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Marta ANTOSZ
Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland
martaantosz@gmail.com

DAD DAD BUU DUGSADAA DUGAAGNA GEED[1] – THE SOMALI DIASPORA IN THE UNITED STATES AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE AMERICAN DOMESTIC, SOCIAL AND SECURITY SITUATION

ABSTRACT The paper is dedicated to the Somali diaspora in the United States and its influence on the American domestic, social and security situation in relation to: 1) Somali cultural, historical and religious background, 2) history and patterns of U.S. Somali immigration, 3) analysis of the Somali cultural adaptation to American society, 4) analysis of the remittances sent from diaspora back home and certain associated patterns 5) potential among Somalis, especially young Somalis, when it comes to the Islamic radicalization, 6) analysis of the Somalis as part of Black African immigration. However, Somalis are not even close to being the largest migration group from Sub-Saharan Africa, for sure they are a significant one. Settled mostly in Minnesota (mostly the Minneapolis urban area), Columbus (Ohio), Seattle (Washington), Virginia, Washington D.C. metropolitan area, New York City metropolitan area, San Diego and Georgia, they created a unique minority with significant impact on the whole picture of American society and the American domestic and security situation.

Keywords: Somali diaspora, United States of America, migrations

[1] The Somali proverb meaning: "Humans seek shelter with other humans, whereas animals seek forests or trees for protection". See: C. M. Abdi, *Elusive Jannah. The Somali Diaspora and a Borderless Muslim Identity*, Minneapolis 2015, p. 57.

INTRODUCTION

According to the U.S. Census, there are 30,000 Somalis currently living in the United States. However, community leaders' estimates claim the number is much higher and may rise up to 150,000 people[2]. Although classified by the U.S. authorities as the African migration, Somalis usually do not fit the typical success story of most African U.S. minorities. This phenomenon is related to the economic, social and cultural roots of the Somali diaspora.

The aim of the paper is to present the Somali diaspora in the United States and its influence on the American domestic, social and security situation through the relation to 1) Somali cultural, historical and religious background, 2) history and patterns of U.S. Somali immigration, 3) analysis of the Somali cultural adaptation to the American society, 4) analysis of the remittances sent from diaspora back home and certain patterns behind it, 5) potential among Somalis, especially young Somalis, when it comes to the Islamic radicalization, 6) analysis of the Somalis as part of Black African Immigration. Hence, the following research questions have been formulated:

1. What are the main difficulties associated with the Somali cultural adaptation to American society?
2. What are the main patterns between remittances sent by the U.S. Somali diaspora?
3. Are American Somalis prone to Islamic radicalization?
4. Does Somali migration differ much from the rest of Black African immigration in the USA?

Most of the counterfactual material was collected during the author's research stay and expert interviews conducted by the author with the researchers in migration studies, security studies and African Studies at the African Studies Program at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University in Washington D.C., awarded by The Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund, (Sylff), and implemented by queries conducted during the author's research stay there.

The inductive approach was used, based on the formulation of general conclusions from conducted detailed research (critical analysis of the sources, documents, literature of the subject as well as consultations and interviews with the researchers and specialists in the field of the refugee, migration and security studies in order to receive the verifiable factual material), knowledge synthesis method. The proposed research was founded on both actors and institutional-oriented methodology. As far as the proposed theoretical approach is concerned, the author used behavioural analysis[3] of the

[2] Joshua Project, *Somali in United States*, at <https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/14983/US>, 7 January 2016.

[3] D. Sanders, 'Behavioural Analysis' in: D. Marsh, G. Stoker (eds.), *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, New York 2010, pp. 23-41 (*Political Analysis*).

Somali group in the United States, supported by constructivism[4] and the '*scapegoat theory*' introduced by René Girard[5].

