology. *American Journal of Sociology* 103, no. 2 (1997)

Foucault, Michel. & Gordon, Colin. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1980.

Fox, Piven Frances & Cloward, Richard *A. Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed How They Fail.* (1st ed. New York: Pantheon Books, 1977.

Fukuyama, Francis. *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2004.

Futrell, R., Simi, P. and Tan, A.E. Political Extremism and Social Movements in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (eds D.A. Snow, S.A. Soule, H. Kriesi and H.J. McCammon, (2018)

George, Alexander L., and Andrew Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. MIT Press: Cambridge, 2005.

Goffman, E. *On Face-Work: An Analysis of Ritual Elements in Social Interaction. In Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-To-Face Behavior*. Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books, 1972.

Grant, Andrew. "Clan Identity and Islamic Identity in Somalia: An Examination of Non-State Armed Groups in Regional and Sub-Regional Context," in *Clan and Islamic Identities in Somali Society*. ed. David Last, and Anthony Seaboyer (Toronto: Defense R&D Canada, 2011)

Grubeck, Nikolaus. *Civilian Harm in Somalia: Creating an Appropriate Response*. Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict (CIVIC) UNHCR

Gyampo, Ransford. Somalia: An Anti-Thesis of the Western Conception of Failed States? *Ghana Journal of Development Studies*. (2012). 8. 10.4314/gjds.v8i2.1.

H. Sharif and Sheikh Ahmed, "Speech of the Somali President," United Nations General Assembly, 2010.

Hafez, M.M. & Wiktorowicz, Quintan. *Violence As Contention in the Egyptian Islamic Movement in Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, Indiana University Press, 2004.

Hansen, Stig Jarle. *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group*. London: Hurst and Company, 2015.

Heller, Sam. Rightsizing the Transnational Jihadist Threat. Commentary, *Jihad in Modern Conflict* 12 December 2018.

Hess, Robert L. The 'Mad Mullah' and Northern Somalia. *The Journal of African History* 5, no. 3 (1964): 415–33. doi:10.1017/S0021853700005107.

Horton, Lynn. Grassroots Movements. *Wiley Online Library*. Last modified January 14, 2013.

Howard, Tiffany. *Failed States and the Origins of Violence*. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016.

Institute for Economics & Peace.: Measuring the Impact of Terrorism, Sydney, *Global Terrorism Index*, November 2019.

International Crisis Group (ICG), Counter-Terrorism in Somalia: Losing Hearts and Minds? *Africa Report* N°95, 11 July 2005

International Crisis Group (ICG), Can the Somali Crisis be Contained*?* 10 August 2006, *Africa Report* N°116.

International Crisis Group (ICG), Somalia: Countering Terrorism in a Failed State, 23 May 2002.

International Crisis Group (ICG), Somalia's Divided Islamists, Briefing 74 / Africa 18 May 2010.

International Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°114 Nairobi/Brussels, 17 November 2015

International Crisis Group, Kenya's Somali Northeast: Devolution and Security. Briefing N. 114 / Africa 17 November 2015

International Crisis Group, Somalia's Islamists *Africa Report* N°100, 12 December 2005.

Johnston, Hank, and Paul Almeida. *Latin American Social Movements: Globalization, Democratization, and Transnational Networks*. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006.

Jones, Seth G. Jones, and Libicki, Martin C., How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qa'ida. Santa Monica, CA: *RAND Corporation*, 2008.

Jones, Seth G., Vallee, Charles et al. The Evolution of the Salafi-Jihadist Threat: Current and Future Challenges from the Islamic State, Al-Qaeda, and Other Groups, *CSIS Transnational Threats Project*, 2018.

Joseph, Dan, and Harun Maruf. *Inside Al-Shabaab: The Secret History of Al-Qaeda's Most Powerful Ally*. Indiana UP, (2018).

Jytte Klausen, Selene Campion, Nathan Needle, Giang Nguyen & Rosanne Libretti. Toward a Behavioral Model of "Homegrown" Radicalization Trajectories, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, (2016).

Kalyvas, Stathis N. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kapteijns, Lidwien. *Clan Cleansing in Somalia: The Ruinous Legacy of 1991*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013.

Keating, Michael, and Matt Waldman (eds), *War and Peace in Somalia: National Grievances, Local Conflict, and Al-Shabaab*. Oxford Academic, 2019.

