

A Grand Strategy for Kenya is Timely – Lessons from Elizabeth 1

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Abstract

Since March 2020, something happened in Kenya that would change the course of things perhaps permanently. The ‘country stopped’. It was already happening elsewhere in the world and has created a period we now call ‘new normal’. This is the current pandemic caused by the COVID 19 virus. Whilst the ‘new’ is quickly experienced, the ‘normal’ is strange and will take a while before humanity adapts. This calls for an urgent new grand strategy that will see the hard and bad times manageable in anticipation for better ones. Kenya, a country to reckon with in the East African Community and the Horn of Africa, needs to employ the best possible approaches in coordinating military expertise, political influence, diplomatic capability, and economic force, within a consistent national strategy that will address the current situation. How the Leadership deals with the present determines how the near future unfolds, a period everyone is looking forward to. This paper goes back into history to tap into the reign of Elizabeth 1 (1533 – 1603) whose grand strategy was hailed in the 16th Century in order to draw some lessons to apply to Kenya’s current situation. Her strategy was intentioned and focused. It comprised military capability², building alliances, assembling a good inner team known as the Privy Court and political calculations that an excellent negotiation skill. Her reign would last for over 40 years at a time when women were neither heads of states nor commander in chiefs.

1. Introduction

This study utilizes a historic case study approach. Making reference to Elizabeth I’s grand strategy, the study explores five key areas of her grand strategy that relate to events in the leadership and governance of Kenya while

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² Eltis, David. "77i* Military Revolution in Sixteenth Century Europe." (1995).

paying attention to the prevailing situation induced by the pandemic. The basis for the Kenyan case is premised in an article written in one of the Kenyan dailies by a renowned diplomatic historian Macharia Munene³ in August 2018. Written two years back, it is still as relevant. In it Munene notes that Kenya urgently needs a grand strategy for emerging issues such as regional geopolitics, state of the military, maritime forces and its level of preparedness towards national emergencies such as the current pandemic.⁴ In many other articles by Munene that are cited, there are clear propositions on what Kenya can do to craft a grand plan that would steer the country to a new level.

Every country needs a grand strategy and thus, smart leaders have deliberately developed grand strategies throughout history. This is enabled by effective national leadership. In doing that, most of them have effectively executed them and have accomplished political, economic and social cultural goals and sometimes religious objectives. As this process is immensely complex, not all leaders have been successful, and that is perhaps what Kenya as a country is undergoing. The actions of leaders at the highest level may have failed to attain the country's ends. It bears examination, then to look into Kenya's grand strategy and evaluate while bearing in mind to learn a thing or two from Elizabeth I's grand strategy. Elizabeth I has been hailed as a leader whose grand strategy brought back England's glory. Likewise, Kenya needs to restore its glory that is slowly slipping away in recent times. In that vein thus, Kenya can draw lessons from Elizabeth I's reign applying them to the current situation hence contributing to a newer, better and stronger grand strategy to bring Kenya back to its place in the region.

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⁴ Macharia Munene, "Kenya needs a grand plan to stay ahead of others," *The Standard*, Monday August 20, 2018, p 14

2. Strategy

From time immemorial, the word strategy has been applied and experienced by people of all civilizations albeit it referred to different meanings. If one goes by the meaning of a plan, then people have always planned. If the meaning of strategy is the art of planning and directing an operation, then this has always been carried out as people from ancient times have had conflicts and wars. These are great empires like the Mauryan in ancient India, or the times of Sun Tzu.

In political lexicon, the word strategy has been evolving. The present-day application of the word is traced back to ancient Greece where it referred to the art and skill of The General. That original recapitulation is what in present day stands for tactics.⁵ Beatrice Heuser, one of the contemporary scholars in strategy traces the word to late 16th century when it first came to be used in discussions on military affairs.⁶ Its broader meaning is however developed in the 20th century where it is applied retrospectively to the past practitioners. When scholars are researching on how warfare was staged in the past, they employ this term as it enables them to explore continuities in practice as they make comparisons on them over time.

Lawrence Freedman is another scholar who dedicated a whole book on Strategy. He builds up from Heuser when he states that in order to achieve political objectives, one has to utilize military means.⁷ It is therefore clear that the word strategy cannot be detached from military affairs. Taking a different view, Cohen Eliot defines strategy in the context of threat and force to achieve policy ends.⁸ Cohen further adds that strategy should be used as a steady bridge connecting the political purpose and the military power. Therefore, up until WW1 strategy had a precise military character. The meaning eventually

⁵ Beatrice Heuser, *The Evolution of Strategy*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 4;

⁶ Beatrice Heuser, *The Evolution of Strategy*, and *The Strategy Makers: Thoughts on War and Society from Machiavelli to Clausewitz* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Security International, 2010).

⁷ Freedman, Lawrence. "The Meaning of Strategy: Part I: The Origin Story (November 2017)." *Texas national security review* (2017).

⁸ Cohen Eliot A., "A Revolution in Warfare, *Foreign Affairs*," March/April 1996, pp. 37-54.

broadened to include other areas in academia such as sports and business strategy. Currently, military strategy⁹ is a subcategory of the broader field.

