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An introduction to the new Journal of Sierra Leone Studies   John Birchall

It has been a considerable period of time since a specialist Journal on all matters relating to Sierra Leone was published. In the period of time that has elapsed since such a publication last appeared information technology has changed the way in which academic publications are produced. This means that a specialist publication can now be produced and made available to a world audience relatively cheaply and in a shorter period of time that was once possible.

In this the first edition of the new Journal of Sierra Leone Studies we have concentrated on the most influential era of post independent Sierra Leone, the civil war and its aftermath. In future editions we would like to broaden the content to cover all areas of academic research being conducted involving Sierra Leone.

The opinions expressed in all of the articles included in this edition are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Editorial Panel.

I would also like to thank Peter Andersen for his assistance in the preparations needed for this new Journal   as ever his knowledge and patience are quite remarkable.

The work of John Trotman, who read through all the items to check grammar and other aspects of language, was very much appreciated.

The next edition of the Journal is planned to go on line in June 2012 and possible contributions should be sent to John Birchall at Birchall.john68@gmail.com.

We hope you find this first edition to be of interest and use in your studies.

Already accepted for the next edition is an article by Professor Jonas Redwood-Sawyer, Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone on how to re-build the education system in Sierra Leone so as it once again can be considered 'The Athens of Africa'.

John
Cambridge
January 2012

Peer Reviewed Articles

Because It Works: The Advantages of Child Soldier Use During the Sierra Leonean Civil

War

"…they took a stone and hit the face of my father and then he was killed
and they removed his blood and put it in a cup and said 'drink this blood
or else we will kill you'; so I have no alternative but to drink the blood…"

Introduction

Children are often used like pawns during contemporary conflicts. Thrust

forward into the fray, manipulated, abused, ripped from their families, all for the rebel

or government cause. The armed conflict in Sierra Leone (1991-2002) is an extreme

case, wherein almost all parties involved used children for military support and as

soldiers. Children were utilized in multiple ways, and a plethora of moral boundaries

were shattered. Forces inside and outside the state contributed to the phenomenon,

and little-to-no effort was made by the international community to stop the practice.

International and state level analyses can provide the frames through which we can

begin to see what happened,[2] but these frames do not capture clearly how youth, guns

and blood combine to create a daunting tactic, specifically, the use of children as

soldiers. The following discussion will provide a ground-level analysis of child soldier

use by presenting an explanatory case study of the armed conflict in Sierra Leone.[3] I

ask: Why did numerous fighting factions in the conflict use children as soldiers? Using

historical analysis and ethnographic evidence from fieldwork in Sierra Leone, I accept

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[1] Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission, *Witness to Truth: Report of the Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission, Volume 3B* (Graphic Packaging, Ltd. GCGL, Accra, 2004), 276.
[2] See, for example, Vera Achvarina, Ragnhild Nordås, Gudrun Østby and Siri Aas Rustad, 'Poverty and Child Soldier Recruitment : A Disaggregated Study of African Regions', *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* 43 (2009), pp. 386 413; and Astri H. Høiskar, 'Underage and Under Fire: The Use of Child Soldiers, 1994-8', *Childhood* 8, 3 (2001), pp. 340-360.
[3] Denov provides a detailed analysis of the "making" of a child soldier by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). Her work details the inner experiences of children pulled into the armed conflict. This article takes a different, combat-based angle, looking at the interactions between fighting groups and civilians. See Myriam Denov, *Child Soldiers: Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2010).

the assumption that child soldier use in the war was a rational action, steeped in the visceral reaction that the practice evoked.[4] It took place in a brutal arena, but it was a calculated endeavor that capitalized on generational social divisions, and on flesh. Basically, I argue child soldier use was a tactic, one that worked.

Most of the literature on child soldiers contends that structural dynamics, such as poverty, unemployment or an overall weak state, correlate with child soldier use.[5] Little work has been done on the premise that child soldier use is a tactic, though. Tynes and Early argue that if an insurgency has the tactical need, then child soldier use is a tool that might be chosen.[6] There are however obstacles to this choice, even if the need is great. Utilizing children in combat pushes moral boundaries observed by most cultures throughout the world. When a fighting force crosses over this moral boundary, they are breaking through a social control mechanism. Hence, the moral boundary is a cost that the insurgency/government force must consider. But the tactic

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[4] Other researchers also observe a rational choice component to the use of child soldiers. See Dorothea E. Woods, *Child Soldiers: The Recruitment of Children into Armed Forces and Their Participation in Hostilities* (Quaker Peace and Service, London 1993); Rachel Brett, Margaret McCallin and Rhona O'Shea, *Children: Invisible Soldiers.* Report on the Participation of Children in Armed Conflicts and Internal Disturbances and Tensions for the United Nation Study in the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children. (The Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva, and the International Catholic Child Bureau on behalf of the Child Soldiers Research Project, Geneva 1996)
Afua Twum-Danso, *Africa's Young Soldiers: The Co-optation of Childhood,* Monograph 82 (Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria 2003); Peter Singer, *Children at War* (University of California Press, Berkeley 2006); Vera Achvarina and Simon F. Reich, "No Place to Hide: Refugees, Displaced Persons, and the Recruitment of Child Soldiers." *International Security* 31, 1(2006), pp. 127-164; and Chris Blattman, 'The Causes of Child Soldiering: Evidence from Northern Uganda', Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association 48th Annual Convention, Hilton Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA, 28 February (2007).
[5] See, for example, Peter Singer (2006); Rachel Brett and Irma Specht - *Young Soldiers: Why They Choose to Fight* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, CO 2004); and Graça Machel, *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children* (United Nations, New York 1996).
[6] Robert Tynes and Bryan Early, 'Tactical Innovation and the Use of Child Solders in Civil Wars', Paper presented 2011 American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, 1-4 September, Seattle, Washington.

can also produce benefits. If a group is willing to transgress the moral boundary, it gains access to new forms of power. When the power gained outweighs the prohibitive costs of breaking social norms, child soldier use occurs. The use of child soldiers in Sierra Leone exhibits at least three components that make the cost/benefit calculations tip towards an advantage, or political opportunity: troop amplification, moral dilemmas, and relocation of fear. The Sierra Leonean case also reveals the dynamic of tactical interaction or the reciprocation of child soldier use by the opposition in order to counter the power of the tactic.[7] Further, the war in Sierra Leone exposes a deeper dynamic, that of social disrupture, or the intentional attempt to tear apart pre-existing social structures. The Revolutionary United Front's (RUF) battle strategy deliberately placed children in the center of the conflict. The result was an upending of pre-existing patrimonial structures of social control. The point became to obliterate any and all forms of political power containers, from the top (central government), through the middle (local government), through the family, and into the child.[8]

A Brief History of the War in Sierra Leone, 1991-2002

On March 23, 1991, an insurgent force of about 100 fighters crossed over the border from Liberia into Sierra Leone and laid siege to two towns in the southeast district of Kailahun. The group was a mix of Sierra Leoneans, Liberians, and

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[7] As McAdam states, the introduction of a tactical innovation (in this instance, child soldier use), can set off a back and forth process whereby the opposition counters with a tactical adaptation, leading to another tactical innovation, and so forth, and so on; Doug McAdam, 'Tactical Innovation and the Pace of Insurgency', *American Sociological Review* 48, 6 (1983), pp. 735-754.

[8] This is akin to what Chabal and Daloz (1999) call the political instrumentalization of disorder; Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument (*Indiana University Press, Bloomington 1999).

mercenaries from Burkino Faso ("Burkinabes"). The attack was relatively short: "The rebels killed one Sierra Leone army major, one lieutenant and eleven civilians, looted the towns and withdrew into Liberia".[9] This brief assault, however, initiated the ten year-long civil war in Sierra Leone, which resulted in thousands of casualties, the loss of limb through intentional amputation, and the violent sexual assault of women.

Although the first attacks consisted of a number of different groups   Sierra Leoneans trained in Libya, lumpen youth and criminals recruited from Liberia, and members of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) 'specials forces'   the insurgents would become known as the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) of Sierra Leone. The RUF was formed by Foday Sankoh, Abu Kanu and Rashid Mansaray after their return from guerilla military training in Libya in 1988. Sankoh and his cohort organized for the conflict while in Sierra Leone, and then during stays in Liberia. Liberian Charles Taylor and the NPFL offered support (arms and troops) for the RUF in exchange for help with the NPFL insurgency, which had been staging its own rebellion in Liberia.[10]

The RUF was less about an intellectual movement overthrowing the government, and more about disgruntled lumpen youths and individual citizens turning towards more self-serving violence in response to years of government corruption. President Joseph Momoh was in power when the RUF conducted its initial raids. Momoh was the "handpicked successor" of Siaka Stevens, the first, post-

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[9] Lansana Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa: The RUF and the Destruction of Sierra Leone* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington 2005), p. 59.
[10] Ibrahim Abdullah, 'Bush Path to Destruction: The Origin and Character of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF/SL)', in Ibrahim Abdullah (ed.), *Between Democracy and Terror* (CODESRIA, Dakar 2004), pp. 41-64.

independence President of Sierra Leone.[11] Stevens' presidency, which began in 1971,

presided over ever-increasing corruption, moving a state premised on democracy

towards patrimionialism, one party elitism (the All People's Congress/APC), and

poverty. During Stevens' reign, Sierra Leone went from being a state potentially rich

in diamonds and agricultural produce, to one bankrupt and severely lacking in basic

social services such as healthcare and education.[12] When Stevens retired and Momoh

took over, citizens looked for positive change and significant reforms. President

Momoh seemed to hear the call for reform, but he was, in reality, "a benign figure, if a

thoroughly incompetent one."[13] It was is in this environment, a state willing to prey on

its own citizens, that the RUF took up arms in what would be less about a

revolutionary transformation and more about a Hobbesian[14], self-serving reaction to a

nasty and brutish government.

As the RUF continued its incursions across the eastern part of Sierra Leone,

Momoh responded by sending troops from the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) to fight off

the insurgency. However, the SLA was small and ill-equipped. In 1990, the army

consisted of a little over 3000 members.[15] Momoh turned to Guinea and Nigeria to help

fortify his army; he also recruited a rag-tag number of Freetown "vagrants" to raise the

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[11] Page 34 of Lansana Gberie 'The 25 May Coup d'état in Sierra Leone: A Lumpen Revolt?' in
Ibrahim Abdullah (ed.), *Between Democracy and Terror* (CODESRIA, Dakar 2004), pp. 144-163.
[12] Naturally, Stevens' presidency was not the only corrupt facet of the Sierra Leone state. There
were many business and political forces before his regime that enabled corruption.
Nevertheless, Stevens was a key component in the systematic dismantling of a potentially
healthy state. For a deeper look at the structural dynamics of corruption in Sierra Leone, see
William Reno, *Corruption and State Politics in Sierra Leone* (Cambridge University Press,
Cambridge 1995).
[13] Lansana Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa*, p. 37.
[14] (The phrase 'Hobbesian' in the context of the war in Sierra Leone: Robert Kaplan, 'The
Coming Anarchy', Atlantic Monthly, February 1994.
[15] International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1991-1992* (International
Institute for Strategic Studies, London 1991).

SLA troop level to about 6,000.[16] Despite the increase in Momoh's army, they could only attain a "stalemate" against the RUF in early 1992. Then, on April 29th members of an unpaid and disgruntled army staged a coup and ousted Momoh from power. The new junta, led by Captain Valentine Strasser, named itself the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) and promised to defeat the RUF and bring Sierra Leone back to the people[17]

Despite the promise of stability, the country descended deeper into war and more troubles. Although the RUF did not control the entire country, their brutal tactics were having an effect on citizens everywhere, on and off the battlefield. The "hacking off of hands and limbs, rape, all forms of torture, and the destruction of schools and the violent recruitment of schoolchildren…were causing deep demoralization in the nation's population."[18] The NPRC began building up its forces, which included unemployed youths. According to an Amnesty International report, "by 1993 over 1,000 boys under 15 years of age, some as young as seven, were reported to have been enlisted into the army."[19]

The NPRC regime increased its military prowess as soldiers from the SLA moved in and captured territory from the RUF, including the diamond mines. But the glory of the victory was quickly eroded as many members of the SLA looted villages and mined the diamonds for themselves. Soldiers would pretend to be RUF rebels on their nighttime rampages, thereby earning the nickname, "sobels", a.k.a. "soldiers by

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[16] Lansana Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa*, p. 64.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid, p. 71
[19] Amnesty International, *Sierra Leone: Prisoners of War? Children Detained in Barracks and Prisons.* 12 August (1993), p. 1.

day, rebels at night", for their duplicitous actions.[20] Despite the corruption on the battlefield, the NPRC junta did move closer to civilian rule. In 1996, elections war held in most parts of the country and Ahmed Tejan Kabbah of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP)[21] was elected president.

During its term of rule (1992-1996), the NPRC gained some ground against the RUF, but its efforts alone were not enough to stop the rebel atrocities. The NPRC's self-serving sobel troops further diminished the sense of trust in the state. As a consequence, local militias formed to fend off the RUF. Collectively this militia became known as the Civil Defense Force, or CDF. One of the earliest militias was a Tamaboro battalion, organized in late 1992 "under the patronage of a senior NPRC officer."[22] Tamaboros were traditional hunters who worked as scouts and as combatants. They were revered for their keen awareness of the bush terrain and a deep knowledge of the occult world. According to Gberie, they were a "witchcraft battalion", an important physical and spiritual counter to the RUF's socially disruptive ways of waging war.[23] The Tamaboros were one of four main civil defense groups; the others were the Kapras, the Donsos, and the Kamajor.[24]

The Kamajor became the most notable "face" of the CDF in Sierra Leone, and Chief Hinga Norman was their most prominent military head. Like the Tamaboros, the

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[20] Page 106 of Arthur Abraham, 'State Complicity as a Factor in Perpetuating the Sierra Leone Civil War," in Ibrahim Abdullah (ed.), *Between Democracy and Terror* (Dakar, Senegal: CODESRIA, Dakar 2004), pp. 104-120.
[21] The SLPP was the rival party to Stevens APC.
[22] Lansana Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa*, p. 82.
[23] Ibid, p. 82.
[24] Page 45 of Marda Mustapha, 'The Use of Child Soldiers in the Sierra Leone Conflict: Implications for Democracy in Post-conflict Sierra Leone', *Journal of African Social Sciences & Humanities Studies* (Winter 2006), pp. 43-69.

Kamajor were revered for their "magical powers" and bush knowledge.[25] These were

men steeped in the Mende hunter guild tradition and Poro secret society.[26] The

Kamajor forces were effective against the RUF because they had, in addition to their

skill as warriors, psychological power on the battlefield. As Muana notes, the Kamajor

exemplified how many African wars were fought not just on the corporeal level, but

also on the psychological level "through traditional magic and assistance of the

spiritual world."[27] The mythic quality of the Kamajor was essential to their

counterinsurgency, because it confronted the terror that the RUF tried to generate.

Some RUF combatants said they were easily defeated by the Kamajor because they

feared their "supernatural powers."[28] The Kamajor were also able to recruit many

volunteers into their ranks as they carried moral legitimacy in the community   they

reinforced pre-existing social norms rather than destroyed them.

This reinforcement of social norms was apparent in how the Kamajor

incorporated children into their troops. According to Mustapha, the Kamajor did not

force children to fight. They "mainly used propaganda and heroic praises" for

recruitment.[29] Youths would join in order to exact revenge, protect their village or to

become a hero. If children wanted to volunteer, they had to be accepted into the

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[25] Page 84 of Patrick Muana, 'The Kamajor Militia: Civil War, Internal Displacement and the Politics of Counter-Insurgency', *Africa Development* XXII 3/4 (1997), pp.77-100.
[26] Poro is a West African secret association of the Mende that "serves as the primary religious and political entity at the local level." See page 8 of Beryl L. Bellman, *The Language of Secrecy: Symbols & Metaphors in Poro Ritual* (Rutgers University Press, Brunswick 1984). The society is also responsible for initiating boys into manhood, and for teaching youth proper conduct in society. Those who do not pass through Poro are not considered adults, and are not allowed to fight in war or even act as spies (Confidential Interview, 2009).
[27] Patrick Muana, 'The Kamajor Militia', p. 85; note that "magic" and "spiritual" are used to denote cosmologies existing outside the bounds of the western, empirical, rationalist traditions
[28] Ibid, p. 94
[29] Marda Mustapha, 'The Use of Child Soldiers in the Sierra Leone Conflict', p. 48.

Kamajor and then undergo Poro and Kamajor initiation. The process adhered to pre-existing cultural rites of passage, changing them from children into adults, making them legitimate men and warriors in the society.[30] This approach was the opposite of how the RUF used children. Under the RUF, children were forced to fight or act as sex slaves, and to be subservient to their commanders, who were to be seen as their new fathers, or Pa's. The RUF also utilized an initiation process, but the goal was to further oppress and subjugate children rather than transition them into the Sierra Leonean social construct of adulthood.[31]

The CDF[32] was extremely important in subduing the RUF in Mende Chiefdoms, and the militias were credited with helping to pressure the RUF to sign the Abidjan Peace Accord on November 30, 1996.[33] But the ceasefire, and subsequent election of President Kabbah, did not end the war. In May of 1997, another coup occurred, led by sobel members of the Sierra Leone Army. President Kabbah fled Sierra Leone, as the Johnny Paul Koroma-led junta took control of the government under the name of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). Koroma invited Foday Sankoh and the RUF to join forces with the AFRC. Members of RUF flooded into the capital of Freetown and with the AFRC instigated waves of looting and brutalization, which they nicknamed Operation Pay Yourself. According to Gberie, the

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[30] Patrick Muana, 'The Kamajor Militia' and Marda Mustapha, 'The Use of Child Soldiers in the Sierra Leone Conflict'.

[31] For a thorough description and analysis of the inner workings of the RUF with regards to making a child soldier, see Miriam Denov. *Child Soldiers: Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2010).

[32] "CDF" will, from this point on in the discussion, designate all of the civil militia collectively, but with the recognition that Chief Hinga Norman's Kamajor forces were the most prominent and documented group.