Klärner, A., Gamper, M., Keim-Klärner, S., Moor, I., von der Lippe, H., Vonneilich, N. (eds) *Social Networks and Health Inequalities*. Springer, Cham, 2022.

Kriesi, H. Charles Tilly: Contentious Performances, Campaigns, and Social Movements. *Swiss Political Science Review*, 2009.

Kriesi, Hanspeter. Mobilization of Protest in the Age of Austerity. In *Street Politics in the Age of Austerity: From the Indignados to Occupy*. edited by Marcos Ancelovici et al., (Amsterdam University Press, 2016.

Kriesi, Hanspeter. The Organizational Structure of New Social Movements in a Political Context. In *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, edited by D. McAdam, J. McCarthy, and M. N. Zald, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996)

Krueger, Alan, B., and Jitka Malečková. Education, Poverty and Terrorism: Is There a Causal Connection?"*Journal of Economic Perspectives*. 2003.

Last, David & Seaboyer, Anthony. Clan and Islamic Identities in Somali Society. *Defense R&D* Canada Contract Report DRDC

Lewis, I.M. *A Modern History of the Somali: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*. Boydell & Brewer, 2002.

Lygre, R. B., Eid, J., Larsson, G., & Ranstorp, M. Terrorism as a process: A critical review of Moghaddam's "Staircase to Terrorism. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, (2011).

Lyons, Terrence. The Ethiopia-Eritrea Conflict and the Search for Peace in the Horn of Africa. *Review of African Political Economy* 36, no. 120 (2009).

Malthaner, Stefan. Radicalization: The Evolution of an Analytical Paradigm. *European Journal of Sociology*, 58, 2017.

Malthaner, Stefan. *Mobilizing the Faithful: Militant Islamist Groups and Their Constituencies*. Campus Verlag, 2011.

Mamdani, Mahmood. *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror*. New York: Three Leaves Press, 2005.

Marchal, Roland, 'Motivations and Drivers of Al-Shabaab', in Michael Keating, and Matt Waldman (eds), War and Peace in Somalia: National Grievances, Local Conflict and Al-Shabaab. *Oxford Academic*, June 2019.

Marchal, Roland, and Zakaria M. Sheikh. Salafism in Somalia: Coping with Coercion, Civil War and Its Own Contradictions. *Islamic Africa*

Marchal, Roland. The Rise of a Jihadi Movement in a Country at War: Harakat al-Shabaab al Mujaheddin in Somalia. [Research Report] *Sciences Po*. 2011.

Marchal, Roland. Warlordism and Terrorism: How to Obscure an Already Confusing Crisis? The Case of Somalia. *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs.

Martín Ramírez, Jesús. and Monaghan, Rachel. and Walters, Tali K. *Radicalization, Terrorism, and Conflict*. Cambridge Scholars Pub. 2013.

Massoud, Mark Fathi. *Sharia, Inshallah: Finding God in Somali Legal Politics. Cambridge Studies in Law and Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.

Maton, Karl. "Habitus." Chapter. In Pierre Bourdieu: *Key Concepts*, edited by Michael Grenfell, 2nd ed., 48–64. Key Concepts. Acumen Publishing, 2012.

McAdam, Doug, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly. *Dynamics of Contention.* Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.

McCauley, C., & Moskalenko, S. Friction: *How Radicalization Happens to Them and Us*. New York: Oxford University Press. 2011.

Medani, Khalid Mustafa. *Black Markets and Militants: Informal Networks in the Middle East and Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.

Meleagrou-Hitchens et al. Lights, Camera, Jihad: Al-Shabaab's Western Media Strategy. *International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence*, 2012.

Menkhaus, Ken. Violent Islamic Extremism: Al-Shabaab Recruitment in America. Hearing before the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, *U.S. Senate*, 11 March 2009.

Menkhaus, Ken, Somalia: They Created a Desert and Called it Peace(building). *Review of African Political Economy*, 2009. 36:120, 223-233

Menkhaus, Ken. The Crisis in Somalia: Tragedy in Five Acts. *African Affairs*, Vol. 106, Issue 424

Menkhaus, Ken. "Political Islam in Somalia." *Middle East Policy*, vol 9, no. 1, 2002

Menkhaus, Ken. Governance without Government in Somalia Spoilers, State Building, and the Politics of Coping. *International Security*, vol. 31, no. 3, 2006

Menkhaus, Ken. Elite Bargains and Political Deals Project: Somalia Case Study. *Stabilization Unit* UK Government, February 2018.

