

Terrorism In Kenya Since 1990s: A Historical Lens Perspective

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Abstract: Terrorism has proved to be a phenomenon that targets human society at all sectors; social, economic, political and religious, to mention a few. It is equally not limited to any particular geographical region; underscoring it as a universal phenomenon. Incidences of terrorism have increased in the last two decades both globally and in Kenya. Just as it is the case with the contemporary global trends, most of the recent terror attacks in Kenya have had religious and ethnic dimensions. This paper examines terrorism and its attendant incidences in Kenya from a historical lens perspective since the 1990s. Adopting a theoretical position of history as the struggle for liberty, the study acknowledges that what had driven the prior stages of History in general was recognition which often led men to assert themselves in new and unforeseen ways, even to the point of becoming once again bestial. In the same breadth, it is the Position of this Paper that both the past and the present in the context of struggle for liberty, provide a complementary lens in the process of History of terrorism in the contemporary Kenya. Acknowledging that terrorism in general, and in Kenya in particular had transitioned to become more and more complex with an input of many factors both historical and current, the paper submits that political history of nationalism in Kenya still presented one of the best analytical tools with which to understand the religious, ethnic and geographical features as they played out in the increasingly complex nature of terrorism in Kenya since the 1990s.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In a key note speech at a UN meeting president Obama of the US conceptualized the world globally as being at crossroads between peace and war; between disorder and integration; and between fear and hope (Obama, 2014). Obama visualized this paradox from the perspective of the enormous gains made under the United Nations (UN) that had seen the prospects of war between the major world powers reduced, and more people live under governments they elected. Yet at the same time the very forces that had brought the rest of the world together had made it more difficult for nations to insulate themselves from the new dangers created by the combined forces of globalization and modernization such as is the case of terrorism (Obama, 2014). Terrorism as a phenomenon has grown fast over the last two decades to affect countries in Asia, Europe, America and Africa. Its monumental growth has become an issue of global concern as can be discerned from the many conferences and summits convened to debate and offer solutions to its attendant negative impact. It is the concern of the world leaders that unless the phenomenon of terrorism is addressed soon, the world is at real risk of becoming a terrorist paradise.

The multiple dimensions of terrorism to some extent may explain the many perspectives and theories of terrorism prevailing in the world today. One such perspective traces the phenomenon to the socio-economic and political conditions in the world. Yet, another common perspective views terrorism in terms of group dynamics. This view holds terrorist activities as forms of reactions to nationalism, ethnicity, poverty, non-democracy, radicalization, and religion (Crenshaw, 1981). Terrorism has become a great challenge to Kenyan security. It is true that previously Kenya experienced what others have referred to as a different type of terrorism during the struggle for independence (Edgerton, 1989). A good example in this case has always been given in the case of the struggle for independence in Kenya when the *maumau* movement resorted to terror activities against the colonial government to achieve their goals. Crenshaw supports this school of thought when she says that nationalism movements often turned to terrorism as a last resort among the extremist factions, (Crenshaw, 1981).

Just as it is the case with the contemporary global trends, most of the recent terror attacks in Kenya have had religious and ethnic dimensions. Most common have been groups organized by religious fanatics and ethnicity opposed to nationalism, westernization and foreign ideologies which they feel is at logger head with

their culture, and threatens their wellbeing. More common is the propagation of the notion that Islam is generally at war with the west and convincing their fellows that a clash of civilizations between Islam and the west was in the offing (Obama, 2015), and that terror activities constitute a remedy to the clash. In Kenya since the 1990s, the ideology of civilizational clash has been seized upon by some terror actors, and is being used to polarize the citizenry along ethnic and religious lines between Muslims and non-Muslims. More vulnerable in this respect often are those not so well conversant, and who as a consequent might not really understand the differences between Islam and fundamentalism. Such actors then often target non-Muslims in their attacks. It is all construed as encompassing a struggle of good versus evil; a situation that could easily engulf all of humanity especially when it is essentialised into binaries such as the faithful or true followers versus infidels or apostates (Cronin, 2002).

In sub-Saharan Africa, Kenya and Somali countries have probably had the most terror attacks compared to other countries. The presence of Kenyan military forces to restore order in Somali by fighting against al-Shabaab militant group has seen Kenya bear more brunt of terror attacks. The increased attacks in Kenya could also be attributed to historical factors as well as the seemingly close ties with Israel and western countries especially the USA. The vibrant coastal beach tourism industry that allegedly threatens local Islamic culture have also been cited to explain the attacks, and so is the perception that countries predominantly Christian present obstacles to Islamization. (Otiso, 2009).

Terrorist attacks in Kenya in recent times are often traced to the 1980s when the Jewish owned Norfolk hotel was attacked by the Palestinian liberation movement. This was closely followed by a bombing of the US embassy in Nairobi in 1998, bombing of Paradise hotel in Mombasa, Westgate mall attack in 2013, and lately the attack on Garissa University that killed over 147 students in 2015. The terrorists in the Garissa attack claimed to be the al-Shabaab militant group and indicated that they were retaliating over non-Muslim occupation in Muslim territory (Shiundu, 2015). This was in retaliation to the Kenyan government operation *Linda Nchi* (a Kenyan military operation in Somali) that was coordinated between the Somalia government and Kenya military from 2011 in order to secure Kenyan border with Somali from the al-Shabaab militants. The continued terror attacks by the al-Shabaab has potentially polarized the relationship between the Muslims and non-Muslims since the al-Shabaab target non-Muslims and claims to represent Muslims. Aronson reiterates this position when he notes that the invasion by Kenyan defense forces re-amplified an already tense relationship between Muslims in the horn of Africa, and the Kenyan government (Aronson, 2013).