CULTURAL BACKGROUND

It is believed that the Somali territory was inhabited around 1000 years ago by the Arabic families who arrived in the territory of what now is referred to as the Horn of Africa.[6] Islam arrived in these territories together with the Persian and Arabic merchants in the 11th-12th century, but still between the 13th-16th centuries, Somalis did participate in religion-motivated fights between Christians and Muslims[7]. Yet, today 99% of Somalis are Sunni Muslims and religion constitutes one of the most important parts of their identity. According to Raynel M. Shephard, Islam is one of the two most important identification factors for the Somalis in the United States, the other one is ethnicity. However, the second one is slightly more complicated in many cases, and especially among young people, religion might play a far more important role[8]. For Somalis, ethnic identification is rather attached to their clan or even sub-clan. Somalis are divided into the nomads (Samalle) and the minority herder population called Sab. Therefore, the Somali language is divided into two basic dialects: the northern one, Maha, and the southern, Mai. Those distinctions are very often the reason why Somali community members first identify themselves as Muslims and then by their ethnicity. The Muslim tradition is also important when it comes to gender identification. A lot of effort and community work have been put into gender awareness among Somali women in the Somali community. However, still despite the economic factors or language abilities that in some cases should empower women, the traditional model is visible in distributing roles between men and women in the family, favouring males. Gender issues are very often the obstacle for access to education among Somali women as it is not acceptable for them to attend gender-mixed schools[9].

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4 A. Moravcsik, 'Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics', *International Organization*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (1997), pp. 513-553, at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1162/002081897550447>.

5 R. Girard, *Kozioł ofiarny*, transl. by M. Goszczyńska, Łódź 1992 (*Człowiek i Jego Cywilizacja*).

6 By using the term Horn of Africa for the purpose of the article, the author will refer to its broader definition (sometimes also called as the Greater Horn of Africa) including: Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, Yemen, Eritrea, Djibouti, Sudan.

7 I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali. Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*, Athens, OH 2002, pp. 18-40.

8 R. M. Shephard, *Cultural Adaptation of Somali Refugee Youth*, El Paso 2008, pp. 9-44 (*New Americans*).

9 Ibid.

THE HISTORY OF THE SOMALI MIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES

Despite undertaken studies, Somali immigrants are still one of the least recognized minorities in the United States. It is the combination of African geographical background, Arabic-derived tradition, and the unique refugee experience that constitutes Somalis as a group that rarely fits any of the heretofore established frameworks related to the diaspora studies. It is commonly believed that the influx of Somalis into the United States started after the fall of Siad Barre's regime and the outbreak of the Somali civil war in 1991. However, the first Somalis arrived in the United States back in the 1980s after the introduction of the Refugee Act. The group mostly included the political opposition of the former dictator and inhabited the region of San Diego, which might be slightly surprising taking under consideration the present location of the majority of the Somali diaspora. Despite that, still the U.S. migration was rather small when compared to other African groups. A few factors might have affected this situation. Firstly, although Barre's rule was no more than a dictatorship, still he introduced a lot of reforms – like land reform that put some social groups in privileged positions (like Barre's sub-clan: Mareehaan) at the cost of the others[10]. Secondly, the introduction of The Refugee Act of 1980 that created The Federal Refugee Resettlement Program[11]. Thirdly, the economic situation in Somalia, due to the hyper-militarization and Barre's reforms, was getting worse and the state itself was on its road to collapse. Lastly, during the drought that occurred in the Horn of Africa in 1980s, it was easier and cheaper for most Somalis to make their way to Kenya or the Somali Region in Ethiopia and seek shelter there especially since some of them already had relatives living there and the community within the United States had just began to establish. The real outbreak of Somali migration waves to the United States erupted after the outbreak of civil war. It continues today, many of the Somalis first make their way to Kenya or Europe and from there decide on further asylum seeking or migration to the North American continent[12]. Typically, people follow the already existing communities when it comes to the place of their final destination in the United States of America. They choose to settle in Minnesota (mostly the Minneapolis urban area), Columbus (Ohio), Seattle (Washington), Virginia, the Washington D.C. metropolitan area, the New York City metropolitan area, San Diego or Georgia, because of the Somali communities which

[10] A. A. Osman, I. K. Souaré (eds.), *Somalia at the Crossroads. Challenges and Perspectives on Reconstituting a Failed State*, London 2007, pp. 10-14.