Meyer, David S., and Suzanne Staggenborg. Movements, Counter-movements, and the Structure of Political Opportunity. *American Journal of Sociology* 1996 101:6, 1628-1660

Michael King & Donald M. Taylor. The Radicalization of Homegrown Jihadists: A Review of Theoretical Models and Social Psychological Evidence. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 23:4, 2011.

Misguided Intentions: Resisting Africom | Article | The United States Army. https://www.army.mil/article/35036/misguided_intentions_resisting_africom

Moghaddam, Fathali M. The Staircase to Terrorism: A Psychological Exploration. *The American Psychologist* vol. 60,2 (2005)

Mohamed Haji Ingiriis, From Al-Ittihad to Al-Shabaab: how the Ethiopian intervention and the 'War on Terror' exacerbated the conflict in Somalia. *Third World Quarterly*, 39:11, 2033-2052

Moskalenko, Sophia, and Clark McCauley. *Radicalization to Terrorism: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.

National Commission on Terrorist Attacks. *The 9/11 Commission Report*. WW Norton, 2004.

Neumann, Peter R. The Trouble with Radicalization. *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-) 89, no. 4 (2013): 873–93. no. 3

Pape, Robert A. *Bombing to Win. Air Power and Coercion in War*. (Cornell University Press | Cornell Studies in Security Affairs. 1996.)

Perkoski, Evan James, "Organizational Fragmentation and the Trajectory of Militant Splinter Groups" (2015). Publicly Accessible Penn Dissertations. 1943.

Perkoski, Evan. “Organizational fragmentation and the trajectory of militant splinter groups.” (2015).

Piazza, James A. Incubators of Terror: Do Failed and Failing States Promote Transnational Terrorism? *International Studies* Quarterly 52, no. 3 (2008)

Plumb, J. H. *The Growth of Political Stability in England: 1675-1725*, [by] J.H. Plumb Macmillan London, Melbourne [etc.] 1967

Futrell, R., Simi, P. and Tan, A.E. (2018). Political Extremism and Social Movements. In *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (eds D.A. Snow, S.A. Soule, H. Kriesi and H.J. McCammon).

Prendergast, John. The Perilous Chaos of Forgotten Somalia. *Crisis Group*, 31 Jan. 2005

Prof. Moccia, Luigi .Deliverable D2.1: Literature Review on Radicalization. *European Commission Literature Review Report*, March 2019.

Quaranto, Peter J. Building states while fighting terror: Contradictions in United States strategy in Somalia from 2001 to 2007. Pretoria: *Institute for Security Studies* (ISS), 2008

Rapoport, D. C. The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism. In A. K. Cronin & J. M. Ludes (Eds.), *Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy* (Georgetown University Press, 2004)

Rapoport, David C. *Waves of Global Terrorism: From 1879 to the Present*. Columbia University Press, 2022.

Remnek, Richard B. The Strategic Importance of the Bab El-Mandeb and the Horn of Africa. *Naval War College Review*

Reno, William. Somalia and Survival in the Shadow of the Global Economy. Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford. *ODID Working Paper* No. 100

Report of the Accountability Review Boards on the Embassy Bombings in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam on August 7, 1998, | Office of Justice Programs

Report to the Committee on Foreign Relations, “Al Qaeda in Yemen and Somalia: A Ticking Time Bomb” (United States Senate, One Hundred Eleventh Congress, Second Session, 2010. Washington, U.S.)

Rotberg Robert I. State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror. World Peace Foundation: Brookings Institution Press 2003.

Rotberg, Robert et al. Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2005.

Roth, John and Greenburg, Douglas and Wille, Serena. 9/11 Monograph on Terrorist Financing: Staff Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States. 12th Media Services, 2019.

Sage, Andre Le. “*Stateless Justice in Somalia: Formal and Informal Rule of Law Initiatives*.” (2005).

Samatar Said S and Chatham House Study Group. *The Islamic Courts and Ethiopia's Intervention in Somalia: Redemption or Adventurism?* (London: Royal Inst. of Internat. Affairs, 2007)

Samatar, Abdi Ismail. "The Miracle of Mogadishu." Review of African Political Economy 33, no. 109 (2006)

Samatar, Abdi Ismail. “Ethiopian Invasion of Somalia, US Warlordism & AU Shame.” Review of African Political Economy 34, no. 111 (2007): 155–65. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20406369.

