



“New Wars” at Sea: A Critical Analysis of Maritime Piracy off the Coast of Somalia in Stella Rimington’s *Rip Tide* (2011)

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Abstract: This article analyses the complex issue of maritime piracy off the coast of Somalia with particular emphasis on the multilateral cooperation of the Western countries as a part of counter-piracy efforts to tame the outlaw sea when the security of nations is at stake. Maritime piracy in the Horn of Africa poses a real security and economic challenges that undermine regional stability. Accordingly, drawing on the theory of narratology which is concerned with the study and analysis of narrative texts, this paper argues that Stella Rimington’s *Rip Tide* explores the connection between criminal operations in the Gulf of Aden, the Indian Ocean and the international maritime security threat and terrorism. And we also use Stone’s postulation that narrative construal of reality is universal in human cogitation to highlight the origin, identity, prime motivation, modus operandi of piracy in the Horn of Africa and the strategies to eventually come to end of the new war at sea.

Keywords: Maritime Piracy, Counter-piracy, Multilateral Cooperation, Somalia, Terrorism

Résumé : Cet article analyse la question complexe de la piraterie maritime au large des côtes somaliennes en mettant l'accent sur la coopération multilatérale des pays occidentaux dans le cadre des efforts de lutte contre la piraterie pour apprivoiser la mer hors-la-loi lorsque la sécurité des nations est en jeu. La piraterie maritime dans la Corne de l'Afrique constitue un véritable défi sécuritaire et économique qui sape la stabilité régionale. Par conséquent, en s'appuyant sur la théorie de la narratologie qui s'intéresse à l'étude et à l'analyse des textes narratifs, cet article soutient que *Rip Tide* de Stella Rimington explore le lien entre les opérations criminelles dans le golfe d'Aden, l'océan Indien et la menace internationale de sécurité maritime et de terrorisme. Nous utilisons également le postulat de Stone selon lequel la construction narrative de la réalité est universelle dans la cogitation humaine pour mettre en évidence l'origine, l'identité, la motivation première, le modus operandi de la piraterie dans la Corne de l'Afrique et les stratégies visant à mettre un terme à la nouvelle guerre en mer.

Mots-clés : Piraterie maritime, contre-piraterie, coopération multilatérale, Somalie, terrorisme

Introduction:

Maritime piracy, as defined in the 1982 UN Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), is an ‘act of violence carried out for personal gain “against a ship, aircraft, persons or property in a place outside the jurisdiction of any State” (Edward R. Lucas, 2013: 56). Indeed, in the context of globalisation, maritime piracy is becoming a global threat to the freedom and security of the seas that the world is facing in the Horn of Africa and the Western Indian Ocean.

Somalia, where piracy at sea commonly thrives, holds a geopolitical and geostrategic value for maritime trade as it “links Asia and Europe through the Red Sea, the Suez Canal and the Mediterranean Sea (Macharia Munene, 2023: 3). As a result, the symbolic value and geopolitical realignment of the country sharpens the voracious appetite of criminal gangs, terrorist organisations and pirates in their attempt to control the access to the regional resources following the failure of Biarre’s government. The rapid escalation of piracy off the coast of Somalia and its economic impact, therefore, generates enormous attention in academic arena from international relations to literary fiction to comprehensively address the thorny security issue and find some strategies to come out on top of the seabed warfare.

Stella Rimington’s *Rip Tide*, her sixth Caryle Adventure novel, fictionalizes piracy operations in the high seas off the coast of Somalia. She opens her narrative with a Somalian piracy attempt on a UK-based charity’s cargo carrying food, medicine and emergency supplies to the port of Mombasa, Kenya, in the Indian Ocean. This operation involves the complicity of a British born Pakistani. Further investigation of this incidence reveals that this would have been the third such hijacking on the United Charity Organisation (UCSO) shipment. The subsequent inquiry also proves that there is a leak of information and a web of conspiracy from the inner offices of the charitable organisation in Athens to a mosque in Birmingham, England, where young Islamic bigots are recruited, converted, trained and served as agents of jihad.