There is a hidden assumption in certain quotas among the Muslims in Kenya that the invasion of Somali seemed to be the last straw since the Somalis are also Muslims and both have had several historical grievances against the Kenyan government which they feel has alienated, and mistreated them in many spheres from the colonial period to present (Cronin, 2002). Cronin observes in this regard, with particular reference to the Kenya's coastal population, the bulk of whom are Muslims, that the region has been marginalized politically and socio-economically since the colonial days creating an environment of non-existent social services, and poverty that facilitates terrorism (Otiso, 2009). Most of the terrorists in recent cases in Kenya have involved mainly people of Somali ethnic origin and the attacks are coordinated from Somalia that is a failed state granting al-Shabaab a latitude of freedom to operate. Equally, much of the Kenyan government efforts against terrorism on average have concentrated in north eastern Kenya that is also dominantly Somali ethnic group. But, what is terrorism?

II. OF TERRORISM IN GENERAL

It is a surprise that terrorism, though a topical issue of the contemporary times still lacks an internationally, satisfactory and universally accepted definition. This is fundamentally due to the fact that unlike ordinary crimes and evils, terrorism has an ideological coloration. Depending on one's perspective, a perpetrator of terrorist activities could be classified easily as a hero, a normal criminal or terrorist. Partly as a consequence of this ambiguity, many international conventions have been dogged by the complex task of defining terrorism. All the same different countries have legislations criminalizing various acts of terrorism. For the purpose of this study however, the definition of terrorism advanced by A.B. Krueger and Maleckora (2002) is suffice. The two authors have defined terrorism as a premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience.

Terrorism as phenomenon has gained international attention because of its overall adverse effects on nation-states and societies. Its negative social and political ramifications have had profound economic consequences including forcing governments in the world to finance counter-terrorism measures. This is evident in the bloated national defense budgets as well as on the general national budgetary figures. Terrorism therefore has not only affected the national economies but also the international economies apart from wanton destruction of property and loss to human life. This explains why terrorism has been conceived mainly as evil and even irrational; a conception that has been considered as the 'false universals' of terrorism. Critical analysis by Stanley Fish in *Think Again* suffices here when he rejects the 'false universals' of evil and irrationality of

terrorism narrative as inaccurate and unhelpful with regard to understanding and resolving the terror problem. Fish prefers instead to look at terrorism and terrorists as bearers of a rationality we reject as often its goal is the destruction of others. From Fish's point of view therefore terrorism could as well be a style of warfare in the service of a cause informed by passion. It may therefore be of no surprise as maintains Fish, that the rhetoric on the 'irrational' and 'evil enemies' that is by far and large the dominant narrative of terrorism in the public sphere, is the major culprit for the many losses associated with terrorism (Fish, 2015).

Today B. Ronald and C. Cooper (2008) have identified four types of terrorism classified by its motivation: the leftwing, rightwing, ethno-nationalist or separatists and religious or sacred one. Accordingly, each of them has a different style and mode of behavior that informs its manifestation and type and nature of its violence. Currently religious or sacred terrorism dominates the explanations at the global level even though a contesting view bypasses sacred explanation settling on societal structures instead. (ahaya, 2016). In general, some of the causes of terrorism in Kenya include but not in any way limited to ethnic conflict, political exclusion and the resultant insurrections, religious differences and social economic exclusion and marginalization. In the next section of this paper we turn to theoretical conception of the interplay of these causes.

III. HISTORY AS THE STORY OF LIBERTY: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study adopts Benedetto Croce's position in *History as the story of Liberty* when the author sees history as basically connected to liberty arguing that all history is in fact contemporary history implying that History consist, essentially in seeing the past through the eyes of the present in the light of its problems. Croce maintains in this regard that the main work of the Historian is not merely to record, but to evaluate for if he does not evaluate, how can he know, what is worth recording. Francis Fukuyama seems to be in agreement with this theoretical position when he asserts that the purely economic interpretations as History is incomplete and unsatisfying. Fukuyama in support of this position cites Hegel and Hegel's non-materialistic accounts of History that sees history basically as the struggle for recognition. Hegel had argued that man differs fundamentally from animals because among other things he wants to be recognized. The desire for recognition and the accompanying emotions of anger, shame, and pride are parts of human personality critical to political **life**. According to Hegel, these are what drives the whole historical process. The struggle for recognition therefore, provides the insights into the nature of national and international politics.

Consequently, what man has been seeking throughout the course of History; What had driven the prior stages of History, was recognition. Fukuyama asserts in this regard that what may lead men to assert themselves in new and unforeseen ways, even to the point of becoming once again bestial; what Fukuyama calls "first Man", is the quest for recognition. In the same breadth, it is the Position of this Paper that both the past and the present in the context of struggle for liberty provide a complementary lens in the process of History of terrorism in the contemporary Kenya. In the context of Kenya, the most devastating attacks can be categorized to have come from ethno nationalist and religious terrorism categories although the nature of their combination is complex and might even have since evolved with time. All in all, what might be without doubt is that conflict and its history, of necessity, lies at the heart of recent terrorist acts. This position informs the basis of our analysis of terrorism in Kenya since the 1990s in this study. In the next section we turn our attention to the major terrorism incidences in the history of Kenya.