[33] Lansana Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa*, p. 86.

coup led to the complete "collapse of formal state institutions and emergence of criminal gangsterism to replace them."[34]

The AFRC coup was "condemned universally" by the international community.[35] The regional coalition's military force, the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), battled the junta and effectively pushed the AFRC/RUF to negotiate a cease fire with the Conakry Peace Plan of 1997. But the junta leaders were evasive when it came to implementing the agreement and eventually ECOMOG troops and the CDF executed a coordinated, countrywide assault on the AFRC/RUF. By April of 1998, "90 percent of Sierra Leonean territory, including the diamond mining districts" had been made safe, thanks to ECOMOG and the CDF.[36] AFRC leader Major Johnny Paul Koroma and his troops retreated from Freetown and President Kabbah returned to assume his elected position as head of state.

Even though the RUF was beaten back into the countryside, their insurgency re-ignited. RUF commander Sam "Maskita" Bockarie proclaimed on BBC radio that the rebels would "kill everyone in the country 'to the last chicken'" and then initiated the next wave of destruction, known as Operation No Living Thing.[37] In the months that followed, the rebels regained possession of the diamond mining region, wrested control of key towns in the north, and in January of 1999 returned to invade Freetown.

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[34] Ibid, p. 96
[35] Page 154 of Lansana Gberie, 'The 25 May Coup d'état in Sierra Leone: A Lumpen Revolt?' in Ibrahim Abdullah (ed.), *Between Democracy and Terror* (CODESRIA, Dakar 2004), pp. 144-163.
[36] Lansana Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa,* p. 116.
[37] Ibid, p. 120

Two weeks of "horror" ensued with rebels digging in, battling ECOMOG forces, ransacking civilian homes, and killing indiscriminately.[38] The rebels utilized:

> …thousands of teenage RUF fighters, almost all of them wearing bandages on the side of the head where incisions had been made to pack crack cocaine under their skin. They seemed completely insane or delirious. They rounded up whole neighborhoods, forcing frightened civilians to state a demonstration of welcome for them. Those not showing enough enthusiasm were gunned down immediately. Hundreds were killed in this way.[39]

Complete terror enveloped the capital city. Mass amputations, rape and slaughter prevailed.

After three weeks of fighting, ECOMOG was able to fend off the RUF and regain control of Freetown. The Kabbah government was not assured that it could hold off the RUF forever, though, and agreed to negotiate an end to the war. In July 1999, the government of Sierra Leone and the RUF finalized the Lomé Peace Accord. The agreement called for a cease-fire and amnesty for all involved in the fighting. The armed conflict "formally ended on 11 January 2002, with the symbolic ceremonial closure of the last disarmament centre in Kailahun district, where the war had begun in March 1991."[40]

Roots of Child Soldier Use in the Sierra Leone Civil War

Children were included in the ranks of the RUF from the very start of the conflict in Sierra Leone, and the idea to use them in battle germinated during events occurring in Libya and Liberia years before the war. Qaddafi's assistance extended to

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[38] Ibid, pp. 126
[39] Ibid p. 127
[40] Ibid, p. 2

Sierra Leoneans as early as the 1970s.[41] Student groups formed at Fourah Bay College (FBC) of the University of Sierra Leone in order to study the Green Book. The Green Book was Qaddafi's political philosophy treatise outlining how a people's state could be formed. The key moment of Libyan support came in the mid-1980s after three lecturers and 41 students were expelled from FBC in response to student protests against the APC government.[42] A small group of these protesters, including the FBC student union leader Alie Kabbah, left the country to continue their studies at the University of Ghana. The Libyan government paid for their school fees. Some of these students then went on to Libya to participate in seminars and conferences, receiving ideological training, from 1987-1988. The Sierra Leonean trainees were concerned with how to turn their corrupted state into a viable, just nation. However, a split occurred in the group regarding how that process should take place. Alie Kabbah's faction sought a well-structured revolution based on principles. The opposing faction, however, was less-concerned with ideology and principles and pushed for a purely militaristic overthrow of the Sierra Leonean government. The military group advocated for a joint effort, teaming up with the Liberian insurgents, the NPFL, to stage a violent insurrection. It was the latter group that Libya chose to bolster.[43]

The NPFL was training in Libya at the same time as the Sierra Leoneans, and their leader, Charles Taylor, saw an opportunity. According to testimony to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Taylor "was quick to take advantage of the split in the

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[41] Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission, *Witness to Truth…Volume 3B;* Ismail Rashid, 'Student Radicals, Lumpen Youth, and the Origins of Revolutionary Groups in Sierra Leone, 1977-1996', in Ibrahim Abdullah (ed.), *Between Democracy and Terror* (CODESRIA, Dakar 2004), pp. 66-89.

[42] Page 59 of Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission, *Witness to Truth…Volume 3B.*

[43] Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission, *Witness to Truth…Volume 3B;* Ismail Rashid, 'Student Radicals, Lumpen Youth.'

ranks of the Sierra Leoneans by aligning with Foday Sankoh, a former corporal in the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces (RSLMF), who emerged as the leader of the more militant faction."[44] Alie Kabbah and members of his group left Libya after the split, but Foday Sankoh stayed and, with several others, went on to engage in military training from 1988-1989. According to a witness at the trial of Charles Taylor in the Special Court of Sierra Leone, the Liberians trained with Sankoh and about 10-15 Sierra Leoneans at first.[45] Sierra Leoneans also mingled with fighters from Gambia, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Congo, Philippines and Indonesia, but it is was the NPFL that they would most closely align with   the future RUF members helping with the insurgency in Liberia and the NPFL helping with the armed conflict in Sierra Leone.[46]

Youths were a part of the core group of the Liberian and Sierra Leonean fighters, who trained in Libya. Benjamin Yeaten was a 14-15 year old boy who impressed Taylor with his hard work in the guerilla training. "He was very aggressive in training and won a lot of prizes," said one witness who was with Yeaten in the Libyan camps.[47] Yeaten fought as a child soldier for the NPFL during the Liberian civil war, and went on to become Taylor's bodyguard and the Director of Special Security Services (SSS) for the Liberian state. Rashid Mansaray was a teenager when he went through commando training with the first group of Sierra Leoneans at a base in Benghazi, Libya. He was seen as a "teenage revolutionary with a much respected

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[44] Page 60 of Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission, *Witness to Truth…Volume 3B*
[45] Open Society Justice Initiative, '2:00 Taylor's Former Vice President: Governments of Libya, Burkino Faso and Ivory Coast Supported Taylor's 1989 invasion of Liberia." Transcript of the Special Court of Sierra Leone Trial of Charles Taylor, 14 May (2008).
[46] Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission, *Witness to Truth: Report of the Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission, Volume 3A* (Graphic Packaging, Ltd. GCGL, Accra (2004).
[47] Open Society Justice Initiative, "5:00 Taylor's Former Vice President, Moses Blah, and Continues His Testimony." Transcript of the Special Court of Sierra Leone Trial of Charles Taylor, 14 May (2008).

commitment to the cause and intellectual energy."[48] Mansaray was part of the

triumvirate heads of the RUF that included Foday Sankoh and Abu Kanu. Mansaray

was the RUF's first Battalion Commander, fighting for the NPFL in Liberia and for the

rebels in Sierra Leone.[49]

With models such as Yeaten and Mansaray, Sankoh was shown how potential

could turn into action. The training camps in Libya created brutal fighters and leaders

for the RUF, and provided a solid grounding for guerilla war: "the logistics behind the

actions that made hacking of limbs, creation of child soldiers and killing of over fifty-

thousand countrymen and countrywomen in Sierra Leone possible."[50] Fighters such as

Yeaten exemplify how the recruitment of children was a pre-meditated act, an integral

part of Sankoh's original war machine. After training in Libya, the core members of

the RUF went off to Liberia to fight for the NPFL and to recruit troops for their future

invasion into Sierra Leone.

Although it preceded the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, the NPFL insurgency

in Liberia grew out of the same ground   Libya; and the Liberian armed conflict

remained deeply intertwined with the fight in Sierra Leone. Liberia's civil war began

in December of 1989 when Taylor's NPFL invaded into Liberia's northern Nimba

County. The goal was to make their way to the capital, Monrovia, and overthrow the

president, Samuel Doe. The NPFL insurgency utilized extreme violence from the first

invasion onwards. There were innumerable acts of terror that targeted civilians, and

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[48] Page 93 of Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission, *Witness to Truth…Volume 3A*
[49] Ibrahim Abdullah, 'Bush Path to Destruction.'
[50] Karamoh Kabba, 'Opposition Movement in Sierra Leone "Link" Ruling Party Leaders to
Rebellion', *The Awareness Times* 8 June (2007).

there was a continuous, deliberate use of children as soldiers as a tactic. Children from

6-18 years of age were forcibly recruited, and made:

> …to kill friends and family members including their parents, rape and be raped,
> serve as sexual slaves and prostitutes, labor, take drugs, engage in cannibalism,
> torture and pillage communities. Many were forced to be 'juju' controllers,
> ammunition carriers, spies, armed guards, ambushers and so on.[51]

Children were placed intentionally in the dead center of the battle theater. The

NPFL's terror tactics were meant to create an environment of complete uncertainty, to

obliterate all forms of trust in the society.[52] This attempt at social disruption was about

usurping leaders at the national level and about challenging and appropriating deeper

levels of political authority at the local level, specifically the power of the secret society,

Poro, and the family. The child became one locus of this struggle.[53]

In *The Mask of Anarchy*, Stephen Ellis details how the war in Liberia was fought

on the ground and in the Liberian cosmology.[54] The acts of brutality were not random,

but rather highly signified acts meant to wrestle power from the reigning political

authority of Poro. The Poro notion that power is gained through sacrifice and eating

was transformed into weaponry and commodities. The monopoly of the legitimate use

of force was extracted from the institution of Poro, and co-opted by political

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[51] Page 44 of Republic of Liberia, *Truth and Reconciliation Commission Final Report*, Volume 1
(Republic of Liberia, Monrovia 2009)

[52] Advocates for Human Rights, *A House with Two Rooms: Final Report of the Truth and
Reconciliation Commission of the Liberian Diaspora Project* (DRI Press, St. Paul 2009).

[53] Note that several researchers have noted the connection between social/political disrupture
and state failure. In the case of Liberia and Sierra Leone, child soldiers are just one type of
tool used to evoke social disrupture, but not necessarily the only means. See, for example,
Jimmy D. Kandeh, *Coups from Below: Armed SubAlterns and State Power in Africa,* (Palgrave
MacMillan, New York 2004), David Keen, *Conflict & Collusion in Sierra Leone.* (James Curry,
Oxford 2005), and Ibrahim Abdullah (ed.), *Between Democracy and Terror* (CODESRIA, Dakar
2004)

[54] Stephen Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, Second Edition (New York University Press, New York
2007).

entrepreneurs/violent specialists,[55] and anyone else who wanted to empower themselves. During the war, "the practice of human sacrifice was taken out of the bounds of officials of traditional secret societies and used by heartmen, independent commercial entrepreneurs who obtained human organs and sold them for monetary gain to those who believed that they could acquire wealth and power by their ritual use and even consumption, In fact, it was privatized."[56]

Children, who were traditionally seen as belonging to the family and the jurisdiction of secret societies, were also to be eaten, both metaphorically and literally, in order to access their potential power. Anthropologist Mariane Ferme explains how in West African societies, children are not viewed as innocents in need of coddling. Children, according to Ferme, carry tremendous potential and chaotic power. Infants can "endanger their own mothers' lives by harboring witch spirits who complicate pregnancy, labor and delivery."[57] Children exist in an ambiguous social space, sometimes they are "real persons" but they are also deemed to be like animals, "unable to control their behaviors."[58] This marginality makes children a potential threat to social order. The ambiguity of the child's role was mobilized as a resource for disrupting and overturning the existing social/political order. One function of Poro is to tame the child and convert them into an adult that conforms to social norms,

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[55] Regarding political entrepreneurs/violent specialists, see Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2003); when a political entrepreneur/violent specialists attempts to co-opt the monopoly of the legitimate use of force from institutions such as Poro, he/she may or may not wish to institutionalize such legitimacy. Unlike a state, the political entrepreneur/violent specialist sometimes extract legitimacy from other agents so that no one person or institution can hold it. The point is to destroy legitimacy for all.

[56] Pages 265-266 of Stephen Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*; Ellis's example is one of many instances where war activities imitated and/or reconfigured Poro and other traditional ritual orders.

[57] Page 199 of Mariane Ferme, *The Underneath of Things: Violence, History and Everyday in Sierra Leone* (University of California Press, Berkeley 2001).

[58] Ibid, p. 200

thereby decreasing their potential danger to the community. As combatants, children were threatening because they were chaotic power with a gun. As one United Nations observer said, "they can cut off someone's head without thinking."[59] By turning them into child soldiers, the NPFL had metaphorically eaten the child's power. But the rebels would go even further:

> …commanders organized cooking feasts and served children's body parts, including their intestines and hearts. The blood of children was collected and cooked into soups into which hearts were served as choice meats for cannibalistic commanders. In other instances, children's body parts were sold in open markets.[60]

These practices in the Liberian war were "the politics of the belly" amplified to its most extreme state.[61] Children had become viable commodities for economic consumption, which made the transformation of children into military labor an easy transition. It was estimated that there were between 15 and 20 thousand child soldiers involved in the two civil wars in Liberia, 1989-1997 and 1999-2003.[62] Multiple factions pulled children into the battlefield. Nevertheless, it was the NPFL that initiated and institutionalized the practice. In addition to gathering boys and girls up for their ranks as they conquered villages and towns, the NPFL also had special Small Boy Units. These were the "first generation of child soldiers" some of whom were as young as 13, and they were very aggressive.[63]

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[59] Page 168 of Stephen Ellis, 'Liberia's Warlord Insurgency', in Christopher Clapham (ed.), *African Guerillas* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington 1998), pp. 155-171.
[60] Page 44 of Advocates for Human Rights, *A House with Two Rooms.*
[61] Jean-Francois Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly* (Polity Press, Cambridge 2009).
[62] Page 204 Advocates for Human Rights, *A House with Two Rooms.*
[63] Stephen Ellis, 'Liberia's Warlord Insurgency'; Open Society Justice Initiative, '2:00 Taylor's Former Vice President.'

The war in Liberia was, to some, a contagion, a nasty conflict that infected the nation of Sierra Leone. The "spillover effect" manifested as extreme acts of terror, the strategic abuse of civilians, cannibalism, and the inclusion of child soldiers.[64] But the Liberian civil wars are not solely to blame for the brutality that occurred in Sierra Leone, and some members of the RUF did recognize moral limits. After the conflict started in Sierra Leone, there were RUF leaders who did not agree with the indiscriminate killing. Both Rashid Mansaray and Abu Kanu thought that the RUF should not use random violence as a tactic, and because of their beliefs, Foday Sankoh had them executed.[65] So, in addition to the contagion that Liberia created, it was also necessary to have political entrepreneurs/violent specialists, such as guerilla trainers in Libya, Charles Taylor, and Foday Sankoh, who would push the insurgency beyond the extreme, which included child soldier use.

It was within the Liberian war experience that Sierra Leonean Foday Sankoh formulated his strategies and gathered his troops. In October 1990, Sankoh, as a member of the NPFL, visited numerous detention centers in Liberia where Sierra Leoneans were being held captive. At Camp Namma, a training base for the NPFL, he developed the seeds of the RUF insurgency, what would become the trademark of the rebel fighting force.[66] According to the Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission, "the base provided the training ground for a unique and vicious breed of

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[64] Page 161 of Amadu Sesay and Wale Ismail 'The Phenomenon of Child Soldiers in Armed Conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone', in Amadu Sesay (ed.), *Civil Wars and Post Conflict Peace Building in West Africa* (College Press, Ibadan 2003), pp. 137-166; [64] Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission, *Witness to Truth…*Volume 2.
[65] Ibrahim Abdullah, 'Bush Path to Destruction', p. 61
[66] Confidential interview, 2008

fighters, many of them child combatants."[67] (p. 101). These recruits would become the

vanguard force for the RUF:

> a disparate collection...included among their number both men and women;
> Sierra Leoneans of most of the major ethnic groups in the country, including
> large numbers of Mendes and Temnes; boys as young as 11 years of age, 'senior
> citizens'; illiterate labourers and secondary-school drop-outs through to a
> highly educated professionals in diverse fields.[68]

Within the vanguard was a group of about five children who "formed the RUF's first

contingent of 'small boys'."[69] Testimony given by one vanguard member stated that

these children (between the ages of 10-14) did not train with the adults, but they were

given weapons and named 'bodyguards' or 'small soldiers'; these young recruits were

noted as being 'fierce fighters' during the war and a few of them became members and

commanders of the RUF's Small Boys' Unit, or SBU.[70] In March of 1991, the vanguard

force invaded Sierra Leone. This was the RUF, with Foday Sankoh and his

experiences in Liberia to lead them.

Child Soldiers in the Sierra Leone War

Up to 10,000 child soldiers participated in the decade-long armed conflict in

Sierra Leone, and "more than 6,774 entered the DDR programme" after the war had

finished.[71] All sides involved had children in their ranks. The four main fighting

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[67] Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission, *Witness to Truth...Volume 3A*, p. 101.
[68] Ibid, p. 105
[69] Ibid, p. 107
[70] Ibid, p. 107
[71] Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission, *Witness to Truth...Volume 3B*, p. 235.

groups were: the SLA (the government), the RUF, the AFRC, and the Kamajor. Towards the end of the war, another, spin-off group, the West Side Boys, arose. The West Side boys were a "splinter group" of the AFRC that emerged in 1999 and lasted until 2000.[72] The interactions between the government and the RUF, the government and the AFRC and the government and the Kamajor all involved child soldier use on both sides. However, when the United Kingdom (UK) joined with the government against the RUF and against the West Side Boys in 2001, child soldier use only occurred on the side of the rebel groups. It appears that the presence of the United Kingdom deterred child soldier use by the Sierra Leonean government. It could be that because the U.K. is deeply entrenched in the international community, and therefore subject to greater scrutiny for violating international norms against child soldier use, the cost of breaking the norm for the U.K. or even allying with a state that did was much higher. Additionally, the economic and military resources available to the British might make dipping into lower age groups for recruitment unnecessary.