Samatar, Ahmed I. "The Porcupine Dilemma: Governance and Transition in Somalia," Bildhaan: An International Journal of Somali Studies: Vol. 7, 2008.

Samatar, Said S. "The politics of poetry." Africa Report 38, no. 5 1993.

Scahill, Jeremy. Dirty Wars : the World Is a Battlefield. (New York :Nation Books, 2013.)

Schmid, Alex. (2013). “Radicalization, De-Radicalization, and Counter-Radicalization: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review.” Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism Studies.

Secretary-General, U. (n.d.). *Letter, 20 June 2006, from the Secretary-General*. United Nations Digital Library System. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/577343

Sgt. Maj. Dos Santos, Clayton & Mr. Perdue, James *Battle of Mogadishu: The Mission Command Perspective.* NCO Leadership Center of Excellence.

Shapiro, JN, C Watts, and V Brown. Al-Qaida's (Mis)Adventures in the Horn of Africa. WestPoint, N.Y.: Combating Terrorism Center

Sidney Tarrow, "Charles Tilly and the Practice of Contentious Politics: From France to England and [Not quite] Back Again", Histoire@Politique. Politique, culture, société, N°10, janvier-avril 2010,

Silber, Mitchell & Bhatt, Arvin. NYPD Police Department, *Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat,* 2007.

Snow, David; Byrd, Scott, "Ideology, framing processes, and Islamic terrorist movements," Mobilization: An International Quarterly

Stickings, J; Abadia, M; Nikolaishvili, M; Bakrania, S; and Fisher, A. Identifying Groups Vulnerable to Violent Extremism and Reducing Risks of Radicalization. London: Department for International Development.

Straw, Jack, Reordering the World: The Long-Term Implications of September 11 (London: Foreign Policy Research Center, 2002

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (2004). '*The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior*.' in J. T. Jost & J. Sidanius (Eds.), Political psychology: Key Readings (pp. 276–293). Psychology Press.

Tarrow, S. (2013). Contentious Politics. The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements (eds D.A. Snow, D. Della Porta, B. Klandermans, and D. McAdam).

Tarrow, S. Contentious Politics. "The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements" (eds D.A. Snow, D. Della Porta, B. Klandermans, and D. McAdam). (2013).

Tarrow, Sidney G. "Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics," 3rd ed., Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Tarrow, Sidney. "Comparison, Triangulation, and Embedding Research in History: A Methodological Self-Analysis." BMS: Bulletin of Sociological Methodology / Bulletin de Méthodologie Sociologique, no. 141 (2019)

Tarrow, Sidney. “Social Movements in Contentious Politics: A Review Article.” The American Political Science Review, vol. 90, no. 4, 1996, pp. 874–83.

Tarrow, Sidney. War, States, and Contention: A Comparative Historical Study. (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 2015.

Tavolato, Umberto. “*Somalia: Djibouti to Mbagathi: Making or Breaking the Peace,”* Nairobi, 12 January 2004.

The 9/11 Commission Report, Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003

The author is anonymous, Somalia’s al-Shabab Reconstitutes Fighting Force (CTC Sentinel, February 2008, Volume 1, Issue 3)

Tilly, Charles & Tarrow, Sidney. Contentious Politics. Oxford University Press. 2015.

Tilly, Charles. The Politics of Collective Violence, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Toros, Harmonie, and Stephen Harley, 'Negotiations with Al-Shabaab: Lessons Learned and Future Prospects', in Michael Keating, and Matt Waldman (eds), War and Peace in Somalia: National Grievances, Local Conflict and Al-Shabaab, 2019; online edn, Oxford Academic, 20 June 2019

Torres, Julian A., "Exploring the Causes of Islamic Radicalization and Recruitment and the General Strain Theory in Identified Terrorists" (2013). All Regis University Theses.

U.S. Department of State, Country Reports on Terrorism, April 28, 2006.

U.S. Department of State. Bureau of Counterterrorism Country Reports on Terrorism. (2021). Retrieved July 9, 2023, https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2021/

UNDP. Journey to extremism in Africa: Pathways to recruitment and disengagement, February 2023.

UN Security Council Committee Established pursuant to Resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea Chair and UN Monitoring Group Established pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1519 (2003) And 1907 (2009), “Letter Dated 10 March 2010 from the Chairman of the Security Council

Committee pursuant to Resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) Concerning Somalia and Eritrea Addressed to the President of the Security Council,"

United Nations, "United Nations Operation in Somalia (Unisom II) - Background https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/past/unosom2backgr2.html.