IV. MAJOR INCIDENCES OF TERRORISM IN KENYA

In the Kenyan case most of the perpetrators of terrorism are Muslims, Somalis, Arabs or Swahilis. The manifestation of these dominant forms of terrorism in Kenya has a definite historical sequence. Before independence Kenya experienced the Mau Mau war for independent which has been referred to as a terrorist group mainly because they used violence to destabilize the colonial government and drive away the white settlers (Hofsman, 2006). Other major terrorism incidences in Kenya and their implications on terrorism in Kenya are briefly documented in the sub-sections that follows:

4.1 The *Shifta* Wars and Terrorism in Kenya

Soon after independence, the young Kenyan state found itself in a political quagmire regarding its chosen path of a unitary national government model in the backdrop of arbitrarily connived national boundaries that ignored the pre-colonial constituent nations of Kenya. One such incident saw Kenya declare a state of emergency and curfew over the Northern frontier district due to attacks from Somali militia and political party. The situation soon deteriorated into anarchy as the government fought against Somali Insurgents seeking secession from Kenya and union with Somali republic. The government fought against the Somali insurgents; this war was referred to as the *shifta* wars. It ended in July 1967 after an agreement with neighboring Somali which had been seen to be supporting the insurgents. Although Kenya returned the Northern Frontier district, this did not end the feeling of dissatisfaction and marginalization of people in that region who were mostly the

Somali ethnic community (Hofsman, 2006, 48).

The *shifita* wars forced many Somali ethnics to escape to the now failed state of Somalia and they later found it difficult to get back to Kenya. This created secondary and tertiary problems for Kenya eventually leading to an insecure border (Hofsman, 2006, 48). To make matters worse in terms of the relations between the government of Kenya and the Somali community, the government forces killed many Somalis during the Wagalla and Gonsamassares hence laying down a background viewed in this study as a vital clue towards understanding why many terrorist attacks in Kenya lately had been led by people of Somali origin (Ronald and Cooper 2008).

4.2 Israel hostage rescue mission:the Palestinian Dimension and Terrorism in Kenya

One of the earliest incidences connected to Terrorism in Kenya occurred in 1976 when the Kenyan government allowed Israeli airplanes to refuel in Nairobi on their way to Uganda's Entebbe airport to rescue Israel hostages that had been kidnapped by a Palestinian group known as Baader-Meinhof; a popular front for the liberation of Palestinian territory in the Middle East (Dunstan. (2011). The Palestinian group planned to shoot down the plane during a scheduled stopover in Nairobi (Dunstan, 2011.). The support offered by the Kenyan government to the Israeli operation angered the Islamic extremists hence fueling the Islamic angle to the post-independence conflict in Kenya. This came to pass. On 31st December 1980, the Norfolk hotel in Nairobi owned by a prominent member of the local Jewish community was bombed. The bomb killed 20 people of several nationalities, wounded 87 more and destroyed much of the west wing of the hotel. It was believed to be an act of revenge by pro-Palestinian militant for Kenya's supporting role in Israel's operation in Entebbe (Kiruga, 2013). Intelligence reports from both the international security agencies in conjunction with the Kenya police, enabled the identification of the prime suspect within hours. The suspect was identified as a 34 years old Quddura Mohammed Abdel Al-Hamid of Morocco, and was said to have checked into the Norfolk Hotel in Nairobi in the last week of 1980. Al-Hamid was found to have paid for his room up until new year's day but slipped away on the afternoon of 31 December. He had boarded a plane for Saudi Arabia by the time the guests at the Norfolk assembled for a new year's eve dinner (Kiruga, 2013).In this terror incident the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was playing out in Kenya in miniature as terrorism.

4.3 The Al-Qaeda Terrorist Attacks in Kenya and the Islamic Dimension.

Like the Norfolk hotel attack, Islamic religion played the dominant motivational role in the al-Qaeda attacks in Kenya. In 1998, there was simultaneous terrorist bomb attacks on the US embassies in Der-salaam and Nairobi. Over 200 people were killed in Nairobi and over 400 injured apart from the destruction of buildings such as the Ufundi house. A group calling itself the liberation Army for Holy sites claimed responsibility. Investigations however discovered that the attacks were planned by the Al-Qaeda terrorist group with the help of both local and foreign actors all of whom were Muslims. They included Fazul Abdulla, two Saudi suicide bombers, a former Egyptian police and a Palestinian; all Al-Qaeda members from Jordan (US Department of state, 2007),

The next major al-Qaeda attack occurred on 22nd November 2002 when its affiliates bombed an Israel owned hotel in Mombasa which was just receiving visitors from Israel. It led to the death of several Kenyans, 3 Israelis and wounded dozens. This saw the Israel government sending planes to evacuate the injured and all those Israelis who wanted to leave back for Israel (Kelley and Munciata 2004). Almost simultaneously two shoulder-launched surface-to-air missiles were fired at another chartered Boeing 757 airliner owned by an Israel based airline as it took off from Moi international airport in Mombasa. The charter company had a regular weekly service flying tourist between Tel Aviv and Mombasa. Kenya police discovered a missile launcher and two missile casings in Changamwe area of Mombasa, about two kilometers from the airport (Kelley and Munciata, 2004) The Police believed Fazul Abdullah to be the main suspect. It would seem that the Arab-Israeli conflict had acquired a clash of civilization interpretation as it was played out in the context of Kenya.