In order to examine the tactical dynamics of child soldier use on the ground, I conducted fieldwork in Sierra Leone in 2008 and 2010. Data was gathered through interviews, ethnography and historical analysis. About 35 respondents were involved in the study. The range included civilian mothers and fathers, former child soldiers, former members of the SLA, the AFRC, members of ECOMOG troops, local and national government officials, and several former university students who participated in the radical student movement of the 1980s.

One general pattern and discourse emerged from all of the interviews. The

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[72] Mats Utas and Magnus Jörgel, 'The West Side Boys: Military Navigation in the Sierra Leone Civil War', *Journal of Modern African Studies* 46, 3 (2008), pp. 487-511.

meetings began with a detailing of personal histories during the civil war and then led into discussions about why the interviewees thought children were enlisted to fight. Initial responses often consisted of immediate, utilitarian rationales, such as children were a cheap way to build an army, and children were easily managed and manipulated. However, as the discussions carried on, talk of a moral breakdown in the social structure emerged. Even though Sierra Leonean culture has a staunch taboo against forcing children to fight in adult wars, political entrepreneurs were able to tap into communal weaknesses brought on by economic hardships and government failures. Political entrepreneurs capitalized on, and heightened, individualism and selfishness in the society. This increased sense of "every man and woman for him or herself" seems to have weakened the usually tight, moral fabric. One consequence of this weakening was that people became much less concerned with upholding the norm of protecting children. One woman related how, during the war, she witnessed a mother abandoning her healthy, crying baby in the bush. When asked, "Why would a mother do that? What would drive her to readily give up her child?" The interviewee responded: "The woman was so scared. She thought the crying baby would give her hiding place away and the rebels would find her. The baby was crying because it was hungry and the woman had no food to feed the child, so she got rid of it, so she wouldn't get killed."[73] This story highlights the environment of anomie that was created by the government under Stevens and Momoh and then leveraged by groups such as the RUF. The use of child soldiers further amplified the social disrupture   the breaking apart of the family unit and a shifting to individual alienation   that took

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[73] Confidential interview, 2008

place.

Political Opportunity

Child soldier use encouraged political opportunity for whichever side chose to incorporate them into their ranks. One component of political opportunity was troop amplification. Troop amplification is the increase in troop size and/or troop capability. Size is about gaining more bodies. Capability is about increasing the power of the fighters either through training or tactical use. The latter becomes important especially for small groups/insurgencies that seek to maximize their power against larger state forces. The RUF entered the Kailahun district in March 1991, starting a war with approximately 100 fighters several hundred miles away from the capital city of Freetown. The rebels invaded a rural region in which the SLA had few troops. Four days later the RUF attacked another village with 300 troops this time. Both invasions involved looting, destruction of property and the killing of civilians.[74] The rebels were quick to build their troops through forced recruitment as the SLA was soon to bring part of its 3,000 troop force to fight them.[75] The government forces would need more troops as well. Abdullah and Rashid state that children became the answer to shortages for both sides. There was a "shortage of able-bodied males to fight for the RUF and the RSLMF. The high death toll, the wretched conditions of service, the meagre salary…the summary executions, and above all, the senselessness of the war,

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[74] Lansana Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa*, p. 59.
[75] Ibid, p. 60

discouraged responsible adults from enlisting on either side."[76] The RUF also had to overcome the unpopularity of their insurgency: their failure to win "the sympathy of the very people they claim to be fighting for compelled them to recruit their army from lumpens and juveniles."[77] One former radical university student said simply, "Children were used out of necessity and expediency".[78] The practice immediately boosted troop numbers and troop concentrations. A former SLA soldier, who fought with the British late in the war, said he observed that the RUF recruited more children whenever manpower dipped. He remarked that adding children to their ranks was different than adding adult soldiers, because children were more difficult to confront. "They would send the children to the front lines and the leaders would follow," he said. "It made it much harder to fight them, having to face off first against children."[79] By boosting troop numbers and troop concentration, the RUF, and subsequent factions, gained political-military opportunities that often gave them an edge on the battlefield.

The second component of political opportunity was moral dilemmas. A moral dilemma is an event in which an individual has to choose between two or more options, none of which, when picked, maximizes utility. Furthermore, the choice of action carries with it a positive and a negative implication. When confronted by a child on the battlefield, socio-cultural values enter the rational choice equation. A soldier can defend him/herself by shooting the child holding the weapon. Preservation of life is the positive outcome. The negative, dilemma-inducing result is that the soldier has

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[76] Page 242 of Ibrahim Abdullah and Ishmail Rashid, '"Smallest Victims; Youngest Killers": Juvenile Combatants in Sierra Leone's Civil War', in Ibrahim Abdullah (ed.), *Between Democracy and Terror* (CODESRIA, Dakar 2004) 238-253.
[77] Ibrahim Abdullah, 'Bush Path to Destruction', p. 63
[78] Confidential interview, 2008
[79] Confidential interview, 2008

killed a child, which crosses socio-cultural norms and carries social and personal

sanctions. If the soldier is a parent, the costs of killing a child often increase, which

deepens the dilemma.

In the Liberian war, the NPFL put children on the front lines in order to

induce moral dilemmas in ECOMOG fighters:

> They were the first in a wave of troops, and the older fighters were behind
> them. At first the ECOMOG troops didn't want to shoot at the kids…they were
> shocked to see such small kids fighting. But when the kids began shooting at
> them they had no alternative, so they began shooting and killing kids.[80]

In the Sierra Leonean armed conflict, we find the same tactics, child soldier use

preying on social systems that have strong norms of protecting children. Keen found

that children were sometimes "used as 'bait' to encourage an attack that could be

ambushed."[81] One of Keen's informants told him of the rebel "practice of sending

drugged-up boys as shields in attacks to test the strength of the government forces:

'When the government says, "We have killed 40 rebels," a lot of these will be young

boys'."[82] The "strength" of the government was a reference to moral fortitude. Would

the government soldiers be able to kill boys, knowing that they might face social

retribution? The "test" was the moral dilemma.

A former SLA soldier said it was very hard seeing children on the battlefield.[83]

He said he was trained by the British military in how to deal with a very young enemy.

Even with the training, he said, it was very very hard. "When you go against an enemy

who is an adult, you need courage," he said. "But when you face a child, it's no longer

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[80] Human Rights Watch, 'Easy Prey: Child Soldiers in Liberia' *Human Rights Watch Report*,
8 September (1994).
[81] David Keen, *Conflict & Collusion in Sierra Leone*, p. 97.
[82] Ibid, p. 85
[83] Confidential interview, 2008

about courage. It's a burden." The psychological weight, the "burden", that the practice added to fighting can slow the soldier down and make him/her much more vulnerable. Child soldiers create a gap in standard operating procedures, which provides an opportunity for the enemy. A former member of the AFRC told me he did not like children in war.[84] "It makes for more problems," he said, "more problems on the battlefield."

The third component of political opportunity was the relocation of fear. This is when an insurgency or any fighting group pushes beyond the boundaries of just war and attempt to usurp the state's monopoly of the legitimate use of force. Merari discusses how terrorism is used by insurgents as a strategic device, "to impose their will on the general population and channel its behavior by sowing fear."[85] Terrorism as a strategy is about exerting social control, through psychological means, stealing away the state's authority over civilians. In Vinci's study of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) of Uganda, he argues that the LRA challenges the state with its use of fear in the battlefield. Fear, for the LRA, is a force multiplier, a method for maximizing "its perceived threat."[86] Child soldiers are utilized by the LRA because they can "inflict fear on their adversaries due to their own fearlessness in combat and complete disregard for human life." [87]

The NPFL in Liberia and the RUF in Sierra Leone both instrumentalized terror as a tactic for relocating fear (making the insurgencies the holders of supreme

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[84] Confidential interview, 2008
[85] Page 225 of Ariel Merari, 'Terrorism as a Strategy of Insurgency', *Terrorism and Political Violence* 5, 4 (1993), pp. 213-251.
[86] Page 369 of Anthony Vinci, 'The Strategic Use of Fear by the Lord's Resistance Army', *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 16, 3 (2005), pp. 360-381

[87] Ibid, p. 371

threat). The outcome in these armed conflicts was a demobilized, controlled population, and child soldiers were one of the terror tools used. One witness in Liberia said that "child soldiers killed people for 'fun', further underscoring the incendiary and terrifying combination of an armed child vested with absolute authority over others."[88] According to Human Rights Watch, the RUF and AFRC placed children at the front lines and forced them "to commit atrocities against their own communities."[89] Child soldiers were often used at rebel checkpoints because they invoked more fear in civilians compared to adult guards.[90] The RUF solidified the power of children by instituting a Small Boys Unit (SBU). Child commanders of the SBUs were considered "ruthless…or in the jargon of the RUF 'a wild boy or hard boy'."[91] The RUF also attempted to wrest the political authority of the Poro, developing initiation rites of their own, complete with naming practices and tattooing.[92]

Interviews with Sierra Leonean civilians related the all-pervasive fear that child soldier use could produce.[93] One mother said that acts of amputations, especially by child soldiers, were meant to break up the community and push out all previous power holders. "They made us scared," she said. Another Sierra Leonean said because so many child soldiers were drugged, they were seen as "crazy" and unpredictable. This unpredictability induced fear and paranoia in civilians, paranoia and distrust that continued well after the war was over. A father stated that child soldiers that returned

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[88] Advocates for Human Rights, *A House with Two Rooms*, p. 217.
[89] Human Rights Watch, "Sierra Leone: Sowing Terror: Atrocities Against Civilians in Sierra Leone", *Human Rights Watch Report*, July 1998 10, 3A (1998), p. 10.
[90] Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission, *Witness to Truth…Volume 3B.*
[91] Ibid, p. 294
[92] Myriam Denov, *Child Soldiers.*
[93] Confidential interviews, 2008 and 2010.

to his village after the conflict had to be moved elsewhere, because no one trusted them. "If they came back, they would be too much trouble," he said. Many interviewees stated that by taking children and turning them into soldiers, the rebels had undermined all sense of authority, removing it from the government and the family. Adults no longer had control, which for many civilians was the last vestige of power they had. By demobilizing civilians, rebels were able to inhibit the behavior of civilians. They were less likely to fight back, which opened up a political opportunity of greater social control for the rebels.

Demobilization of civilians and other groups was not complete, though. There were ways that the government and other factions could counter the tactical innovation of child soldier use. One method was to use child soldiers. According to McAdam, tactical innovations often lead to rebuttals by the opposition. This dynamic becomes a tactical interaction   the process of each side trying to regain power from the other.[94] During the First War in Indochina, the Vietminh continually engaged in a back and forth assessment and adjustment process on the battlefield. "Each devised new tactics and strategies and the other attempted to foil them," states Tanham.[95]

Once again, we find that a tactical dynamic, in this case tactical interaction develops in the Liberian war and then also manifests in the Sierra Leone conflict. Richards states: "The practice of recruiting war orphans as under-age 'shock troops' was introduced by the NPFL, but later became general among all factions in Liberia, and among parties to the dispute in Sierra Leone, not excepting the Sierra Leone

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[94] Doug McAdam, 'Tactical Innovation and the Pace of Insurgency
[95] George K. Tanham, *Communist revolutionary Warfare: The Vietminh in Indochina* (Fredrick A. Praeger, New York 1961), p. 110.

army, where under-age 'vigilantes' were selected and trained by battle-front commanders to 'fight fire with fire'."[96] The SLA, the government army, recruited youths to take away potential soldiers from the RUF, to decrease the pool of available conscripts, and to gain the socio-psychological advantage that child soldiers afforded. The government army recruited "from among border-zone youth, teaching them guerilla tactics as deployed by both the NPFL and the RUF."[97] One of the earliest civil defense militias formed (in 1991) was led by Captain Prince Benjamin Hirsch. Hirsch intentionally recruited from the same region as the rebels. "In this way he was able to deny the RUF its potential support from the youth of the diamond mines."[98] Hirsch also incorporated Poro notions of "hindo-hindo (the mobilsation of village young men for community defence)."[99] By including Poro ideas and practices, Hirsch's militia and the CDF groups that followed were able to gain legitimacy.

Conclusion

This single case study of Sierra Leone has hopefully provided a much more nuanced view of how child soldier use works as a tactic. By delving deeper into the ground-level dynamics, we see the advantages that child soldier use affords: troop amplification, morals dilemmas and relocation of fear in a society. The armed conflict in Sierra Leone also reveals several aspects that deserve greater attention for future research. Political entrepreneurs/violent specialists such as Foday Sankoh and Charles

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[96] Paul Richards, Paul, *Fighting for the Rainforest: War, Youth & Resources in Sierra Leone* (James Currey, Oxford 1996), p. 88.
[97] Ibid, p. 180
[98] Lansana Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa*, p. 76.
[99] Page 189 of Krijn Peters and Paul Richards, "'Why We Fight': Voices of Youth Combatants in Sierra Leone." *Africa* 68, 2 (1998), pp. 183-210.

Taylor were very influential in the dissolution of moral boundaries and the instituting of human rights abuses in their armed conflicts. Child soldier use was a primary tool for them. Sankoh and Taylor demonstrate how the environment may be primed for child soldier use, but the practice only occurs when certain leaders push their forces over the tipping point. Another aspect that deserves more attention is the effects of allies, especially states that are major actors in the international arena, (e.g. the United Kingdom). In the Sierra Leone armed conflict it appears that the introduction of British troops at the end of the war decreased the likelihood of child soldier use by the SLA. Why? If the British presence did have a constraining effect, then under what conditions? Could having major international actors intervene in civil wars be a method for decreasing child soldier use?

A final concept that warrants greater attention is social disrupture. This is an outcome of child soldier use. Social disrupture is an outcome of the relocation of fear. Kabia states that fighting factions "often deliberately target civil society as a way of undermining and weakening its resolve to act as a check on predatory elites. These terror tactics are meant to destroy the social capital and the moral economy that underpin civil society."[100] With the RUF, placing children in the center of the battle arena was clearly an attempt at annihilating social capital and the moral economy in order to weaken any resistance movement from civilians. Even the training and indoctrination of child soldiers was an attack on social capital, wrenching any connection that the child may have had with civil society and the moral economy. The RUF was trying to strip a "forced recruit of all grounding in the society to which he or

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[100] John Kabia, *Humanitarian Intervention and Conflict Resolution in West Africa* (Ashgate Publishing Limited, Surrey 2010), p. 20.

she previously belonged (including by subverting the moral and socio-cultural norms of that society) and then compelling (corrupting) the recruits to adopt a new, fundamentally warped set of standards and guiding principles."[101] The new principles that children acquired maximized their potential for violence for the duration of the armed conflict, and created long-term social disruption. Such brutal destruction of the pre-existing social system was part of the goal of groups such as the RUF, to "create legacies of embitterment and suspicion that are the opposite of the relationships of trust and confidence vital to social capital" (Harvey 1997, p. 17). By committing atrocities against family and village, child soldiers were thrust out of their former social system. It was an "irrevocable break between conscripts and their communities" (Richards 1995, p. 158). The result was that after the war was over, many child soldiers could not go home. The socially disruptive effect was not limited to child soldiers, though. One government official echoed a wide-spread sentiment that the war and the use of child soldiers had eroded traditional generational constraints. "Before the war, pikin would always listen," he said, "But now, after the war, less children listen to their elders."[102]

How to mend or transcend social disrupture becomes the role of communities, government and global civil society. It is an enduring task, one that has received sporadic attention. Considering the depth of brutality and social schism, we must consider the effectiveness of post-conflict remedies to social disrupture. If children are forced to eat their fathers, can they ever re-enter the social system that they once inhabited? Given that child soldier use produces such drastic outcomes, greater focus

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[101] Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission, *Witness to Truth…Volume 3A*, p. 530.
[102] Confidential interview, 2008

should be placed on how to stop the practice *before* the conflict ends, that is, while

social disruption is happening. This means finding counters for the child soldier use

tactic. In other words, how do we decrease the benefits on the ground?

Revisiting Sierra Leone's 'Rebel' War: Reflections on Evidence from the TRC and the SCSL by Lansana Gberie[103]

Abstract

The 'rebel' war in Sierra Leone has over the years attracted considerable scholarly interest, and dozens of academic articles and several book-length studies of it have appeared. The proceedings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and those of the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCLSL) have brought to the public domain prodigious amount of new information, data and analysis. The trial transcripts and judgments of the SCSL in particular, running to tens of thousands of pages, are bound to be the primary sources of information on the war in future for scholars and analysts. A preliminary look at these documents show that they are unlikely to fundamentally change certain key areas of consensus about the war: the essentially mercenary trait, the salience of youth delinquency in a corrupt and receded state, and the influence of external actors and natural resources in fueling the conflict.

On 14 JULY 2009, in an open session at Trial Chamber II of the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) sitting in The Hague, Charles Taylor, the former Liberian president, was finally giving testimony on a crucial and much-debated point about the

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[m] The author is an academic and journalist with a PhD in history. He is the author of *A Dirty War in Sierra Leone: the RUF and the Destruction of Sierra Leone* (London: Hurst, 2005)

origins of Sierra Leone's 'rebel' war. He was being questioned by his lead counsel, Courtenay Griffiths:

Griffiths: Now moving on, Mr. Taylor, did you knowingly assist Foday Sankoh and the RUF [Revolutionary United Front] to invade Sierra Leone?

Taylor: I, Charles Ghankay Taylor, never ever at any time knowingly assisted Foday Sankoh in the invasion of Sierra Leone.

Griffiths: Did you plan such an invasion with him?

Taylor: I never ever planned any invasion of that friendly country with Foday Sankoh.

Griffiths: Did you have prior knowledge that such an invasion would take place?

Taylor: Now, I may have to probably just seek some clarification. I was aware from Libya that a Sierra Leonean group, the Sierra Leonean Pan-African Revolutionary Movement, harboured the intent to carry on such operations in Sierra Leone at the time in Libya, and so that's why I said I need some clarification - but as to the Foday Sankoh operation, no.

Griffiths: Did you ever provide the RUF with military assistance?

Taylor: I did not provide the RUF with any military assistance to invade Sierra Leone.[104]

This vehement denial notwithstanding, the prosecutors on 17 January 2011 submitted their voluminous final brief to the judges, arguing with great cogency and detail that Taylor "created, armed and supported" the RUF which, in the view of the prosecutors, was little more than "an extension" of Taylor's NPFL(National Patriotic Front of Liberia). This claim (which is unlikely to be definitively decided by the SCSL because the origin of the RUF is not covered in the indictment period of the trial proceedings) has been at the heart of the difficulty in reaching consensus about the character of the RUF and, even more important, about the nature and purpose of the so-called rebel war in Sierra Leone.