United States Institute of Peace Report, Final Report of the Task Force on Extremism in the Fragile States, "Preventing Extremism in the Fragile States: A New Approach, 2019.

United States Military Academy. Combating Terrorism Center. Al-Qaida's (mis)adventures in the Horn of Africa [electronic resource] / Harmony project, Combating Terrorism Center at West Point US Military Academy, Combating Terrorism Center [West Point, N.Y.] 2007

Verhoeven, Harry. "The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy of Failed States: Somalia, State Collapse and the Global War on Terror," Journal of Eastern African Studies 3, no. 3 (October 2009)

Williams, Jennifer. "How Ordinary People Decide to Become Terrorists - Vox." Vox, November 20, 2015.

Wright James D. International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences. Second edition Second ed. Elsevier 2015.

Yusuf, Muuse. The Genesis of the Civil War in Somalia: The Impact of Foreign Military Intervention on the Conflict. (I. B. Tauris, 2021).

Zartman, William. Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority. (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.1995)

Advocacy group lobbies President Bush

Al-Itihaad Al-Islamiya / AIAI | United Nations Security Council," www.un.org. Accessed October 31, 2022,

Https://Www.Un.Org/Securitycouncil/Sanctions/1267/Aq_Sanctions_List/Summaries/Entity/Al-İtihaad-Al-İslamiya/Aiai.

Al-Shabaab | Council on Foreign Relations. "Al-Shabaab," November 4, 2022. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/al-shabaab.

BBC NEWS | Africa | Somali Militias Target Cemetery." BBC NEWS

Clandestine Somalia Missions Yield AQ Targets — the Third in a Series Looking at U.S. Military Operations in the Horn of Africa After the Sept. 11, 2001, Attacks, 2013.

Ethiopia/Ogaden (1948-present): https://uca.edu/politicalscience/dadm-project/sub-saharan-africa-region/69-ethiopiaogaden-1948-present/

Frazer, Jendayi E. ‘‘Testimony before the US Senate.’’ https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-110shrg39987/html/CHRG-110shrg39987.htm

Somali warlords form unity council
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1235434.stm

A short history of suicide bombing
https://aoav.org.uk/2019/a-short-history-of-suicide-bombings/

Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia
https://military.wikia.org/wiki/Alliance_for_the_Re-liberation_of_Somalia

US funding Somali warlords-intelligence experts say
https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/us-funding-somali-warlords-intelligence-experts-say.

Coups, rebellions, and revolutions
https://www.britannica.com/topic/collective-violence/Coups-rebellions-and-revolutions

Islam and Somali social order
https://www.c-r.org/accord/islam-and-somali-social-order

Heller, Sam. *Rightsizing the Transnational Jihadist Threat*. Commentary, Jihad In Modern Conflict 12 December 2018.
https://www.crisisgroup.org/global/rightsizing-transnational-jihadist-threat

Most active terrorist organizations worldwide in 2020, by number of attacks
https://www.statista.com/statistics/937553/terrorism-most-active-perpetrator-groups-worldwide/

IRIN Interview with Islamic Courts Chairman Hassan Sheik Mohamed Abdi
https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/fr/node/173678

Somali faction leaders boycott talks
https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/report/14132/djibouti-somali-faction-leaders-boycott-talks

https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1744(2007)

Al-Itihaad Al-Islamiya / AIAI
https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/sanctions/1267/aq_sanctions_list/summaries/entity/al-itihaad-al-islamiya/aiai

How ordinary people decide to become terrorists
https://www.vox.com/2015/11/20/9764078/paris-terrorist-radicalization

Intelligence Brief: Somalia
https://www.worldsecuritynetwork.com/Africa/Weinstein-Michael/Intelligence-Brief-Somalia-1.

Interview on the NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, 2001-2009. state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2003/22102.htm. Accessed 26 Oct. 2022.

Islam and Somali Social Order | Conciliation Resources," www.c-r.org, accessed October 30, 2022, https://www.c-r.org/accord/islam-and-somali-social-order.

Mbaria, John. "Somalia: The Ethiopia Factor in the Rise of the Union" Allafrica.com," accessed November 2, 2022, https://allafrica.com/stories/200612051026.html. December 05, 2006

McGregor, Andrew. "Warlords or Counter-Terrorists: U.S. Intervention in Somalia - Jamestown." May 31, 2006. https://jamestown.org/program/warlords-or-counter-terrorists-u-s-intervention-in-somalia/.