4.4 Al-Shabaab Terrorist attacks in Kenya and the Dominant Somali Dimension.

The war in Somalia pitting the Al Shabab against the Somalia Federal Government and the forces of the AMISOM is spilling over into many neighboring countries with Kenya being one of the affected countries. Terrorist attacks have increased in Kenya in recent years between 2011 and 2014; there have been more than 70 grenade and gun attacks in Nairobi, Mombasa and Garissa counties, (Wafula, 2014). Besides the attacks and killings, it also appears that Al Shabab is seeking to radicalize and recruit children from various communities in Kenya. The accumulative sufferings of the people accomplish the group's goals of instilling fear, getting their message out to an audience or otherwise satisfying the demands of their often radical religio-political agenda.

The al-Shabaab saga has confirmed in many ways the narrative that children in African societies are amongst the most vulnerable segment of the civilian populations during conflicts and crises. This is because wars and conflicts put children in situations where every of their right is being violated. Children are killed or

injured, usually in the context of clashes between opposing forces, and children have also been directly targeted in many cases. In the chaos of war and other crises in Africa, many children become separated from their families, which results in loss of parental care and protection at the time when they most need it. In the context of conflicts, children are exposed to the risk of abuse and exploitation and their very survival is threatened. Children also face the threat of being recruited as soldiers not only by terrorist groups but also by other armed actors including the forces of the state.

Recent trends in armed conflict as presented by al-Shabaab group, without doubt have resulted in new challenges for the women as mothers in the narrative of the vulnerability of children. Previously armed conflict involved confrontations between states, whereas currently intra-state conflict is more frequent. As battle lines becomes blurred and fragmented, armed groups increasingly rely on improvised explosive devices and suicide missions, as well as the use of children to carry out attacks. Both boys and girls have been targeted for recruitment and use by such groups, which indoctrinate and manipulate in order to coerce or force children to participate in hostilities, including acts of extreme violence. Girls and boys are often unaware of the actions or consequences of the acts they are manipulated or coerced to commit, which explains the current situation in some parts of Kenya.

Radicalization, as the manipulation and coercion goes is real in Kenya and targets groups varying in age for the militants. There are reports that a swoop carried out in Mombasa's Musa Mosque by security agents rescued over 200 children as young as 12 years said to be undergoing radicalization for al-Shabaab, (The African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 2016)). A report by Regional News Service (June 2015) estimate that 255 persons have left to join the al-Shabaab terrorist group since 2013. Other reports may however give an indication that this figure could be higher as in Isiolo County in Eastern Kenya alone, an estimated 200 children were reported missing since 2014 and assumed to have crossed over to Somalia, (A report by Regional News Service (June 2015)). The target group for the recruiters are children and youth between ages of 15-30 and mostly boys. Al Shabaab in the case of Kenya has mastered the art of manipulating Islam religion to fit their desire, atrocious activities and to lure more Muslim Youth into the militia group. They radicalize and then lure the gullible youth by interpreting the Qur'an to serve their particular ideology.

Looking at the case in Kenya, a number of interrelated social, political and economic factors are fuelling the radicalization of children. Geographically, the epicenter of radicalization appears to be the Northern region of Kenya which is dominated by ethnic Somalis, and by most accounts, the region considered to be the worst victim of unequal development, (Kenyan Somali Islamist Radicalization, International Crisis Group, 2012). According to a report by the International Crisis Group, the Northern Province has a history of insurgency, misrule and repression, chronic poverty, massive youth unemployment, high population growth, insecurity, poor infrastructure and lack of basic services, which are resulted in the bleak socio-economic and political conditions. The rate of poverty is significantly higher in the areas where radicalization of children is rampant, thus the vulnerability of children and young people being lured to join these groups. Moreover, the unfolding conflict in neighboring Somalia has also had a largely negative effect on the region. Reports also reveal the existence of a high level of small arms flow across the Northern Kenya, which provides a conducive environment for the extremists to easily arm their recruits.

Over all, according to US Embassy report, between the years 2011 and 2012 Kenya experienced about 17 attacks involving grenades or explosive devices in Kenya connected to al-Shabaab. At least 48 people died in this attack and around 200 people were injured. Nine of these attacks occurred in North Eastern region including locations in Dadaab, Wajir and Garissa. Four attacks occurred in Nairobi and four in Mombasa. Targets included police stations and police vehicles, night clubs and bars, churches and religious gatherings, a down town building of small shops and bus station. Of these, a more recent attack involved two simultaneous assaults in a church in Garissa on 1st July 2012. In this attack 17 people were killed and about 50 people were injured.

On 21st September 2013, the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi was attacked by terrorist who were Al-Shabaab associates. They shot and killed at least 57 people and injured many more non- Muslims. It was the worst assault the country had seen in years. The onslaught was sudden, ruthless and the bloody; men, women and children alike were wounded or shot dead by a group of ten to fifteen highly skilled assailants. Nairobi security forces continued to pursue the perpetrators, most of whom were held inside the upscale Westgate shopping mall along with a small group of hostages. Kenya had not witnessed a deadly attack like this since 1998, when an explosion at the American Embassy in Nairobi occurred concurrently with another attack against the US Embassy in Dar-es-Salaam Tanzania that killed hundreds and wounded thousands (BBC news, 2014).