[11] According to the Office of Refugee Resettlement, the *Refugee Act of 1980* created The Federal Refugee Resettlement Program. The main aim of the program was to provide for the effective resettlement of refugees and to assist them to achieve economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible after arrival in the United States. See: Office of the Refugee Resettlement, *The Refugee Act*, at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/resource/the-refugee-act>, 18 February 2016; The Refugee Act of 1980, Congress.gov, at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/96th-congress/senate-bill/643>, 7 January 2016.

[12] C. M. Abdi, *Elusive Jannah...*, pp. 169-229.

exist there already. In the case of Minnesota, it was also the prosperity of the 1990s in this state that encouraged Somali migration[13].

Somali migration to the United States follows three general patterns:

- Resettlement – many of the refugees are being resettled in American territory through the Office of the Refugee Resettlement (ORR) and agencies in Kenya that are cooperating with it. According to the UNHCR, resettlement is defined as "the transfer of refugees from an asylum country to another state that has agreed to admit them and ultimately grant them permanent settlement". In essence, the resettlement process creates a new beginning for the refugees in the third country[14]. Somali refugees are often resettled to USA, Canada, Australia or Scandinavian countries.
- Family reunification process – many Somalis are being sponsored by their family members already living in the United States. However, the definition of family differs according to the American and Somali perspectives. According to U.S. Immigration Law, family reunification is divided into two basic categories: 1) immediate relatives of U.S. citizens (non-native spouses of U.S. citizens, unmarried minor children (aged 21 or below) of U.S. citizens, orphans adopted by U.S. citizens, and the parents of U.S. citizens over the age of 21) – this category does not have any number ceiling, and (2) family sponsorship according to preference categories (Unmarried, adult (age 21+) sons and daughters of U.S. citizens, spouses and unmarried sons and daughters of U.S. permanent resident aliens ("green card holders"), married sons and daughters of U.S. citizens, brothers and sisters of adult U.S. citizens) which is a numerically limited category and hence no single country can account for more than 7% of total admissions[15].
- Some Somalis arrive as asylum seekers after making their way to one of the American airports. They ask for asylum and enter the U.S. territory as asylum seekers[16]. According to UNHCR, asylum seekers are defined as people who claim to be refugees, but they have not been granted refugee status yet, therefore under the international law they are not refugees yet[17].

Therefore, most of the future diaspora members arrive in Kenya first, but due to the harsh living conditions and poverty among Kenyans themselves they decide to leave for the United States, very often paying enormous sums of money to be smuggled. As observed by Cawo M. Abdi, the rate did rise drastically since the beginning of the 2000s, on average 10 times more[18]. In contradistinction to the American or European migra-

[13] Source: author's expert interviews with Dr. Lahra Smith (1 December 2015, Georgetown University, Washington D.C.) and Dr. Terrence Lyons (24 November 2015, George Mason University, Washington D.C.). Joshua Project, *Somali in United States...*

[14] UNHCR, *Resettlement*, at <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4a16b1676.html>, 7 January 2016.

[15] R. McKay, *Family Reunification*, Migration Policy Institute, 1 May 2003, at <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/family-reunification>, 7 January 2016.

[16] C. M. Abdi, *Elusive Jannah...*, pp. 169-229.

[17] UNHCR, *Asylum-Seekers*, at <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c137.html>, 7 January 2016.

[18] C.M. Abdi, *Elusive Jannah...*, pp. 31-58.

tion, those of the Somalis who choose to make their way to the Middle East (Saudi Arabia, United Arabic Emirates or in the past, Yemen) or South Africa usually avoid the Dadaab refugee camps' complex and make their way directly to these destinations. The dominant population trend in the Somali U.S. migration are the Gosha people (Somali Bantu) and Benadiri Somali. Both groups are excluded from the main Somali clan structure and hence were forced or chose to leave Somalia.

