Somalia and Rwanda: The Psychology and Philosophy of the African Conflicts

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Abstract. *Specialists on African conflicts are torn between fascination, frustration and factionalism. Factionalised and fictionalised narratives in post-conflict communities in traumatic settings are often presented not through reflexive rationality but through defeatist war logic. Focusing on an account of Somali uncivil war in 1991, I challenge the recent propagation of the claim of 'clan cleansing' in Somalia and thus present a critical reassessment of the complex dynamics of the past Somali conflicts. An engaging academic re-examination is important, considering the controversies often created by post-conflict claims. By putting clan conflicts into anthropological and historical perspective, I argue that the claim of clan cleansing has no ethnographical authorisation and historical validity in Somali history. Drawing on longitudinal ethnographic observation and personal experience as a witness of Somali uncivil war and working as a writer in Mogadishu during the height of the Somali conflicts, backed by theoretical, conceptual and comparative and empirical critical analysis on scholarship across humanities and social sciences, I problematize the paradoxes of the claim, propagated through public commentaries in Somali websites and by certain commentators in academia.*

Keywords: *African Conflicts, Somali Uncivil Wars, Post-conflict Narratives.*

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Conflict Studies Quarterly
Issue 14, January 2016, pp. 3-34

Introduction

On the evening of 28 January 2013, at Holiday Inn Hotel in Toronto, Canada, dozens of (expatriate) Somali Somalis, Somali Ethiopians and Somali Kenyans gathered for a clan convention they titled the "inaugural commemoration of the 1991 Clan Cleansing in Somalia."[1] The mobilisers of the conference – many of them were the beneficiaries of the deposed regime of General Mohamed Siad Barre by virtue of their direct association – had been stirred by the recent work of

revisionism, *Clan Cleansing in Somalia: The Ruinous Legacy of 1991*, by Lidwien Kapteijns (2013a), a Dutch author, who has attempted to academise this claim in a more authentic way, as the term was previously inserted into the public discourse in a less clear fashion and unsophisticated manner.[2] Intended to augment the claim while overlooking the complex narratives of the clan conflicts, the account is filled with accusatory allegations and vocabulary of hatred and hostilities. The primary source base stems from one certain clan-group expatriates in the United States and Canada who have permeated the pejorative term "clan cleansing" over the years to describe the defeat of the dictator and his fleeing from the capital city of Mogadishu (Ingiriis, 2013b, pp. 112-114). Thus, the account offers a site unto itself upon which informants could draw discursive claims in which they could arrest rivals. Armed with the claim of clan cleansing – concerned as it is with advocating for the return of a lost clan pride – informants seem to join the clanised wars to advocate for the return of one particular sub-clan hegemony by discursively arresting certain politicians and personalities. Such attempts continue to feed into clanised wars after clanised wars. The gist of the clan cleansing – in spite of kindling the clan conflicts – was to demand a political position within the State spoils for new politico-war entrepreneurs.

Between 30 December 1990 and 26 January 1991, clan militias – on one hand represented by the United Somali Congress (USC) led by General Mohamed Farah Aideed, on the other by General Mohamed Siad Barre with the backing of the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) – fought each other for defending and for destroying the military regime in Somalia. Eventually, the latter was defeated in a four-week battle that raged most of the Somali capital Mogadishu (Ingiriis, 2013b). Fractionalized and fictionalised narratives in post-conflict communities in traumatic settings are more often than not dictated by the defeatist war logic: "I want to revenge and expect vengeance after vengeance." The perpetual armed conflicts in Somalia(s) have not only produced a mini-states based on clan exclusivity, but it has also given rise to new clan victimhood discourse inspired by the conflicting narratives of various clans and communities. Imag(in)ing impartiality and impinging on objectivity appear to be difficult in this context, as rivals criminalise each other. However, some were able to subsume their narrative under the catchphrase of "clan cleansing" in a catch-all cliché fashion aimed at (re)configuration of Somali politics. As in Rwanda, the claim of clan cleansing is a "political tactic aimed at partially exonerating the former regime and shifting the burden of guilt to the new one" (Prunier, 1995, p. 357). Writing in 2006, Menkhaus (2006/07, p. 94) has predicted that "in the short term, external support for state building will almost never be a neutral exercise, but will instead entail taking sides in internal Somali disputes." The State-building is now turned into clan-building, more or less what Menkhaus predicted as "clan homelands" or "clanustans' (*ibid*., p. 83).

Many efforts have been made time and again over whether non-Somali analysts could be used to speak for "us" against "the other". Needless to say that most of these attempts

have so far ended in failure. The scholarly production from certain observers – though impressive – is less objective history than what Shokpeka (2005, pp. 485-491) calls "applied history" – which is to say, a history founded on traditional clan-based myths. In *The Savage Mind*, the French anthropologist Lévi-Strauss has noted that "history is never history, but history-for" (1966, p. 254). Put simply, the "for" is obvious in the Somali Studies. Apparently satisfied to uncritically accept any tales that clan conscious informants fed into her, Kapteijns's recent book (2013a) on the Somali conflicts is undoubtedly written for one particular clan-group, as long as the pen was exercised in the Somali repertoire (as elsewhere in Africa) as a weapon to support certain clans and arrest their rival opponents (Ingiriis, 2013b, 2013c). According to S. Samatar (2013), each Somali clan-group has now its own advocates in Somali Studies and, incredibly, he points his finger at Kapteijns (2013a) and some other Western commentators who publicly sided with one clan against the other.[3] This is not something of which most analysts in Somali Studies are unaware. Indeed, some have tended to admit their alignment, wittingly or unwittingly.

Kapteijns presents a biassed narrative of how certain clan politicians and populace viewed and formulated on what happened in 1991, explaining and insisting through such voices that what occurred was clan cleansing. Besteman has pointed out to "the biases and assumptions" of anthropologists and other academics "in constructing a representation of violence in Somalia" (1996b, p. 120), not to mention their lack of deep thoughts and typologies. Indeed, the only narrative Kapteijns gives here stems from her adopted clan. But the problematic aspect of such narrative is the ordered exploration of who they are from who they were. Defining clan cleansing in a very broad terms, the past is positioned into the place of present with politics writ large. On the front cover of Kapteijns's book (2013a) on the 1991 clanised wars over pride, prestige and power, the sub-title is "the ruinous legacy of 1991". This is where the partisanship and partiality begins in the preparation of upcoming parliamentary election scheduled to be held in 2016. Contrary to the claims that the 1991 armed conflicts were a new phenomenon in Somali society, killings were for Somalis "tearless" and "griefless" even in the the pre-colonial period (Hanley, 2004, p. 81). Not only should the 1990s Somali clanised wars be understood as a continual of prearranged project set for Somalia by the ousted regime, so too contemporary continuation of the conflicts. The ruins of the capital, which is to this day invisible to observers who visit the capital, would have attested to the fact that clan cataclysms were random.

The continuation of the armed conflicts in Somalia has produced a new academic discourse through categories and catalogues that helped the competing armed clan-groups dehumanise each other. Somali Studies, in and of itself, as a subject and as a sub-field in African Studies has become a spatial arena very prone to this guinea pig war tests where spins masquerading as "scholars" exercise their spins here and there. Upon the publication of Katepijns (2013a), the disputes of the Somali conflicts were shifted from

oral discourse to academic claim as the debate over who lost what, why and where in 1991 and over who won, what, why and where has become a politicised project.[4] This is not because one cannot understand the complexities of Somali conflicts, but when one fails to be natural in the analysis of the conflict, the real sight and insight were lost. Failure to discussing the sociology and philosophy of armed clan conflicts leads to misunderstanding. Two purposes define the claim of clan cleansing. First is to make what Prunier (1995) calls the "artificial past of the present" to compete a contemporary contestation over power. Second, and by far the most detrimental, is to distort "the present by projecting it into the past" (p. 38). Of a precisely better example is how Kapteijns's (2013a) account dehumanises a certain clan-group at a particular moment of the 1991 cataclysm. Can the caricatured claim of clan cleansing be then applicable to the Somali context? To whom people can be applied to the term "cleansing"? People killed for political or clan reasons? The ordinary donkey cartman called Taliye, a Bantu/Jareer from the Reer Shabelle on the banks of Qallaafe in the Somali territory in Ethiopia, who was appallingly killed in a trivial dispute with an armed men in Mogadishu in 1998, might have wondered whether there was one single legacy in the 1990s.[5] If he were alive today, he might have asked: Was 1998 less ruinous than 1991?