More than many other small wars in Africa, and more than even the Liberian civil war from which it allegedly derived, the Sierra Leone 'rebel' war has over the years attracted significant scholarly attention, and debates about the origin and nature of the war still rage among academics, policy analysts, and, before the SCSL, jurists. This article will revisit the beginning of the debate, both in order to see how consistent the points of contention have been for the past 15 years or so, as well as to evaluate the new evidence that has been brought up to illuminate the issues, principally by the report of the Sierra Leone's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in 2004 and the data produced by SCSL over the years.

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[104] Trial transcripts from the SCSL's website http://www.sc-sl.org accessed on 1 November 2011: Taylor added, however, that months after the initial incursions by the RUF into Sierra Leone, "between the periods of August 1991 throughout May of 1992," his National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) had forged some kind of 'cooperation' with the RUF after an anti-Taylor group, ULIMO, entered Liberia from Sierra Leone to battle Taylor. "They had been armed, trained and sent in by the [President Joseph Saidu Momoh] government [of Sierra Leone].
Now, I provided for the protection of the borders of Liberia, as was my duty and responsibility at the time - I provided small amounts of arms and ammunition, more ammunition than arms to that particular group," Taylor said.

The TRC was mandated by the Lomé Accord of July 1999 (the controversial but definitive agreement that ended Sierra Leone's war); Article XXVI of the accord stated that a "Truth and Reconciliation Commission shall be established to address impunity, break the cycle of violence, provide a forum for both parties and perpetrators of human rights violations, to tell their story, get a clear picture of the past in order to facilitate genuine healing and reconciliation." It submitted its initial report, *Witness to Truth*, in 2004.[105] In it the commission concluded that overall the RUF committed 60.5% of the atrocities committed during the war in Sierra Leone; the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC) 9.8%; the Sierra Leone Army 6.8 %; the Civil Defence Force (mainly Kamajors) 6%; and ECOMOG, the Nigerian-led West African intervention force, 1%. The SCSL on the other hand was set up by the UN in response to a request by Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, president of Sierra Leone at the time. In his letter (of 12 June 2000) to the UN Secretary-General calling for the setting up of the Court, Kabbah wrote that he believed "that crimes of the magnitude committed in this country are of concern to all persons in the world, as they greatly diminish respect for international law and for the most basic human rights. It is my hope that the United Nations and the international community can assist the people of Sierra Leone in bringing to justice those responsible for those grave crimes." Resolution 1315 (2000), passed unanimously in the Security Council without debate on 14 August 2000, called on the UN Secretary General to negotiate an agreement with the Government of Sierra Leone to "create an independent special court" as a "credible system of justice and accountability for the very serious crimes committed" in Sierra Leone during its 'rebel' war.[106]

On 7 March 2003, perhaps aiming to create an impression of even-handedness, the Court's theatrical Chief Prosecutor, David Crane, announced the first set of indictments that included all three parties to the just-concluded war. They included Foday Sankoh and his notorious and sanguinary enforcer Sam Bockarie of the RUF, as well as Issa Sesay, who, during the disarmament process had been induced by the UN to take over the leadership of the RUF after Sankoh was effectively neutralised. Also indicted on the RUF's side were the previously unknown Morris Kallon; and a month later, Augustine Gbao, an anodyne former police officer who was one of the original members of the RUF. Crane also indicted Sierra Leonean soldiers who constituted the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC) junta of 1997-1998: Johnny Paul Koroma, its Chairman, as well as relative unknowns Alex Tamba Brima, Brima Bazzy Kamara and Santigie Borbor Kanu. Koroma, a Member of Parliament at the time, had, however, fled the country before the indictment was announced. Crane's next set of indictments, of leaders of the Civil Defence Force (CDF), were the popular war hero and then Deputy Defence Minister of Sierra Leone Chief Sam Hinga Norman, as well as Moinana Fofana and Alieu Kondewa (known as Chief Priest of the Kamajors).

On 4 June 2003, Crane unveiled a long-sealed 17-count indictment of Liberia's President Charles Taylor, while Taylor was in Ghana during negotiations to end

[105] For more on the TRC, see Zoe Dugal, "Witness to the Truth": The TRC of Sierra Leone   An Overview" in Lansana Gberie ed., *Rescuing a Fragile State: Sierra Leone 2002-2008* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2009)

[106] See Lansana Gberie, 'Africa and International Criminal Justice: Lessons from the Special Court for Sierra Leone,' *African Security Review*, 19, 4 December 2010, 31-47 for more on the court.

renewed fighting in Liberia. Taylor subsequently left power and went into voluntary exile (in Nigeria) and was only handed over to the Court in 2006. The Special Court charged that Taylor, like others above, bears "the greatest responsibility" for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law, committed in the territory of Sierra Leone from 30 November 1996 to 18 January 18, 2002. The prosecution alleges that by his 'acts or omissions, Taylor is responsible for the crimes in an 11 Count Amended Indictment which includes *five counts of war crimes:* terrorizing civilians, murder, outrages on personal dignity, cruel treatment, and looting; *five counts of crimes against humanity:* murder, rape, sexual slavery, mutilating and beating, and enslavement; and *one count of other serious violations of international humanitarian law*: recruiting and using child soldiers. Taylor's case is the only one remaining before the Court as I write (in November 2011).

The main report of the TRC is 1,500-pages long, plus 3500 pages of transcripts of testimonies of victims and as some perpetrators. But this prodigious documentation seems negligible when compared to the output of the SCSL: the proceedings in the RUF trials alone, which ran from 5 July 2004 to 24 June 2008, with 85 prosecution witnesses appearing, produced a case file running to 32,096 pages, excluding the transcripts recorded of the proceedings of the 308 days of trial. Without doubt the SCSL data will come to constitute the key primary documentation of the Sierra Leone war. It is very important, therefore, to note that researchers are well-advised to concentrate more on the transcripts of the testimonies than on the judgments or the prosecutors' briefs, since these are selective and often partial or plainly misleading. The expert reports for the SCSL, especially those by Stephen Ellis on Taylor's role in Sierra Leone, Ian Smillie on the role of diamonds in the conflict (both for the prosecution), and Danny Hoffman on the CDF (for the defence), are invaluable.

A recent article in the journal *African Affairs* on the war by four academics, they asked, "Was the civil war in Sierra Leone (1991 2002) fought for diamonds, or was it a peasant insurgency motivated by agrarian grievances?" The evidence on both sides, it noted, "is less than conclusive."[107] It is a curious way of framing the issue, since the proponents, including this writer of the view that diamonds helped fuel the war have never suggested that the war was all about diamonds. In this article, I describe key findings relating to the origins and causes of the war by both the TRC and SCSL, showing how they illuminate, contradict or support what is already known about the war from published sources. I engage with theoretical debates about the war only in so far as they relate to these findings.

Understanding the Origins of the War

In his magnificent *War & Peace*, Tolstoy mordantly reflects on the arbitrary nature of historical stocktaking. "The first thing history does is to take an arbitrary series of continuous events and examine them separately whereas no event can *ever* have a beginning, because an individual event flows without any break in continuity from

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[107] Esther Mokuwa, Maarten Voors, Erwin Bulte and Paul Richards, "Peasant Grievances and insurgency in Sierra Leone: Judicial Serfdom as a driver of Conflict in Sierra Leone" (*African Affairs*, May 2011, Vol. 110, Issue 440, 339-366.)

another," he writes. "The second thing…is to treat the actions of a single person…as the sum total of everybody else's individual will."[108]

Tolstoy makes a number of important points. In considering historical events, especially modern wars which are subject to judicial reviews, one perforce must make judgments about the approximate origins, the trigger causes, and individual driving forces. This is particularly true of the Sierra Leone 'rebel' war, which has been so subject to conflicting interpretations and reinterpretations, and about which there has been an expensive and prolonged international criminal proceeding.

On a number of issues regarding the war, however, scholars, analysts, policy makers and jurists agree. The first is that Sierra Leone's war started in March 1991 when Foday Saybanah Sankoh, a self-adoring former army corporal, led a small army from territories controlled by then insurgent leader, Charles Taylor, in Liberia into southern and eastern Sierra Leone. Like Taylor, Sankoh had trained in Libya, though there is some disagreement about whether the two met there and forged a relationship.[109] There is no dispute, however, that Sankoh spent considerable time with Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) forces in Liberia in the initial stages of Liberia's civil war (from 1989 to 1991) and that he recruited and trained most of his initial RUF fighting force under Taylor's patronage in territory controlled by the NPFL in Liberia. This is of particular interest, in part because the SCSL prosecutors have charged that Taylor and Sankoh made "common cause" to launch a war in Sierra Leone from their time in Libya as well as in Taylor's territory in Liberia at about this time. The prosecutors charge that this was in furtherance of a "joint criminal enterprise" (JCE) to loot Sierra Leone's mineral resources, mainly diamonds.

The trial transcripts show that all the so-called Vanguards — the fighters who constituted the original invading RUF force from Liberia — were trained at Camp Naama in Taylor's occupied territory in Liberia by Isaac Mongor, a Liberian NPFL who had been a guard at Monrovia's Executive Mansion (the presidential palace). These included future leaders of the RUF: Issa Sesay, Sam Bockarie, and Morris Kallon. Sankoh was clearly now leader of the RUF; Rashid Mansaray was battle front commander (and No.2 in the RUF hierarchy), and Mohamed Tarawalie was battlefield commander (No.3). All three had trained in Libya, and were known as Special Forces. The prosecution's argument that Taylor "created and effectively controlled the RUF" is based on these facts, as well as on the evidence that the majority of the original RUF fighters who entered Sierra Leone in 1991 were Liberians who were members of Taylor's NPFL.[110] Trial transcripts show several witnesses testifying that many of the Sierra Leoneans who were recruited into the RUF at that point were already prisoners held by Taylor's forces, and almost certainly would have been executed had they not joined Sankoh's RUF. On this, even Taylor's defence conceded, noting in its final brief that "recruitment into the RUF was accomplished in part by deceit and blackmail; and many were…reluctant volunteers preferring the relative safety of joining

[108] Leo Tolstoy, *War & Peace* (London: Penguin Books, 2005 edition), 912.
[109] See the SCSL trial transcripts cited above.
[110] *Prosecution Final Trial Brief: Public Version* (SCSL's website), 17 January 2011, 22.

the RUF to the prospect of indefinite detention in a NPFL camp. The Sierra Leoneans recruited by Sankoh were predominantly expatriate Sierra Leoneans from Liberia and Ivory Coast." But it noted, in defence of their client's claim that he never entered into a pact with the Sankoh before the launch of the RUF war, that only "former members of the NPFL and some ordinary citizens of Liberia chose to throw in their lot with the RUF."[111] Even Issa Sesay testified that he was forced to join the RUF on threat of death. A key prosecution witness testified that the RUF's plan to attack Sierra Leone was drawn at Voinjama between Taylor and Sankoh. *Witness to Truth*, the TRC's final report, estimated that as many as 1,600 NPFL fighters were involved in the early phase of the Sierra Leonean war,[112]80% of the RUF forces. The report called the original RUF recruits in Liberia "detainee-turned-vanguards", noting that:

> Sankoh personally accompanied members of NPFL 'hit squads' who visited some of the detention facilities, apparently for the sole purpose of enlisting the men and women he wanted to make into his first revolutionary commandos... Sankoh's favoured means of recruitment depended on convincing people that their lives lay squarely in his hands and that if they refused to join him, they would be responsible for their own fate   effectively, he blackmailed them into becoming members of the RUF. Many of those enlisted by this means were acutely aware of what Sankoh was doing, but were equally powerless to prevent it in view of the all-pervading dangers at that time of being a Sierra Leonean in Liberia...[113]

Once they invaded Sierra Leone, the RUF targeted children for recruitment, and this continued as a policy. The judgment in the case of the three RUF indictees   Issa Sesay, Moriss Kallon and Augustine Gbao, delivered on 2 March 2009   determined that "thousands of children" were forcibly recruited by the RUF. It noted:

> The military training of children by the RUF dates from its inception as an armed movement. Between 1991 and 1992, children between the ages of eight and 15 were trained at Camp Naama in Liberia 3081 and Matru Jong and Pendembu in Sierra Leone. Prior to1996, the RUF also trained children in military techniques at their Headquarters at Camp Zogoda... In the Chamber's view, this evidence demonstrates a consistent pattern of conduct by the RUF of recruiting and training children for military purposes that began as early as 1991 and continued throughout the Indictment period. Children were of great importance to the RUF organisation. As the RUF had no formal means of recruitment, it relied heavily on abducted children to increase the number of fighters within the RUF. Young boys were of particular value to the RUF due to their loyalty to the movement and their ability to effectively conduct espionage activities, as their small size and agility made them particularly suitable for hazardous assignments. The younger children were particularly aggressive

[111] Defence Final Brief: Public Version (on SCSL's website), 23 May 2011.
[112] *Witness to Truth: Report of Sierra Leone's Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, vol. 3A, para. 126.
[113] Ibid.

when armed and were known to kill human beings as if they were nothing more than "chickens."[114]

Some witnesses testified that the RUF was not well-armed at the time it invaded Sierra Leone, and the prosecutors produced a letter in court from Sankoh begging Taylor to send him more armaments and weapons. Taylor's defence seized on this to suggest, in its final brief, noting that this would mean that the RUF was not a wing of the NPFL since it otherwise would be been significantly well-armed by Taylor before it was launched in Sierra Leone.[115] But it admitted to Taylor being aware of the RUF training in territory under his control, emphasising, however, that there was "ideological training" of the RUF, inducing in the fighters a need to "give good treatment to the civilians because they needed their support; people's property was to be taken care of and maintained, fighters were to have access to food." It continued: "Ideology training involved offering someone a chance to surrender; no raping; and allowing civilians to leave for safer locations."[116]

No doubt the training was not successful, as many witnesses testified to a regime of terror and rapine imposed on areas that the RUF immediately controlled after its initial incursions. Blame for this was largely placed by several witnesses on the Liberian elements in the RUF. This concurs with the findings of the TRC, which noted that in fact Sankoh was effectively held hostage by the NPFL elements (or so-called 'Special Forces') both because of their huge number and by the fact that having brought them to Sierra Leone, Sankoh "had to accept that in the eyes of the population these people were the RUF."[117]   In addition, the Commission insightfully notes of the Liberian training in general:

> The Commission recognises that the period spent in training by the vanguards of the RUF was to provide a benchmark for the formation of other militias and armed groups that participated in the Sierra Leone conflict: in character, this group of people stands to be considered as a highly unconventional fighting force; its members were taken on board in troubled circumstances, many of them under false pretences, duress, or threats to their lives; and they were only loosely bound together by superficial bonds, more out of a sense of common adversity than any true notion of unity. It is therefore hardly surprising that the

[114] Trial Chamber 1: Judgment in the case of the three RUF indictees   Issa Sesay, Moriss Kallon and Augustine Gbao, 2 March 2009 (See: http://www.sc-sl.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=D5HojR8FZS4%3d&tabid=215 acessed on 2 November 2011.) On the recruitment of children by the RUF in Liberia, Taylor's defence team made this gloriously absurd point: "a more nuanced and culturally sensitive view as to the presence of children at Naama [training camp] must be considered…Some children present on the base were the children or small brothers of the trainees. They may have participated in physical activities and lectures, but the idea was not that they would train for active combat." See *Defence Final Brief*, 146.
[115] Defence Final Brief, 271.
[116] Ibid. 144
[117] *Witness to Truth*, Vol. 3, 242.

relationships of these vanguards among themselves would fluctuate between friendly camaraderie and mutual suspicion.[118]

Once the RUF gained a foothold in Sierra Leone, particularly in Kailahun and Pujehun districts, long strongholds of opposition to the All Peoples Congress (APC) one-party dictatorship in Sierra Leone, several witnesses testified that there were many 'willing recruits' joining the RUF. Paul Richards was the first scholar to draw attention to these types, as he was the first to write about the brutalities of the Liberian and Burkinabe elements in the RUF at the early stages of the war, in a pioneering article that appeared in 1995. Among such 'willing recruits', he wrote, there were "signs of voluntary adhesion" to the RUF.[119] The TRC report has a particular section on such recruits in its Volume Three, and it treats the matter with appropriate circumspection and sensitivity. Referring to "a variety of individuals in both the East and South of the country, with particular emphasis on young men from rural areas" who "joined the RUF of their own volition, stayed with the movement until the end of the conflict and, in many cases, have gone on to become members of the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUFP), which they feel still embodies their ideas for change," the report noted that "some complicated sociological dynamics [are] to be considered when looking at the concept of 'volunteering' one's own or a family member's services to the RUF." The 'willing recruits' were mostly, the TRC concluded, of the stereotype which would "fit a young man who had come from a lower-class background of abject poverty and whose parents had not enjoyed any favour or good fortune under the APC, despite often having worked hard in the agricultural sector." Such a young man "had nonetheless been able to acquire enough education to perceive some of the blatant injustices to which he was being subjected; but at the point the RUF found him, he had lost all social bearing and was therefore open to the option of taking up arms."[120]

A key piece evidence popularly tying Taylor to the RUF from the very start of the war in Sierra Leone was Taylor's statement on the BBC on 1 November 1990, threatening to attack and destroy Sierra Leone's international airport, arguing that by allowing its territory to be used as an operational base of the West African intervention force, ECOMOG, Sierra Leone had made itself a legitimate target. The SCSL prosecutors presented this as evidence of Taylor's involvement in the war in Sierra Leone, but the defence dismissed it as mere bluster on the part of Taylor, not a policy statement. Evidence is incontrovertible that in the late 1980s, and long before this threat, Taylor traveled to Freetown and bribed the compulsively venal Joseph Momoh government of Sierra Leone to allow him to use Sierra Leone as a base to launch his war in Liberia. Momoh's government at first agreed but later reneged on the agreement, arrested and detained Taylor for several days.[121] Was this the root of Taylor's animus to Momoh,

[118] Ibid. 74

[119] Paul Richards, 'Rebellion in Liberia and Sierra Leone: a crisis of youth?' in Oliver Furley, ed., Conflict in Africa (London: I. B. Tauris, 1995), 134-170.