Strategy is significant for all countries as it provides a theory of success. Functioning plans aimed at converting trifling military capabilities into suitable combat against the enemy are rooted in strategy. By this, strategy performs a conversion function. Richard Rosseau on this point, stresses that the strategist must convert military power into political benefit.¹⁰ The demands of strategy calls for silent growth. When there is victory, one needs to adapt themselves to the newly created situation and plan on the next action. Strategy then becomes a system of maneuvers¹¹. In the wake of COVID 19 pandemic, Kenya has had to literally convert the military into an instrument for order, for peace and for security, strategies that should reap political mileage for the leadership in the end.

3. Grand strategy

Grand Strategy literally means a plan that is holistic, complete and vast in all ways. These Grand plans are held and pursued by the highest levels of a state mainly to defend the national interests. If national interests are well safeguarded, they provide a platform for external projection in international relations and foreign policy. For every country, a grand strategy is required especially in emergencies, but with a longer term projection. In Kenya, this is ‘that particular time’. An extraordinary time.

In that vein, Tami Biddle states that using a combination of instruments of power such as the diplomatic, the economic and the military, grand strategy identifies and articulates how to achieve a given political actor’s objectives.¹² America calls this National Security Strategy (NSS). Lindel Hart referring to

⁹ It was used in other contexts during the 19th century, but (as with revolutionary strategy) with a military analogy in mind. For the history of the concept see Lawrence Freedman, *Strategy: A History* (New York: OUP, 2013).

¹⁰ Rousseau, Richard. "Strategic Perspectives: Clausewitz, Sun-tzu and Thucydides." (2012). pp 75

¹¹ Helmuth von Moltke, *Moltke on the Art of War*, edited by Daniel J. Hughes (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1993), 47.

¹² Biddle, Tami D. *Strategy and grand strategy: What students and practitioners need to know?* Army War College-Strategic Studies Institute Carlisle United States, 2015.

the NSS, states that to achieve policy outcomes, one has to use all assets in a country in a coordinated way.¹³ A seamless coordination needs a grand plan.

In addition to Hart, there are other key scholars who have mastered the grand strategy narrative. Elizabeth I's grand strategy is like what Clausewitz would write on years later. In his 'On War', he explains his theory; that all military prowess points to one goal; that of attaining the political objective of the war. Clausewitz's writings continue to impact the issue of grand strategy in many states. At the heart of his theory is the triad of i) a strong passion – for the enemy ii) fortune, opportunity and risk – much like the activities of the army and its commander and iii) motive – that translates into policy.¹⁴ In other words, defeat the enemy, take possession of their resources and win public support.

During Elizabeth I's reign, Spain was always a country to watch, more of a foe than an ally. Having applied the tactics similar to those presented by Clausewitz, Elizabeth realized victory in her grand plan as compared to Phillip II of Spain. One major strategy was to fortify England's place in relation to Continental Europe. Further, it is curious that one of her grand plans was tied to her remaining spinster and with no child. Like that, she was able to focus on the exercise of power without being drawn into wars for successional reasons.¹⁵

Other scholars share similar propositions albeit different periods in time. In early 1980's, Barry Posen defined grand strategy that became fundamental for later authors. Grand strategy, for Posen, is that collection of military, economic, and political means and ends with which a state attempts to achieve security. It is "a political - military, means - ends chain, a state's theory about how it can best cause' security for itself."¹⁶ Similarly, for Hal Brands, a grand strategy is "an integrated scheme of interests, threats, resources and policies" that

¹³ B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy: The Indirect Approach* (London: Faber and Faber, 1967), 31, 336.

¹⁴ Clausewitz, *On War*, op. cit., 89.

¹⁵ Groves, Bryan N. "The Multiple Faces of Effective Grand Strategy." *Journal of Strategic Security* 3, no. 2 (2010): 1-12.

¹⁶ Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), 7, 13.

represent a “conceptual framework that helps nations determine where they want to go and how they ought to get there.”¹⁷

John Lewis Gaddis defines grand strategy as ‘aligning potentially unlimited aspirations with necessarily limited capabilities’ and highlights the persistent error of focusing on the former while ignoring the latter. Gaddis suggests that they two attributes should be combined. That means a focus on primary goals while responding realistically to the prevailing circumstances. By this, he describes grand strategy “the calculated relationship of means to large ends. It’s about how one uses whatever one has to get to wherever it is one wants to go.”¹⁸

Nina Silove contrastingly pokes into these definitions by stating that there is ‘no true’ definition of grand strategy but rather a series of equally justifiable conceptions. This statement is supported by her argument that differing ideas of grand strategy can be classified according to whether the scholars view such strategies as a plan for action or a set of theoretical or organizing principles, or a pattern of behavior.¹⁹ Appalled, scholars have termed those assertions as relativistic.

4. Kenya needs a grand strategy

In times of crisis, what counts is the leadership’s ability to rise up to restore the public’s confidence. For the pandemic crisis in Kenya thus far, the President and his Ministers have demonstrated this aspect. Munene informs us that the 20th century has had a few such leaders. During the great depression, Franklin D. Roosevelt came up with a New Deal to deal with the economy. Using radio, he effectively restored public confidence. Likewise, Winston Churchill used the radio with inspiring speeches to recapture the British Empire’s trust during the World War II, making a tough situation appear surmountable. By recasting the relationship between politics and economic theories, Nestor Kirchner of Argentina stabilized the country’s economy. Kenya experienced smooth

¹⁷Brands, Hal. *What good is grand strategy? Power and purpose in American statecraft from Harry S. Truman to George W. Bush*. Cornell University Press, 2014.