Employing critical theories of conflict studies and adding a pint of salt to the post-conflict claims of Somalia while empirically and theoretically conceptualising, comparing and contrasting with the Rwandan case, I challenge the claim of clan cleansing and offer a nuanced account of the complex dynamics of the past Somali conflicts. This is not to deny the clanised wars following Siad Barre's ouster, but to illuminate that these atrocities were less devastating than what Somali society as a whole has been going through before and after 1991 (Africa Watch, 1990; Ahmed, 1995, 1996, 2001; Brons, 2001; Besteman, 1996a, 1999; Ingiriis, 2012a, 2012b; Simons, 1994, 1995). Drawing on longitudinal ethnographic observation and personal experience as a witness of the Somali uncivil wars and working as a writer in Mogadishu during the height of the clan wars, backed by theoretical, conceptual and empirical critical analysis scholarship across humanities and social sciences, I problematize the paradoxes of the claim, propagated through public commentaries in Somali websites and by certain commentators in academia. Direct knowledge and past experiences of the events under discussion by the scholar himself or herself provide a bonus for constructing a balanced and productive scholarship. Understanding the Somali conflicts warrants a nuanced ethnographic explanation of the unusual "webs of violence" (Fujii, 2009) as well as the 'local determinants' (Halvard and Rød, 2006). As Boddy (1997) reminds: "[T]here must be scope for anthropologists to reach beyond the academy, engage with current issues, challenge common but uninformed social stereotypes in responsible yet accessible ways" (p. 6). Debunking the conjecture of "cleansing" reveals how the clan claims upon which the notion is based fails to consider that clanised wars have a history, one that is repressed in current debates.

Commonalities: Somali Studies and Rwandese Studies

Specialists on African conflicts are torn between fascination, frustration and factionalism. Specialists often study on societies in their studies, but rarely is there a study studying the specialists themselves. Generations-long clan hatreds and counter-hatreds in African societies have begun to spread in African Studies. How war-torn societies affect scholarship is a matter that warrants psychological and psychopathic investigation. Examining this phenomenon helps to critically inquire over whether clan cleansing as a concept can be applied to the Somali clan conflicts, a historical reality since time immemorial, which leads us to ask for multi-disciplinary Braudelian historical exploration, one that is informed by various sides of the debate other than a narrow analysis. There is a rare academic engagement of Somalists and when they do, the engagement takes the form of academic pugilism. This leads one to conclude that specialists on Somalia either love or loathe each other. Does the war affect unknowingly or unwittingly? No doubt that many years of working in conflict-ridden zones have to endure psychological impacts on them. Without knowing, a post-traumatic distress simmered into their way of thinking in African conflicts.[6]

Depending on one's point of view, each gets as pro-Hutu or as pro-Tutsi. A work of scholarship – a Hotel Rwanda-style – joining the conflict is not a matter restricted to the Somali case and not even unique to the study of polarised societies. In Rwandese Studies, for example, the specialists after post-genocide began to sympathise either with the Tutsi or the Hutu. While Prunier (1995) celebrates the Tutsi capture of power after the fall of the Juvénal Habyarimana regime, Mamdani (2001) seems to support the position of the Hutu power. Indeed, both scholars noted (unwittingly?) that each specialist sided with one side over the other (cf. Mamdani, 2001, p. 133; Prunier, 1995, p. 157, 357).[7] Prunier (1995, p. 357) makes a second note of this point. Apparently to exonerate himself from such a Tutsi label, he revised his book and added a new chapter (chapter 10). This was probably because, upon a scathing criticism of the book, he, at last, came to terms with reconciling his objectivity, trying to balance his treatment of both groups. Within three years later, Prunier (2009) crossed the floor to the Hutu "moderates" opposing the Tutsi-dominated Kigali regime. But he went as far as arranging crucial foreign contacts for his Hutu politicians. Prunier also seems to hint that Paul Kagame was behind the mysterious murder of Fred Rwigyema, a Hutu and original leader of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), only to pave the way for his usurpation of power. As Mamdani complained with exhaustion: "In the inflamed atmosphere of postgenocide Rwanda studies, even the tiny coterie of Rwanda specialists among Western academics – mostly Belgian, French, and North American – has not escaped this litmus test.

Deriving their sources from either the RPF or the former regime élites, authors in post-genocide Rwanda had aligned themselves with the guiders on the ground or fabricators in the field. Whereas most of the newcomers are pro-Tutsi, most of the old

academics are pro-Hutu, a phenomenon that could be attributed how power has configured knowledge in Africa in the strict Foucauldian sense. To call Timothy Garton Ash: "Political perception, like treason, is a matter of date. If you want to judge anything written by a foreigner about a country, you need to know when the writer first went there. Was it in the bad old days? Or perhaps for him they were the good old days? Was it before the revolution, war, coup, occupation, liberation or whatever the local caesura is? Of course, the writer's own previous background and current politics are important too. But so often the first encounter is formative. Emotionally and implicitly, if not intellectually and explicitly, it remains the standard by which all subsequent developments are judged" (cited in Prunier, 2009, p. 357). Prunier (*ibid*., p. 358) himself provides very candid review of himself as moving from being a Tutsi friend to a Hutu friend. He also reports that his colleague Lieve Joris has admitted to him that she dislikes the Tutsi, because she first met and socialised with the Hutu. In Somalia, Kapteijns's first and last visit to the country was 1989, when the Siad Barre regime was conducting a campaign of clanocide (annihilation) against the Isaaq clan-group in the North (today's Somaliland), a story about which she has not discussed.

The example of Rwanda was a case unknown in the Somali Studies until the publication of Kapteijns' *Clan Cleansing* (2013a), even though literature produced and published by non-Somalis since post-colonial *gouvernementalité* (governmentality) has one common trait: eulogising particular clan at the expense of others (Bahadur, 2011; Lewis, 1961, 1992, 2002, 2003, 2008; Le Sage, 2002).[8] Lewis (2008) has expressed his views in stridently supporting Somaliland secession from Somalia, which non-Isaaq Somalilanders tend to shift from a campaign of rejection to a campaign of ejection. Almost all non-Somalis writing about Somaliland followed in the footsteps of Lewis, some going as far as to suggest that Hargeysa has to contemplate on drawing lessons from the violent option for secession of Eritrea, Kosovo and South Sudan, which is to say – taking up arms is the only route open to obtaining international recognition and thus seceding from Somalia (on such an odd argument, see Pijovic, 2014; Routhke, 2011). Ahmed (1995) arrives at the most incisive observation on these dynamics from the literary analysis, when he observed that:

> … scholars on Somalia based their writings on information gathered from politically conscious informers. Of course, a scholar's own analysis of the data remo[u]lds the information made available to him/her by informers. However, we must remember that such information at the disposal of the scholar is not impartial. The absence of impartiality, in and of itself, is no fault of the scholar's. After all, different informers give out different pieces of information. A scholar's writing, however, becomes counterproductive, I believe, if he/she becomes complacent with a single version of any reported event. Such complacency could become a travesty of scholarship when other scholars only glean information from past texts (p. x).

The partial and biassed analyses – this, after all, was war-torn Somalia – pointed out by Ahmed have partially contributed to the continuation of the Somali conflicts. Those who run after their political or economic attachments – those who have one foot in one side of the pavement and the other in the other pavement in 1991 – end up at the end of the day to come up with a work intensely prejudiced to a particular clan. In Somalia, as in Rwanda, it often proves easy to pull Westerners into the "matrix of clan rivalry" (Besteman, 1996b, p. 122). Many is a non-Somali author feeling no shame (perhaps lack of cultural nuance) to represent the interests of a particular clan-group. Most recently, some have begun to publicly proclaim their favour of one clan to the detriment of another.[9] Like Colette Braeckman, who unashamedly supported the Habyarimana regime in Rwanda due to earlier economic affiliation (Braeckman, 1994), Kapteijns's (2013a, 2013b) was less a description of cleansing than an attempt to invent one.[10] This was also the case with Siad Barre's era. Only following his ouster did analysts who had previously supported him begin to curse him (e.g. Lewis, 2004, 2008).

The cumulative consequences of what happened in 1991 had elsewhere been interpreted such that Kapteijns wrote that the "state and social order themselves collapsed in communal (clan-based) violence that took many Somalis completely by surprise" (Kapteijns, 2009, p. 102). If the violence – in Kapteijns's own interpretation in 2009 – was "communal" and "clan-based" violence, why the clan cleansing argument in 2013? Where is the role of all the other clans and sub-clans who were blamed for involvement in such a mutual communal violence? What is the concentration of one clan-group out of all others? If the clan wars of 1991 between the Hawiye and the Daarood amounts to clan cleansing, what about the "Hargeysa Holocaust", where more than 50,000 people had been exterminated by the Siad Barre regime-sponsored Daarood army backed up by the Hawiye levies (Africa Watch, 1990)? The 1959 purge of Tutsi from Rwanda to Uganda? The 1972 elimination in Burundi of educated Hutus? The Red Terror massacres in Ethiopia under Mengistu Haile Mariam in 1974-1991? The mass murders in Uganda under the Obote II regime in the mid-1980s? The list goes on and on. Even if one accepts the clan cleansing hypothesis against particular clan, what about the other clan cleansing(s) against the Hawiye, the Isaaq, the Rahanweyn (Reewing) and other unarmed Somali communities (the so-called minorities), such as the Banaadiri, the Bantu, the Bravenese, basically all other clans and communities? This was of no interest so it was disregarded in Kapteijns (2013). However, the answers should be located somewhere midway between (or beyond) oppression, heavy-handedness and political alienation under the clano-military regime.