[120] *Witness to Truth*, Vol. 3, 208.

[121] The trial transcripts are clear about this — even Taylor has not denied it. In his testimony to the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in 2009, Prince Johnson, who was Taylor's chief commander

and the reason why he supported the RUF's incursions? On this, the TRC report states:

> The Commission has confirmed that Taylor was indeed detained at Freetown Central Prison for a limited period in 1989, but must caution against the story being afforded any undue credence or significance as a motivation for his later involvement in the Sierra Leone conflict. Taylor had developed multiple other reasons for attacking Sierra Leone by March 1991 and his period of imprisonment ranked very low among them. Acknowledging that the detention itself was not the main cause of Taylor's rancour, some commentators have made claims that Foday Sankoh was incarcerated in the Prison alongside Taylor and that their friendship grew out of this common plight. Testimonies before the Commission do not support this version of events. Several firsthand testimonies place Sankoh in Libya and the Ivory Coast during the period in question. Taylor and Sankoh had met in Libya in 1988 and had become part of the deal between Sierra Leonean and Liberian revolutionaries to mutually support each other in their respective plans. Thus when Taylor was released from custody in Sierra Leone and returned to the Ivory Coast to pursue his incursion on a single front, he would meet Sankoh on Ivorian territory and the two of them would continue their joint plans from there.[122]

The TRC gives more weight, with respect to reasons for Taylor's support of the RUF's invasion, to the fact that Momoh had permitted ECOMOG the 'Ceasefire Monitoring Group' of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the use of Sierra Leone's Lungi International Airport, "to be used as a launch pad for air raids that were essentially leveled 'against' Taylor." The fact that Momoh sent at least two sets of troops in support of ECOMOG only added to Taylor's ire, in the TRC's view.

Both the TRC and the SCSL prosecutors, in other words, are agreed that Taylor played a critical role in the launch of the RUF war in Sierra Leone — though the SCSL's approach has been less nuanced because narrowly focused on proving "joint criminality" and "common cause" between Sankoh and Taylor than the TRC's.

Diamonds and War-Atrocities
In his account of the war, Stephen J Rapp, the former chief prosecutor of the SCSL, makes the popular case with respect to Taylor's involvement in Sierra Leone's war:

> ...in March 1991, Taylor sent his and Foday Sankoh's RUF forces into Sierra Leone and began a civil war that would last eleven years. ...the RUF's conduct

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at the initial stages of the Liberian war, said that Taylor gave President Momoh $50,000 as inducement for his facilitating role, but that Momoh later arrested and detained Taylor. Johnson suggested that there was some kind of understanding from that point that Momoh would be punished once the NPFL became successful. I attended the hearings in Monrovia and took notes. As well, Johnson's testimony could be heard from this YouTube link:
http://www.veoh.com/watch/v20279237MBCkchb6?h1=Prince+Johnson's+Testimony+at+TRC

[122] *Witness to Truth*, Vol. 3, 39.

of civil war was characterized by a campaign of terror. The targets were not military bases, enemy soldiers, or even sections vital to government infrastructure. The targets were civilians, and their homes and villages, and the acts included murder, mutilation, rape, and the gruesome display of dismembered corpses   acts with no benefit to the perpetrators other than to spread fear far and wide. They included the enslavement or conscription of human beings as sex slaves....

The evidence that the prosecution has uncovered tends to show that, from the beginning, Taylor and Sankoh saw the diamonds as a benefit of the conflict, but that taking, holding, and exploiting diamond fields became even more important as the war continued. The evidence also shows that thousands of diamonds were smuggled from Sierra Leone through Liberia, which has only limited diamond resources of much lower quality. These diamonds provided critical finance for the supply and armament of the RUF, but the evidence also shows that the majority of the profits went to Taylor for "safekeeping." This exploitation, itself the war crime of pillage, also involved the commission of the crime against humanity of enslavement and the war crime of slavery, the victims of which included hundreds of civilians who worked under conditions of great deprivation and cruelty.[123]

On the critical issue of the role of diamonds in the war, especially as motivation for Taylor's involvement, the SCSL prosecutors submitted key evidence to assert that "as early as 1992" the RUF captured the diamond district of Kono "and took captured diamonds to Charles Taylor." They stated as well that in 1995, the RUF again took Kono and Tongo Fields, another diamond area, and extensively mined diamonds there. The prosecutors noted: "However, it was during the AFRC/RUF Junta period that Taylor began to taste the real benefits of Sierra Leone's abundant diamond resources." Their final brief noted in order for Taylor to arrange shipment of arms to the AFRC and RUF forces   now united as the Peoples' Army   Taylor's emissary Ibrahim Bah "informed Junta leaders that it would be necessary to pay cash for the flight and provide diamonds to Taylor." Diamonds mined in Tongo Field, then under the control of the RUF's Sam Bockarie, "were taken to Taylor by Daniel Tamba." The brief noted that when the AFRC was expelled from Freetown, "Taylor ordered the rebels to concentrate on retaking Kono," which they did, and committed widespread atrocities, including mass execution and amputations in the process of establishing their control and mining diamonds. Taylor "arranged shipment of multiple truck-loads of ammunition" into Sierra Leone, which "enabled the late 1998/early 1999 offensive in which the rebels were able to take control of all diamond areas", the brief charges. It noted Issa Sesay's testimony to the effect that after Sam Bockarie left the rebels for Liberia following the 1999 attack on Freetown, "Liberian security closed the border to all with the single exception that Taylor's emissary, Ibrahim Bah, was allowed to cross the border into Sierra Leone with trucks filled with [diamond] mining equipment."

[a] Stephen J. Rapp, 'The Compact Model in International Criminal Justice: The Special Court for Sierra Leone,' *Drake Law Review*, Vol. 57, 2007.

The brief noted that twenty-five witnesses "provided information about the AFRC/RUF's diamond business with Taylor or his designees."[124]

In response, Taylor's Defence conceded much of this, stating that "diamonds only financed the procurement of arms and ammunition" for the RUF between 1998 and 2001. Denying that diamonds were the reasons why Taylor supported the RUF, the Defence's *Final Brief* stated what no one has challenged: that the RUF diamond mining began "post the invasion" which happened in March 1991. It stated: "There is no evidence of any discussions relating to diamonds pre the Sierra Leonean invasion to suggest that the invasion might have been motivated by a desire to pillage Sierra Leone's diamonds."[125] It should be noted that the Defence's key point is not that Taylor *did not* support the RUF, but that he did not do so either as part of JCE or with "an underlying intention to cause terror." The Defence contends that there was a "purely political motive" for Taylor's support of the RUF war, which may be immoral but certainly not illegal in international law.

The TRC report noted that diamonds were a fueling factor in the war, and that all the factions, but mostly the RUF and AFRC, targeted diamond-mining areas of the east and south of the country to ruthless exploitation. The report noted that the RUF abducted numerous civilians, including children, to use as slave labour in the diamond fields, causing extensive suffering to the population residing there, including abductions, looting and executions related to diamond disputes. The report noted: "The Commission finds that the exploitation of diamonds did not cause the conflict in Sierra Leone, but different fighting factions did target diamond areas for purposes of supporting their war efforts."[126]

In essence, these findings broadly agree with the seminal work on diamonds and the war, *The Heart of the Matter: Sierra Leone, Diamonds and Human Security*,[127] which observed in January 2000 that:

> Diamonds, in fact, have fueled Sierra Leone's conflict, destabilizing the country for the better part of three decades, stealing its patrimony and robbing an entire generation of children, putting the country dead last on the UNDP Human Development Index...Over the years, the informal diamond mining sector, long dominated by what might be called 'disorganized crime', became increasingly influenced by *organized* crime and by the transcontinental smuggling not just of diamonds, but of guns and drugs, and by vast sums of money in search of a laundry. Violence became central to the advancement of those with vested interests. As the mutation of the war in Sierra Leone

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[124] Prosecutors' *Final Brief*, 13-14.
[125] Charles Taylor's Defence's *Final Brief*, 273.
[126] *Witness to Truth*, Volume 2, Chapter 2, p. 107
[127] Ian Smillie, Lansana Gberie and Ralph Hazleton, *The Heart of the Matter: Sierra Leone, diamonds and Human Security* (Partnership Africa Canada 2000).

continued through the 1990s, so did the number and type of predators, each seeking to gain from one side of the conflict or another[128]

The TRC attached a very interesting appendix to its report on the ghastly issue of amputations during the war, which became perhaps the defining mark of the Sierra Leone war.[129] Though the report mentions a number of intermittent cases of amputations in the region based on mainly colonial and missionary records, it wisely refrains from historicising the phenomenon. The report noted that 'intentional amputations' had been carried out by Taylor's forces in Liberia before they were reported in Sierra Leone. The report cites the testimony of Francis Momoh Musah, of the RUF's Internal Defence Unit for Kailahun District, as claiming that the notorious Liberian Special Forces "introduced this specific kind of brutality into the Sierra Leonean civil war of the1990s." Analysing the telling case of a Sierra Leone government soldier, Tamba Ngauja, who was amputated on 21 November 1992 by Liberian elements in the RUF in Kono, the report notes:

> If the details of this story are credible and if they are representative of the actions of other RUF rebels at least, then we may conclude that the Liberians did, in fact, influence the Sierra Leoneans to commit amputations (the history of amputations in Liberia in lends further credence to this view) and that the Sierra Leoneans, as represented by this commander, willingly accepted the suggestion and made it into their own. We may also conclude, on the basis of this testimony, that, at least at this point in the war (November 1992), the RUF did not have a planned strategy to amputate, but that amputation resulted instead from improvisation on the field.[130]

The report noted that amputations came to be widely practiced by both the RUF and rogue government soldiers, particularly after the ousting of the AFRC from power in Freetown in 1998. From that point, "similarity of the structure [of amputations] points to a systematic strategy on the part of the perpetrators" and that amputations "were reportedly regularly performed by young boys, often in their teens, though on occasion children were also used." The report quotes a famous amputee, Jusu Jaka, the Chairman of the association for amputees in Freetown, as testifying that "there was one queue for amputation of one hand and another for the amputation of both" during the attack on Freetown in January 1999. It also quotes claims by amputees and the UN that there were 'special units' devoted to cutting off of hands, especially during the horrendous attack on Freetown in 1999. Much of this agrees with my analysis, in which I characterized the amputations as 'violence-as-spectacle'.[131]

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[128] Ibid. Executive Summary

[129] 'Appendix 5: Amputations in the Sierra Leone Conflict,' (*Witness to Truth*) put together by friend Artemis Christodulou, a PhD student from Yale University, who was an intern at the TRC in 2003: I shared some of my notes, which formed a section of my book (*A Dirty War in West Africa*), with her. In 2004, she was involved in a horrible accident in Sierra Leone, and remained in coma for many years.

[130] Ibid.

[131] See Gberie, *A Dirty War*, 118-155. I must add that the book was already with the publishers when the TRC report came out, and I had assisted the TRC research into this aspect of the war.

The SCSL, on the hand, did not treat amputations in any special way, noting that they were "a hallmark of the retreating" AFRC and RUF forces from Freetown. It noted in the verdict against the three RUF and AFRC leaders charged by the court that "many civilians were subjected to this crime at locations including Calaba Town, Upgun and Kissy." It states: "According to witness George Johnson, AFRC Commander Five-Five issued an order to commit 200 civilian amputations and to send the amputees to the Government," and that several "witnesses testified that rebels asked civilians whether they wanted "short sleeves" or "long sleeves" and their arms were amputated either at the elbow or at the wrist accordingly. Rebels were also known to amputate four fingers, leaving only the thumb, which they referred to as "one love" and which they encouraged the victims to show to Tejan Kabbah." Based on this evidence, the SCSL concluded that "the scale of violence was such that there can be no doubt that the infliction of violence on civilians was a primary objective of the attacking forces."[132] This also agrees with my analysis.

Early Analysis of the War

The RUF's brutality, its reliance on foreign fighters at the initial stages of the war, and on child soldiers throughout the war, bewildered most analysts from the start. The first attempt to understand the war had to grapple with this unique characteristic. As it happens, the basic outline of this analysis   which depicted the war as part of a wider narrative of youth nihilism, state collapse, and mercenarism in West Africa   has been significantly modified, but not entirely rejected. It began with the publication, in 1994, of Robert Kaplan's highly influential 'The Coming Anarchy' article in the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine.[133]

Kaplan's article, which posited youth discontentment and dislocation in West Africa as among the most important drivers of conflict in the region, however, addresses the problem only tangentially, as a footnote to much more important factors at play. Uneasily welding together the thesis of Martin van Creveld about post-Cold War wars by non-state actors, Thomas Homer-Dixon's pessimistic environmental prognosis and Samuel Huntington's thesis about the unavoidable 'clash of civilizations', Kaplan described the war in Sierra Leone - and in Liberia at the time, after lightning stops in both countries - as anarchic, criminal (as opposed to political) violence that would lead to a Hobbesian state of nullity and terror. The widespread armed violence in both countries, he wrote, was not war in the sense in which Clausewitz defined wars as a continuation of politics by other means. Instead, what was happening in Sierra Leone was

> … a microcosm of what is happening in West Africa and much of the underdeveloped world: the withering away of central governments, the

[132] Trial Chamber 1 Judgment, 453-454
[133] Robert Kaplan, 'The Coming Anarchy,' *Atlantic Monthly*, February 1994.

rise of tribal or regional domains, the unchecked spread of disease, and the growing pervasiveness of war.[134]

This kind of war is he says not politically motivated but criminally driven, with dispossessed urban youths   'loose molecules in an unstable social fluid' - wreaking vengeance on societies that had left them despairing and poor. Kaplan suggested that these armed youths were Africa's modern day *écorcheurs* who were roaming and ravaging the countryside in a manner reminiscent of the ravages of armed mercenaries in Germany during the Thirty Years' War. It was the phrase, West African youth as 'loose molecules in an unstable social fluid', that captured the mercenary essence of the war, and upon which other analysts seized.

It provoked Paul Richards, a British anthropologist with very intimate knowledge of Sierra Leone, to write the first scholarly analysis of the war. In 1995, Richards published 'Rebellion in Liberia and Sierra Leone: a crisis of youth,' as a chapter in Oliver Furley's volume on Conflict in Africa.[135] It is impossible now, with all the many volumes and thousands of pages of data that have been produced on the war, to accurately capture the refreshing impact of this path-breaking article. It was the first serious study that drew a conceptual and practical connection between the RUF and the NPFL in Liberia, even tracing their roots to anti-state student and youth activism, as well as the support from ideological connections in Gaddafi's Libya. Richards did not appear to have the evidence to flesh out the linkages. The following year, he wrote a book-length account of on the war, *Fighting for the Rainforest: War, Resources and Youth*,[136] in which, stung perhaps by a robust critique of his 1995 article by Ibrahim Abdullah, he somewhat abandons those critically important aspects of the war to instead concentrate on providing a rationalist framework for the RUF's demented brutality. Though he makes the case that student radicalism had been a factor in the rise of the RUF, Richards devotes a large part of the book to debunking Kaplan's ill-thought out thesis on the Sierra Leone war. Youth is central to understanding the crisis in Sierra Leone, Richards wrote, but not in the context that Kaplan placed it. There is nothing like the breakdown of social order, population pressure, family breakdown and environmental degradation that Kaplan claims to have happened in 'this well-resourced country.' Sierra Leone, Richards wrote in a spirited piece which came not long after Kaplan's article, 'is one of Africa's less likely candidates for neo-Malthusian disaster.' The problem really, according to Richards, is that there was a rebellion of marginalized youth to take control over the country's forest resources from the capital city-based elites and their exploitative foreign friends. He analysed the RUF now as a 'group of embittered pedagogues' fighting to replace the corrupt patrimonial state with a 'revolutionary egalitarian one' and appealing "directly to deracinated youths with blighted educational prospects." The RUF also, he wrote, appealed to a 'younger generation of rural primary and secondary school teachers, long disgruntled by poor and uncertain pay" and to a "mass of less educated youth in the diamond

[134] Ibid.

[135] Paul Richards, "Rebellion in Liberia and Sierra Leone: a crisis of youth?"

[136] Paul Richards, *Fighting for the Rainforest: War, Resources and Youth in Sierra Leone* (London: Heineman, 1996).

districts [who had] a more intuitive revolutionary consciousness shaped notably by reggae-style Rasta and exposure to Rambo genre of post-Vietnam movies." Richards noted certain "communitarian principles" practiced by the RUF in areas it controlled, including redistribution of "food, drugs, clothes and shoes from 'liberated' government sources," taking at face value the RUF's stated pronouncement "Every member of the community has rights to basic needs (food, housing, health, and transport)."[137]

Once again, Ibrahim Abdullah descended on Richards in a pathbreaking article, "Bush Paths to Destruction: The Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone,' first published on the Sierra Leone email discussion forum Leonenet in November and December 1996 and later as part of a collection of articles on the war.[138] In it Abdullah offers his own interpretation of the war as a 'rebellion' driven by 'lumpen youth', and, inevitably, characterized by terror and lacking in ideological motivation. Abdullah defines 'lumpen' youth as socially uprooted and criminally disposed young people among whom had emerged, after decades of a corrupt and ultimately failed one-party system, a 'lumpen youth culture' - a despairing anti-social movement of drug addicts, petty thieves and gamblers, growing up mostly in the slums of Freetown. People from this group formed the core leadership of the RUF, which is why the group was pathologically disposed to criminal violence and terror. The war, in other words, was a kind of rootless urban youth revolt. The "mutilation, murder and rape of innocent women and children by the RUF are acts that are incompatible with a revolutionary project," Abdullah argues. "The 'revolutionary' acts…were committed again and again precisely because of the social composition (of the RUF)…A lumpen social movement breeds a lumpen revolution."[139]

The transcripts of testimonies from the SCSL trials make clear that the RUF did make an attempt to establish some form of communitarian order in Kailahun once the district had been fully subjugated, but that the effort was not at all consistent, as the RUF's regime of terror superseded all such efforts. Some witnesses, mainly for the defence, testified that civilians worked willingly on 'community farms' and in mines particular run by Issa Sesay in Kailahun district, and that workers were well-taken care of. As in certain slave plantations in the antebellum south,[140] some workers on these farms and mines were said to have gone about their work "singing and dancing." The RUF, again true to form, allowed some of the workers on the agricultural fields to keep the proceeds from the farms. A picture of harmonious cooperation between the RUF overlords and the peasant farmers was painted by some witnesses; Issa essay was said to have been particularly generous to the workers, giving them salt, pepper, cigarettes and other food condiments. The SCSL Trial Chamber rightly rejected this glorious picture, noting:

Richards, *Fighting for the Rainforest*, 52-54
Ibrahim Abdullah, 'Bush Paths to Destruction: The Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone,' in *Between Democracy and Terror* (Dakar: CODESRIA, 2004).
Ibid.
See Eugene Genovese's *Roll, Jordan, Roll: the World the Slaves Made* for an insightful discussion of this phenomenon.