(NOT) A JANNAH[19]

When it comes to the United States, the place most associated with the Somali immigration is Minnesota. According to the 2000 census, the number of Somalis living in this state was 11,000 At the same time, the Minnesota Demographic Center estimated that there might be 25,000 Somalis living in Minnesota in the period between 2010-12 (including children) and the American Community Survey claimed that 21,200 people of Somali origin lived in the state during that period of time. According to Ms. Abdi, Somali community organizations give numbers reaching 70,000 for the Minnesota and St. Paul area[20]. Despite the numbers, the Minnesota diaspora is still the heart of the U.S. Somali community, especially so because back in the 1990s the state was an example of economic prosperity with the reinvention of Minneapolis and St. Paul, therefore it was an ideal option for Somali resettlement[21]. However, job opportunities were not easily open to the Somalis due to certain limitations that included the following: 1) language skills, 2) education, 3) cultural background, 4) gender issues, 5) family affairs. These limitations influence the decision about the place of settlement – it seems easier to follow already existing patterns or relatives living in the United States rather than trying to build up new communities, especially since Somali families are big and family ties are really strong. Looking after other family members, even distant ones is considered as a moral obligation, so it is not a rare situation that one person provides for a few others back home. Somalis who made their way in the USA feel obliged to help their relatives who remain in Somalia, Kenya or the Middle East to get access to the land of opportunities. Although American immigration laws facilitate the family reunification program, in many Somali cases applications are still rejected, because even if some are considered family by Somalis themselves, they cannot be accepted by the U.S. law[22].

Most Somalis arrive with no knowledge or very poor knowledge of English. Due to their financial situation, they usually cannot afford to attend language courses, and hence undertake low paid jobs that require low qualifications. Very often, it is only one person in the broad definition of family that is providing for all the people living inside the household. However, in many cases it is unacceptable for men to be supported by

[19] The word: jannah means paradise in Somali.

[20] Following data collected by: C.M. Abdi, *Elusive Jannah...*, p. 174.

[21] 'Minnesota's Job Market: Land of 10,000 Opportunities', *The Economist*, 17 May 1999.

[22] C.M. Abdi, *Elusive Jannah...*, pp. 169-229.

women, even if they finish some courses or are engaged in programs that allow them to get better qualifications in English or any job profession. It is especially hard for them due to the gender equality model that is being promoted in the U.S., which differs from the traditional Somali model of roles in which the man provides for his family. Furthermore, it is not a random situation that a Somali man has a wife or even two wives back in Somalia or Kenya, so if the woman takes up the male role, she has to provide for them as well. This very often leads to marriage conflicts or even divorces. Similar situations occur in reference to the access to education. Many Somalis do not have access to education because of their financial situation and family obligations to work or take care of the younger siblings. Also, poor language skills make Somalis unable to access schools. Young Somali people very often have a problem with cultural adaptation among other peers. This is especially visible among young Somali women who were the *hijab* and who often meet the opposition of the families in going to the co-educational schools. As a consequence, they are more exposed to the adaptation problems as well as lack of acceptance from other students. Moreover, wearing traditional clothes forbids the undertaking of some activities or even factory work that might expose women to additional danger. Thus, consequently, it is very often opposed by some of the employers and teachers. Both professional and educational lives of Somalis depend on their cultural background and family ties as well as the traditional role of men and women. After arriving in the United States, the traditional model and values are confronted with the modern, gender equality of American reality. Still, many young women manage to combine tradition with education, professional experience and community work. Hence, most of the Somalis declare that USA is not their final destination and one day they would like to return home. For many of them, United States turned out to be a disappointment, and the living conditions did not reflect their ideas. On the contrary, to many immigrant groups, perhaps because of their nomadic roots, most of the Somalis see their presence on the American soil as temporary. Nevertheless, they cannot define the term "temporary"; usually when they are asked about that they point at their: 1) material situation – they plan to stay until they will be able to improve their financial situation 2) until the security in Somalia improves and they will be able to go back home. The security paradox is that even though Somalis seek shelter in the USA, to some extent they are very often perceived as a threat by the public opinion (the consequence of the terrorism threat and confirmed cases of Islamic radicalization in the Somali community in Minnesota).

REMITTANCES

According to Andrés Soliman, remittances are: "a growing and relatively stable source of development finance which are the complement for national savings, bring foreign exchange and provide a source for capital formation (especially small-scale projects)"[23].