Clan Cleansing à la *Rwanda*

Drawing on social science scholarship under the rubric of genocide studies, as adopted by revisionists, and relying on insights and opinions offered by the French political scientist Compagnon (1995), Kapteijns's approach (2013a, 2013b) to the 1990s clanised

wars are assumptive rather than analytical prescriptive proximate or deeper, since the causes of the wars were not systematically studied. If one expects to locate answers for sombre questions such as why Somalia fell into the imaginative clan cleansing, one will be disappointed.[11] This is not merely because the term "cleansing" can hardly be applicable to the Somali clan world in a nuanced, contextual meaning, but its usage is problematic in a context where one of the warring sides was considered as a fellow ethnic rather than an "alien". In the Somali world, there was no such an ontological feature compartmentalising clans into tribal lines, let alone ethnic lines. For example, the Hawiye militias believed that the Daarood militias were rivals – more or less competitors, whereas the Hutu in Rwanda held that the Tutsi were "aliens" who came from Ethiopia (Mamdani, 2001; Pottier, 2002; Prunier, 1995). Besteman (1998) explains that "what happened in the early 1990s was an unprecedented cataclysm of violence that affected all corners of the country and all social groups" (p. 111).

The notion of clear them out as was in Rwanda would not even capture in the clanised wars, even if one could compare with what happened as *flushism* – a metaphor for the unconventional mode of warfare – rather than *cleansism* as there was no one to be cleansed (or cleaned) from the Somali territories. This is not merely because the clan cleansing was imported from outside, but there was no Somali term for cleansing. Yet, in the clan cleansing claim, the Hawiye is perceived and painted as Hutu, the Daarood being put into the position of the Tutsi – victims, that is. True, the hostility between the Hawiye and Daarood was akin to the Hutu and Tutsi, but nothing comparable to the latter's beyond-the-pale barbarity happened in Somalia.[12] In Rwanda, husbands killed wives based on ethnic identity. Such horrific acts had not been witnessed in Somalia, though cases of husbands divorcing wives due to clan vendettas were rife during the 1990s. In short, nothing that resembled cleansing happened in Somalia, notably in Mogadishu during the height of the 1990s wars. It indeed occurred in Rwanda where Kapteijns (2013a) came to rely on secondary anthropological work in constructing her assumptions on Somalia.[13] The reality remains that the conflict in Somalia was not a clear-cut affair; it has a long litany of multifarious political actors with multifarious agendas. Bakonyi (2009) has noted that, when conflicts are reduced to cultural claims, "they tend to be total, as they not only simplify the identification of friend and foe within a given taxonomy, but also force every person to locate herself/himself within this taxonomy" (p. 450).

Employing a Bosnian-style definition of genocide and selective use of unnamed sources that conforms to her *imaginaire*, Kapteijns let loose of invoking the ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia. Referring also to Rwanda, in order to make her case of the Somali context more compelling, she equates – in a sweeping judgement and a completely discrete context – the 1991 Somali clan convulsions with the 1994 Rwandan genocide, even with the 1995 Yugoslavia. She does so by shuttling from one embattled politician to another to prove her point. The conceptual framework frequently used to

make sense of the case is the Foucauldian concept of the 'key shift' (e.g. Foucault, 1972), a term problematically adopted. However, the concept of the key shift was first applied to African Studies by Mamdani (2001, p. 142), who made a standard contribution to the Rwandan genocide. Indeed, what had been witnessed in Rwanda – or even close – had hardly happened in Somalia, but Kapteijns (2013a) maintains to partner the Somali case with the Rwandese one. She does justice neither to the subject matter, nor to the distinctive socio-political factors of both cases. Mimicking Mamdani's, Kapteijns (2013a) seems to scruple applying his significant concepts on ethnic conflict to the Somali case. That she perceives this, not as an invention, but innovation is an indication of her failure to contextualise the complexity of the Somali clanised wars.

The dangers in comparing the genocide in Bosnia and Rwanda to the clan convulsions in 1991 Somalia are all too obvious to explain. In *When Victims Become Killers*: *Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda*, Mamdani (2001) carried out investigative, eye-witness research fieldwork in Rwanda, interviewing both victims and victors for his standard study. Contrastingly, Kapteijns (2013a) did not carry out fieldwork research in any part of Somalia, let alone Mogadishu, the epicentre of her historical drama. Unlike what she asserts and insists, she has not travelled to Somalia (even empirically or conceptually) to construct convincing theoretical case (Ingiriis, 2013b, pp. 112-114). Not visiting the sites of the fighting (perhaps because she had already affiliated herself with particular clan-group) led her to re-emphasise the gossip and clan-hate narratives that one clan-group held against another. Writing on specific incidents out of news reports, she berates reporters on the field on why they failed to report about the clan cleansing, a cleansing they had never seen. Not even what had happened during the 1990s in Sierra Leone (Richards, 1996) or Liberia (Brehun, 1991), what happened in 1990s Somalia and the Somali case was not as organised along systematic lines as them. Here, the USC was not a coherent organisation like the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone or National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) in Liberia. In Somalia, in contrast to elsewhere in African conflicts, what occurred in 1991 was a "political slaughter". Considering the role of ethnicity and clan in those wars, Mamdani (2001) found in Rwanda that ethnic massacres do not necessarily lead to 'genocides'. For example, "genocide" was something that – as Prunier (1995, p. 141) aptly pointed out – "would have been almost impossible to do in Somalia" in the 1990s Somalia. This was because

> boody as it was, the Somali conflict remained a war, where civilians died as secondary casualties. Somali culture is not nicer than Rwandese culture, it is simply too individualistic to enable such systematic slaughter to be organised among civilians. One more note of caution for commentators who glibly talk about 'Africa' as if it were a coherent whole (*ibid*.).

The most peculiar of this positions was not the clan cleansing claim in and of itself, but the implicit argument that the Hawiye and the Daarood are two different ethnic

groups, a proposition unwittingly paves the way for more massacres. Prior to using clan cleansing term, Kapteijns (2001b, p. 684; 2002, p. 56) had adopted a decade ago the term "ethnocide", a somewhat similar to genocide, but differs from when it was carried out to massacre a community or whole clan because of ethnicity. The invocation of "ethnic" appears to imply as though the Hawiye and the Daarood – whose name were used by the departing dictatorial regime to pit one clan-group against the other for survival – were two different ethnic Somali groups, so much so they could be compared to the Hutu and the Tutsi in Rwanda.[14] Such a Rwandan-style invocation into Somali Studies is misleading at best and fabricated at worst. In Rwanda, Mamdani (2001) shows that colonialism had framed both the Hutu and the Tutsi in two different races, a strategy later retained by the post-colonial Rwandese State leaders. Similar to such a divide-and-rule classic rule, some sought to divide the Hawiye and the Daarood into two different ethnic groups similar to the Amhara and Orromo in Ethiopia or Kikuyu and Kalenjin in Kenya.

Putting the Rwandan Crisis into a Context

Africa is a peculiar place of puzzles. Twenty years have elapsed since the Rwandan genocide and the great *gouvernementalité* (governmentality) in South Africa. While, for example, 1994 Rwanda was going through one of the most barbaric moments in its history, 1994 South Africa was experiencing one of the best moments in its history. How could one mediate with the twin incidents, which still remains a riddle to both pundits and politicians in Africa and elsewhere? This is not a place to compare and contrast with the two 1994 paradoxes – that is, the miracle in South Africa and the misfortune in Rwanda. Rather, it is about revisiting the Rwandan conflict by linking the past into the present and present into the past. The conflict of Rwanda can hardly be compared to any other in Africa. Anyone who was familiar with the Rwandan *long durée* history à la Braudel would have anticipated and expected that, given the structure of the post-colonial State façade, the country would be prone to ethnic upheaval, but never genocide, since both the main two ethnic groups, the Tutsi and the Hutu, had lived peacefully side by side over centuries. Considering the current political reality in Rwanda, the aim of this section is to draw attention to the fact that the roots of the tree that led to genocide still constitute a challenge to the sustainable peace and development in Rwanda. It is now an opportune time – as twenty years has elapsed since the genocide – to rethink what went wrong in Rwanda. Reconceptualising and redefining Rwandan conflict – rather than accepting or swallowing how the local élites framed the genocide – entails a careful reconsideration of local political dynamics dominated by political ethnicity.[15]

Scholarship after scholarship and literature after literature carried constant claims that the Hutu – assumed as a homogeneous group – nearly exterminated the Tutsi. Even though Hutu civilians were used as auxiliaries in the genocide campaign, the Hutuness was a political tool and title employed by the genocide regime, whereas the Tutsiness

was a political platform used by the RPF to ascent to power. Did the Hutu killed the Tutsi as Tutsi, or vice versa? The most important point – which is absent in the genocide literature on Rwanda – is that, when the Hutu civilians were killing their fellow Tutsi, they were *not* killing Tutsis as a Tutsi. Rather, they were killing the RPF.[16] From the mind of the Hutu *génocidaires*, they were killing not the Tutsi, but the *Inyenzi* (the derogatory term they labelled for the RPF which means the "cockroaches"). The term was not only used to describe the RPF but all their supporters regardless Tutsi or Hutu; most of the wrath affected the former. Who were the RPF? To the minds of *génocidaires*, the RPF was Tutsi refugees from Uganda attempting at reinstating an authoritarian rule of a colonial kind. For the RPF rank-and-file were held to be the former Tutsi refugees returning to set the earlier scores in the same way as the genocidal State unleashed brutal crackdowns upon them. Somehow, fear for RPF reprisals aggravated the genocide. The Hutu "often killed Hutu just to get even with those they perceived as globally responsible for the death of their families" (Prunier, 1995, p. 322). The RPF, on the other hand, were not fighting for the Tutsi, as it made clear right from the beginning. They were simply after seizing the whole state so as to grab the resources.