The Chamber recognizes that there may have been a limited few privileged people who had access to such amenities. The Chamber is of the considered view that the overwhelming evidence presented during the trial contradicts this reality for most civilians in RUF controlled areas of Sierra Leone during the war. The Chamber observes that the majority of these witnesses testified that they were adherents of the RUF ideology. Some of these witnesses testified out of loyalty to the RUF and their superior Commanders, and evidently were trying to assist Sesay and Kallon in this trial, and not necessarily to assist the Chamber in its search for the truth. Accordingly, the Chamber has rejected the version of events presented by these witnesses because their testimony to this effect, in the circumstances, is not credible.[141]

In fact, the SCSL noted:

Numerous witnesses testified before the court and gave personal accounts of suffering brutal and violent crimes such as amputations or rapes, or had personally witnessed crimes such as amputations, rapes and killings committed against relatives and friends. The re-telling of such traumatic experiences was difficult for many of the witnesses, some of whom became understandably emotional and distraught during testimony. The Chamber recognizes that, as an obvious consequence of recounting such horrifying events, some witnesses were unable to give the Chamber a full account of what they had endured, either because it was too painful, or because they had mentally repressed the event. Other witnesses, while able to remember the event, had difficulties in recalling all of the details in full.[142]

On the matter of whether the RUF was an urban or rural rebellion, Krijn Peters cites a study by Humphreys & Weinstein in 2004 which "make clear that a majority of ex-combatants in the Sierra Leone civil war (more than 80 per cent) were from a rural background." This, in writes, "is seemingly at variance with the urban "lumpen" thesis of Abdullah (1997) and others, which states that the RUF rebellion was implemented by a group of people with urban underclass backgrounds."

Peters notes:

The root causes of the conflict in Sierra Leone suggested by rural ex-combatants can be divided into two kinds. One group of reasons consists of issues playing out on the local level: complaints about a general unwillingness of seniors to help their juniors, the injustice meted out by local courts controlled by corrupt elders and chiefs, and the control these elders exercised over productive and reproductive means, such as land and labour, and the resources necessary for marriage. The other group of reasons plays out at national or state-level. Here, the focus is on the state's failure to provide

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[footnote] *Trial Chamber verdict in the Case of the RUF Accused*, 181.

accessible education for all, lack of job opportunities and desire for a democratic system to replace an unfair and divisive clientelism.[143]

Peters interviews mainly such rural ex-combatants, and mostly in the eastern part of the country (Kailahun and Kenema districts). One would assume, of course, that ex-combatants who partook of a defeated and discredited 'revolution' would provide such ex post facto rationalisations, though the issues raised — petty injustices and even oppression at the rural level — are real indeed. The problem is that these deprived rural youths only took up arms when an essentially outside force came in, and in most cases, as is clear from the foregoing, their recruitment was far from 'willing'.

Conclusion

In this article, I have engaged only with a few of the major works on the war in Sierra Leone, juxtaposing arguments made by them against the findings and data produced by the two institutions tasked with establishing the historical record of the war, the TRC and the SCSL. These institutions had vastly greater resources and access than any individual author, and both sought to be as dispassionate with the evidence as possible.

I have concentrated on the RUF, as I did in my by book *The Dirty War in West Africa*, in part because the war was started by the RUF, and arguably only the RUF ensured its continuation and character. A number of very important works have appeared on the CDF( ), in particular the Kamajors; the most authoritative account in this respect is Danny Hoffman's '*The war Machine* '(2011),[144] which more than any other work integrates the Sierra Leone conflict within the wider Mano River wars that started in Liberia and spread into Guinea and Ivory Coast.

Since I am one of the authors reviewed in this paper, my bias is plain, but I have tried as best as possible to do justice to the various scholars who started and sustained the debate on the war in Sierra Leone. To them, Sierra Leone owes a debt of gratitude.

[140] Ibid. 181-182.

[141] See introduction of Krijn Peters, "Footpaths to Reintegration: Armed Conflict, Youth and Rural crisis in Sierra Leone" (PhD thesis Wageningen Universiteit, 2006)

142 Danny Hoffman, *The War Machines: Young Men and Violence in Sierra Leone and Liberia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011

Connection between Good Governance and Economic Development in Sierra Leone: A Quantitative Analysis

Abdul Karim Bangura

Introduction

Sierra Leone's economic, political and social state has been a hot topic of discussion since decolonization. If underdevelopment can be seen as a major cause for Sierra Leone's problems, the experience of the past four decades implies that there is still a vague understanding of what to actually do about it. This is not to say that there are not any working theories. It is actually precisely the opposite; there are many books, articles, assessments, theories and suggestions advising Sierra Leoneans how to turn their situation around. Liberal democracy, central direction and structural adjustment programs are only a few of the reforms that have previously been put in place but have resulted in failure.

Employing a conceptual framework and a quantitative methodological approach, this essay critically analyzes the connection between good governance and economic development in Sierra Leone. The underlying presupposition of this study is that these concepts/variables are very much intertwined, since the lack of economic gains is often linked to the lack of political participation among one or more groups of people.

The essay begins with definitions of the two major concepts/variables. As the fields of governance and economic development have become increasingly complex and interdisciplinary, it is only appropriate to start with the problem of definition, even if the reader may feel frightened at the thought of other definitions of clearly over-defined phenomena. The intention, however, is not to suggest *new* definitions, but to stress an important point: that is, there can be no *final* definitions of good governance and economic development, only suggestions of what they should imply. The two concepts/variables should be open ones which will continue to be redefined as our knowledge of the processes increase and as new problems to be solved by these concepts/variables emerge. The intellectual preoccupation with the two phenomena, to give them new contents, and to come up with suggestions about how to promote them, is thus part of the research processes in the fields of governance and economic

development. When definitions of these concepts/variables are discussed, the effort is geared toward orientations of foci of interests. To avoid the concepts/variables altogether would create more havoc than it solves.

Next, the conceptual framework and quantitative methodological approach employed are discussed. The operationalization of the two variables, data collection techniques and sources are also presented.

After that, the data collected are analyzed at the univariate and bivariate levels. The first level entails a descriptive statistical analysis of each of the two variables. The second level involves correlation and simple regression analyses of the two variables to determine the strength and possible direction between the two variables.

Good Governance

Governance is generally defined as the act of affecting government and monitoring (through policy) the long-term strategy and direction of a country. In essence, governance comprises the traditions, institutions and processes that determine how power is exercised, how citizens are given a voice, and how decisions are made on issues of public concern (Wunsch, 2000:487-509). According to this definition, governance is bound to have an everlasting impact on the rule of law, local and national institutions, leadership, public administration issues and, of course, Africa's or a country's goal of sustainable development. Good governance has become a fashionable phrase in recent development literature, but treating it as a buzzword would be short-sighted.

 A government as an institution can be seen as a structure of rules, both written and unwritten. To engage in governance then is to attempt to enforce the rules that make up governments (Wunsch, 2000:487-509). Behind the rules that are created by governments, there is another set of rules that are constitutional in nature and regulate persons engaging in enacting the rules of government. Great power is held in the hands of individuals and groups that have authority to alter constitutional regulations in any form without consulting the people. The concentration of power determines the character of political process and must be given a great deal of attention when it comes to Africa. When a small group of people or a single person has the resources to establish and enforce a set of constitutional rules, one should expect a high level of danger and instability, because that group or individual will design unilateral advantages and biases into the rules to benefit the group or the person and in turn ignore the rights of the majority (Wunsch, 2000:487-509). Among the negative prospects of such regimes are corruption, economic inefficiency, eroded legitimacy and, eventually, economic and administrative decline, as has been witnessed in many cases in Africa (Wunsch, 2000:487-509).

Such regimes are, thus, very weak in nature because the rule of law that enables them to survive is constructed on the backs of an oppressed people. The mass support for

these regimes is shallow and does not reach outside the capitals. Their attempt to lead any sort of significant social or economic change or even to deliver basic services for the most part is short lived (Wunsch, 2000:487-509). Perhaps this could explain the reluctance of these governments to allow the development of more local leadership and institutions. Upon closer inspection, the story of most post-colonial African states clearly shows concentration of power and centralization (Wunsch, 2000:487-509). Local autonomy is able to breed leaders and create cohesion which eventually will challenge the elite class. Unfortunately in most cases, because governments do not foster good local governance, Africans have not been able to have a united movement against oppression from their leaders, like the one that led to the rejection of colonization.

Despite the negativity surrounding Africans, the people have managed to survive. For the most part, social order has been kept and civilizations have been maintained. Voluntary associations, churches, mosques and traditional ruling structures foster community living. Democracy is not a new introduction to Africa; the indigenous populations have been practicing it for centuries through use of consensus and chiefs (Makumbe, 1998:305-311). In African societies, there is a basic building block for more contemporary democratic solutions to address current problems. Some in support of the traditional system of local governance have argued that local institutions could give birth to viable state systems by using a bottom-up approach. It is not the purpose of this paper, however, to determine whether the bottom-up strategy will work, but rather to merely indicate that the central state strategy in Africa has failed and traditional political structures and complicated intermixing of cultures seem to be the reason why Africa has not completely crumbled. On the other side, the bottom-up approach has been associated with romanticizing the workings of pre-colonial regimes. But, regardless of the method used, because of the specific nature of African demographics, the intermixing of several ethnicities, national governance should focus on representation, discussion and consensus building. One of the main road blocks in post-colonial Africa is the fact that current governmental systems do not allow for constructive public participation.

It is therefore instructive to note what Jacques Mangala says about good governance as it pertains to Africa:

> Good governance is not only a government duly put in place by the people, but which stays in close touch with the needs of people in the formulation and implementation of national policies. Good governance is not about the mechanics of policies but their ends. Good governance in this sense is intimately linked to the pursuit of a democratic agenda, which seeks "ownership" by the people of reform and development program enunciated by the state/government. Participatory democracy, decentralization of economic and political decision-making centers of power are central to this broad democratic agenda, which should constitute the measure of "good governance," especially when assessed against the background of state sovereignty (Mangala, 2008:113).

Indeed, Mangala's points bring some restoration of intellectual sanity to the discourse on good governance, for they highlight the truism that good governance is fundamentally a political necessity grounded on the notion of legitimacy.

Economic Development

The concept of *economic development* is concerned with societies in change, which is rarely the case with conventional economics. Thus, economic development theory is related to *development strategy*: the purposive change of economic systems and social institutions, which makes it even more different from the established tradition of the social sciences. As economic development theory has grown out of a concern with developing countries with the implicit assumption that the conditions in those societies are unsatisfactory and ought to be changed, it is relatively more normative than social sciences in general.

Economic development theory refers primarily to the academic pursuit of knowledge while *development thinking* is a more inclusive concept. The latter not only refers to academicians, but also to administrators, planners, politicians, volunteers, etc. in economic development work.

One can recall the series of initiatives by Africans themselves aimed at addressing the development challenges of Africa, in particular the Lagos Plan of Action and the companion African Alternative Framework for Structural Adjustment. Each time, these initiatives were counteracted and ultimately undermined by policy frameworks developed from outside the continent and imposed on African countries. Over the past several decades, a false consensus has been generated around the neo-liberal paradigm promoted through the Bretton Woods Institutions and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). This stands to crowd out the rich tradition of Africa's own alternative thinking on development. It is in this context that the proclaimed African initiative, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which was developed in the same period as the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa's (UNECA) *Compact for African Recovery*, as well as the World Bank's *Can Africa Claim the 21ˢᵗ Century?*, are to be assessed.

The uneven progress of democratization and in particular of the expansion of space for citizen expression and participation are to be noted. The contribution of citizens' struggles and activism to this expansion of the political space and for putting critical issues of development on the public agenda must also be acknowledged.

Indeed, the challenges confronting Africa's development come from two interrelated sources: (1) constraints imposed by the hostile international economic and political order within which African economies operate, and (2) domestic weaknesses deriving from socioeconomic and political structures and neo-liberal structural adjustment policies. The main elements of the hostile global order include, first, the fact that African economies are integrated into the global economy as exporters of primary commodities and importers of manufactured products, leading to terms of trade losses. Second, reinforcing this integration have been the policies of liberalization, privatization, and deregulation, as well as an unsound package of macroeconomic policies imposed through structural adjustment conditionality by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). These have now been

institutionalized within the WTO through rules, agreements, and procedures, which are biased against African countries. Finally, the external and internal policies and structures have combined to generate an unsustainable and unjustifiable debt burden which has crippled Africa's economies and undermined the capacity of Africa's ownership of strategies for development.

The external difficulties have exacerbated the internal structural imbalances of African economies, and, together with neo-liberal structural adjustment policies, inequitable socioeconomic and political structures have led to the disintegration of African economies and increased social and gender inequity. In particular, African manufacturing industries have been destroyed; agricultural production (for food and other domestic needs) is in crisis; public services have been severely weakened; and the capacity of states and governments in Africa to make and implement policies in support of balanced and equitable national development has been emasculated. The costs associated with these outcomes have fallen disproportionately on marginalized and subordinated groups of African societies, including workers, peasants, and small producers. The impact has been particularly severe on women and children.

It is not farfetched to state that these developments have reversed policies and programs and have dismantled institutions in place since independence to create and expand integrated production across and among African economies in agriculture, industry, commerce, finance, and social services. These were programs and institutions which had, in spite of their limitations, sought to address the problems of weak internal markets and fragmented production structures as well as economic imbalances and social inequities within and among nations inherited from colonialism, and to redress the inappropriate integration of African economies in the global order. The associated social and economic gains, generated over this period, have been destroyed.

This reality should inform our reflections on the NEPAD. We must conclude that, while many of its stated goals may be well-intentioned, the development vision and economic measures that it canvases for the realization of these goals are flawed. As a result, the NEPAD will not contribute to addressing Africa's development problems. On the contrary, it will reinforce the hostile external environment and the internal weaknesses that constitute the major obstacles to Africa's development. Indeed, in certain areas like debt, the NEPAD steps back from international goals that have been won through global mobilization and struggle.

The most fundamental flaws of the NEPAD, which reproduce the central elements of the World Bank's, *Can Africa Claim the 21ˢᵗ Century?* and the ECA's *Compact for African Recovery*, include the following:
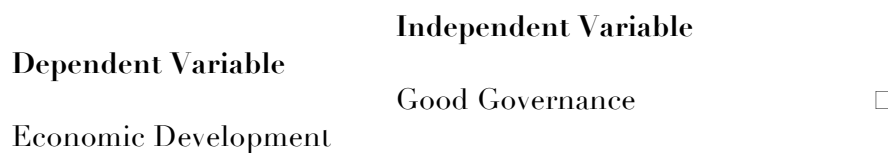
(a) the neo-liberal economic policy framework at the heart of the plan repeats the structural adjustment policy packages of the preceding several decades and overlooks the disastrous effects of those policies;

(b) the fact that in spite of its proclaimed recognition of the central role of the African people to the plan, the African people have not played any part in the conception, design, and formulation of the NEPAD;

(c) notwithstanding its stated concerns for social and gender equity, it adopts the social and economic measures that have contributed to the marginalization of women;

(d) that in spite of claims of African origins, its main targets are foreign donors, particularly in the G8;

(e) its vision of democracy is defined by the needs of creating a functional market;

(f) it underemphasizes the external conditions fundamental to Africa's development crisis and, thereby, does not promote any meaningful measure to manage and restrict the effects of this environment on Africa's development efforts. On the contrary, the engagement that it seeks with institutions and processes like the World Bank, the IMF, the WTO, the United States Africa Growth and Opportunity Act, and the Cotonou Agreement will further lock Africa's economies disadvantageously into this environment; and

(g) the means for mobilization of resources will further the disintegration of African economies that we have witnessed at the hands of structural adjustment and WTO rules.

In order to address the preceding development problems and challenges, Africans on the continent and in the Diaspora must unite and take action at the national, continental and international levels to implement measures that take into consideration African-centred strategies.

Conceptual Framework and Research Methodology

Based on the preceding discussion, it is quite evident that the concepts of good governance and economic development are very much intertwined, since the push for political participation among one or more groups of people has often been linked to the desires for economic gains. The relationship is diagrammatically represented as follows:

Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

Good Governance

Economic Development

From the conceptual framework, it is reasonable to proffer the hypothesis that good governance (independent variable) positively influences economic development

(dependent Variable) in Sierra Leone. One major purpose of this study, then, is to examine the validity of this hypothesis using sound research methodology. The perspective to be provided will then complement traditional views and highlight some aspects emphasized in previous work on these topics.

This essay utilizes quantitative methodology to explore the connection between the two variables under investigation. Quantitative methodology can be simply defined as a systematic technique that emphasizes numerical values.

Operationalization of the Variables and Data Collection

This section describes how each of the two variables is measured and its data source. The variables are discussed individually for the sake of clarity.

Good Governance The Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) is employed in this essay to measure good governance. The timeframe covered is from 2001to 2010, the period for which the data are available. The index's score ranges from 0 to 100, with 0 being the worst and 100 being the best. The data were collected from the second edition of the *2010 Ibrahim Index* published in October of 2010 (MIF, 2010).

The IIAG considers governance from the point of view of the citizen. It measures the extent of delivery to the citizen of a large number of economic, social and political goods and services by governments and non-state actors. The index groups indicators into four main categories: (1) Safety and Rule of Law, (2) Participation and Human Rights, (3) Sustainable Economic Opportunity, and (4) Human Development (MIF, 2010).