In this perspective, the present paper aims to examine the potential implication of pirates and terrorists’ use of information warfare techniques to wage new wars at sea that are threatening the stability of the overseas nations. Information warfare is a concept involving the “battlespace use, management, and the manoeuvre of information and related technologies to gain competitive advantage over an adversary (Brian David Johnson, 2019: 22). Those who can leak information or gather intelligent services, therefore hold a considerable advantage over the ones who have not. Furthermore, we also explore the effective strategies implemented by the international community to counter-attack the new security threat Europe is facing. In this light, our analysis raises some fundamental questions: how does Stella Rimington constructs maritime piracy off the coast of Somalia as an exogenous reality in the novel? Is there any correlation between piracy and terrorism? To what extent does Somalia piracy set on the enforcement of a cooperative intelligence service to counter-piracy? This study provides an opportunity to advance our knowledge of the main motivations that fuelled the Somalian

citizens to get involved in the new wars at sea and the mediums or strategies implemented to achieve their goals.

I- Narrative and the Roots of Piracy and Terrorism

Stella Rimington, in *Rip Tide*, demonstrates that maritime piracy in the Horn of Africa and its inherent dangers is not an ex-nihilo fact. She intimately relates the presence of terrorist attacks to the existence of pirates in the Horn of Africa as a causative factor bred and nurtured by the socio-political and economic situation of Somalia, growing into a sort of no-man's land.

That fictional perception is, in fact, the representation of the sad reality of what has become Somalia today, markedly from president Biarre's accession to power following a bloody coup d'état against the former government. That is somehow the reason why Somalia today is described as the most dangerous place where no one has to venture to (*R.T.86*). This situation as addressed by Stella Rimington, a former director of a counter-terrorist and counter-espionage cell. She unveils the impacts of the failure of the consecutive political regimes to destabilize or secure the country and the population as it is narrated through the character, Blakey, in the following lines:

Somalia was a worry. It wasn't a country any more, not in any real sense. Rebel groups proliferated, fighting with each other or with any new government that emerged.

The native population kept its head down amidst the warring factions, and scraped a living by subsistence farming. Or fishing, though Somalia's inability to patrol its own waters meant foreign fishing fleets had depleted the fish stocks to the point of disappearance. With no legitimate living to be made, small wonder many fishermen had turned to piracy (*R.T.46*).

In deconstructing the discourse of the rise and proliferation of maritime piracy in the Horn of Africa, Blakey identifies two aggravating factors: the dysfunction and failure of the Somalian government; and the birth of rival gangs and clans. As a matter of fact, the political turmoil of the country led by the consecutive undemocratic and despotic governments paves the way for the disintegration of the state. The absence of effective government to perform security tasks over the resources of the territory gives rise to the birth of bitter hostility between rival factions and clans competing for power and control over the resources of the nation. The state of lawlessness that befell Somalia has left the country's economy in tatters and dramatically affected the means of subsistence of the local fishermen.

Concerning the advent of the warring factions, for instance, these fishermen had a pristine living condition. Their catch, in the local waters, was fairly lucrative. If lucky enough, they “would chug back laden with anchovies, sardines and mackerel, sometimes a tuna, and very occasionally a shark” (*R.T.37*). The narrator, by praising the plentifulness of Somalia’s local water resources, tends to show how beautiful and delightful the life of the fishermen was as they “did not want anything that mattered” (*R.T.37*). However, at the outbreak of the civil war, the fishermen’s lives exponentially shifted. The catches were “growing poorer everyday” (*R.T.38*) and “a few fishermen remained in the hamlet, trying their luck in the shallow shoals that had once been fertile fishing grounds; occasionally a band of strangers would come and commandeer several of the abandoned shacks, using them as a temporary base before moving on (*R.T.38*). Somalia, therefore, was no more a peaceful place where the inhabitants can live in security. In such circumstances, the only alternative for the fishermen was to turn to piracy.

Even worse, the absence of effective government as well as the existence of the rival factions in Somalia provides a fertile ground for the proliferation of the radical Islamic groups, chiefly Al-Qaeda. This terrorist network creates a hidden base for their maritime and inland operations as Blakey mentions it:

All of which was worrying enough, but Fane knew that such chaos created just the sort of situation that attracted people even more sinister than pirates. Al Qaeda, under pressure in Pakistan and Afghanistan, was looking for safer bases from which to launch their attacks against the West. Yemen was already on their list – was Somalia following? Fane thought of the young boy sitting in a Paris jail cell, arrested helping hijack UCSO’s ship and carrying a British driving licence (*R.T.46*).