The Hutu and the Tutsi, as traditional social identities, were racialized, first by the Belgian colonial State and later retained such racialization by none other than post-colonial Rwandan State. While refuting the colonial and post-colonial policies of treating the Hutu and the Tutsi as two different races, many scholars have come at last to treat them as such by considering the Tutsi an alien outside race. Considering the Tutsi and the Hutu as a "corporate groups contending for political power" and thus refusing to regard them as different races, Mamdani (2001) finally compares the Tutsi to white South Africans or Indians in Uganda. This meant that the Tutsi were a different race than their Hutu brethren. In Rwanda, as in Somalia, this compartmentalisation had created animosity between the Tutsi and the Hutu.[17] Thus, the social bomb was deliberately fostered well before 1994 (on a congruent context in Somalia, see Castagno, 1964). After the post-colony, the political lexicon of condemning colonialism was turned to those who took over power. One crucial fact was that the socially accepted standard rhetoric was directed at this time not at the Belgian colonialists, but at the Tutsi élites who constituted the gatekeepers – or up above in the ladder – in the hierarchical colonial power. The transformation of the Tutsi – the colonial authorities described them *the* "Europeans under a black skin" – saw seeds of hatred due to economic and political benefits accrued from the colonial connection. Oral tradition gathered by early ethnographers and ethnohistorians are replete with patron-client relationship between the Tutsi and the Hutu asserted in the *ubuhake* system, a system of subordination segregating those who were less economically sufficient from those who were successful (Lemarchand, 2011). The consequence was irreconcilable tensions over socio-economic lifestyles and 'racial' compartmentalisations between the Hutu and the Tutsi as not only two different ethnicities, but also races. The functionality of the concept of 'dual colonialism' – Belgian

colonialists on the one hand and the Tutsi colonialists on the other – was materialised. The debates over the role played by the ethnic cleavages in the genocide remain alive in everyday oral and academic discourses on Rwanda.

A recent BBC documentary, which radically reviewed the genocide in 1994, has added fuel to the deep sentiments among the Rwandan Diaspora and created uproar back home (BBC Two, 2014). Apart from the controversy underpinning here and there, the documentary exposed for the first time the politics behind using the genocide as a political resource on the part of the RPF government. By sparking an intense dispute over who had committed the genocide and against whom was committed, the documentary has pursued a controversial line of revisionist argument that the Tutsi civilians murdered in the genocide were less numerous than their Hutu fellows, while the overall death toll was less than the number which had previously been pervaded. Released in a time when the Rwandan society is trying to overcome the traumatic distress of the genocide, the documentary opened up new wounds. Even if there was an element of exaggeration in the BBC documentary, it cannot be altogether wrong to argue that the Tutsi and the Hutu are victims of *the same* genocidal campaign. It is also reasonable when the Kigali government counteracted recent revisionisms on the post-genocide Rwanda, because such attempts continue to pose a challenge to (re)creating a cohesive community living in peace and harmony with each other.

The political agenda of the Kigali government does not only quell dissenting voices, but it also suppresses any critical scholarship that does not sit well with their aims. That the government banned Alison Des Forges from the country, the only specialist who warned of the possible genocide in 1994, shortly before her death, was one such untenable act. In any case, denying Des Forges entry into Rwanda was too far for the Kigali government. The notable Rwandan specialist Filip Reyntjens was also declared *persona non grata* in 1995 and he has not been able to visit the country ever since (e.g. Reyntjens, 2012). These political reactions reflect the lack of 'collective memory' (Berry and Berry, 1999) in the aftermath of the post-conflict settings to properly heal both victims and victors. Suppression against specialists undoubtedly gives a wrong impression on the Rwandan government among many analysts who would have been sympathetic to a country grappling to come to terms with the legacies of one of the most horrible genocides in the world history. The authoritarian actions of the government would lead to incomplete democracy or lack thereof. As a result, one legitimately inquires whether democracy was nurtured in Rwanda or, rather, a "danger zone" was constructed (Verhoeven, 2012).

Comparing and Contextualising Conflicts

The power expansion projects and plans, pursued partially by a small group of power-brokers closer to the Kigali government, became counterproductive and have further contributed to new ways in which ethnicity was asserted and re-asserted through sub-

tle ways. Given the escalation of polarised political spaces, a sense of victimhood still persists in the Tutsi and the Hutu camps, a sign that the genocide that afflicted the Rwandan society in the recent past would unnecessarily incorporate into the present political debates. As Prunier (1995) observed: "In Rwanda and in Burundi, history, the world, politics, are now increasingly seen through the prisms of Tutsi or Hutu partisan visions" (p. 387). For Rwanda, as for Somalia, there is a lack of trust between the victims and the victors of the catastrophes. What *is-aaminaad* is to the Somalis is *igihango* to the Rwandese (both terms donate 'trust'). Both the Tutsi and the Hutu élites accuse each other of the genocide, even though the evidence shows that it was a small group of Hutu élites in the Habyarimana inner circle who had incited the Hutu civilians in massacring their fellow Tutsi brethren in the aftermath of the President assassination in April 1994. Reconsidering what had happened reveals that the genocide was the "last-ditch attempt at survival" (Hintjens, 1999) by the remnants of the Habryarimana regime who gone mad upon hearing the horrible news that the President's aircraft was shot down. This does not imply that the genocide was not pre-planned, but it means the aeroplane shooting served the momentum of justification for the attempt to wipe out the RPF and its supporters.

However, the Rwanda genocide was a state project whether it was pre-planned or planned on the eve of the assassination. As the widowed state authorities organised and ordered the civilians to act swiftly to avenge the death of the president, ethnicity was used both as an ideology and an instrument. Propaganda was pervaded all over Kigali and elsewhere that the RPF bent on seizing power was the culprit behind the aeroplane shooting. Even though there were many other orchestrators, the main instigators of the genocide in Rwanda were none other than Colonel Théoneste Bagosora, General Augustin Bizimungu, Jean Kambanda, Frodwald Karamira, Colonel Protais Mpiranya and many other of their colleagues. Many external (both neighbours and distant) strong stakeholders were also politically and militarily involved in Rwandan genocide which made the whole thing more complex and complicated. While the Americans, the British and the French were competing, "the Museveni government exported Uganda's internal crisis to Rwanda" (Mamdani, 2001; Prunier, 1995; Reyntjens, 2009). Most notable of these external support went to the RPF. Mamdani (2001) acknowledges that "it is not possible to define the scope – and not just the limits – of action without taking into account historical legacies" (p. 9). The tendency to trace the Rwandan genocide through inner eyes without considering the outside agencies is akin to depriving the genocide chronicle one crucial and critical – if not the most significant – historical background.

Reclaiming the Rwandan Reality: The Open-ended Ethnicity

Ethnicity still is a potent force and powerful caption in Rwanda. The unrepentance positions over the years of the civilians – the so-called *génocidaires* – who actually carried out the genocide is a testament that the hatred that led to the genocide appears to be

visible and vigorous. The *génocidaires* are alive and still capable of committing it again (Kiwuwa, 2012; Reyntjens, 2012). Whether the current government of the RPF continues to suppress them or opens to a new space(s) they could be reintegrated into the society hinges upon policies pursued for the contemporary conflict resolution by the current government. For there is no any other alternative to the conundrum other than the government to allow them to be part of the peaceful post-genocide Rwandan society, the choices are very few and far few in that matter. Where the Rwandan government rejects the reintegration of politicians and soldiers who served in the Habyarimana regime, in Somalia, the Siad Barre regime remnants are conceived of as technocrats – that is, the only people who know how to run a government (Ingiriis, 2012a).[18]

The power and potency of the ethnicity in contemporary Rwanda are illustrative of the attempt by the Kigali government at suppressing it by the legal prohibition of the terms such as the Tutsi, the Hutu and the Twa. It is without saying that such de-ethnicization (or de-clanisation) attempts hardly work in Africa, given the Siad Barre's Somalia, where such attempts had been carried out in 1971 soon after the accession to power of the military regime in 1969. However, the Somali case could be seen somewhat different, for Siad Barre himself was a real beneficiary of the clan system in order to maintain his rule, which was on the Mareehaan-Ogaadeen-Dhulbahante (MODH) clan coalition (Adam, 2008; Aroma, 2005a, 2005b). The Paul Kagame regime also possesses no lesser purpose than Siad Barre's. As soon as it ascended to power, the RPF itself made the Hutuness a crime, or as Prunier (1995) put it, "a Damoclean sword over every Hutu's head" because "any Hutu is either a real or potential murderer" in the eyes of the new government and "can go to jail at any time". The RPF at the same time denies the existence of ethnic – even racial – differentiation between the Tutsi and the Tutsi.