The index is a composite measure utilizing data from 23 external institutions. After the gathering of the raw data on all the 89 indicators used, since the data come in all shapes and sizes, a method is chosen to put the data on a common scale (that is to say, to re-scale the data), so that they can be usefully combined to produce an overall score for each country. The index uses the Min-Max method which involves re-scaling the raw data values to a scale of 0-100, for every indicator, for every country, and for every year. This is done by utilizing the following formula:

$$[x_t - \text{Min}(X)] / [\text{Max}(X) - \text{Min}(X)] * 100$$

where x_t is the raw value for that indicator for a particular country in year t, and the Min (X) and Max (X) are the minimum and maximum values for that indicator over the whole period and for all countries. The final result is subtracted from 100 where necessary, so that a higher number always indicates better performance (MIF, 2010).

After the 89 indicators have been transformed to a common scale, each indicator is grouped with similar indicators to form subcategories. The subcategory score is simply the average of all the indicator scores; subcategory scores are averaged to produce the category score. The category scores are then averaged to produce the final Ibrahim Index score (MIF, 2010).

Economic Development—Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita based on Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) for Sierra Leone is used in this essay as the measurement for the country's economic development. The data for this measurement also cover from 2001 to 2010 to match the number of years for which data are available for the IIAG. The GDPPCPPP data were retrieved from the 2011 Index Mundi.

GDP per capita is a measure of the total output of a country that takes the gross domestic product and divides it by the number of people in the country. PPP allows an analyst to compare the standard of living between countries by taking into account the impact of their exchange rates.

GDP per capita is calculated by using the market value of all final goods and services produced within a country in a given period. It is often considered an indicator of a country's standard of living. A rise in GDP per capita signals growth in the economy and tends to translate as an increase in productivity. An increase in GDP per capita signifies national economic growth. As such, economic planners and forecasters use GDP per capita in monitoring economic growth trend for time series. It aids them in developing economic policies and development plans, since the trend in GDP per capita at a specific period would clearly indicate whether the standard of living of the population is improving or not. A declining trend in GDP per capita indicates a sinking economy. Therefore, economic planners must come up with policies and infrastructures to facilitate economic growth. An increasing trend in the GDP per capita, on the other hand, would prompt economic planners to implement various structural adjustments to prevent inflation rate from increasing due to an increase in the purchasing power of the individual members of the population.

Summary   the preceding measurements offer a useful snapshot of some perceptions of a country's quality of the variables, but various researchers have pointed out some problems in their construction. These critics have claimed that users often fail to take into account or often are not aware of the indicators' limitations, which together can be summarized as follows: (a) lack of transparency, (b) not reproducible, (c) over complexity, (d) arbitrary, (e) absence of an underlying theory, (f) hidden biases, (g) lack of comparability, (h) lack of "actionability," (i) overselling, and (j) no concept validity.

While these criticisms are valid, no alternative measures have been developed with which everyone agrees. So, we are left with imperfect but useful measures. Indeed, the indicators contribute to the growing empirical research on good governance and economic development, which have provided activists and reformers worldwide with advocacy tools for policy reform and monitoring. The indicators, and the underlying data behind them, are part of the current research and opinions that have reinforced the experiences and observations of reform-minded individuals in government, civil society, and the private sector that these variables are imperative for stability. Their growing recognition, as empirical evidence suggests, has stimulated demand for monitoring their quality across countries and within individual countries over time. Virtually all of the individual data sources underlying the aggregate indicators are, along with the aggregate indicators themselves, publicly available.

Furthermore, the indicators are a compilation of the perceptions of a very diverse group of respondents, collected in large numbers of surveys and other cross-country assessments. Some of these instruments capture the views of individuals,

firms, and public officials in the countries being assessed. Others reflect the views of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and aid donors with considerable experience in the countries being assessed, while others are based on the assessments of commercial risk-taking agencies.

Data Analysis

What follows is a discussion of the results generated after the data collected, and then computed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), were analyzed at the univariate and bivariate levels. As stated earlier, the first level entails a descriptive statistical analysis of each of the two variables. The second level involves correlation and simple regression analyses of the two variables to determine the strength and possible direction between the two variables.

Univariate Analysis

As shown in Table 1, the mean score for Sierra Leone's IIAG for the period studied is 42.39, with a standard deviation of 3.39; the mean for its GDPPCPPP is $658.40, with a standard deviation $128.31. These results indicate that there was little variation in the country's IIAG scores and significant variation in its GDPPCPPP over the ten-year period.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
IIAG	42.390	3.3916
GDPPCPPP	658.40460	128.311462

From Figure 1, it can be seen that Sierra Leone's IIAG had a significant and steady growth from 2001 to 2008; it dipped slightly in 2009 and then leveled off in 2010. Figure 2 shows that the country's GDPPCPPP also grew significantly and steadily from 2001 to 2007; it dipped slightly in 2008 and then grew again significantly from 2009 to 2010.
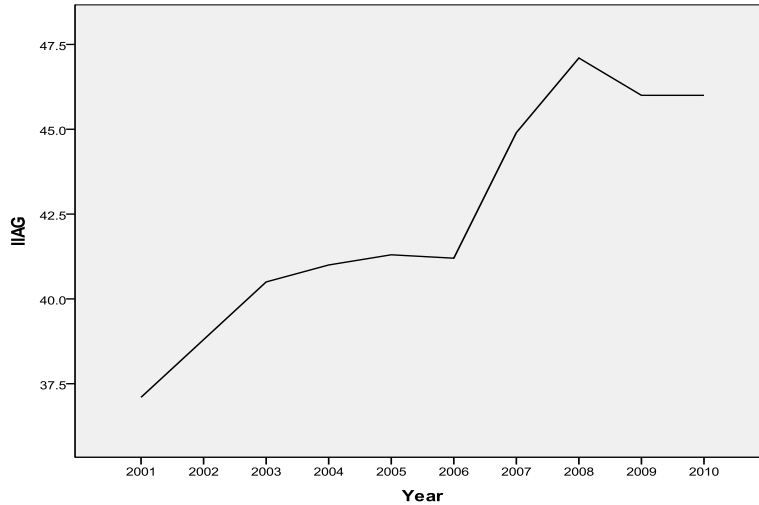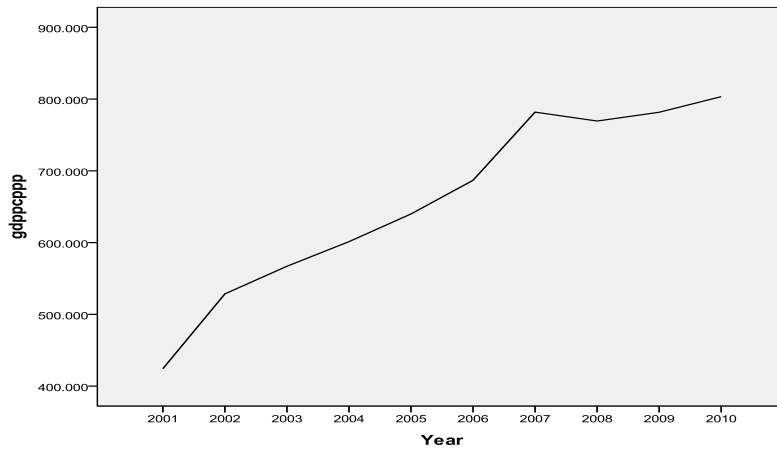
Figure 1: Sierra Leone's IIAG, 2001-2010

Figure 2: Sierra Leone's GDPPCPPP, 2001-2010

Bivariate Analysis

Table 2 reveals that there is a positive and statistically significant correlation between Sierra Leone's IIAG and its GDPPCPPP at the 0.01 level of significance. Table 3 also shows a positive and statistically significant relationship between the two variables at the 0.01 significance level. For every $1.00 gain in GDPPCPPP, there was a 30.16 score increase in the IIAG during the period studied. Indeed, these results indicate that the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables are quite impressive.

Table 2: Correlation

Variable	GDPPCPPP
IIAG Pearson Correlation	.956**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.0001

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 3: Regression Coefficients, with GDPPCPPP as Dependent Variable

Model	Unstand-ardized B	Standard-ized Error	Standard-ized Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-874.441	167.134		-5.232	.001
IIAG	36.161	3.931	.956	9.198	.001

From the preceding analysis, the hypothesis tested in this essay can be accepted: that is, good governance (independent variable) positively influences economic development (dependent Variable) in Sierra Leone.

Conclusion

This essay has shown that the developmental capacity of the Sierra Leonean state and its ability to ensure that it prospers will hinge partially upon its degree of legitimacy. Any failure to continue to improve institutions of good governance in Sierra Leone will mean that the vast majority of its people will have neither a role nor a voice in nation building.

The ultimate question then is the following: What are the implications of all these findings for Sierra Leone and other African states? Some have suggested that the current state of the majority of the African economies such as Sierra Leone's is caused by Africans themselves, which is a myth that needs to be eradicated. There needs to be a clear distinction between the ruling class and the majority of working class Africans. The majority of the population depends on an agrarian based economy, disconnected from the ruling class. The cause of most of Africa's problems comes from a combination of outside actors, via colonialism and neo-colonialism, and also from powerful African leaders and elite who have acted, like the colonizers, in their own self-interests and have become wealthy on the backs of the African masses.
African civil societies have been active in taking back power from the elite, but these institutions need to be nurtured in order to become more functional. The existence of civil societies has led to the liberation of South Africa from a racist settler regime. The worker-led national strike in Swaziland was followed by democratization in 1997. The rejection of the one-party system by civil groups in Malawi resulted in the drafting of a multi-party system. In essence, the resurgence of civil protest in virtually most of the African nations south of the Sahara since the 1980s has resulted in the transformation of the continent's governance and political systems. Civil groups are demanding that their governments be democratic, transparent and accountable, and results are becoming visible. There is, however, much to be done in Africa. Civil societies need

more material, financial and moral support from outsiders, governments and citizens in order to see more change.

Furthermore, civil societies become more proactive when there is a system for the mass education of the people. Education for more citizens, particularly females, would give Africans added power to transform their countries. Educators should be able to obtain the basic materials to do their jobs, instead of being forced out of the profession. The future of Africa depends on the next set of skilled employees. Economic transformations in all parts of the world took place because there were educated people who were innovative enough to make impacts on their economies. Thus, governments should invest in the future by educating the majority and enticing educated Africans to stay in their countries and become productive members of their societies, as opposed to indirectly forcing people to emigrate to other countries.

In some African nations, the rule of law is still absent; neighboring countries should work together towards transforming Africa as a whole. Strong institutions that are well respected by citizens are able to reduce transaction costs, which will foster investment. Establishment of the rule of law will reduce corruption, which is one of Africa's main problems. It will also foster the rights of individuals and private organizations, which will lead to free media that will then be able to boost the flow of information to benefit the people.

The weakness or absence of institutions of local governance in many African states has given more power to national structures that reflect the interests of the ruling class which marginalizes the masses. These systems are centralized, lack legitimacy, and are ineffective, but they continue to operate with the help of the military. As mentioned earlier, African states should focus on building local governance. The slow bottom-up approach by which a true public constitution is built has to be implemented, and local governments should be seen as agents for building such a system.

The challenges towards development remain the same and will depend greatly on the willingness of public administrators to remain open to the mass public and to embrace the virtues of consultation and consensus. Problems could be solved by discussing issues with the people who are directly affected. This is not done just by letting go of bureaucratic government assumptions, but would require leaders to yield power and give freedoms to citizens. This, then, would allow citizens and governments to jointly address problems that arise. There needs to be a move towards basing public policy on the concrete experiences of the people, as opposed to a top-down approach which has failed numerous times in the past.

A modern state will only become and remain democratic if there are strong, inherent systems of political accountability. There is no one clear solution for all of African problems. This essay does not try to validate or invalidate other theories of development but states that before one tries to apply reforms, one has to consider first the issue of good governance and the rule of law. Without these two, no approach will be successful in transforming the current state of Africa's economies and security. This suggests that Africa has to first build a solid institutional base to facilitate sustainable development. African civil societies, governments, outside donors and international organizations all play a significant role in Africa and must work together towards change.

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The Role of Diamonds in Peace to War Transition in Sierra Leone: Examining the 'Greed' vs. 'Grievance' Argument as a Cause of War

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Abstract
The eleven-year civil war in Sierra Leone is attributed to several political, socio-economic, and structural root causes.
One feature that remains consistent throughout the 'pre-conflict', 'during conflict' and 'post conflict' phases is the abundance of diamonds. However, what changed through this peace to war to peace transition is the functionality of those diamond revenues. Therefore, we attempt to answer the research question: why did the social and economic features in
Sierra Leone led to the outbreak of war in 1991? This paper will argue that the social and economic features allowed the diamonds to play a central role in peace to war transition in Sierra Leone. The top-down economic structure revolving around diamonds was utilized by the bottom-up process of societal grievances to incite rebellion in 1991. The Kimberly
Process has been the main policy focus to address the mainstream 'greed' based cause of the war in Sierra Leone.
However, in the case of Sierra Leone, the sole focus on diamonds limits the effectiveness of the Kimberly Process due to its inability to address the social and economic factors that still prevail and can reignite rebellion. Thus, in order to adequately understand the features leading to the outbreak of war in 1991, we will use the political economic approach in our analysis rather than the rational choice model which only explains motivations prevailed by greed and fails to consider motivation prevailed by social and political grievances. This paper does not set out to explain all features of the war in Sierra Leone1. Instead, the focus is directed on the role played by diamonds and how the 'greed vs. grievance' discourse should not be viewed as a binary distinction but rather as relational in order to understand the societal, economic, and political history of Sierra Leone, and thus, the breakout of war in 1991.

I. Introduction

The eleven-year conflict in Sierra Leone has become synonymous with 'blood diamonds'. However, at the root of this conflict was a deeper set of societal issues most notably youth marginalization and oppressive forms of patrimony (Richards, 1998). 40% of the population in Sierra Leone were and still are under 15 and unskilled. Youth, in this context, is not defined by age but lack of decent employment opportunities and access to resources: "it is getting increasing difficult to transition from youth to adulthood. Inadequate education systems combine with stratospheric unemployment rates to foreclose the possibility of securing a job that could provide financial security" (Gavin, 2007:221).Therefore,
Sierra Leone can be described as a 'failed state' in that its public institutions were characterized by corruption, patrimonial relations and kleptocracy that made them ineffectual in meeting the needs of its citizens.2 In an environment in which the central government was unable to provide security for its citizens, individuals often

relied on strong men and ethnic allegiances for security. The case of Sierra Leone underscores Clapham's idea that 'insurgencies derive basically from blocked political aspirations' (Clapham, 1998:5); indeed the rebel group in Sierra Leone conceived themselves to be a replacement for a corrupt government.

Diamond resources affected the dynamics of the war in Sierra Leone and are central to understanding the political economic situation of the country and the subsequent shift in the balance of power between state and non-state actors.

The assumption of greed for diamond revenues as the primary motivation for driving the war has arguably had the most influence in international policy response (this has the affect of delegitimizing the RUF as a group of nadits without political purpose). Despite the heavy focus placed on diamonds, it is important not to fall into the trap of conflating means with causation.

By the same token it necessary to recognize that wars are not static, and that the original reasons and rationale for war often mutate as the war changes in character over the course of time (e.g. the composition of warring factions, their incentives to take up arms, the outcomes fought for are likely to change). Although the onset of war cannot be attributed to profits gained from diamond revenues, it can be said that the state of war/anarchy set up patterns of trade/economic patterns are deemed favourable to the leadership of the rebel group. In this sense the state of war provided incentives to

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1 Additionally, we recognize that geo-politics (i.e. Charles Taylor and the war in Liberia, Libya's strategic aims in supporting the
NPFL which extended to the RUF) played a large role in the igniting rebellion in Sierra Leone. Time constraints prevent us from thoroughly reviewing this feature; however, we do tie the geo-politics of Charles Taylor into our parts of our argument as an influential factor.

2 Sierra Leone falls under the 'resource curse' 'Rentier State Model argument; the diamond revenues gave the state an external source of revenue rather than relying on domestic taxation, thus, deterring the state from building strong public institutions and being accountable to its citizens. The lure of mineral revenues led rulers to pursue predatory action rather than legitimizing development goals and this in turn bred 'grievance' motivated violence against the state and sustain the war. Whilst the economic prize of diamond revenues alone did not lead to the onset of the war, it can be said to have been a significant factor in perpetuating the length and scale of the conflict (Ross 2004). The economic dimension that the conflict in Sierra Leone took on fits Kaldor's (2006) description of a 'new war', in the sense that the point of war for the rebel group became the enterprise of having a war in itself, in order to maintaining a condition that enabled them to engage in predatory economic activities.

Historical Background: Sierra Leone Civil War 1991-2002
The civil war in Sierra Leone began on March 23, 1991 with a cross-broader invasion into eastern and southern Liberian border districts of Kailahun and Pujehun by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) led by Foday Sankoh and backed-up by Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). Their aim was to overthrow the

Momoh government in order to create a government 'for the people'. In October of the same year, a new constitution providing for a multiparty system of government came into effect.

On April 19, 1992, Captain Valentine Strasser led a coup to remove President Momoh and establish the National

Provisional Ruling Council (NRPC) as the ruling authority. Democratic elections were held in March 1996; Ahmed Tejan

Kabbah of the Sierra Leone Peoples' Party (SLPP) won the election and became President and Commander-in Chief of the Sierra Leonean Armed Forces. Sierra Leone returned to civilian rule after four years of military rule. However, the RUF rejected the election results and refused to recognize the legitimacy of the SLPP government.

On November 30, 1996 President Kabbah and RUF leader Sankoh signed the Abidjan Peace Accord but the agreement was never implemented; the newly elected government was soon overthrown by military coup leading to five more years of war. In May 1997, President Kabbah was driven into exile after a military revolt by Major General Johnny Paul Koroma.

The government was replaced by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC); the AFRC formed an alliance with the RUF. Koroma suspended the constitution and abolished political parties and demonstrations. Later that same year, in a second attempt at a negotiated peace, the RUF signed the Conakry Peace Agreement on October 23, 1997, but again the agreements were fully never implemented. International intervention came in the form of the Nigerian-led intervention (ECOMOG) - The Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group, in February 1998; President Kabbah returned to power and the RUF and AFRC were driven from the capital.