¹⁸ Gaddis, John Lewis. *On grand strategy*. Penguin Books, 2019.

¹⁹ Nina Silove, “Beyond the Buzzword: The Three Meanings of ‘Grand Strategy,’ ” *Security Studies* 27, no. 1 (2018): 27–57.

transition from colonialism to independence as Jomo Kenyatta exuded enough authority. This is despite the reputation that he was a Mau Mau chief.²⁰ Presently in Kenya, it is time Kenyatta's son, Uhuru to craft a grand strategy that will see the country triumph through the COVID 19 pandemic and the consequences thereof.

Independent Kenya prides itself for being a democratic state that has regular elections, with their attendant hiccups and often punches above its geopolitical weight²¹. Kenya is a beautiful country in Africa that acts as a benchmark and a reference point to many African countries. This is because of many factors such as its geopolitical position, its progress in democracy, its use of English language and touristic features. Kenya is a country that has been relatively peaceful in the region while brokering peace to other countries such as South Sudan. The peace period was put to test following the violence that erupted in 2007 that saw lots of deaths and displacements of people. The once peaceful country was shaken to its core and its people pushed to the brink. Other than the active violence that was witnessed–Kenyan people have complained of significant injustices, lack of delivery of services and goods, poor infrastructure to support an upcoming democracy and politicization of many sectors to the detriment of the citizenry such as education and health. Despite these factors however, Kenya and Kenyans have been resilient. They fight on, and forge means and ways that propel them forward.

Currently, Kenya needs a grand plan in order to stay ahead of other countries in the East African Community and in the Horn of Africa. Kenya needs to reclaim and go beyond its eroding position of pre-eminence. Munene affirms that ‘the essence of “grand strategy” is a big vision to achieve and sustains long-term objectives by overcoming potential obstacles and threats to national interests’²². There is need for massive education on national interest, the concept and application, to involve the three branches of government. Each

²⁰ Macharia Munene, “Uhuru must now show his leadership mettle”, The Standard, 23 March 2020

²¹ Foreign affairs Principle Secretary Macharia Kamau presentation at the Auditorium of the United States International University, Nairobi, Wednesday, January 9, 2019

²² Macharia Munene, “Kenya needs a grand plan to stay ahead of others,” The Standard, Monday August 20, 2018, p 14

branch needs exposure on the value of the others to the state and the national well-being. For this to happen, suspicion and bad faith needs to be shunned down to enable the ability to think big, to think ‘grand strategy’.²³ Munene, in his article states that when there is a call for a grand strategy undertaking, it is because there is a serious disappointment or there are threats to perceived interests of specified geopolitical units. Further, he explains that threats can be of war or military in nature, but they can also be geopolitical, economic, and socio-cultural.²⁴ Kenya is experiencing the same issues as well; there is a deadly pandemic that has caused a myriad of problems in the country mainly on the economy and education, there is tiff with the horn especially the maritime border and the Djibouti issue, diplomatic rows between Kenya and Tanzania. These interests that are threatened by creeping structural, cultural, and political challenges calls for an urgent Kenyan Grand Strategy.

5. Lessons from Elizabeth I

History has shown us that when there is a noxious problem ailing a society, there needs to be a robust plan to counter the ills of that problem. The counter measure plans should be double stronger than the problem, that is the only way to defeat it. Then, Elizabeth I seemingly inherited a country that was ailing following the death of Mary Tudor. She needed to do something to prevent the country from losing itself. Some may have objected to her ascension to power given she was the half-sister to Mary Tudor, and thus no clear succession line.

Elizabeth, daughter of King Henry VIII and his second wife Anne Boleyn was born in 1533 and died in 1603. Elizabeth’s mother was guillotined when she was two years old. That execution was ordered by her father the King, having been accused of adultery and conspiracy²⁵. At age 25, upon her half-sisters Mary Tudor’s death, she became Queen. She claimed the throne despite having been declared illegitimate through political machinations. She would rule for 45years. Perhaps following the fact that she never married, she was known by other names such as the Virgin Queen and or Queen Mary. Elizabethan Age is

²³ Macharia Munene “Conflicts among the three arms of government in Kenya: Issues, problems and Prospects.” Discussion paper no. 2. November 2018

²⁴ Macharia Munene, “Kenya needs a grand plan to stay ahead of others,” The Standard, Monday August 20, 2018, p 14

²⁵ Biography.com Editors. Queen Elizabeth I Biography.

<https://www.biography.com/royalty/queen-elizabeth-i> Access date. March 16, 2020

a period in history that is traced back to her. This is an age when England proclaimed itself strongly as a major European power in politics, commerce and the arts²⁶. Elizabeth was a long serving queen, governing with relative steadiness and prosperity.

The issues she encountered and had to deal with included a plague, maritime wars, diplomatic rows and a complex of church and state all compounded by dissident voices in her government that did not subscribe to her school of thought and therefore hindering development in any way.