Promoting the notion and the narrative of the "Tutsi genocide" – the claim that only the Tutsi was massacred – on the part of the Kigali government means that the genocide affair was one single ethnic project, not for all Rwandan one. From various ways, the government unintentionally upholds ethnicity: on one hand, it publicly bans, but fosters on the other. The fact that the amended version of the Rwandan Constitution mentions the Tutsi, but not the Hutu, speaks volumes how the current government attempts to capitalise for its own benefit on the *Tutsised* version of the genocide (Government of Rwanda, 2008). On the other hand, there is an invisible element of contradiction in the government position. Rather than recognising the conflict in which the genocide was conducted as one between Rwandan on Rwandan, the government regards it one between the Tutsi and the Hutu. As long as the genocide is a "Tutsi" genocide, President Kagame has a justification to stay in power as does other authoritarian rulers in other parts of Africa. The question the rural Rwandan would pose to the generation of Western researchers should be: where are the "new breed of African leaders" imagined by the Clinton White House in 1994?

Twenty years ago, Rwanda was an almost apocalyptic country where the existence of human life was near to vanish (*Time*, 1994; also Des Forges, 1999; Gourevitch, 1998; Omaar, 1995). Whereas some inside and external stakeholders washed their hands from the blood, some others took off the glove and encouraged their fellows to conduct the dirty work of the genocide. While the Rwandan Church was complicit in the genocide, it is scarcely surprising that its counterpart, the Muslim Mosque, was an eyewitness to the genocide. As observed by Mamdani (2001, p. 253), the only community that averted to implicate in the genocide was the Muslim community. Aside from the blameworthy and the bystander, the Rwandan tragedy resulted in the catastrophic human loss of epic proportions. As Prunier (1995) reported: "The physical aspect of the country was tragic, with buildings destroyed, standing houses thoroughly looted and heaps of corpses still lying around. In some villages, children could be seen playing with skulls as if they were balls" (p. 327). Somalia was not so different in terms of the huge social and economic devastation (e.g. Brunk, 2008). In August of 1992, a British journalist had to report from Golweyn (Somalia) with this horrible story:

> The orphans of Golweyn watched in silence as the boy was taken out of their smoke-blackened room. He had lain for six hours under a soiled sheet, among the motionless bodies of the living. Then they found he was dead. Nobody knew where he had come from, where his family was, what he was called. Three men gently carried him out, wrapped in the straw mat on which he had died. They cut off his stained clothes with a knife and laid him on the bare springs of a bedstead. Water ran across the fire-scarred floor as they washed the bones that were all that was left of the boy after his long starvation. He was wrapped in a white sheet, bound with strips of rag. For a few minutes, three old men prayed over the body. Then the boy was buried outside the camp among 1,200 unmarked graves dug in the past two months. As we walked to the cemetery the men carrying the body were told that they would have to dig graves for three more people who had died in the past hour (Huband, 1992).

Conceptualising Clan Cleansing

Cleansings are measured or determined the lethal outcome and the ways in which the agents and the ones who are involved mediate a new meaning after the battlefield. The war over state power between the two Hawiye leaders Ali Mahdi Mohamed and General Mohamed Farah Aideed – inaccurately depicted as the Abgaal and the Habar Gidir war – was longer and larger in time and in a number of victims than any other in 1991.[19] It is worth noting that Ali Mahdi chaired in 2007 a reconciliation conference held in Mogadishu that each Somali clan apologised the other for what they did to each other in the name of the clan. So the similar way the Daarood elders apologised to the Hawiye, the Hawiye apologised to the Daarood. Yet, the clan cleansing claim as a political term rather than analytical or empirical term disregards other clanised wars

as nothing more than crossfire, because the claim itself is used as a political resource rather than a historical fact. For instance, it is used in contemporary political scene to vilify a politician to exclude from the right of State power, a State which never existed in reality but existed in imagination. This is not a simple proposition, but would seem so for analysts so parochial to argue for a case of clan cleansing in clan conflicts. When is the claim invoked to assert that a particular clan conflict resulted in clan cleansing?

The term clan cleansing had previously been used in several instances for specific purposes to apply to Somalia (Augelli & Murphy, 1995; Prendergast, 1994b; Rogge, 1993). However, most of these usages referred to the catastrophe in Baydhabo famine of 1991-1993. Though not directly referenced, Kapteijns's adoption of the term draws from Perlez (1992), who had – deriving from her certain clan interviewees – first adopted what she called "clannic cleanings". Likewise, in his revised fourth edition of his classic, *A Modern History of the Somali*, Lewis (2002, p. 263) used the term clan cleansing in a careful and conscious way by attributing its originality to the Siad Barre and his rush-hour SSDF supporters. However, the claim has been perpetuated *sensu lato* by politicians who lost many beneficial preferences from the ousted regime of Siad Barre. The term is a new phenomenon that has not been witnessed in the clanised wars of 1991 left behind by the regime. A historical concept and highly controversial analytical instrument, the claim can never capture the complicated nature of the Somali clan cataclysms. It seems to have obviously been inspired by – and remains a slight alteration of the phrase of – "ethnic cleansing", exercised in Yugoslavia and, to some extent, in Rwanda. Naimark (2002) points out that this was a "term that derived from contemporary journalism rather than from scholarly or juridical sources" (p. 3). The phrase itself is not a useful historic-theoretical term to grasp recent African wars, let alone Somali clan conflicts (Ingiriis, 2013b). The latter are too complex to sort out who was killing who or why. It would be wrong to argue that clan X was killing clan Y for nothing, though.[20] The only time wherein what close to genocide occurred in Somalia *after* 1991 was the time of the Baydhabo death triangle in 1991-1993 (e.g. Prendergast, 1994a). As a result, any reference of cleansing to the 1991 Somalia is problematic at best and flawed at worst, not only because the period was purported as a pseudo-genocidal, but what occurred in Rwanda and Yugoslavia was not identical to the Somali case.[21]

The tendency in which clanism was used as camouflage for power position has a long historical trajectory in post-1969 Somalia. It is from this political background that the clan cleansing claim has over the years been used by SSDF supporters as a shorthand to argue for a case of permanent inheritance of the post of the Prime Minister in the (current) Somali "federal" government.[22] As one government insider puts it: "Whenever the post is filled by a Puntlander politician, one would never hear about clan cleansing or "*guryahayagii ayaa xoog na lagaga haystaa*" (our properties are being held by force) and all claims end out there".[23] This is not only because those who propagate the claim

do hold that power would accrue much previous wealth as was in the 1960s all the way down to 1980s, but they also realise that the post of the prime minister would generate more properties by State appropriation. The benefits that might follow with the political power held by one of their own is perceived to be a real recreation of how the State system worked in the past. The political demonstrations in the Diaspora that chants "one of our own must hold the post of the prime minister" often compels the incumbent presidents to appoint a Puntlander, as was done by President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed in 2011, but paused by President Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud in 2012, although he detracted his earlier position in January 2015. Once the post went to a Puntlander (Puntlanders are not all equal though), it belittles the invocation of clan cleansing as a political tool and this is where the concept as a political resource vanishes.[24] Given such an opportunity, repressing manipulated minds to breathe for power with evoking nostalgic moments is deemed compulsory.