Morgan, David. "US Funding Somali Warlords-Intelligence Experts Say - Somalia." ReliefWeb, June 5, 2006.

Most Active Terrorist Organizations Worldwide 2020. Statista." www.statista.com/statistics/937553/terrorism-most-active-perpetrator-groups-worldwide.

Olad Hassan, Mohamed. "Ethiopian Force Enters Somalia" Washington Post, July2006. https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2006/07/21/ethiopian-force-enters-somalia-span-classbankheadtroops-set-up-in-city-of-baidoa-to-protect-interim-governmentspan/38806558-5783-4ac2-8af1-980070c2c084/.

Overton, Iain. "A Short History of Suicide Bombing - AOAV." AOAV, 23 Aug. 2020, aoav.org.uk/2020/a-short-history-of-suicide-bombings.

Parry, John. "Credit Crisis to Have Broad, Lasting Impact-Kaufman." U.S., n.d. https://www.reuters.com/article/credit-crisis-economist-idUSN1733850120090717.

Rosen, Nir. "How Did al-Shabab Emerge from the Chaos of Somalia?" TIME.com, 20 Aug. 2010, content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2010699, 00.html.

Samatar, Abdi Ismail. Genocidal politics and the Somali famine. https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2011/7/30/genocidal-politics-and-the-somali-famine

Shell-Shocked: Civilians under Siege in Mogadishu," Human Rights Watch, August 13, 2007. https://www.hrw.org/report/2007/08/13/shell-shocked/civilians-under-siege-mogadishu.

Somali warlords form unity council. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1235434.stm

Special Representative on Somalia, Briefing Security Council, Says Crisis "Escalated Dangerously," Fighting Expanded Across 400-Kilometre Front | Un Press

Speech of the Somali President H.E. Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, At the General Assembly of the United Nations September 25, 2010 https://gadebate.un.org/sites/default/files/gastatements/65/65_SO_en.pdf.

Sudan Tribune, Somali Islamic militia says willing to negotiate with the government. https://sudantribune.com/article16892/

Tasci, Ufuk Necat. "Ahmad Gurey: A Somali Muslim Ruler Who Repelled Portuguese Invasions." Accessed November 5, 2022. https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/ahmad-gurey-a-somali-muslim-ruler-who-repelled-portuguese-invasions-33121.

Wanted cleric gets key Somali post | News | Al Jazeera. "Wanted Cleric Gets Key Somali Post," June 24, 200624. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2006/6/24/wanted-cleric-gets-key-somali-post.

Wax, Emily, and Karen DeYoung. "U.S. Secretly Backing Warlords in Somalia." May 2006. https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/05/16/AR2006051601625_pf.html.

Weinstein, Michael. "Intelligence Brief: Somalia." world security network, October 2005. https://www.worldsecuritynetwork.com/Africa/Weinstein-Michael/Intelligence-Brief-Djibouti

The New Humanitarian. EU to present memorandum to Somali parties. (2006, December 19). https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/report/62796/somalia-eu-present-memorandum-somali-parties

An Interview with Elizabeth Schmidt "the US Helped Destroy Modern Somalia." (n.d.). https://jacobin.com/2022/11/somalia-cold-war-war-on-terror-us-intervention-destabilization

Ethiopia/Ogaden (1948-present). (2001, May 6). 68. Ethiopia/Ogaden (1948-present). https://uca.edu/politicalscience/dadm-project/sub-saharan-africa-region/69-ethiopiaogaden-1948-present/

https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news/2001/10/09/advocacy-grouplobbies-president-bush

Cherian, John. "Return to Civil War." Frontline, June 15, 2006. https://frontline.thehindu.com/world-affairs/article30209713.ece.

Robinson, B. M., (2006, October 10) Call for Jihad as Ethiopian Troops Go into Somalia. https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1531095/Call-for-jihad-as-Ethiopian-troops-go-into-Somalia.html

Samatar, Abdi. Genocidal politics and the Somali famine
https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2011/7/30/genocidal-politics-and-the-somali-famine

In Somalia, U.S. Escalates a Shadow War
https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/16/world/africa/obama-somalia-secret-war.html

Straw, Jack. “Failed and Failing States” The Guardian, October 22, 2001.
http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2001/oct/22/britainand911.september11

“Regional War May Loom in Africa,” NBC News, accessed October 31, 2022, https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna16200852.