Upon Elizabeth's death, many of her subjects lamented, but others were relieved²⁷. This is a common occurrence when a person dies, and more so leaders of states as they are known far and wide, and have as many friends as enemies. King James took over the leadership of England following Elizabeth I's death. However, a nostalgic revival of the Elizabeth I's cult happened when expectations placed on King James upon her death were not met.²⁸ It is like realizing the key role played by a leader after they are gone. This has happened in Kenya with the demise of the late president Moi. In the meantime, Elizabeth I had inherited a myriad of problems initiated by her half-sister Mary. The war with France for instance proved very expensive to the English people. Upon her death, and the citizens' realization that she had been a good leader, some of her achievements were revived.

5.1 London Plague of 1563 - On the Corona Virus pandemic

16th c was a tough period for London. In 1563, London was hit by a plague that led to the deaths of at least 20,136 people from the city and its environs.²⁹ The outbreak was devastating. It has been noted that around 24% of London's

²⁶ John S. Morrill and Stephen J. Greenblatt, Elizabeth I, Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., December 18, 2019 <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Elizabeth-I> March 16, 2020

²⁷ Loades, David. *Elizabeth I*. A&C Black, 2003.

²⁸ Somerset, Anne. *Elizabeth I*. Macmillan, 1992.

²⁹ Nichols, John (1823). *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth, Among which are Interspersed Other Solemnities, Public Expenditures, and Remarkable Events During the Reign of that Illustrious Princess*. John Nichols, F.S.S Lond. Edina. & Perth. Retrieved 5 May 2019.

population ultimately perished³⁰, the plague affected London's insanitary parishes and neighborhoods the most³¹.

By every standard, a similar event is currently happening in Kenya dating back to March 2020. The emergence of the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) infections that were first observed in China in December 2019³² have rapidly spread the whole world. It has become a global emergency, given its impact on the entire world population especially the health and the economy sectors. This is nothing anyone expects, worse still, leaders of affected countries.

By comparison therefore, it is crucial to critically examine what Elizabeth I did that Kenya can learn. Immediately the plague was confirmed, Queen Elizabeth's government gave new orders that all households with infected individuals should have their windows and doors locked up and for forty days, no persons inside the houses should dare make contact with persons outside³³. President Kenyatta in an effort to minimize the spread, declared a dawn to dusk curfew and intercountry lockdown in the country. Kenyan citizens have to bear with this, as hard it is—it is after all perhaps the best way to manage the spread of the virus.

Another measure the Queen took was to move the Royal Court to Windsor Castle and while there, erected gallows in the market squares. She threatened to hang anyone who followed them from London. As human as she was, fearing contagion, she prudently banned the transportation of goods into Windsor from London. In hind sight, this was harsh of a leader given her people were scared, suffering and dying. However, it can be argued that a leader needs as much as possible, to stay alive to steer the direction of his or her country.

³⁰ London Plagues 1348-1665" www.museumoflondon.org.uk. Museum of London. 2011. Retrieved 12 May 2019.

³¹ Kohn, George (ed.). *Encyclopedia of Plague and Pestilence: From Ancient Times to the Present* (3 ed.). InfoBase Publishing. p. 229. Retrieved 12 May 2019.

³² Lu, Hongzhou, Charles W. Stratton, and Yi-Wei Tang. "Outbreak of pneumonia of unknown etiology in Wuhan, China: The mystery and the miracle." *Journal of medical virology* 92, no. 4 (2020): 401-402.

³³ Creighton, Charles (1891). *A History of Epidemics in Britain*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. pp. 315–317

This issue of delivery of goods and services is challenging in Kenya's day to day economy, where many of its citizens work for a minimum wage of less than a dollar a day, with most living from hand to mouth. This amidst an impending economic crisis, remains a challenge for the Kenyan Leadership to tackle. The president needs to quickly move from employing abstract economic theories and jump into the boldness of advanced political economy thinking. This being an extraordinary time calls for extraordinary measures. It is perhaps an ideal time to discourage imports and encourage local manufacturing. The corona virus pandemic has demanded global leadership and individual policy ingenuity. While no country escapes health induced disarray, few have the stamina and the brilliance to act right. So far, Kenya's health response has been commendable. However, its economic policy response needs recasting³⁴. A good leader must make changes in government if necessary such as forming committees, empowering country governments so as to ensure the economy does not collapse as a result of the pandemic.

Munene deliberates that a strategic leader should display statecraft dexterity in pulling his or her country through difficult situations. Further, he states that leaders win or lose depending on focus, farsightedness, the right temperament, and having ability to balance aspirations and capabilities while tackling the unexpected. He affirms that great leaders figure out how to enhance capabilities rather than let available capabilities limit their aspirations³⁵. High policy makers with little sense of statecraft can easily expose themselves and the country, thereby becoming a great liability to national security. Leaders desiring to make their countries globally felt tend to be visionaries and develop grand strategies in which they remain focused while balancing resources with ultimate objectives despite anticipated and unexpected obstacles³⁶.