However, clannish claims of simple attribution of chasing the SSDF to the USC leaderships have been pervaded wide and far. Out of all other Somali leaders, Kapteijns (2013a) – assuming that the 1991 clan convulsions were the primary cause of the armed conflicts – makes General Aideed as her target, condemning him for "crimes against humanity" while partnering herself with none other than his one-time follower and rival warrior Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed who had earlier falsely charged Aideed (obviously to destroy him in writing if he failed on the front) for "cleansing" his clan (cf. Ahmed, 2012; Kapteijns, 2013a, 2013b). However, there are no speeches, recordings, visual proof or any other evidential primary sources in both Ahmed (2012) and Kapteijn's (2013a, 2013b, 2010b) that could add evidence to their claims. How would a man who saw himself as national leader have behaved such a circumstance which depended on his chance of becoming a president? On the contrary, there are a plethora of YouTube clips – which are purposely avoided to use – showing USC leaders, including General Aideed, admonishing their forces not to shoot anyone who were not on a war front. Recorded at the height of the 1991 clanised wars, one clip shows Aideed himself – with two revered Mogadishu sheikhs in his side – Sheikh Mo'allim Nuur Mohamed Siad and Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Muhyiddiin Eli – giving instructions to his militias not to rob and rape civilians and non-combatants. The clips reveal the two latter sheikhs requesting him to defend the capital from Siad Barre's soldiers.[25] Aideed then gives speech to an audience in which he pledges to confront Siad Barre and his supporters who were trying to recapture the capital. Then he continues to order his forces to "upheld the sense of Somaliness." This is what he says in the rest of the clip:

> We are against *not* the Daarood, but Siad Barre's tyrannical regime and anyone who supports and fighting for him. These are those whom we are against them. They themselves need to be liberated from Siad Barre to restore brotherhood and justice [and] not to allow for people to be re-colonised again because people

> are equal. You [the USC militiamen] must respect the people, protect the people you're liberating, protect the sheikhs, protect the mosques. Face only the enemy, those who are firing at you. If they [Siad Barre's fighters] commit atrocity, don't do what they do. Do otherwise which is goodness, for Allah has ordered us to do such (YouTube; translation from Somali into English is mine).[26]

This conclusive visual evidence appears to contradict Ahmed's (2012) and Kapteijns's (2013a) claims that the USC leaders orchestrated, oversaw and ordered a cleansing campaign of certain clans.[27] As is evident in Aideed's speech, it was unreasonable for a man reputed by the most Somali public as liberator and saviour to eat his people at the peak of his popularity. That he subsequently kept his vow also says something similar about his plans. In April 1991, Aideed's forces captured the southern coastal town of Kismaayo in southern Somalia where his fighters captured General Mohamed Abshir Muuse, a very controversial figure held responsible by Aideed's advisers for facilitating the merger of the SSDF remnants and Siad Barre's Red Berets. In 1991, Abshir met a British journalist who visited Kismaayo at the peak of the war. Following was how he expressed himself to the journalist: "There are angry people here [...] I am [clan so and so], I should side with [my clan]" (cited in McGreal, 1991). Few months later, Abshir was captured by Aideed's forces in Kismaayo while fighting against the USC. A video clip showing Aideed and his advisers deliberating his release is restored on the YouTube.[28]

In January 1991, at the height of the war, a USC contingent captured and handed Abshir over to the elders known as the "Manifesto Group" who were named after an earlier petition they had written to Siad Barre to relinquish power (Ingiriis, 2012a). Captured with him were General Hoolif, General Abdullahi Hassan Matukade and Abdulhamid Suldaan, as recalled by Hassan Dhimbil Warsame, a Manifesto signatory, after an extensive interview over the phone.[29] When 500 Siad Barre soldiers surrendered themselves to Aideed in 1992, he handed them over to the Red Cross. Moreover, he captured additional (almost) 500 fighters who were fighting for the ousted dictator in Gedo. In Aideed's own words: "I gave strict instructions to the USC commander to make sure that no prisoners or civilians were harmed under any circumstances" (cited in Dualeh, 1994, pp. 176-177). General Jama Mohamed Ghalib, the former Police Commissioner during the Siad Barre regime, observed that "Aideed handed over about five hundred prisoners captured from Siad Barre's forces to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)." As a result, "he was not personally accused, let alone proved, of any particular wilful murder of non-combatant civilians" (Ghalib, 2012, p. 152, 166). Whereas there was no single evidence to suggest that the USC leaderships – even though they were in conflict – were instigated and implicated in a campaign of organising or ordering the annihilation of a particular clan, visual evidence abounds that generals Mohamed Said Hersi "Morgan" and Mohamed Haashi Gaani ordering the massacre of the Hawiye, the Isaaq, the Rahanweyn and the Bantu/Jareer in their own territories.[30] Their crimes were

completely cloaked in Kapteijns (2013a), glossing over the responsibility of the regime in supporting the SSDF militiamen to suppress on these communities.

Has Clan Cleansing a Conclusion?

Somalia is but one of the most conflict-ridden countries in the whole African continent. State violence was normalised since the military regime came into power on 21 October 1969. After 1977, the first active armed groups emerged, when the Siad Barre's regime launched a war against the Mengistu's *Derg* regime in neighbouring Ethiopia. Ever since, the country was falling down and down. Many Somalis and non-Somalis seem to have learnt no lesson from the conflicts that had been ongoing for more than three decades. Perpetrators who were involved in the war and beneficiaries disrupted by the war tend to hold grudges of the past conflict due to a feeling of economic deprivations. Similar to the way the Hutu uses the Habyarimana plane crash in 1994 as a site of political memory, certain clan groups continue to use the 1991, a partisan memory to attack the current Somali government. The Toronto clan convention suggests as a concrete reminder of the war consequences, as it was passionate reaction to the appointment by President Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud of Saa'id Farah Shirdoon, a non-Puntlander businessman. Much of the hate speech in the conference was directed at the President and his Hawiye clan-group. Judged from their own words, the speakers' messages contained one of venomous unparalleled in other African experiences, even in Rwanda. In manipulating politics from below whilst demanding an exclusive State spoils for clan élites, Abdiwahab Haji Hussein, a younger brother of Abdirizak Haji Hussein, the former post-colonial Prime Minister of Somalia (1964-1967), expressed his views about how the his clan-group should *never* live alongside with the "Mogadishu clan". With a highly exclusionary style of hate speech, Abdiwahab insisted:

> We are not brothers. We are expecting nothing positive from them [the Hawiye]. They are good for nothing. The capital is their city. It is not Somali capital. We can create our own government, our own capital city. Allah did not make us isolated […] You women, you are our real forces. Let us create a separate capital city with separate country and government as we cannot live with them".[31]

Importantly, Kapteijns's account (2013a) has served both biblical and practical purposes for the clan convention in Toronto: first as a proof of invoking illegitimate clan grievances and second as a momentum of lobbying for the contemporary political competition. Apart from banking on the preference that they were "cleansed," the reiteration of government and capital city in the hate speech reveals how State power and political positions are interlinked and thus sought in every way possible, whether to incite people to secede or abandon their fellow countrymen. The political power nostalgia is also an indication of how and why Somali conflicts have become one of the longest than any other conflict in post-colonial Africa. Power sharing does not even work politically de-

structive settings like conflict-ridden Somalia. Jason Sorens and Leonard Wantchekon (2000, p. 16-51) stressed that "power-sharing has succeeded where the parties to the conflict have been ideological or ethnic groups fearful of depredations from each other (El Salvador, South Africa), not groups organized solely for a struggle over economic resources. Some of the world's most intractable civil conflicts (Sierra Leone, Angola, Zaire, Southern Somalia), on the other hand, have involved primarily a struggle over lucrative resources". Most of those who gathered the Toronto clan convention were economically uppermost in the Siad Barre regime. All of a sudden, most – if not all – felt compelled to either resorting to welfare or work very odd jobs. In any consequence of conflicts, economic frustrations, family quarrels, marital problems and many other 'lems' all become much more difficult than they had been before a war (Prunier, 1995). The rhetoric(s) of victimhood and victimisation – buttressed in the political discourse of the day – then tend to lead to revenge toward a non-existent enemy. Primarily because of the uncivil war, the commonality of Somaliness was destroyed: no more sense of national belonging other than the continual move of either defending or offending each other. It is thus natural that the Somali conflicts are now replete with many countless adjectives and divergent views as a result of the long war experiences by both the public and politicians. Mamdani (2001) proposes new ways of healing this problem: "The prime requirement of political reconciliation is neither criminal justice nor social justice, but *political justice* (italics his)". But how political justice when politics itself is based on an unjust distribution of power?

For other Somali clans and communities, the goal of clan cleansing is not literally to get, gain and gather power *per se*, but is "more fundamentally to use that power, and the sources which it can generate" to overwhelm and oppress those considered to be potential rivals (Chabal and Daloz, 1999, p. 58). Political power does not basically mean access to State spoils, it is also predicts the power to create fear on the so-called "enemy clans". When viewed from this angle, the claim of cleansing seems to have no conclusion. The lack of conclusion is exacerbated by the recent attempts to construct it as a past history, a history that never was. In the Somali world, empirical observation shows that what one perceives of true history is another's untrue history. "Written history", as Scott (1989) writes, "both reflects and creates relations of power. Its standards of inclusion and exclusion, measures of importance and rules of evaluation are not objective criteria but politically produced conventions. What we know as history is, then, the fruit of past politics; today's contests are about how history will be constituted for the present" (p. 681). If history is, then, past politics and politics present history in a conventional way, to the Toronto convenors history is present politics and politics past history.