Around June 15th and 17th 2014 at least 60 people were killed in Mpeketoni Lamu County in a terrorist attack. The Somali based Al-Shabaab militant group claimed responsibility but the then Kenyan president Uhuru Kenyatta asserted that the attacks were organized by local politicians with ties to a network of gangs. Correspondence from the area suggested that the attacks may be have been motivated by ethnic or religious hatred, or revenge for land grabbing. On 15th June 2014, around 50 gunmen hijacked a van and raided a police

station in predominantly Christian town of Mpeketoni as well as burning hotels, restaurants and government offices. Around 53 people were reported to have been killed during the attack and 8 were injured. Most of the dead were from the Kikuyu ethnic community; a fact that could point to the challenge of nation building of domination and marginalization in Kenya (Wafula 2014). On 17th June 2014 assailants suspected to be al-Shabaab set fire to house in the village of Majembeni and Poromoko, near Mpeketoni. At least 15 people were killed. According to an eye witness, the attackers moved from door to door pulling people from their houses and homes demanding that they prove whether they were Muslims or not Hall J. (2014).

In April 2015, the Kenya woke up to the sad news that Gunmen had stormed the Garissa university college, killing almost 150 people and wounding several others. The attackers claimed to be from the Al-Shabaab militant group and indicated that they were retaliating over non-Muslims occupying Muslim territory. The militants took several students hostages, freeing Muslims while withholding Christians (BBC News, 2015).

In concluding this section, it would appear that terrorism as a phenomenon in Kenya has steadily undergone transition in terms of the dominant motivational agents in which the Palestinian issue in the Middle-East in the form of Baader-Meinhof, the global Islamic factor in form of al-Qaeda, and the Somali issue on Kenyan nationalism in the form of al-Shabaab have played major roles in varied and complex combinations. In this transition the purely nationalistic conflict between the Somali ethnic community and the government of Kenya in the form of Shifta wars seems to have undergone a full cycle and partly re-appeared as part of the agenda under the al-Shabaab terror group in Kenya. In the next section we turn on the juxtaposition of factors or situations that have conducted to explain terrorism phenomenon in the 1990s in Kenya.

V. FACTORS AND SITUATIONS CONDUCTING FOR TERRORISM IN KENYA IN THE 1990S

In Kenya as in the rest of Africa the acts of terror can be traced back to the colonial period. This could be seen in practices such as attacking, raiding, capturing and owning human beings as well as disposing of the land of Africans (Asafa, 2013). More often the slavers and colonizers used various form of violence to force people to forsake their individual and group sovereignties in order to use them as commodities and exploit their labor and economic resources. Enslaving Africans involved warfare, trickery, banditry, kidnapping burning villages, raping, killing, torturing, dividing and destroying communities, facilitating civil wars, destroying leadership and institution and cultures. Such forms of social violence have been categorized as terrorism (Asafa, 2013). The interplay of factors and situations conducting for terrorism and the acts of terror in Kenya in the 1990s however are totally different as we begin to account now.

5.1 Unstable neighbors and Terrorism in Kenya

When the government of Somalia collapsed in 1991 it created a lawless society where crimes and radical ideologies flourished. Lacking state rule capacity since that time has allowed unrestricted movement of people and goods into and out of Somalia into Kenya. While many of these people were refugees seeking a better life, the number of terrorists taking advantage of cover among them cannot be underestimated. With a porous border, confirmed presence of Islamic fundamentalists, and a historical conflict the collapsed state of Somalia poses a threat particularly to Kenya and the rest of the world. In a joint press conference with Kenya and United States in 2003, the then American President George Bush declared that “Stabilizing Somalia is essential in sustaining the war against terrorism” (Asafa, 2013)

Without a proper government that can take care of the country, Somalia continues to play direct role in the security deficiencies of Kenya and the world. This allows Somalia to act as a transit hub in bringing illicit items including weapons into Kenya. Most notably the perpetrators of 2002 Mombasa attack transited from Somalia and smuggled weapons into Kenya through the shared Kenya-Somalia border hastening the attacks into Kenya’s soil hence increasing terrorism activities.

5.2 Islamic fundamentalisms and Terrorism in Kenya

Most of the terrorist acts and threats in Kenya have a purported connection in one way or another with Islam. Understanding the current state and extent of global Islamic extremism is necessary to understand the existence of terrorism in Kenya. Globally, the clash of civilizations narrative has been used to explain the resurgence of Islamic extremism in present era when it is claimed that Islam is fighting back for the lost glory of yesteryears against the western civilization (Juergensmeyer,2009). Much of the Islamic extremism affecting Kenya in the form of radical Islam originates mainly from Somalia due to the lack of border security even though there also exists a certain number of Kenya born radical Imams who preach anti-western and anti-Kenya views (Shinn, 2004). This extremism, nevertheless, is relatively limited in its scope lending credence to the position that there is a crucial important difference between Muslim theological conservatives and those Muslims willing to mobilize in terror activities. The two groups may hold similar beliefs on United States often radicalized as the arch enemy of Islam, and the Kenya government. However, the extent of those willing to

participate in terrorism attacks is less obvious. Of the mobilized Muslim groups, Al-Qaeda and al-Shabaab continue to maintain a prominent presence in Kenya since the early 1990s, often though indirectly. About the two groups it is reported that Al-Qaeda has preferred to use proxies in its past terrorist activities with the aim of improving recognition.