The chaotic scenes sparked by the civil war and political instability of Somalia offer a permissive environment for terrorist organisations to take root and thrive in Africa. Actually, the choice of Somalia as a safe haven for the terrorist operation is clearly motivated. Al Qaeda has a clear strategic interest in the Horn of Africa, as the Indian Ocean represents an important regional hub with a geostrategic and geopolitical value for the maritime traffic linking the Western; Asian and African continents. The geographical positioning of Somalia, therefore, represents an increasing factor for the terrorists to orchestrate their criminal operations and finance their activities. More importantly, the bad living conditions of the inhabitants who suffer from hunger, poverty and insecurity provide a godsend opportunity for new recruits in terrorist organisations. This certainly explains the motivation of Taban’s elder brother to become a member of a terrorist cell. Following their father’s assassination in their village by the hand of

the gangsters seeking to steal his skiff, life becomes harder and harder for both of them. “Precarious as their new life was, they survived. Until one day his brother went to Mogadishu, looking for a cousin of theirs who might be able to help them. He had not come back, and after three months Taban assumed he must be dead, for why else would he not have returned?” (R.T.46)

By historicizing the strategic importance of Somalia for the terrorist organisation as reliable information, Blakey draws the readers’ attention on the changing nature, the spirit of maritime piracy and terrorism. As Blakey underlines: “the danger zone was shifting – not everything was coming out of Afghanistan or Pakistan now. Some security expert from an institute somewhere was saying that many of the hardliners were moving away from their traditional hideouts and setting themselves up in lawless places in other parts of the world, where there were no effective governments and they could live and operate without interference” (R.T.86). Somalia, now, epitomizes the ultimate destination for the training of new recruits coming from the Middle East. “A Middle East correspondent from Reuters added that he’d learned that training camps were being set up in some of these places and new recruits from Britain were being sent there instead of Pakistan. Al Qaeda were planning to use these places as bases from which to hit new targets (R.T.86).

The fictional universe provides a safe refuge to the Middle East terrorist leaders from which they can secretly and safely hide; and escape from the control of the secret services of the western countries as evidenced, in the narrative, through the unexpected arrival of the “Tall One,” the code name for the Pakistani leader, in the Somalian coastline. Even though these men, sometimes, resort to piracy methods, namely kidnapping or hijacking and smuggling to survive, nonetheless, they also pursue some hidden agenda. Because the “Tall One” and his band of men come under cover of darkness, equipped with lethal weapons including AK- 47s, two grenades launchers and quantities of sidearms (R.T.39) cunningly disguise their bad intention. They want nothing else than impose their radical ideologies and cause harm by means of oppressive and intimidating methods. They not only want to challenge Khalid’s authority on the coastline but also to impose and spread their Islamic religious faiths, spending much time at “prayer, kneeling or stretching out on small rugs they laid on the sand (R.T.39)”. Using Khalid’s compound as a base camp, they also intend to conduct classes for their new recruits and get them prepared for imminent undercover terrorist missions in the western countries. Yet, what are the underhand tactics deployed by the pirates and terrorists to take advantage of the new wars at sea?

II- Textuality: Information Warfare and Pover

Stella Rimington's fiction leaves no room for doubts over the hybridization of conventional and information warfare in the new wars at sea. As to Rianne van Vuuren, information warfare suggests "actions focused on destabilising or manipulating the core information networks of a state or entity in society with the aim to influence the ability and will to project power as well as efforts to counter similar attacks by an opposing entity and/or state (Rianne van Vuuren, 2018: 80). It develops as a powerful instrument of domination in which the ones who hold it has a complete advantage on their opposing entities as the saying goes: "if you know others and know yourself, you will not be in peril in a hundred battles. If you do not know others but do know yourself, you will win some and lose some. If you do not know others and do not know yourself, you will be in peril in every battle. (Sun Tzu, 2011: 448). Thus, information warfare in all its manifestations, from its covers-ups to its operational, is of a great importance for orchestrating successful military campaigns over the targets.