³⁴ Macharia Munene, "Uhuru must now show his leadership mettle", The Standard, 23 March 2020

³⁵ Macharia Munene, "Kenya needs a grand plan to stay ahead of others," The Standard, Monday August 20, 2018, p 14

³⁶ Macharia Munene, "Horn of Africa: Western powers' battleground", The Standard. February 4, 2020

5.2 Defeat of the Armada - The Kenya Maritime borders

During Elizabeth I reign, there were tensions between Spain and England. Each of these countries would want to come out victorious. The winner would have to be strategic and that is what England's Elizabeth I did. At the beginning of her reign, Elizabeth I had very few ships. She nevertheless was keen to ameliorate the strength of her military and the navy was one of the areas she fully funded continuously. She spent more on her navy than any other European Monarch during peace times. She thus was ready to face Spain's Grand Armada with about 34 ships³⁷.

At the time, the ships built by Elizabeth I were special since she employed new technology. It was a revolutionary technique that became a blue print for all the ships at the time. This was a grand strategy – the ships were lighter and nimbler that enabled for greater speed and heavy armament. In the same vein, she employed the earlier revolutionary technology of her father's gun founders to make iron canons that were vastly cheaper. Thus, they were produced en masse and used at war³⁸.

The Spanish's invisible Armada was an enormous 130- ship naval fleet. In 1588 it was dispatched by Spain as part of the invasion to England. However, Elizabeth I and her army outfoxed it on the way back to Spain. There were many storms that battered it leading to the ship sinking and getting damaged³⁹. As much as her popularity with the people was enhanced, the relationship with Phillip II of Spain was dented.

In the recent times, Historians have taken a more intricate view of Elizabeth I in view of the battles. As much as her reign is famous for the defeat of the Armada military failures on land and at sea are pointed out⁴⁰. Even in Ireland, despite the fact that her forces ultimately prevailed, her tactics trained her

³⁷ Parker, 93; also:<http://www.the-tudors.org.uk/tudor-navy.htm> (last accessed, 3 May 2011).

³⁸ Parker, Geoffrey. "If the Armada had landed." *History* 61, no. 203 (1976): 358-368.
³⁹ [www.history.com > topics > british-history > spanish-armada](http://www.history.com/topics/british-history/spanish-armada)

⁴⁰ Haigh, Christopher. "Elizabeth I, [1988]." *Londres et New York: Longman Pearson* (2000).

record⁴¹. Strategically evaluating advice from her key advisors, Elizabeth ended England's war with France and Spain and hence forth avoided clashing with other super powers of her time.

One of the techniques Elizabeth I sought was to use her guidelines in decentralized execution of her grand strategy. She counted on commanders Lord Howard and Sir Drakes to "harass"⁴² the Spanish Armada utilizing the point Clausewitz referred to as the 'culminating point.'⁴³ That meant that she timed the point when the enemy was vulnerable and decisively engaged. The measure of allowing the commanders to act with full freedom enabled them to develop tactical and operational means. By doing this, they were able to postpone Spanish invasion by a year.⁴⁴ Thus with Spanish errors and poor weather in the high seas, the English came out victors. She calculated, she was rational in her approach – and this grand strategy proved more successful than Phillip II. In that regard she exemplified her understanding of Clausewitz principle 'determining political aim then making means to accomplish it'⁴⁵.

What can the leadership in Kenya learn from this? It is important to note that the maritime issues Kenya is experiencing are not about a real war in the sea or invasions like happened in Europe. However, if the people mandated to sort them do not act quickly, the tensions may escalate to active conflict. Making reference to Munene's elucidation on these, Kenya's marine issue can be summarized into two main complications. Firstly, Kenya is facing Somali irredentism of the sea, which as Munene put it, is supported by foreign powers such as the United Kingdom (UK), United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Qatar among others. Historically, Africa's security thinking has kept a keen interest to the terrestrial domain as opposed to the maritime⁴⁶. Munene cites trust issues

⁴¹ Black, John Bennett. *The reign of Elizabeth, 1558-1603*. Pickle Partners Publishing, 2018.

⁴² Garrett Mattingly, *The Armada*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2005), 200–232.

⁴³ Howard and Paret, *On War*, 582.

⁴⁴ Mattingly, *The Armada*, 93–109.

⁴⁵ *The Prince*, p. 22. See also Unger, *Machiavelli*, pp. 33–34.

⁴⁶ Maritime Border Challenges and Implications on Security: The Kenya-Somalia Dispute in Perspective. An Experts' Symposium. Report. September 2019. Nairobi

inherent in frameworks like the ‘Yaoundé Code of Conduct’⁴⁷, adding that partnering with foreign powers is euphemism for aid. Since the importance of access to the sea is increasing, Kenya has to watch and change such mentalities.

Secondly, there are strange geopolitical reconfigurations that arise out of the discovery of huge quantities of such natural resources as oil and gas in the sea. Because of lack of strategy at the Sea and an inchoate maritime security, Kenya has experienced major obstacles in piracy. That puts Kenya at unfavorable position because sea resources are then lost to sea powers who simply ignore weak states. The problems only increase when Somalia, giving prospecting oil and gas concessions to corporations from hegemonic states, seemingly gained enough ability to ‘adjust its map’, for the Kenya Somali border in such a way as to claim the resources in Kenyan waters⁴⁸. The reason the Europeans pushed Somalia to encroach on Kenyan waters and sea wealth was partly because Kenya has no recognizable maritime force. With the real threat coming from the sea, the perceived maritime weakness was an invitation to sea irredentism. Kenya’s commitment to two things would help to avoid becoming other countries’ created realities. First, adjust sense of national priorities to create maritime industry and undertake serious naval build up. Second, mount serious questioning of Euro using the Somali proxy to rearrange Kenya’s sea geography. Push for the establishment of the Coast Guard with enough reach in the deep sea⁴⁹.