The Somali Islamist military group Al-Shabaab on the other hand, while seeking some Somali specific goals including historical ones, is reported to operate to some extent within an increased amount of support of Al-Hijra; a Kenyan Islamic fundamentalist group previously known as Muslim Youth Centre. All in all, among the various radical groups' multi-dimensional motives for acts of terror is the desire to equalize for Islam as much as responding to temporal conditions as well as historical conflicts such as the thorny issue of the Somali ethnic community in Kenya.

About the aforementioned temporal conditions this study notes that foreign attacks in Kenya to some extent have been hastened by the competition between Islam and Christianity. This is in so far as Kenya is dominated by Christianity whereas the sub-Sahara African countries are dominated by Islam. Kenya stands out with its predominant Christian population and relatively large economy (Porter, 2003). This represents a major stumbling block to Muslims who desire to play a larger role in the region's affairs, by for instance offering shariah law as a solution to social economic challenges. With this in mind, terrorist attack beside mainly attacking USA and Israeli interest in Kenya, are designed to strengthen the hand of Muslims in the country's national affairs hence aiding the cause of Islam in the country and the region (Mbogo 2003).

5.3 Lax law enforcement and Terrorism in Kenya

Lax law enforcement agencies often compromised by corruption has made Kenya an easy and accessible state by terrorist networks. The raging global war on terrorism has dismantled terrorist sanctuaries and havens elsewhere forcing them to scamper for safer and more accessible operational environments. Kenya with its relatively lax security mandate, has provided ideal environment for terrorist to exploit as they infiltrate into the country. It is noted in connection that it is becoming clear that those who employ terrorists, regardless of their specific secular or religious objectives, strive to subvert the rule of law by paralyzing law enforcement agents and effects change through corruption (bribery), violence and threats. The terrorists also often share belief misguided or not, that killing, kidnapping, extorting, robbing and wreaking mayhem to terrorize people are legitimate forms of political action. Lax law enforcement has therefore contributed to a conducive environment for terror groups and their activities. The geographical position of Kenya has not made the situation better in relation to terrorism. Kenya occupies a geographical, regional and international strategic position that has enabled the country to become a regional hub of international air, road, maritime and communication traffic from Europe, Asia and the rest of Africa. The links makes it easy for foreigners to travel from and within the country, to communicate easily, and launch terrorist attacks within Kenya a factor aided by lax security enforcement (Soke, 2003).

5.4 Kenya and the Historical Ties to the West, Israel and Middle East.

The relationship between Kenya and the West, Israel, and the Middle East has been good and indeed responsible for the development of the country, but has also opened up the country to terrorist attacks with foreigners able to access the country without restrictions. In particular, the close ties between Kenya and Israel, a country disliked by Muslims around the world for its persecution of Palestine is a major concern to local Muslims who have unsuccessfully called for the severance of the relationship. As already noted elsewhere in this study an indicator to the strength of this relationship was Kenya's decision in June 1976 to offer Israel crucial support in the Entebbe raid. This act by Kenya infuriated Muslim fundamentalists who in turn retaliated by supporting attacks against Kenyans.

5.5 Local tourists Industry and Terrorism in Kenya

For some time before the Kenya defense forces went into Somalia the vibrant tourism industry particularly at the coast faced real danger from terrorist attacks and abductions. The bone of contention, it would seem, was that tourism as it was practiced in the country coastal beaches was at odds with the local Islamic culture and customs. Islam for example demands that women cover part of their bodies when in public and also forbids the consumption of alcohol which appeared not to be the case with the Kenyan coastal beaches where women tourist walked around in scanty dresses. Consequently, some of the local Kenyan Muslims at the coast had expressed anti-tourism sentiments complaining that alcohol served freely in many bars that catered for tourist had contributed to high incidences of prostitution and drug abuse. Such complaints had made it easier for groups like al-Qaeda and al-Shabaab to infiltrate the coastal area in the guise of providing solutions to halt the Islamic cultural erosion.

VI. IMPACT OF TERRORISM IN KENYA

Terrorist attacks in Kenya have had many negative economic, social, political, and geopolitical effects. These include decline of the country's tourism industry, loss of jobs and foreign exchange, growing tensions between Muslims and Christians, radicalization of the country's Muslims raising anti-western sentiments in the Muslim and general population, the passage of unpopular anti-terrorist measures that threaten Kenya's human, civil, and political rights besides eroding the country's sovereignty, and rising tensions between Kenya and the west.

6.1 Economic Impact of Terrorism in Kenya

One of the most direct impacts of terrorism is on the society's economic wellbeing. In Kenya, where much of the foreign exchange rely on tourism, agriculture and foreign investors, the economic condition became vulnerable whenever there was a terror attack. Terrorism affect the economics by undermining the tourist sector through travel bans translating into massive loss of revenue, loss of guests, jobs, and foreign earnings. In term of economic investments terrorism affect investors' confidence in the economy. For instance, this had been the case in the Kenyan coast until the government was forced to intervene by sending military troops to Somalia in the year 2011.