Stella Rimington's fiction is replete with connives or secret plots intending to ensure considerable success for the Somalian pirate gangs' operations on the *Aristides*, the Greek cargo, sailing through the dangerous waters off the Horn of Africa on their way to the port of Mombasa. In the narrative, one of the cover-ups agents, Katherine Ball actively gets involved in the African based conspiracy to rob the United Charities Shipping Organisation (UCSO). As a member of the charity organisation, she works mainly in London as a deputy to the charity's overall director, David Blakey (*R.T.88*) a man of imperturbable confidence (*R.T.129*). David Blakey even gives her credits for her key role in the good functioning of the charity as he attests that "the place wouldn't function without her. She's got desk in Athens too – I know they'd say the same about her (*R.T.51*). More importantly, she also shares her office with her Athens Director of UCSO, Mitchell Berger as his deputy. Katherine Ball's full integration in the offices as the chairmen's deputy offers her ample opportunities to spy on confidential information or to keep an eye on the ships' manifests so that to alert her accomplices (the pirates) or to arrange them an unfettered access to the ship as crew with fake Pakistani passports(*R.T.183*). Quite interestingly, the seductive role she cleverly played on David Blakey, her boss, entrapping him to make all the running about the classified information of the charity, revealing her every single details on the trajectories of the *Aristides* and the identity of the investigative undercover agent,

Maria Galanos, coming to unmask the conspirator of the leakage of information to the gang of Somalian pirates (*R.T.129, 234*).

Though, she publicly distinguishes herself as a professional worker to the charity organisation, nonetheless, she privately leads a double life as a close “associate of the pirates” (*R.T.86*) for years without being discovered. Faking the moon landing, she secretly performs an inside job to poke a hole into the information of the charity organisation. In a more ideological and political vein, Katherine Ball is presented as a masterminded covert agent plotting for the recruitment of the hundred young western and Asian men in London and preaching to them radical sermons in the New Springfield Mosque on how to conduct jihad against the westerners. The M16’s officer of the British intelligence service, Liz Caryle, proves the evidence of her implication in the terrorist activities as follows: “Speaking of acting, your performances at the London mosque seem to have had quite an impact. Several British Asians have left this country to fight *jihad* because of you (*R.T.242*)”.

Katherine Ball’s conspiracy narrative on the radicalization of the malleable young men is typically used to challenge the western’s dominant ideological assumption on their political and cultural hierarchy in the Middle East. By preaching them radical sermons as part of a conspiracy, she personally seeks to undermine the social structure of the western countries. She partly blames the British government for becoming stooges of the American government, the staunch ally of Israel which inflicts suffering and oppression on the Palestinian in the camps in Gaza for “those who are not with us are against us.” Anyone who thinks differently from them is a threat and has to be destroyed. And the rest of the world is supposed to admire this, and stick out their bowl for the thin gruel the likes of UCSO graciously bestow on them (*R.T.242*)”. Ideologically, she feels concerned for the defence of the Palestinian cause, constructing a binary opposition between “them” versus “us.” She also shares her sense of belonging to the radical Islamic movements by recruiting young men and sending them to Pakistan for training and then to Somalia for terrorist activities.

She is, *de facto*, the person who leaks information connecting UCSO to the cells of Northern African crooks. Using the information warfare as a power projection to leverage an advantage on the UCSO shipment, the pirates could know in advance the intended destinations and values of the cargoes. That certainly helps to understand how the hijackers succeed in calibrating their two attacks on the *Aristides*:

Since the last hijacking, six other UCSO shipments had sailed unmolested through the waters off the Horn of Africa, despite an overall increase in the numbers of



hijackings in the region. Why had the pirates targeted the *Aristides*? A Greek-registered merchant ship, which regularly sailed those waters, was surely a far less attractive target than a tanker. Berger wanted to believe it was pure chance that UCSO had been targeted three times, but his professional experience had taught him to be suspicious of apparent coincidence (*R.T. 19*).

By investigating the scope and dimension of piracy off the Horn of Africa, it becomes more than evident that the potential targets of the two high-value UCSO shipments were not merely coincidental. Actually, if we take into consideration the growing synergy of the information provided from the inside organisation and seapower to the pirates, then, we may come to the conclusion that the UCSO aid operations to the acute crisis areas in Africa have been blown from the beginning.