Writing past conflicts and putting it into writing, Ginzburg (1981, p. 90) explains "does not imply that historians, disguised as judges, should try to re-enact the trial of the past [...] The specific aim of this kind of historical research should be the reconstruction of

the *relationship* between individual lives and the contexts in which they unfold" (his emphasis). As Certeau (2000, p. 91) also insists: "History is never sure. The historian does not exert police powers over the past. His mission [should be] more humble and more subtle. The historian is not in charge of speaking the truth, but in charge of 'diagnosing the false'". A metonymy for the former regime, Kapteijns's (2013a) academic advocacy has contributed more theatrical than truth kin, which remains controversial and clumsy to the Somali setting. Because clan cleansing was framed as victims' narrative of demanding a share in the state spoils, Kapteijns turns to different trajectory by justifying one clan argument yet arresting the other. In no sense is an attempt made to consider other communities' narratives. Oddly, she charges one single clan members "responsible for past atrocities" as she sees this would help "force a nation to come to terms with its past as well as to laying to the groundwork for reconciliation".[32] Thus, in her own words, collective innocence should be shelved. Her aim seems to criminalise certain clan, but her statements seems to contradict the claim she sets out to paving the way for victimisation of particular clan. This is where the claim gradually develops into a normative notion that not merely (re)ignites but (re)incites the clan conflicts wittingly or unwittingly while the outcome would undoubtedly plunge Somalia into the cul-de-sac chaos of 1991.

Conclusion

The recent avalanche of clan cleansing claims could best be compared with the Somali metaphor of a three blind men where each touches an animal differently yet coming up with different ideas (Ahmed, 2001). Reviewing Kapteijns's (2013a), Ranger (2014) concluded that the study is a "one woman" project. Thus her *ipse dixit*. In an interview with the satellite-linked Somali Channel Television, Kapteijns remarked that she cried while writing her work.[33] Writing under emotion – which intrinsically means writing under strain – leads the author to play under prejudice and disregard neutrality. In her *Emotions in History: Lost and Found*, Frevert (2011) reveals some of the results emotions have had in one's mind, one of which being the loss of balance to clearly think and consider the work at hand. In *Clan Cleansing*, clan triangulation – that is, using sources from all rival clans to prevent from clan bias – is not employed. The stories of all other armed Somali groups, except for the SSDF, are absent. By going as far and further as to label her critics "deniers" and even "haters", Kapteijns clearly indulged herself in the Somali clan conflicts.[34] That her work was used in a clan conference in Toronto by certain clan group who demanded the post of prime minister in the current Mogadishu government is one among many pieces of evidence that links Kapteijns to politicised narratives. As a result, hers "is not a work of scholarship, but a fiction purported to be scholarly designed for certain community", as one observer described. It appears that Kapteijns's ear does not hear and appear intolerable to anything short of clan cleansing, as she offered elsewhere a different interpretation that attacks the essence of her

latest argument:

> ...the militias and out-of-control bands of violent men *did not* constitute or represent the whole clan or clan family to which they belonged. Many of those who happened to be members of these clans or this clan family did not want anything to do with this violence, rejected it, tried to stop it, and saved many of those targeted by it. The same is true for the leaders of the (clan-based) armed opposition front that had recruited the fighters, the United Somali Congress or USC. Many of these leaders did not want this violence and tried to prevent and end it' [emphasis in original] (Kapteijns, 2010a, p. 12).[35]

In his review on Kapteijns (2013a), titled *Some Reflections Lidwien Kapteijns*, the renowned political scientist David Laitin finds numerous contradictions in the claim of clan cleansing. Laitin (2013) has pointed out how she minimises the clan as a concept and at the same time uses it to argue for a case embedded in contemporary clan politics. One cannot shrug off the fact that the cause of the clanised wars was not linear, but multifaceted and multidimensional as well as – not static but – dynamic. The clanised wars were not only, as Kapteijns (2013a) argued, "instrument[s] of power used to reach particular political goals" (p. 5). To the contrary, the distinctions and divisions of Somali clanship seemed to be stronger than even Lewis's natural fixed segmentary lineage structure, phraseology seemingly derives from Rousseau (Lewis, 2004; Ingiriis, 2014b). Expounding the clan wars and clanism itself has become the work of many. Surreal and strange as the Somali case seems, even geographers (Samatar, 1992) and politicians (Warsame-Kimiko, 2011) attempted to explore the practice and politics of the clan system.[36] This illustrates why the clan concept itself is all for all phenomenon in the Somali case susceptible to misinterpretation after misinterpretation in and out itself.

In this article, I showed how analysis can be joined the fray of political conflicts either wittingly or unwittingly. Since the 1991 violence was "communal," where is the role of the all other clans and sub-clans in such a mutual violence? Why is the concentration of one clan-community? Even the novice reader of the complex issues of things Somali can discover that what occurred in 1991 in Mogadishu was *not* a clan cleansing. Kapteijns seems more interested in what *happened* – in this case, the consequence – than what *contributed* to that *happening* – in this context, the causes and the roots of what triggered that *happening*. This is due to the lack the diachronic historical context of her informant-politicians, who (mis) and (ab)use the term *Somaliness*, without questioning, why, for example, the latter was unworkable during the period of clanised wars in the 1980s and 1990s, but was workable in the era of anti-colonial movements in the 1940s and 1950s. What is nationalism got to do within the context of uncivil war? One can revoke a shallow *Somaliness* clouded in clanism. Generally uncompromising and unpersuasive as were the narratives of war-torn societies, it appears difficult to be exact in relation to the question of war. Willingly or unwillingly, but unfortunately, Kapteijns fell in this

trap. In concluding, how many years will the notion of *ku-qabso-ku-qadi-maysid* (catch and claim the cake and you'll never be hungry) pursued by political expansionists – and *kan-aamusan-hooyadiiba-waa-qadisaa* (one who is silent will be hungry in the eyes of his mother) on the part of other Somali clans and communities – dominate the discourse of 'post'-conflict Somali spaces?

Endnotes

1 'Daawo Beesha Daarood oo Samaysatay Xus Ay ugu Magac Dareen Xasuuqi 1991', http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FzPL-ePKfCU, accessed on 4 August 2014.

2 Kapteijns (2013a) is heavily politicised as it describes the clanised wars in advocacy and activist manner, taking a highly partisan position (Ingiriis, 2013b, pp. 112-114). The constructivist theories of kinship used in Kapteijns's seems to have derived from Simons's book (1995) without acknowledgement.

3 Said Samatar himself, a Daarood academic who recently passed away in the U.S., viewed the Somali government in Mogadishu as a Hawiye government, because it was led by Hassan Sheikh, a Hawiye (see Samatar, 2013). Nuruddin Farah has also hinted that he does not recognise Hassan Sheikh as a Somali President nor does he sees him someone representing him or his clan. In short, to his mind, Hassan Sheikh is a rival clan President (Farah, 2013). Farah's diatribe came after the heated dispute between Hassan Sheikh and Farah's clan Ogaadeen élites over the partial declaration of the clan mini-State of "Jubbaland," backed by neighbouring Kikuyu-led Kenyan government. This despite the fact that Farah himself has admitted that he met his father in a refugee camp in Kenya wherein the father verbally assaulted (even insulted) a rival clan (in a plain language). He wrote during the height of the war between the Hawiye and the Daarood: "I asked my father why he thought he would be killed, simply because he was from another clan […] 'Mogadiscio has fallen into the clutches of thugs,' my father went on, 'no better than hyenas. Now, could you depend on a hyena to know what honour is, what trust is, what political responsibility means?'" (Farah, 1996, p. 6, 9).

4 The book has endangered a controversy among Somali popular media and chatting groups. For an open letter, see Abdulkadir Osman "Aroma", "An Open Letter to Professor Kapteijns: A Rejoinder," *Hiiraan Online*, March 28, 2013. www.hiiraan.com/op4/2013/mar/28686/an_open_letter_to_professor_kapteijns_a_rejoinder.aspx (accessed on 17 April 2013). Most recently, one wondered Somali blogger posed a serious question about the political benefits of the book for one community against the other over the State spoils. Available at: http://www.somaliaonline.com/community/topic/faisal-roble-seems-pretty-obsessed-with-the-book-clan-cleansing/ (accessed on 19 October 2014). For a poem (with explanation) criticising the book, see Eno (2013).

5 Author's notes, Mogadishu (Somalia), August 1998.

6 On 27 November 2014 at the University of Oxford, I observed two renowned Rwanda specialists looking each other in a very hostile way. So were the interaction between two renowned Sudan specialists who strongly defended their ground with somewhat bitterness. In Lund University in Sweden, two years prior, I also witnessed two other Somalia specialists refusing to greet each other.

7 Prunier went afar in publishing another book that blames the RPF for using the genocide as an exercise for their brutality (2009). It appears that he retracted his earlier sympathies with the RPF after the Kigali government had reacted angrily to his work, with one mid-level civil servant describing him a man 'who claims to be an academic' and writes a "pseudo-analysis of Rwandan society" (quoted in Reyntjens, 2009, p. 188). For anti-Tutsi attitudes, see also Lemarchand (2011) and Reyntjens (2009). The latter author was expelled from Rwanda by the RPF.