[23] A. Soliman, *Remittances by Emigrants: Issues and Evidence*, Santiago de Chile 2003, p. 1 (*Macroeconomía del Desarrollo*, 26).

65%[24] of all remittances go to developing countries, proportionally to the migration rates from the regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), MENA (Middle East and North Africa), Latin America and the Caribbean, East Asia and Pacific. Every year, around 1.3 bln U.S. dollars are being sent back home to Somalia, accounting for between 25-45% of the Somali economy, so more than humanitarian aid, development aid and foreign direct investment combined[25]. Most of these resources flow to Somalia directly from: Nairobi, Minneapolis, Melbourne, Toronto, London, and Copenhagen. Money Transfers Operators (MTO) estimates that 80% of the small businesses in Somalia is being started due to the money transfers from the diaspora[26]. MTOs themselves formatted due to the lack of a banking system in the conflict-torn Somalia. They evolved from the informal money transfers systems, *hawalas*, and were to some extent expected by the foreign governments of the countries from which the diaspora was sending money, especially Kenya and the United States. As both, Kenyan and American authorities have been long interested in *hawalas* activities due to the suspicion of terrorism support. First warnings of the possibilities of closing the U.S.-Somali financial corridor were announced after the 9/11 attacks, but no serious actions were undertaken until 2011 when Sunrise Community Banks announced that it would close the Somali MTOs. In 2015, USA closed some of the *hawalas* offices at which they suspected undocumented money transfers or direct and indirect transfers to al-Shabaab. From the economic perspective, money transfers support dependency of the Somali economy, especially that one out of three Somalis back in Somalia claims that without remittances they would be unable to pay for basic facilities and provide for the education of their children. On the other hand, for women remittance flows are very often the only possibility to get access to the family money and in their case might be seen as an element of empowerment[27].

In the case of American Somalis, firstly, they see financial transfers as their moral obligation towards their relatives back in the refugee camps in Kenya or those living in Somalia. Secondly, they are seen as investment into one's future and building trust between the migrant and his/her relatives in the case of the future return. The relation between immigrants-relatives and transfers is often seen as a form of contract and thus one can differentiate between two main forms of contracts:

- Loan repayment – as usually it is the family that invests in the education and journey of one of their relatives, the person being granted the money is obliged to repay after he or she settles abroad.
- Co-insurance – a family member who was sent abroad becomes the economic insurance for his/her relatives as especially in the developing countries, the economic situation and hence bank institutions and money insurance are really unstable or do not exist at all.

[24] Ibid., p. 2.

[25] P. Scott et al., *Hanging By a Thread: The Ongoing Threat to Somalia's Remittance Lifeline*, Joint Agency Briefing Note, Oxfam, 19 February 2015, p. 1.

[26] Ibid., p. 2.

[27] Ibid., pp. 1-9.

Generally speaking, remittances can be divided into two main categories: 1) monetary transfers and 2) in-kind. Money transfers measured in U.S. dollars directly increase the availability of foreign exchange in the migrant's country of origin, whereas in-kind save foreign exchange for the recipient country. Transfers are made not only in cash, but also as the donation of goods. Furthermore, they are not always sent to the relatives' households, but also can be transferred as donations to various organizations – charity, mosques, religious institutions or even organizations related to suspicious activity (with crime or terrorist links), especially that transferring goods instead of money makes it even harder to follow. Moreover, not all the remittances are sent through the official channels, which causes difficulties in following the exact appropriation of the funds. There is also one more important distinction between the remittances: 1) they might be sent regularly throughout the duration of the migrants' stay in another country or 2) they might be brought back home from emigration as one time cash/goods inflow[28].

In general, remittances are considered as a good impact on the Somali economy both in the short and long-term run. In theory, they could be a basis for investment by the Somalis themselves which is a highly desirable model for the developing countries, and a stimulus to consumption. However, in the case of Somalia as well as other developing states, the mechanism is not working as it should. The reasons behind for this state of affairs are usually believed to be the lack of sustainability in this output, especially with the new migration – when the immigrants are not yet well adapted in the new country and their income is fluid. Thus, the American diaspora is still the biggest provider of the remittances, but transfers lack the proper mechanisms of financial control, especially after their arrival in Somalia[29].