The pirates, in the narrative, could probably be kept abreast on the actions and values of the cargoes for their ransoms demands. As to Mitchell Berger who initially presumed the first hijacking on the UCSO cargo to be a freakish-one off, the pirates were, at first, demanding “£1 million, but after apparently recognising that they weren’t dealing with wealthy owners on this occasion, they had eventually settled with the charity’s insurers for half that sum. However, when the ship was returned, the cargo, which had been unusually valuable, had gone (*R.T.18*)”. On the occasion of the second hijacking of the UCSO shipment “carrying high-value cargo – more than the normal quantity of drugs (morphine, anaesthetic, antibiotics). Also, lodged in the Captain’s safe, there was \$200,000 in cash, intended for the UCSO people on the ground to use to grease certain palms... The ship had been recovered after a month, though this time the ransom demanded had stayed firmly fixed at £1 million. Again, most of the cargo had been removed and the bank notes were no longer in the safe (*R.T.18*). Reversely, the hijacking operations on the high value oil tankers sailing in the Somalian waters may have not been fruitful without any risks for the pirates. This, indeed, is mainly due to the fact that they may have limited information on the activities of the multinational oil companies. Rimington, in her fiction, raises the awareness of both the managers of the international organisations and law enforcement officers on more effective protection of the classified information to avoid any risks of leakage of information likely to leverage the seapower of the Somalia radical groups. Yet, what could be the international community’s response to the taming of the outlaw sea?

III- Taming the Outlaw Sea

Stella Rimington's fiction indisputably poses as a site for international cooperation to challenge the new security threat facing Europe. She calls for a strong collaboration between overseas nations to counter-piracy and terrorism in the high seas of Somalia. David S. Alberts et al insist on collaboration as "a process that takes place between two or more entities. Collaboration always implies working together toward a common purpose. This distinguishes it from simply sharing data, information, knowledge, or awareness" (David S. Alberts et al, 2001: 27-28).

The need for effective cooperation is all the more serious in the narrative. In the very first chapter of the novel, the narrator places a particular emphasis on the Anglo-French cooperation at the Ministerial Security Summit as fictionalised in these lines:

The French Minister of the Interior was in full flow, expatiating on the new security threats facing Europe. From where Liz sat, in the back row of the seats set out in the library of the Institute for Strategic Studies in Whitehall, she could survey the whole room. At the front French and English officials, senior policemen and military officers sat alongside journalists, who were eagerly scribbling on their pads. At the back, assorted French and British spooks were grouped, well out of sight of the TV cameras. For this Friday morning was the press conference concluding the previous day's Anglo-French Ministerial Security Summit.

Liz's last posting in Northern Ireland had led to a close involvement with the French security services, and now, back in counter-terrorism, she had special responsibility for joint operations with the French. Next to her Isabelle Florian, her colleague from the DCRI – MI5's French counterpart – was shifting in her seat, looking worried that she'd miss her Eurostar back to Paris (*R.T. 1*).

The press conference of the joint forces, in this passage, fully expresses the sound desire of the international intelligence services to work together and devise a strategic response to maritime piracy. The French Minister of the Interior made a declaration on the "new security threat facing Europe" in the spotlights of the TV camera lens. Not only does he want to raise the alarm of the global intelligence services, but he also stresses the need for implementing an effective counter-piracy task force as exemplified through the "International Protection Force" operating for the protection of the vessels sailing through the dangerous waters off the Horn of Somalia (*R.T. 13*). The media coverage at the international security summit is, therefore, used as a potent diplomatic channel to invite and summon the other European nations to join the transatlantic alliance against piracy and terrorism in the interest of the global economy and regional stability.