8 Nowhere is this more informative than the cases of Samatar brothers where one of them campaigned against Somaliland by considering an "Isaaq project" but now Ahmed reversed his position by lobbying for Somaliland secession (Samatar and Samatar, 2005). The case of Ahmed Mohamed Adan "Qaybe," a former ambassador, was also similar. In 1994, before assuming a series of top political position in Somaliland, he told a journalist that Somaliland is "a one-tribe issue," adding that "[t]he Isaaq want to secede and the other clans are saying no. The others are willing to manage their own affairs locally until such time as a central government is formed" (quoted in Noakes, 1994, p. 53).

9 It is interesting that Kapteijns (2010b) blames Abdi Samatar, a Somali geographer, for giving "a highly partisan lecture mobilising Somalis and raising funds in support of the 'jihad of national liberation' from U.S.-supported Ethiopia and the TFG in Mogadishu".

10 In siding with one clan-group to the detriment of other, Kapteijns (2013a) fits perfect for those championing clan interests by joining the clan conflicts.

11 On post-conflict study concerning with South Africa, but close to the Somali case, see Grunebaum (2010).

12 For further revelations on Rwanda, see Mamdani (2001); Melvern (2000); Pottier (2002); and Prunier (1995).

13 For an excellent socio-historical studies on the explosion of the Somali uncivil wars, based on interviews and primary documents from the armed resistance movements, see Bongartz (1991) and Ingiriis (2012a).

14 Kapteijns (2013a) puts adopted clan in the position of the Tutsi victims, the other as the Hutu perpetrators.

15 Literature on Rwandan genocide is extensive and growing and follow the dichotomy of the Hutu versus the Tutsi (Lemarchand, 2011; Mamdani, 2001; Pottier, 2002; Prunier, 1995; Straus, 2006). Rwanda – ruled since the genocide by the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) – is now reputedly considered both as a 'gatekeeper state' or even a 'developmental State', a reputation which has been affirmed not uncritically by recent scholarship (Booth and Golooba-Mutebi, 2012).

16 Observations drawn from Rwandans in Brussels and London.

17 The colonial authorities preferred the Tutsi to the Hutu. As evident in elsewhere in Africa, the colonial authorities often preferred those held (or were held) to have come from afar. Indeed, colonialism created rapprochement with these groups very easily as they perceived them to share with them the label of "foreign" or "alien" in contrast to those who considered themselves as 'autochtones' (natives). Mamdani (2001) has a point – and a very fierce at that – to go as far as to declare that colonialism was the culprit behind the Tutsi and Hutu enmity that resulted in the 1994 genocide. Prunier (1995) has also argued that ethnic favouritism was 'absent-mindedly manufactured' in colonial literature.

18 Only time will tell which policy was correct. But one may discern that both policies have their weaknesses.

19 For other similar fictitious stories, see Kapteijns (2013a). Kapteijns has made a peculiar argument that those who were "cleansed" from Mogadishu – Daarood clan-community, to be specific – were 'as much as one half of the population of the capital alone'. If one takes her clan-oriented assumption at face value, all the other Somali clan-groups, clans and communities, who lived in Mogadishu at the time, were the other half, suggesting that Siad Barre's supporters were the dominant in the city, which is not true. With usual contradictory and inconsistency, she has recently retracted her statement and came up with a much smaller number by observing (obviously with a second-thought) that the "clan-based mass killings and expulsions" in 1991 affected only "tens of thousands of individuals".

20 The only time wherein what close to genocide occurred in Somalia *after* 1991 was the time of the Baydhabo death tringle in 1991-1992 (see Prendergast, 1994a).

21 For this observation, see Compagnon (2012).

22 One way one could identify with the identity of the Hawiye and the Daarood élites is to closely follow the tone and tactical arguments crafted through "federal" or "non-federal" lines. Anyone who closes his eyes could discern and distinguish the Hawiye from the Daarood and the Daarood from the Hawiye. The valid question one might pose is this: where are other Somali clans and communities who are more numerous than these two clan-groups? The valid answer is this: they either support one against the other. Had other Somalis stood up and pursue different nationalistic agenda, they would have probably superseded and surpassed both the Hawiye and the Daarood politicians.

23 Oral information from F.A.H., 6 October 2014.

24 The immediate statement released by the Puntland authorities within less than an hour, when Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke was appointed Prime Minister in Mogadishu speaks volumes for this political opportunism. See "Puntland oo si Buuxda u soo Dhaweysay Magacaabidda R.W. Cumar C/rashiid." Available at: http://hiiraan.com/news/2014/Dec/wararka_maanta17-89388.htm (accessed on 17 December 2014).

25 Available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1oUCpFagnXc, accessed on 30 April 2014.

26 Available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iMYEwtPyoyQ, accessed on 30 April 2014. By contrast, another video clip on the YouTube shows Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf declaring an all-out-war between his clan and another soon after an interim government was formed in Arta, Djibouti, in August 2000, stating that "the Hawiye were now prepared for war [against the government formed in Arta, led by none other than a Hawiye President]." Available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C0ri6N5WXi0, accessed on 9 May 2014. The exploitation of Hawiye division worked well with Abdullahi Yusuf who later succeeded to have been selected as Transitional Federal President in a Nairobi hotel in October 2014.

27 This is in part because of selective use of existing data, drawing mainly from media reports at the time.

28 Available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TFRpRW_JGkI, accessed on 5 August 2014. Later, Abshir attempted to build an Islamic emirate based on clan and had been sympathetic to Al-Itihad Al-Islami, one of the most hard-line Islamist movements that emerged out of the chaotic post-Siad Barre Somalia (*Africa Confidential*, 1992:8). This is not surprising, given the

unpredictable behaviours of post-colonial Somali leaders to switch not just sides, but also try new ideologies. Abshir was one of the few clan politicians who came to power through the clan nepotism policies in the 1960s Somalia.

29 Telephone interview with Hassan Dhimbil Warsame, 16 April 2014.

30 "Top Secret Tape – Jen. Morgan "Waa Dagaal Daarood iyo Hawiye", www.Keydmedia.net Exclusive, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Dae00I_qtQ, accessed on 10 July 2014). Following Deyr (1997), Kapteijns (2013a) sympathises with General Morgan. For a recent study on the Bantu plight, see Ingiriis (2012b).

31 "Daawo Beesha Daarood oo Samaysatay Xus Ay ugu Magac Dareen Xasuuqi 1991," http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FzPL-ePKfCU, accessed on 4 August 2014. This was similar to the women in Kismaayo under General Morgan whom Deyr (1997), an SSDF warrior, described – with nostalgic memories – "*lafdhabarta dagaalka*" (the backbone of the war). For more of these stories, see Ingiriis (2014:225-240). For analyses of gendered power politics, see Ingiriis (2015) and Ingiriis and Hoehne (2013). Achebe (2012, p. 58) reminds that "it is important to state that words have the power to hurt, even to denigrate and oppress others [...] there is a moral obligation, I think, not to ally oneself with power against the powerless".

32 Similar to the ethnic logic of the Kigali government authorities who hold that all moderate Hutus were killed alongside with the Tutsi victims during the genocide, so all the living Hutus are *génocidaires*, Hawiye civilians – in the eyes of Kapteijns (2013a) are guilty of chasing Daarood out of Mogadishu.

33 "SAADAASHA DHACDOOYINKA Wareysi Prof Lidwein Oo Qortay buug Xaaladaha Soomaaliya 30 10 2013." Available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZmKD1Bb9-sU (accessed on 27 December 2013).

34 "An Interview with Prof Lidwien Kapteijns (Ladan) on Somali Arts and Literature," June 20, 2014. Available at: http://www.wardheernews.com/interview-prof-lidwien-kapteijns-ladan-somali-arts-literature/ (accessed on 19 November 2014). The genealogy of the romantic relationship between Kapteijns and Wardheernews is interesting. This interview was the second within a year conducted by Wardheernews staff, who did not lose any opportunity to exploit Kapteijns's close affiliation with their clan-group. It is in this spirit that she also went so far as to chastise the UN authorities for not distinguishing "friends and foes" (Kapteijns, 2013b:433) – which is to say, differentiating the Hawiye foes from the Daarood friends. It is understandable, but undesirable, that the Somali websites from which Kapteijns gleans information are clan-based and sectarian online tools, such Wardheernews, a website that propagates the interest of the same clan-group she tries to exculpate, while criminalising all others. Indeed, Wardheernews is among the many Somali websites which compellingly "compete to promote and disseminate the interests and interpretations (of their often clan-identified) target groups" (Kapteijns, 2009). Elsewhere, she had recommended her readers to glance at a more clannish website 'allpuntland.com' (Kapteijns 2013a). For an overview critique, see Ingiriis (2013b, 2013c).

35 This claim was contradictory to her later "clan cleansing" argument in which she accused the same leaders of complicity (cf. Kapteijns, 2013a: chapters 3 & 4). This was part of Kapteijns's routine targeting of the USC leaders in the clanised conflicts.

36 Southgate's argument is acutely fitting here that of all people, historians are not like geographers "who drew their maps in terms of their own sometimes very limited perspectives".

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