AMERICAN SOMALIS AND THE POTENTIAL TERRORISM THREAT

Remittances are only one of the sources of the terrorism paranoia that grew around the U.S. Somali population throughout the years. On the other hand, one cannot exclude certain risks that are present especially among the young members of the diaspora. However, these are not related particularly to the Somali group but rather are the result of certain socio-economic factors. In many cases, the radicalization is related to the phenomena that Oliver Roy referred to as re-Islamization – therefore a secondary turn towards the traditional values that are missing among Muslim immigrants, or their children who have American citizenship, but rather redefine themselves as radical Muslims instead of Americans or even Somalis, and hence they try to fit themselves into the global jihad movement[30]. However, the emphasis must be placed on the understanding of the term radicalization itself. According to Mitchell D. Silber and Arvin Bhatt radi-

[28] Ibid., pp. 2-13.

[29] Ibid., pp. 2-13.

[30] O. Roy, 'EuroIslam: The Jihad Within?', *National Interest*, No. 71 (2003), pp. 63-73.

calization should be understood as the *progress in searching, finding, accepting, cultivating and developing the extreme belief system to the moment where it might be used as the catalyst for the terrorist act*[31]. But still radicalization can be motivated not only religiously, but also ideologically or be the effect of other experiences. In the case of Somalis the main reasons behind the radicalization of young people are:

- Economic exclusion – as poverty is very often the cause for many extreme instances of behavior.
- Social exclusion – sometimes the feeling of social exclusion plays an even more important role than the economic one. In the United States this is related to the difficulties in cultural adaption and acceptance by the peers as well as racism.
- Moreover, United States' foreign policy and the security precautions undertaken by the authorities were the source of conflict. For a very long time, also U.S.–Somali relations were suspended and still, Washington has been investing money in training and arming the AFRICOM. It is especially for young people whose parents were forced to leave the country of origin, the lack of progress in the situation in Somalia, but still enormous engagement of the U.S. military in the region that might be confusing[32].

In the period of 2007 and 2012 there were several confirmed cases of the American Somalis who went back to Somalia in order to radicalize themselves and join al-Shabaab. Such cases were mostly manifest among the second and third generation of the Somalis, so the people already born on the U.S. territory. The most famous example was Omar Hammami, born in Minnesota and killed in Somalia after becoming a 'freedom fighter'. Hammami helped to develop al-Shabaab's media strategy. The new media became the main source of recruitment giving the young people know-how and further convincing them that training and fighting in Somalia will be the complement of their *hijrah*[33]. According to Peter Neumann, after 2012-2013, al-Shabaab noted a visible decrease in the amount of the recruits[34]. There are some concerns that

[31] M. D. Silber, A. Bhatt, *Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat*, New York Police Department, New York 2007, at <http://freebeacon.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/NYPD_Report--Radicalization_in_the_West.pdf>, 15 December 2015.

[32] B. Doosje, A. Loseman, K. van de Boss, 'Determinants of Radicalization of Islamic Youth on the Netherlands: Personal Uncertainty, Perceived Justice, and Perceived Group Threat', *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 69, No. 3 (2013), pp. 586-604, at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/josi.12030>; S. M. Murshed, S. Pavan, 'Identity and Islamic Radicalization in Western Europe', *Civil Wars*, Vol. 13, No. 14 (2011), pp. 261-276.

[33] *Hijrah* in Islam is a religious pilgrimage in order to protect and preach Islamic principles. It is modeled on Prophet Muhammad's escape from Mecca to Medina.

[34] A. Meleagrou-Hitchens, S. Maher, J. Sheehan, *Lights, Camera, Jihad: Al-Shabaab's Western Media Strategy*, ICSR Report, London 2012, at <http://icsr.info/2012/11/icsr-report-lights-camera-jihad--al-shabaabs-western-media-strategy/>, 16 January 2016; author's consultations with Dr. Peter Neumann, Professor of Security Studies at the Department of War Studies, King's College London and Director of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation during the author's participation in the UCSIA Summer School: *Religion, Culture and Society: Entanglement and Confrontation: "Is Faith-based Violence Religious?"* held in, Antwerp, Belgium in August, 2015.

the interest of those of the Somalis who might be potentially interested in the Islamic radicalization switched to ISIS.