Before this intervention many Germany and Italian investor in Malindi town on the north coast of Kenyan had been forced to close down their businesses due to terror threats and insecurity. This led to loss of job opportunities for local workers, supplies and a chain of other stakeholders in the hospitality industry. Terror activities like hijacking of ship inflated prices of fuel and basic industrial commodities making life costly for most Kenyans. There is also economic loss incurred in the loss of human capital whenever terror attack happens. Many people lost lives while many others lost source of their livelihood. Consequently, there is destruction of property and loss of bread winners for most of the families and homes resulting into poverty.

Compensation for the losses, medical bills and the general interruption of development plans by terrorist activities is yet another of the economic costs. Millions of shillings intended for development are then diverted towards emergencies to cater for victims of terror attacks, reconstruction of the economy destroyed, compensation and reinforcement of security apparatus. The overall effect is that terrorism makes an economic environment unstable for investments, leads to loss of human life depended upon for economic growth, the resultant economic inflation diverts resources and attention and thereby interfering with budgetary planning of the economy.

6.2 Political Impact of Terrorism in Kenya

Terror activities have led to political re-alignment in world politics for instance, Kenya and other African countries are members of NEPAD, while the African Union through military institutions like AMISON has taken over political responsibility to influence response to terror attacks. Terrorism destabilizes political arrangements, results in confusion, leads to loss of revenue, and makes the political system vulnerable. Consequently, terrorism challenges the existing political institutions. For instance in Kenya there has been a blame game between the executive, judiciary, the police and intelligence services, where each blames the other of ineffectiveness leading to the recurrent incidences of terrorism. (Omeje and Githigaro 2014)

Terrorism also makes the political institutions vulnerable to external influence for instance Kenya has to rely on the west: US, Britain, Australia, Russia, Israel, and Germany among others, for intelligence on terrorism, technical assistance, equipment and strategy. This reliance on others compromises political sovereignty of the country, its institutions and the kind of policy frameworks eventually adopted

6.3 Social impact of terrorism in Kenya

Terrorism has had massive impact on the social life in Kenya as can be seen in many institutions and premises such as places of worship, schools, shops, restaurants and other public utilities where often people have to be frisked making everybody a suspect. This suspicion situation is even aggravated when some ethnic communities like the Somali are more stigmatized in relation to terrorism than others. The family institutions have also been affected by terrorism through loss of their members and more recently the fact that children have not been spared by terrorists as victim of injuries and death. Children have also been recruits into terror groups in schools, clubs, churches, and mosques. Terror groups in the social media are also taking advantage of the mass communication techniques to lure young people into joining the networks sometimes without the knowledge of their parents or guardians. In other instances religious venues have become active terror zones in Kenya. In fact at one time many people feared places of worship because of terror threats that often intended to divide Kenyans along religious lines and less obviously along ethnic lines in consideration to the Somali factor in the recent terror attacks in Kenya.

VII. KENYAN HISTORY IN THE CONTEXT OF TERROR RELATED CONFLICTS: THE MAIN ARGUMENT

Resurgence of terrorism in Kenya in the 1990s that mainly has involved the Somali ethnic group can be understood to some extent in the context of the relationship between the Kenyan government and Somali as an ethnic group going back to the pre-independence era. In the resultant context of conflict Islam has been used to provide legitimacy from the perspective of the thesis as advanced by Karen Armstrong in *Fields of blood: Religion and the history of violence* (Armstrong, 2014, 3-17) Armstrong by exploring known examples of violence involving most of the religious faiths of the world finally argues that more often violent impulses that originated elsewhere such as with nationalism, struggles for territory, resentment at loss of power among others, present themselves as “religious” disputes when really they had little to do with religion (Armstrong, 2014). Connecting this position to Islam, Armstrong takes issue with the Taliban or Islamic State marauders who often cite their religious sources as the justification for their killings (Armstrong, 2014)

As much as its true that most of the terrorism acts in Kenya have their roots in the milieu of current affairs of things, it is also arguable that there are always strands connecting their roots to the national history of Kenya. To that end, this study sustains that the resurgence of terrorism of the 1990s in Kenya can be viewed as a complex phenomenon that also includes a continuation of the historical conflict and struggle in which the Somali ethnic group in particular has borne the brunt of suffering more than the other ethnic communities in Kenya.

Social political conflicts in Kenya as in the rest of Africa in general, to a considerable extent, is the product of the colonial situation. Solomon A. Derso plies this path of argument when he observes that ethnic conflicts in Africa are mainly products of the failure of the post-colonial African states to recognize ethnic diversity and develop the necessary institutions and policies for the accommodation of interests and diversities of members of the various groups.

Derso ventures further and observes that the colonial origin and the arbitrary contrived boundaries and borders between states implied that many independence African states inherited numerous political and social economic inequalities, as well as culturally divergent groups with no shared political history. The diverse ethnic groups were often times forced to remain under state homogeneity and nation building where in many cases, instead of achieving national integration, more ethnic divisions and inequalities came out as is the common case in many post-colonial African states. This has eventually led to ethnical antagonisms and conflicts in many African countries (Derso 2008). The resultant negative ethnicity has resulted in crisis of state legitimacy and fragmentation. This is often expressed by the emergence of unequal patterns of relations between members of various groups and the state involving what some call national oppression. This oppression takes two related forms of the domination of the state by some groups and the resultant alienation and marginalization of the members of many of the constituent groups from the political work structure of society. The above has exhibited itself in the political history of Kenya through the government marginalization of the North Eastern region that is the home to the majority of the Somali ethnic community.