Stella Rimington, in her fiction, proposes and brings to the fore a collaborative information-sharing and gathering as the backbone of counter-piracy and terrorism operations. She entirely plots her storyline around the interagency information as a proactive

communicative strategy in the counter-espionage of terrorist activities under the close supervision of Liz Caryle, the “main liaison with the French services on counter-terrorism” (*R.T.* 59). As a matter of fact, the novel clearly underlines a new consideration of the importance of interagency information sharing, with particular emphasis on the idea that it can contribute to prevent any terrorist activity to thrive in the countryside, but also conditions the success of the collaboration on the basis of trustfulness and mutual confidences. In Rimington’s vision, maximum collaboration should be effective if only it is inclusive and multi-connected. The protagonist, Liz Caryle, fully embodies that principle, considering the lack of sharing of information as the manifestation of a clear obstruction to the success of the operations. This state of fact certainly elucidates the reason why she formally complains about Geoffrey Fane’s refusal in getting her informed on the decision of both the intrusion and murder of a cover agent in the Athenian UCSO in these terms: “I don’t know why you didn’t tell me before you put her in. You were the one who suggested there might be a link between UCSO and Amir Khan; you were the one who said, and I quote, “We’ll need to liaise closely.”” Liz’s voice was rising in anger but the neighbouring tables were unoccupied and no one could overhear their conversation (*R.T.* 103). Liz Caryle, in these lines, looks at the minor detail on the cold-blooded murder of the cover agent as a pivotal element that could offer convincing proof of a hidden conspiracy in the Athenian UCSO. More seriously, she considers Geoffrey Fane’s wilful sparing of information as a conspicuous lack of confidence that could potentially jeopardize the interests of the global alliance.

On behalf of the multilateral cooperation of the intelligence services, Liz constantly gets informed on the concern of Amir Khan’s, a British born Pakistani, arrested by the international protection forces and detained into *La Santé Prison* of Paris. Quite interestingly, she even benefits from a political compromise of the American secret services in providing a logistical (Air) support in the counter-terrorism operation. The coordination of the allied forces is conveniently designed to set in motion a definite plan of attack as suggested in Martin Seurat’s skilled diplomacy at the “co-ordination meeting” at Vauxhall Cross (*R.T.* 193). in these couple of words:

Monsieur, I accept your argument that airpower might be useful. But in this situation, where it will be very difficult to distinguish between the innocent and the enemy, I think helicopters would be the most advantageous. If you can have a ship within ten miles or so of the coast, they could put in reinforcements as needed to either the *Aristides* or the pirates’ camp. They would have adequate firepower if there is resistance, but also have the ability to be – how should I say? – *discriminating* in

who they attack. And, most important, they could transport people out if needed – casualties, freed hostages or prisoners’ (*R.T. 197*).

Realistically, Seurat’s diplomatic discourse pursues an inclusive approach in the conceptualization of the battlespace plan in which he weights all the options for a complete success of the operation. These include the use of the American’s helicopters for the transport of “casualties, freed hostages or prisoners,” the patrolling of the French Navy in the waters to prevent any hijacking attempts and the running of the British commandos in the Somalian battlefield.

In the war on terror, Stella Rimington tempers the intelligence gathering and conduct of the joint forces operations through the use of military satellite technologies like remote sensing and Global Positioning Systems. To Richy J. Lee and Sarah L. Steel’s minds, Global Positioning Systems “is a satellite-based navigational system involving satellites and computers that can determine the latitude and longitude of a receiver on Earth by computing the time difference for signals from different satellites to reach the receiver.” The GPS determines the location regardless of topography, weather, or time of day, anywhere on Earth, provided the GPS receiver is not physically obstructed” (To Richy J. Lee and Sarah L. Steel, 2014: 89). In the narrative, the use of the military satellite technologies provides an impetus for a high resolution remote sensing imagery and geospatial surveillance of the Somalian sceneries. When Liz Caryle inquiries for the positioning of the pirates and terrorists’ strongholds in Somalia, she particularly resorts, for example, to the ministry of Defence satellite photographs to collect enormous quantities of information and determine a precise latitude and longitude of their location. “Opening a small box in one corner of the screen, she entered the precise latitude and longitude co-ordinates he had given her. Seconds later, the screen cleared and they were staring at a topographical view of ocean, with a superimposed X in the middle of the laptop’s display” (*R.T.121*). Liz’s monitoring of the satellite reconnaissance in this intelligence operation. It technically serves to refine the surrounding terrain of Somalia and facilitate the military operation.