SOMALIS AS A PART OF THE SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN MIGRATION

Although Somalis are geographically and culturally placed somewhere between SSA and MENA regions, they still are classified by the American authorities as the part of the Sub-Saharan migration. Somalis are one of the smallest African migrations in the United States. They are also relatively a young migration. Generally speaking, the African migration is one of the fastest growing migrations in the United States with the relatively high employment and education rates, although that varies between particular groups. Only in 2009, 74% of African migrants identified themselves as Black and the number of the Black African immigrants increased in the period between 2000 and 2008-09 by 88%. The biggest minority from Sub-Saharan Africa are still 1) Nigerians who in 2000 constituted 23% of all SSA migrants, whereas in 2008-09 the number slightly decreased to 19%, followed by 2) Ethiopians (12% in 2000 and 13% in 2008-09), Ghanaians (11% in 2000, 10% in 2008-09), Kenyans[35] (5% in 2000 and 6% in 2008-09) and Somalis (6% both in 2000 and 2008-09)[36]. The Migration Policy Institute estimates that in 2007 there were 39,000 Somalis in the U.S. from whom 44% have not completed high school, 19% had a two-year college degree, 7% completed the master's program and only 3% received a doctoral degree. At the same time, only 6% of Somalis spoke English at home, 10% declared no knowledge of this language, but still 35% spoke English very well. When it comes to the employment rate, 54% of the Somalis in the ages of 18-64 were employed, the rate was at the level of 66% for men and 44% for women. The median annual earnings for Black African Immigrants was $27,000, but still for Nigerians they reached the level of $36,000, while for Somalis only $18,000. As far as the overall unemployment rate among the representatives of the Black African Immigration compared to other regions in 2009 is concerned, the rate was 36% for the recent immigrants, compared to 45% among Latin Americans and 22% in the case of the long-term immigrants, comparing to 35% in the case of immigrants from Latin America. Therefore the data about manual annual earnings and the unemployment rate might be inconsistent as a great number of Black African Immigrants work on the Black Market[37]. In conclusion, the Black African Immigrant group has a better position than the group from Latin America. However, there is a considerable degree of variability within the ethnic groups that constitute the group and therefore the Somali migration usually has a worse position

[35] Nowadays, young Kenyans are the fastest growing short-term SSA professional migration, coming to the USA on professional contracts or at the universities.

[36] R. Capps, K. McCabe, M. Fix, *Diverse Streams: African Migration to the United States*, Migration Policy Institute, Washington D.C. 2012, at <http://fcd-us.org/sites/default/files/African%20Migration%20to%20the%20United%20States.pdf>, 17 January 2016.

[37] Ibid., pp. 14-18.

and is not as educated in comparison to the other Black African Immigrant groups in the USA. Somalis differ also in their cultural and adaptation patterns and face certain difficulties in this asspect. They usually undertake blue-collar jobs and although they intended differently, they are a long-term immigration. It might be the effect of the conflict-thorn collapsed state experience[38], in many cases the refugee experience and lack of the educational opportunities among the first generation emigrating from Somalia, Kenya or Ethiopia.