The East African Community - EAC regional block can play a significant role in this. The EAC has to be aware of its strengths and weaknesses when it comes to securing core regional interests and planning on ways to protect them. In addition, the block needs commitment to the national and regional wellbeing. The heads of states of the region have to support in the election of credible, capable and committed policy makers with influence. It can make the people

⁴⁷ A framework for repressing piracy, armed robbery of ships, illicit maritime activity in West and Central Africa

⁴⁸ Macharia Munene, “Why Blue Economy matters to us, Africa. The Standard. 26th November 2018

⁴⁹ Macharia Munene. “Strong navies crucial to Africa's coastal defences”. The Standard. 29th July 2019

internalize the Indian Ocean as being critical to the regional survival and therefore help to make them “own” maritime security⁵⁰.

5.3 Elizabeth I’s appreciation of art and poetry – Education in Kenya

England’s Golden Age or Elizabethan England were names coined mainly to refer to the reign of Elizabeth 1. It was an era of beauty! An era when peace and prosperity, when arts had a chance to blossom with Elizabeth’s support. She scheduled for relaxation time where she enjoyed music and play of the lute. In line with watching plays, the queen promoted the works of Shakespeare and Malowe. In fictitious forms, Authors of the era paid homage to the Queen. Poetry was also encouraged.⁵¹ In Kenya, it would be about the education system. Blending what worked during the Elizabethan era, Kenya has a duty to critically analyze underlying patterns and causal mechanisms that worked and how best we can approach it and or improve it.

Currently there are two concurrent national educational systems in Kenya. Besides that, private entities and international schools employ other systems all for the learner, imparted by the teacher. Here, the point of contention lies in the deep rooted philosophical concepts of schooling and learning. Such action is constrained by factors that are explicitly recognized.

Munene, in his analysis of the recent pronouncements from the Ministry of Education office highlights that the love for schooling and not learning has held the country back in terms of education.⁵² The minister, in view of the prevailing pandemic announced that the country has lost an academic year, the year 2020, and that there shall be no national exams. This statement has myriad effects to the person and the country, that it calls for its own study. For this purpose, however, the issue is that the country lacks a grand strategy when it comes to the education of its people. Emphasis as Munene puts it should be on learning, and not schooling even though the two are closely related but not the same. The government is obsessed with national institutions that drive the

⁵⁰ Macharia Munene. “Let’s Boost EA Maritime Security”. The Business Daily. Monday, May 6, 2013.

⁵¹ Biography.com Editors. Queen Elizabeth I Biography. The Biography.com website. Original Published April 2, 2014. Last Updated February 7, 2020

⁵² Macharia Munene, “Love for schooling and not learning is holding us back,” The Standard, July 20, 2020

government approved curriculum – that has its own issues. The whole schooling concept goes back to colonial times different aspects of schooling for Africans in the name of education. What has happened in schools is a stress on conformity and forced amnesia, not free-thinking.

Munene points to the fact that the Kenyan education system seemingly ignores such thinking and value adding disciplines as history. Most leaders act a though they missed lessons in ethics and were thus miseducated. Munene insists that national self-confidence erosion is reason for Kenya to recast the educational system stressing on units such as statecraft, history, and values⁵³. Subjects such as critical thinking, history and philosophy should be taught all through the schooling of a student so that they know the sequence of events in the country are known.

There is an urgent need for Kenya to embrace critical thinking, creativeness and innovation. This will shift the preoccupation with schooling to learning. Munene reiterates that the Ministry of Education’s decree that students lose a whole academic year is ‘school’ thinking and not ‘education’ thinking.⁵⁴

Psychologists have come out in arms to stress the repercussions this will have on roughly one quarter of the Kenyan population. It is part of a grand strategy to give hope and not stagnation and despair as the Ministry of Education has. The Elizabethan grand strategy could be a useful way of blending history, philosophy and political science to Kenya’s current situation.

5.4 Elizabeth 1 relations with other States – Kenyan foreign Policy and diplomacy

Queen Elizabeth I realized yet another grand strategy in her diplomatic engagements. During her reign, a British imperial diplomatic system was created due to the emergence of new institutions and patterns in English diplomacy. The European landscape was changing in various sectors including the religious, political, economic and military. That required a dynamic administration of England’s foreign policy of which Elizabeth I crafted new

⁵³ Macharia Munene, “Kenya needs a grand plan to stay ahead of others,” The Standard, Monday August 20, 2018, p 14

⁵⁴ Macharia Munene, “Love for schooling and not learning is holding us back,” The Standard, July 20, 2020

alliances to manage disputes. In the end, there were close alliances with old time enemies such as France and Scotland albeit have created a foe in Spain which had been England's ally during Mary Tudor's reign.⁵⁵

Elizabeth I practiced a defensive foreign policy which elevated England's status abroad. She had cultivated a triumphalist image towards the end of her reign, against a background of division and military and economic difficulties which the people had taken at face value.⁵⁶ Once, Pope Sixtus V remarked at how she made herself feared by the empire, by Spain and by France.⁵⁷ As Christendom fragmented, England gained a new sense of sovereignty and self-confidence since she had returned to England and back to Protestantism under the state. Established the English church that helped shape a national identity that remains in place to date⁵⁸. Her legend was adapted to the imperial ideology of time during the Victorian era.⁵⁹ As recently as the mid-20th century, Elizabeth was made a romantic symbol of the national resistance to foreign threat.⁶⁰ Historians of that period, such as J. E. Neale (1934) and A.