Then, to increase the accuracy of the satellite reconnaissance, she also stages a visual and mental reconstitution of the terrain through Captain Luckhurst’s real-life experience of detention in the Somalian terrorists’ stronghold, describing them the geographical features of the coastline. “Then Peggy clicked for another pop-up box, which listed categories of search items: *elevated contours, elevated installations, bodies of water, moving water, vegetation,*



dwelling, vehicles, humans, animal life. She ticked *dwelling* and hit return” (R.T.122). The keywords intelligent search provided by Captain Luckhurst in the formal discussion definitively results in the discovering of a tiny village off the coastline of Somalia where Khalid, the leader of the terrorists, and his band were living.

Stella’s Rimington’s novel, once again, reiterates her view on the global approach of the joint efforts and proactive logistic supports including advanced military technological satellite as an effective response to Somali piracy and domestic terrorism. Indeed, the “COBRA” operation launched by the joint forces under the strict satellite surveillance of the intelligence analysts (R.T.227) from various departments of the Cabinet Office in Whitehall successfully reaches a satisfactory result. The operation enables them to dismantle the Somali terrorist group and the rescue of Captain Guthrie and Dave Armstrong. Even Geoffrey Fane credits the positive outcome of the “COBRA” operation off the Somali coast in these terms:

‘Despite your colleague’s misadventure,’ he had said smoothly, ‘I think you’d have to agree it’s a very satisfactory result. Between us, Elizabeth, we’ve captured some pirates – who I’m certain will turn out to be Al Qaeda or Al Shebab, not that I think there’s much difference – and we’ve killed the rest of their gang. We’ve prevented the Birmingham recruits from reaching Somalia, where they would have been trained and hardened and probably sent back to kill us, and we’ve got your friend Dave out safely. Good job done, I’d say. We must have a drink on it. Perhaps you’ll join me at the Athenaeum one evening.’ Liz wasn’t so sure. The Somali end of the operation might have been shut down, and thanks to Peggy’s research into Xenides’ role, the Athens conduit for Al Qaeda recruits had been closed by the Greek authorities (though Mo Miandad was still at large) (R.T.244).

Such a successful operation of the dismantling of the band of pirates as celebrated through Geoffrey Fane’s subtle humour is telling. It tames out the threat posed by piracy off the coast of Somalia and, reversely, allow the UCSO’s activities to develop safely in the region. Furthermore, Liz’s brands of investigation also contribute to place Katherine Ball, the key conspirator of Athens UCSO and recruiting agent of young Islamic bigots, into arrest:

Katherine Ball, the woman who had inspired young recruits and organised their journeys out to train for *jihad*, was safely held in Paddington Green police station. She would not be doing any more harm, but Liz still felt uneasy about her. She had ranted and poured out her hatred, yet at the end, even when she had learned that her mission had failed, had seemed calm, almost satisfied. Was it just a reaction to all that bile spilled or was there something else? (R.T.244)



Liz's mopping-up counter-espionage and A4 (*R.T.113*) surveillance operation provides her a useful valve for the prevention of the risks of radicalisation of the young people and reduction of the threat of a potential homegrown terrorist cell in the United Kingdom. In this perspective, Stella's fiction successfully pleads for an alternative cooperation of the intelligence security services of the international community to provide a world-based programme of protection that could literally relief the "rip tides" of the regular and cyclical maritime pirates' attacks in the Horn of Africa that is undermining the regional stability, even though she knows that the high tides will come.

Conclusion

Stella Rimington's novel extensively explores the thorny security issue of piracy, one of the oldest crimes of the world. Her fiction reverts to the balance account of the socio-political and economic structure of the rise of piracy and terrorism off the coast of Somalia following the failure of Bierre's government. It also deals with the prime motivation of the innocent fishermen into piracy and indirectly addresses the concern of radicalization among British Pakistani youth which emanated from a crisis of identity and generational conflict.

Stella Rimington's sixty-three chapters of her novel also offers a glimpse in the strained relationship between the various intelligence services of the international community. Therefore, it shows a call for a more effective collaboration to definitively counter-piracy and terrorism. As a whole, Stella obviously dreams of a peaceful world in which the decision-makers and law enforcements would work together, hands in hands, for a common interest. Admittedly, Stella proposes some solutions in the visibility of an inclusive cooperation of the joint forces, insisting on the sharing of information and military use of advanced satellite technology like remote sensing and Global Positioning System to potentially increase of seapower of the global security task force in the frame of the new war at sea.

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