Colonial activities and attitudes in the colonial Kenya did not make the situation better, neither did the global polarization between the west and the Muslim world. Ahmed Idha Salim corroborates in regard to colonialism that it demoralized and caused discontent among Muslims at the Kenyan Coast. The main lesson learnt from contact between Muslims and Christian colonizers was that Muslims were divided along tribal lines setting in motion, a phenomenon where Muslims were politically a disappearing factor (Salim, 1972) because the colonial relationship with Muslims often assumed shapes such as bitter rivalry, and sometimes armed rebellion (Salim 1972). Colonial era equally sowed seeds of discord between Muslims and Christians in Kenya (Maina 1995) when it is argued that by the time the western imperialists met the Muslim/ Arabs along the East African Coast, they already had a history of rivalry and armed conflict as evident in the wars of crusades. Therefore, the initial contacts between Muslims and colonial Christians in Kenya could not escape this previous experience, hence submission that the earliest contact between them in Kenya rested on the foundation of suspicion and sinister motives.

Colonial legacy in Kenya further entrenched the suspicion as is evidenced in its education policy that favored the Christian dominated up country and marginalized Muslim dominated coastal and North Eastern regions of Kenya which were areas predominantly occupied by the Swahili and Somali people among other aspects. This marginalization developed feelings of neglect, among the Muslims who were made to feel as second class citizens hence arguably introducing a religious angle to the subsequent rebellion and rivalry exhibited in terror acts against predominantly Christian areas and populations in Kenya.

It is inimitable that the control of power would generate bitter struggle marked by violence among the competing ethnic groups to the detriment of efforts at post-independence nation building. National oppression has also been exhibited in the socio-cultural realm of society involving the nationalization of the culture and language of the dominant groups as well as the continuation of the non-recognition, marginalization and active denigration and repression of the way of life, cultural institutions and values of many of the other constituent

ethnic groups. For the Somali ethnic community in Kenya who are also Muslims, the above rings true since they feel that the Kenyan state and by extension Christianity and its westernization influences are encroaching and limiting their freedom to practice their religion as they would wish it. It's also interfering with their culture which they feel is under assault from the dominant majority. The post-colonial Kenyan state has continued to, and operates on the basis of Eurocentric norms and values. This perpetuates the denigration and marginalization of indigenous cultures and norms with the consequence of furthering the alienation of the majority of ethnic Africans from the processes of the state.

The above narrative explains the predicament of the Somali people whom at independence found themselves scattered into British Somaliland, Italian Somaliland and Jubaland, French Somaliland, and of late, the failed state of Somalia. The Somali community of North. Eastern region of Kenya who found themselves in Kenya at independence wanted to be allowed to become part of the larger Somalia state (to secede). This is because they felt they had more in common with their fellow Somalis than the other Kenyan communities. This secession attempt led to the *shifita* wars between them the Kenyan government. At the end of the war, the Somalis were forced to remain in Kenya but unfortunately they had lingering wishes to be part of the larger Somalia. Apart from this, the Kenyan government for many years literally abandoned the North Eastern region economically. This coupled with the feelings of suffering historical injustices at the hand of the Kenyan government, contributed to the feeling of alienation by the Somali people vis-avis the rest of Kenyan population.

The terrorist activities of the 1990s has been perpetrated by mostly Muslim fraternity and in which the Somali ethnic group have played a dominant role. This study portends in this regard that the bone of contention lies in some underlying issues which the Somali community have previously expressed such as in terms of threats to secede from Kenya. According to Ndzovu, and a position that is sustained in this study, it's the ethnic marginalization and animosity from Kenyan Somalis and Arab Muslims that occasionally breeds conflicts that assumes religious dimension in form of Islam (Ndzovu, 2009). The history therefore provides a fertile breeding ground and easy harbingers of global Islamic fundamentalism that breeds terrorists and terror acts. The mobilization of ethnicity in the case of Somalis thus tends to increase and harden divisions by questioning the basis of the nation itself. This has fed the rhetoric that the Somalis are not Kenyans, hence explaining why they fought the *shifita* wars and lately the terror attacks that could be seen to be extensions of their expression of a persecuted ethnic group. This also explains the forms of the coldness of the Somali community and its laxity to really feel part and parcel of the larger Kenya for they feel marginalized and excluded in the political and economic structures of the government.

This study therefore advances the argument that it is possible to understand terrorism that mainly has involved Somali ethnic community and Islamic religion from this historical lens of marginalization in which the Somali ethnic group is struggling for liberty.

VIII. CONCLUSION

All in all, it is still ironical that despite all these efforts, terrorist acts in Kenya have continued to be the cause of untold sufferings for many people and so are the counter terrorism measures where often many communities have found themselves caught in between. It is true that terrorism in general and in Kenya in particular has transitioned to become more and more complex with an input of many factors both historical and current. It is also the position of this study that political history of nationalism in Kenya still presents one of the best analytical tools with which to understand the religious, ethnic and geographical features as they play prominent roles in the increasingly complex nature of terrorism in Kenya since the 1990s.

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