L. Rowse (1950), interpreted Elizabeth's reign as a golden age of progress. To mark the Elizabethan age as a renaissance, a symbol of Britannia was used. First in 1572 then onwards as an inspiration to national pride through classical ideals, international expansion and naval triumph over the Spanish.⁶¹

Grand strategy can be understood as a reconciliatory art of means and ends. It is important to note that Kenya's foreign policy is driven by ideas demonstrated into 'visions'. First vision that stands out is 'a peaceful, prosperous and globally

⁵⁵ Fett, Denice. "Elizabethan Diplomacy." *The Encyclopedia of Diplomacy* (2018): 1-9.

⁵⁶ Haigh, Christopher. "Elizabeth I, [1988]." Londres et New York: Longman Pearson (2000).

⁵⁷ Somerset, Anne. Elizabeth i. Macmillan, 1992.

⁵⁸ Hogge, Alice. *God's Secret Agents: Queen Elizabeth's forbidden priests and the hatching of the Gunpowder Plot*. Harper Collins, 2005.

⁵⁹ Loades, David. *Elizabeth I: the golden reign of Gloriana*. National Archives UK, 2003.

⁶⁰ Neale, John Ernest. *The Elizabethan political scene*. G. Cumberlege, 1945.

⁶¹ Boundless World History. Authored by: Boundless. Located at: <https://www.boundless.com/world-history/textbooks/boundless-world-history-textbook/>. License: CC BY-SA: Attribution-ShareAlike

competitive Kenya'. The second one more nationalistic goal is the significance of 'national values and aspirations of the Kenyan people', as enshrined in the constitution of Kenya. Lastly, is the then grand idea 'vision 2030' which aimed at obtaining medium plans that are so significant for the country such as the advancement of economic prosperity of Kenyans and projection of Kenya's image and prestige among others. Kenya Foreign Policy report was released in November 2014 after consultative meetings which the bodies concerned. Five years later, the proposals captured in the document continue to guide and shape the foreign policy and the diplomatic activities of the country. The findings in the report will inform this section of the article.

Kenya foreign policy is aims to strategically place the country in the international arena, by employing a pragmatic approach, informed by several principles to ensure that it efficaciously cements reciprocally beneficial alliances with the West while constructively engaging the East through its policy of positive economic and political non-alignment.⁶² This is essence is a means of creating peace and stability, in addition to fostering economic growth in Kenya and the wider African community. Conversations to enhance the relations with the Horn of Africa, Tanzania, EAC are underway, and should from part of the grand strategy. Again, since vision 2030 has been taken over by other *visions* such as the Building Bridges Initiative and the president's Agenda.

5.5 Reclaiming Protestantism - On the Church and State in Kenya

Mary Tudor's Church invented the Counter-Reformation. During her reign, and using any means necessary, Mary had worked to restore England to Roman Catholicism. As a result, she was named Bloody Mary as a result of ordering the execution of many protestants as heretics. The incinerations terrified most of them into superficial conformism leading to minority convinced protestants.⁶³ When Elizabeth ascended to the throne, there was great tension

⁶² Kenya, R. o. (2014, November). Kenya Foreign Policy. Retrieved April 22, 2016, from

<http://www.mfa.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Kenya%20Foreign%20Policy.pdf>

⁶³ Houlbrooke, Ralph. "Fires of faith. Catholic England under Mary Tudor. By Eamon Duffy. Pp. xiv+ 249 incl. frontispiece, 6 maps and 1 graph+ errata slip and 30 colour plates. New Haven–London: Yale University Press, 2009. £ 19.99. 978 0 300 15216 6." *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 61, no. 4 (2010): 855-856.

between different religious factions. In her swift action, during the first session of Parliament in 1559, she would re-establish the Church of England by first, calling for the passage of the Act of Supremacy and second the Act of Uniformity which created a common prayer book creating a church that is under the state, ruled by Elizabeth 1 then⁶⁴. Rome viewed this in the dimmest sense possible and in 1570, excommunicated Elizabeth.

As part of her strategy, she would take a moderate approach to the divisive religious conflict in her country and worked towards coexistence. She firmly stated that there was one Jesus Christ, and that the rest were disputes over trifles. This approach of letting Catholics and Protestants coexist enabled her to focus on her grand plan as it minimized all public religious squabbles. Nyerere adopting this approach, managed to effectively rule Tanzania. He managed to find a way for different religious factions to coexist in Tanzania. Although Elizabeth was praised as a heroine of the Protestants cause and the ruler of a golden age, it is stated that Catholics did suffer persecution under her reign as much as James was depicted as a Catholic sympathizer, presiding over a corrupt court.⁶⁵ The people chose Elizabeth over the King. The picture of Elizabeth painted by her Protestant admirers of the early 17th century has proved lasting and influential⁶⁶. The main reason why this period was idealized is that the crown, church and parliament had worked in a constitutional balance⁶⁷.