CONCLUSION

Although Somalis are a small African community within the huge melting pot of immigration coming every year to the United States, it is certainly an important one. However, they usually earn less and are less educated than other representatives of the Black African immigration from Sub-Saharan Africa, they are still copingwell, considering their number and comparatively recent immigration history. Certain patterns occur among diaspora in both settlement and cultural adaptation. As far as the settlement is concerned they certainly follow family ties in places which were mentioned earlier e.g.: Minnesota (especially Minneapolis), Ohio (especially Columbus), Virginia, Georgia, the New York City metropolitan area, the Washington D.C. Metropolitan area, San Diego, therefore very often the family relations are far more important than the economic calculations. Most of the Somalis arrive to the USA: 1) as asylum seekers and refugees 2) due to the family reunification programs 3) for teconomic reasons with the intention of returning to Somalia or Kenya as soon as possible. U.S. Somali immigration has been developing in a more or less stable manner throughout the years, although the younger generation has easier access to the English language and education. As for the cultural adaptation, the Somali group faces some difficulties especially in relation to the gender issues and changes of the roles of men and women. As a result, many divorces occur. Adaptation is also difficult for female students as it happens very often that wearing traditional clothes in not accepted by their peers (the same case is related to the workers who want to hire Somali women). As most of the Somalis are blue-collar workers, it is also difficult for many women to find someone to take care of their children when they are working[39]. There are also certain controversies that are still present around the Somali group when it comes to the female cir-

[38] The conflict-thorn collapsed state seems to describe the Somali state condition in the most appropriate way, especially so because according to Abdulahi A. Osman and Isaaka K. Souaré, Somalia was mostly an authoritarian regime (Siad Barre's regime) but until a certain point it was a functioning state after it regained independence in 1960. See: AA. Osman, I. K. Souaré (eds.), *Somalia at the Crossroads...*; R. Kłosowicz, 'Państwa dysfunkcyjne w Afryce Subsaharyjskiej' in: idem (ed.), *Państwa dysfunkcyjne i międzynarodowe wysiłki zmierzające do ich naprawy*, Kraków 2014, pp. 11-64 (*Studia nad Rozwojem*); The Fund for Peace, Fragile States Index 2005-2015, at <http://fsi.fundforpeace.org/>, 29 January 2016.

[39] C. M. Abdi, *Elusive Jannah...*, pp. 187-207.

cumcision, which is not accepted by the majority of the Western societies and hence by the American society as well.

In the case of the remittances, both money and good transfers are seen as the moral obligation towards the relatives that were left in Somalia, Kenya or even Ethiopia, the same case as the family unification. However, not least important is the perception of the remittances as the contract between one person and his/her relatives in order to improve the overall financial situation in the family, or as the investment for the future, especially that many of the Somalis consider the possibility of a permanent return home as soon as they earn enough money and/or the security situation in Somalia improves.

There is no evidence to believe that Somalis are more prone to radical behavior such as Islamic radicalization. Usually, if the incidents occur, they are related to the personal cases and experiences such as trauma, sense of exclusion or socio-economic patterns. It seems that at certain point Somalis were scapegoated by the public opinion as well as many other Muslim groups in the United States. As always, in the case of security, certain government activities such as the Patriot Act together with the occurring terrorist incidents both in the state and around the world, might result in extreme behavior of some part of the population towards the other. This issue should certainly be improved in the future by both local, federal authorities and non-governmental organizations.

Last but not least, we still do not know much about the clan and sub-clan structure of the U.S. Somali diaspora and the distribution of the people from different clan groups, including the six important clans: Digil, Rahanwayn, Dir, Darood, Hawiye and Isaaq. Similar to the case study of Ethiopians, even in the immigration those groups occur as defragmented and divided and therefore not many Somali organizations are operating within the United States. Somalis usually gather in the organizations and centers dedicated to the assistance of all immigrants, African immigrants groups or refugee centers. The only exception are Somali Bantus and Benadiri Somalis whose immigration to the United States as the persecuted groups started during the period of Siad Barre's regime. Together with the Benadiri Somalis a great number writers, poets, artists and clergymen arrived. Consequently, the Benadiri Community of Minnesota is one of the best organized Somali groups in the United States, working through various organizations on the local community level[40].

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Marta ANTOSZ, M.A. – PhD candidate at the Institute of Political Science and International Relations of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. M.A. in American Studies from the Jagiellonian University and M.A. in International Relations from the Tischner European University. Visiting researcher (2015) at the African Studies Program at Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University in Washington D.C. She has also conducted field research in Kenya and Tanzania and took part in UCSIA Summer School at the University of Antwerp on Islamic radicalization and deradicalization. She is working on Somali refugees in Kenya and Ethiopia and their influence on the security in the Greater Horn of Africa.