What then can Kenya learn from this? To effectively frame a grand strategy, a leader has to balance means and ends in addition to setting realistic goals while setting aside necessary resources to achieving those goals. It is essential to realize that Kenya's colonial past is less than 100 years old during which it has faced events that have drastically transformed its people. The error of colonialism was terrible, it brought dissimilar people with radically different

⁶⁴ Jew Jr. "Church and State in England." *Journal of Church and State* (1967): 305-316.

⁶⁵ Strong, Roy. *Gloriana: the portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*. Vol. 581. Random House, 2003.

⁶⁶ Haigh, Christopher. "Elizabeth I, [1988]." *Londres et New York: Longman Pearson* (2000).

⁶⁷ Dobson, Michael, and Nicola Watson. "Elizabeth's Legacy." *Doran, Susan, Elizabeth: The Exhibition at the National Maritime Museum, London: Chatto and Windus* (2003).

cultures under one umbrella for easy governance – the divide and rule approach. All the dictates that would be imposed became acceptable and formed part of ordinary life of Kenyans.⁶⁸ In his book '*culture and religion conflict*', Munene states that in that time, African's reluctantly accepted Christianity as a new religion. This created problems of identity as one was to state if they accepted it or chose to keep their culture. Besides, there were divisions among the various denominations that led to confusion. The conflicts that arose within the church either led to resignation and or cultural compromises. These compromises not only worked for church, but also for the Africans and the colonial administration.⁶⁹

Attempts to impose a particular faith on others, currently common with the rise of *faith* terrorism, looks new but it is as old as the development of religion. It embraces *faith exclusivity* and makes claims of faith universalism. This is imperialism which is an abuse of faith and tends to generate a sense of insecurity⁷⁰. Pope Francis stresses the value of listening to the opposing side, calls for "healthy realism" which rejects dogmatism and rigid idealism.⁷¹ For him, therefore, involvement in exclusivity, dogmatism or rigid idealism is heretical and abuse of faith that would often lead to unacceptable violence. This accommodative stand is more inclusive rather than exclusive to diverse religious forces that would likely reduce the abuse of faith as an excuse for violence or conflicts or wars.

6 Conclusion

Each specific country needs its strategy at the time of need. Various strategies can differ depending on the sector in a country such as the foreign affairs, education, borders among others. The so called micro strategies calumniate to the macro ones. This is the time for Kenya!

⁶⁸ Munene, Macharia. "Culture and religion in conflict management." (1997).

⁶⁹ Munene, M. (1997). Culture and Religion in Conflict Management. *Africa Media Review*, 11(3), 25-39.

⁷⁰ Macharia Munene. "Abuse of Faith and State". Faiths and (in) security in Africa conference, July 4-8, 2016. St. Paul's University

⁷¹ Rose Scammell, "Pope Francis: A 'my-way-or-the-highway' faith is heretical," in religious News Service, June 9, 2016 <http://religiousnews.com/2016/06/09/pope-francis-a-my-way-or-the-highway-approach-to-faith-is-heretical/> accessed 8/14/2016

On education, the current situation aroused by the pandemic has had all stakeholders in the education sector in dialogue. This is a good thing. There is an urgent need to rethink exams in Kenya. Perhaps an assessment of students can suffice other than being subjected to a national exam that holds all Kenyan junior and senior learners at ransom. Further, perhaps the student's whose schools moved to remote online learning should have progressed. This would make sense for business continuity. There would have been a few freshmen in Kenyan campuses and a few learners in secondary schools. If the famous 'Laptop Project' would have been implemented, perhaps there would have been more students plugged online. That is a strategy that did not take off, and in retrospect, has had major consequences. Perhaps the new curriculum already rolling out in the country that offers a different approach to learning should not be sabotaged, but supported by stakeholders and learners as well. Perhaps it is time to disentangle self from colonial approaches to education and embed African culture while staying focused on the globalized world.

Regional cohesion is a strategy Kenya needs to take up so as to strengthen the East African Community (EAC). EAC needs an identity that can be achieved by expediting the free movement of goods and services through the borders. Peace efforts with Tanzania, Somalia, Ethiopia and Djibouti through diplomatic means can be an ongoing.

Kenya can leverage on a great many treasures it has access to such as the peaceful coexistence of the people, of the church and state and of ethnic groups albeit some conflicts from time to time. The country can leverage on the Indian Ocean and on the Mombasa Port. Importantly, and something that is not highlighted, Kenya is highly digitalized with high internet speeds in comparison with its counterparts in the region.

In 2019 during an interview, Manfred Honeck⁷² stated that the *'loudest sound in the world cannot top the energy of silence'*. With the prevailing circumstances created by the pandemic, the World, the Country Kenya is

⁷² Manfred Honeck is an Austrian conductor and Music Director of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

somewhat silent. Are the Leaders listening? Are they strategizing? One thing that cannot be wished away is that for a grand plan to be actualized, there has to be good will on the part of every citizen and more so, those at the helm of leadership. Their activities have to be directed for a common good.

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