After time to regroup, the RUF and AFRC attacked Freetown in January 1999 causing a military stalemate. In a third and final attempt for a negotiated peace, the Lome Agreement was signed in July 1999. The agreement secured President Kabbah's position as President but made Sankoh Vice-President, gave him control of the diamond mines as Minister of Mines and promised government posts to other RUF members in return for a ceasefire and deployment of the UN peacekeeping force to monitor the disarmament process; UNAMSIL was established in October 1999 to monitor the Lome agreement. This 'peace' didn't last long and in May 2000 the RUF attacked UNAMSIL and kidnapped 500 peacekeepers. This lead to a more robust UN mandate and the intervention of the British Operation Palliser and Guinean troops in May 2000

These factors paved the way for the Abuja Cease Fire Agreement in 2001 and the end of the conflict in January 2002.

Additionally, Sierra Leone established the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) and a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Sierra Leone finally entered its peace transition phrase in March 2002 when a four-year state of emergency was lifted and Sankoh was officially charged with war crimes.

II. The Social Grievances

In order to understand the war in Sierra Leone it is necessary for the analysis to go beyond the role of diamonds. First we look at societal conditions that added to war in Sierra Leone; specifically the role of the youth.

The Root of the Grievance

In order to do this it is useful to take a historical perspective of Sierra Leone; a political economy analysis of the history/power structures and political economy is needed to understand the war. Agrarian tensions that emanated from institutionalized abuses deeply rooted in the era of domestic slavery played a significant in role in the conflict in Sierra Leone. The nature of these abuses saw pre-colonial practices continue to manifest themselves as chiefs and land owners continued to assert rights to mobilise unwaged labour and use polygamy as means of tying labour (labour used as a means to work off debt of woman damage). Additionally, the uneducated youth were unable migrate to urban areas to find employment. This led to rising resentment and contestation against the patrimonial system; the RUF used the fuel of this ill feeling as a means of propaganda to mobilize insurgency. Durkheim's social pathology of labour suggests that forced

Labour brings about alienation that breaks down social cohesion, which eventually results in war. Durkheim's argues that alienation arises from forced division of labour and lack of opportunities made the rural area ripe for recruitment (Richards, 2004:4).

In line with Durkheim, Richards argues that when 'grievance begets grievance' it drives the war lending to its prolongation. Richards argues that the "lack of educational opportunity reproduces a 'forced' division of labour, and in turn breeds resentments that feed fatalist violence of the slave revolt. Domestic slavery and civil war risk subsisting in self perpetuating cycle" (Richards, 2004:21).

Youth and the Type of Employment

However, as Cramer (2006) asserts, that it is not so much unemployment itself that was the cause of conflict or that led the youth to join the RUF, but rather it was the burden of the employment; it was the social system controlled by elders that bound the younger men into labour contracts (labour being scarce relative to land in much of rural Sierra Leone). Thus, the conditions of employment within this specific institutional regime drove many to support or participate in the insurgency.

This plight of youth labour established a social context in Sierra Leone that tied the grievances of the population closely to the control of economic resources; whoever controlled the resources, controlled the power of employment. It is because these fragile and growingly antagonistic social conditions that mixed with the shifting economic structure and characteristics of Sierra Leone impacted on the country in catastrophic ways.

Youth played a major role as combatants in the civil war that devastated Sierra Leone, as the lack and inadequacy of alternative job opportunities available to them incentivized participation in the war (Weeks, 2011). The demographic of the

population was composed of youth bulges3, but it is also important to recognize that youth in this context denoted a class of people as well as age. Men who had not found a wife were referred to as youth. The term refers to social position as well as age4.

Humphrey and Weinstein's sample of demobilized ex-combatants revealed that the majority of fighters (85%) were from rural backgrounds and unmotivated by minerals (2004). Furthermore, 20% of fighters stated that their participation in insurgency had enabled them to find a marriage partner; being allowed to marry was a major concern for many

combatants5. Although combatants were mobilized through coercive means, grievance and empowerment through joining a group was also a motivation for joining (Wood's notion of 'pleasure in agency'). The key propagator of the youth participation in the war was therefore driven by 'grievance' rather than 'greed'. The division of forced labour and low societal regards for the uneducated youth created dissatisfaction among the youth and desire for change. Indeed, violence was a means to compensate for a lack of societal respect, thus, a reaction to 'grievance' (Richards, 2005).

III. The Economic Structure: A War Economies Perspective

Within this societal context, the Sierra Leonean government's hold on power was critically tied to its control over the economy, which pivoted on its ability to control the diamond trade. The existent economic structure of Sierra Leone, in which the government controlled diamond extraction and trade, held off the grievances of society. However, as the grievances of society increased and the government's control over the diamond trade weakened through the 1980s, the economic structure of Sierra Leone began to change in a way that enabled an insurgency and the civil war that ensued.

The significance of the diamond trade was due largely to the social, political, and economic conditions within Sierra
Leone, not merely the existence of the diamonds themselves or the greed they tend to inspire. As Cramer affirms:
Rather than politics and violent conflict unfolding within the controlling context of resources, resources came to play a prominent role in the 1991-2002 war in Sierra Leone because of the context of the country's political and economic history (2006: 123).

Indeed, the role and the reason that the diamond trade has greatly affected the war cannot be ascribed to anything innate about diamonds nor resources generally, but rather because of the economic structure of Sierra Leone. A 'war economy's' perspective uncovers and analyses this structure and context, offering an explanation for how the economic features of Sierra Leone contributed to and characterized the war.

In the war economies approach utilized by Pugh et al, emphasis is placed mostly on understanding the economic features that shape the incentives of a conflict's prominent actors, the economic mechanisms used to sustain conflict, and the economic hurdles that post-conflict peace building efforts must confront (2004:2).

Additionally, this framework expands beyond a state-level focus, examining the regional and international linkages that have contributed to a given conflict. Two categorizations of war economies most relevant to Sierra Leone are the 'shadow economy' and 'combat economy'.

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3 This still remains the case in present-day Sierra Leone.
4 The average age for males is 38.
5 The elders used control over marriage as a means of agrarian social control.

As defined by Nordstrom, a *shadow economy* is a network of extra-state economic transactions and activities that take place outside, around, and through formal institutions (2000:36-37). As defined by Pugh et al, a *combat economy* is the belligerent economic activities of a group or party to fund a conflict and/or the crippling of opposition; economic activities used to pursue military-strategic goals (2004:8).

In the case of Sierra Leone, it was the pre-existent shadow economy and its shift to a combat economy that put diamonds at the centre of the conflict. The top-down economic structure revolving around diamonds was utilized by the bottom-up process of societal grievances to incite rebellion. These pre-existing economic conditions created structural incentives for illegal trade, networks to participate in such trade, and thus a means to fund a civil war of grievances.

IV. A Political Economy Analysis: Resilient 'Failed' State to a Collapsed 'Failed' State
Why 1991?
The above analyses that focus on societal and economic motivations and mechanisms for war fail to explain the timing of the war. Indeed many of the causes highlighted have been long standing characteristics of Sierra Leone's post-colonial history and indeed remain a challenge in post-war Sierra Leone (Hanlon, 2005). Why then, despite the continued presence of these factors, did Sierra Leone descend into war in 1991? In order to understand the timing of the war it is useful to adopt a political economy approach in order to gain an insight into the processes, mechanism and context through which conflict and contestation manifested itself in violence during this period (1991-2002). A key question then is how and why a resilient 'failed' state became a collapsed 'failed' state?

Central to such an analysis is the idea of Sierra Leone as a 'shadow state' (Reno 1995, 1998) and the ability of state leaders to act as gatekeepers to the diamond resources.6 Whilst Sierra Leone was seen as a failed state, the political system in Sierra Leone served a function in enabling elites to accumulate capital and successfully maintain political stability in the context of underdevelopment and the state stripping back of state capacities (Keen 1998; Reno 1995, 1998).

Throughout Stevens' seventeen-year rule (1968-1985), the state remained resilient to large-scale political violence.

Whilst providing few developmental benefits for society, Stevens was able meet the Hobbesian concern of establishing political order. He did this by building up an extensive patronage network during his rule and creating 'elite bargains'7 based on granting limited access to the important elites and protecting their property rights in return for loyalty. Crucial to

Stevens' ability to distribute patronage was his ability to grant access to mineral resources to a limited group of elites.

Stevens' was able to control access to diamond revenues during his rule, the joint extraction acted as the economic foundation for the patrimonial regime.8 (Snyder, 2006).

In contrast, Momoh was in a politically weak position and unable to restrict the private control Stevens and his associates continued to have over the countries resources. (Reno, 1998:116).9 The breakdown of joint extraction sowed the fiscal seeds of state collapse (Snyder, 2006).

The relationship between lootable resources and political order is closely linked to changes in the institutions of extraction10 (Snyder, 2006). In a sense, the patrimonial politics that lubricated the workings of the shadow state failed once private groups were able to extract resources independent of the state. The ability to make elite bargains is central to understanding differential trajectories of state resilience.

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6 Whilst much of the literature casts warlords, rebels and state leaders as antagonistic actors/actors antagonistic to each other, it is necessary to understand what cooperation there was and how this relationship evolved. The lines between state and non-state actors are often blurred; this was especially evident throughout the war in Sierra Leone (Sobels' 'sell game').

7 In a world of scarcity there is a need to create economic rents for elites to give them an incentive not to rebel against the state (North, 2007).

8 Snyder argues that where rules have been established institutions of joint extraction, reaping the benefit resource abundance while also allowing for private benefactors, political stability will prevail (2006).

So What?

We can see from the war in Sierra Leone that the means for paying for war and peace are key determinants for establishing political order. Throughout Stevens rule, the leadership was able to pay for peace through patrimonial relations that ensured loyalty through elite bargaining. However, once this control was lost, contestation over the

diamonds eventually fell into rebel hands allowing them in turn to have the ability to pay for war. According to Weber, the state can be measured by its monopoly on the legitimate use of violence; crucial to this is the means to pay for this violence.

V. The International Response: Kimberly Success and the Need for Deeper Reform

The International Response
The notion that diamond resources facilitated armed conflict in Sierra Leone is unquestionable, but whether it is the primary cause of the war is still ambiguous. The assumption of 'greed' as a primary motivation for driving the war has had profound influence on the type of international policy response. However this assumption overlooks the socioeconomic and cultural factors that equally contributed to the war; this oversight could consequently lead to inappropriate international policy responses (Francis, 2001). Francis notes that other natural resources, i.e. 11timber and logging, which helped fuel the 'combat economy', have not been highlighted in the international policy agendas.

Even though the RUF traded other resources such as timber, coffee and diamonds were the main source for the RUF. As part of the attempts to bring an illicit source of revenue into the licit arena, the international community has been primarily focused on dealing with the problems of illicit trade of 'conflict diamonds' or 'blood diamonds', which they assert to be a security threat as it provides potential sources of revenue for future warlord insurgencies. Alongside the diamond industry, governments and NGOs, worked to devise a regime system which would combat this problem. Established in 2003, this system known as the Kimberley Process Certificate Scheme (KPCS) aimed to legalize illicit diamonds from the mine to the jewellery shops by using a certificate scheme.
(Editor's Note: the system was aimed at preventing illicit diamonds getting from the mines to the jewellery shops.)

Though KPCS has been hailed a success story, there remains a major weakness. Maconachie argues that such a process, like the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) implemented in Sierra Leone, represents significant challenges for a country that is yet to emerge from the suffering of the conflict and where "good governance, accountability and transparency will undoubtedly take considerable time to develop" (2008:abstract). Jackson notes, in reference to post-war reconstruction and illicit diamonds that:

Reconstruction of the politico-economic networks surrounding diamond extraction outside the local government may lead to alienation of the same groups that led the rebellion over the last few years (2005:49).

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9 Stevens had restricted army recruitment to 2,000 troops.
10 *Extraction* here is defined as who controls the loot.

11 Timber is an easily exploitable and marketable commodity; it has been one of many natural resources that fuelled recent civil and international conflicts, Sierra Leone being one. The RUF relied on timber as a source of funding war activities and NPFL Charles

Taylor (he held a budgetary income of US $2 million) used the looting of timber to "support government and non-government paramilitary units" such as RUF (Global Witness, 2001).

The efforts to revive chiefdom as part of reconstruction can reinforce significant tensions between the chiefs and the local youth population. As Jackson alerts, since the revitalization of chiefdom system, there have been frequent reports of arbitrary fines and this could be a threat to the continued peace in the country12 (2005:54).

Many assert that there is a need for re-examination of the international strategies that have been inherently driven by the rationale that greed is the cause and driving force for the war, and the need to address issues of poor governance, injustice, poverty, inequality and (un)employment conditions at the local level where the pre-war socio-economic dynamics are still present. Acknowledging this problem, the European Commission understands that although the Kimberley Process is seen as a regulatory instrument, it can also complement other international initiatives that promote good governance of natural resources, such as the Diamond for Development Initiative (DDI) 13. If the international policy agenda focuses more in including these dynamics in international initiatives this could minimize the chance of a war re-emerging again (Jackson, 2005; USAID, 2001).

VI. Conclusion

The debate on the cause of war is often focused on the binary of 'greed' v. 'grievance', one or the other must account for war (Cramer, 2006). This popular neo-classical prediction of violence revolves around the theory that the individual is the starting point for *all* social behaviours and explanations of behaviour (i.e. rational choice) is towards maximizing individual self-interest. Sierra Leone has become a paradigmatic case for the debate concerning 'greed' v. 'grievance' motivations for war. The mainstream view leans towards the 'greed' or rational choice theory. However, instead of accepting this dichotomy, it is a more useful analysis to view greed and grievance as

relations rather than binary distinctions (Keen, 2005; Cramer, 2006). Clausewitz described war as "a continuation of politics by other means"; Sierra Leone is often viewed as "a continuation of economics by other means" (Keen 2005:48). Economic factors are crucial factors in influencing conflict in a country but they are not the sole factor. Keen had it right when he stated that an "overemphasis on economic agendas excludes important insights on the role of grievances in the war, and the role of emotions" (2005:36).

This paper has argued that the social and economic features of Sierra Leone allowed the diamonds to play a central role in the peace to war transition in Sierra Leone. The top-down economic structure revolving around diamonds was utilized by the bottom-up process of societal grievances to incite rebellion in 1991. In order to adequately understand the features leading to the outbreak of war, a political economic approach has been applied order to grasp the contextual and structural features that enabled diamond revenues to play such a central role.

As it has been illustrated, social, political, and economic features all contributed to the outbreak of the war. Firstly, the agency of youth in Sierra Leone's conflict was pivotal in addressing youth motivation for joining the insurgency that perpetuated the outbreak of civil war in 1991. The role of the youths as combatants in the Sierra Leone civil war, [initially driven by grievances] is rooted in domestic slavery and shifted in focus from the escape of oppressive regimes upon their recruitment only to enter into a more oppressive situation. Secondly, a war economies perspective has shown that diamonds played a central role in the conflict not because of the greed they inspired, but because of the economic history and context of Sierra Leone. Due to the long-standing shadow economy, the national economic and social turbulence of the 1980s, and Charles Taylor's opportunistic rebellion, diamond revenues changed from being a source of sustenance for the state's legitimacy to a spur and source of funding for the war. The narratives that account for the causes of the war are however insufficient to explaining the timing of the war. Instead a more sophisticated understanding of the relationship between lootable resources and political order is needed to understand the function diamonds played, first in paying for peace and subsequently for paying for war. Finally, looking at the international response to the war in Sierra Leone, which has been influenced by the greed thesis, we can see how initiatives like the KPSC have overlooked fundamental socioeconomic factors and the problems of bad governance and accountability that are still present. These are

12 The chiefdom rule involves the extensive power enjoyed by the local chiefs, one including the control of land, tax collection and diamond mines. The alienation of the youth and the power of the chiefs to control land and impose fines of forced labour were seen as one of the main cause of the Sierra Leone war (grievance argument).

13 The Diamond Development Initiative focuses on miners of illicit diamond and their communities, seeking to improve understanding, promote policies, and find possible solutions to the challenges and issues outside the Kimberley Process limited mandate, such as social and economic factors in illegal mining. fundamental factors that need to be focused on and implemented as this could minimize the chance of a rebellion reigniting.

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SIERRA LEONE: TEN YEARS AFTER REINTEGRATION OF EXCOMBATANTS
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The Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programme was launched with the primary purpose of providing the former belligerents with alternative livelihood skills in the form of vocational apprenticeships, public works/micro enterprise, agriculture and formal education.
At the end of the disarmament and demobilization programme in 2002, a total number of 72,490 ex-combatants had gone through the process. The entire 'D and D' had encountered a range of problems with that of stigma being amongst the most important. (Sierra Leone Country Programme (www.unddr.org)

Members of the Civil Defence Force (CDF), who made up the bulk of the disarmed and demobilized combatants (37,353 in total),(**ibid**) enjoyed a relatively high level of

acceptability once they were disarmed and returned to their communities. This relative level of acceptability they enjoyed was the result of the fact that they were forced to bear arms because of the high level of collaboration by then between the Sierra Leone Army and the RUF. (**NCDDR UPDATE-2002**) This collaboration was predicated by a strong hankering for material interests by both forces. Thus, incidents of attacks on communities, killings and looting became strong hallmarks of both forces. Such was the level of collaboration that the civilian populace soon branded them sobels- a blend of soldiers and rebels. When the CDF took up arms to defend their communities, they quickly became cause célèbre in their communities who saw them as their only reliable source of security in the midst of sobel brutality and pillage.

The dreaded RUF members of rebel remnants of the SLA and AFRC (who in collaboration with the RUF had seized power from the democratically elected government at the height of the war in 1997) and other armed paramilitary groups attracted little or no level of acceptability especially in their communities of origin. Fearful of the stigma and possible retaliation that they stood to suffer if they became part the 'D and D' programme 20,000 of them disappeared and had no part in the reintegration process (**ibid**). Thus, of the over 72,000 who were discharged and demobilized, only 54,439 actually registered for the economic reintegration component leaving out some 23,458 who accessed virtually no economic reintegration programme which could have properly prepared them for social reintegration as their skills would have served as an incentive for community acceptance (**Reintegration of Ex-combatants-Jeremy Ginifer-2002**)
Of this number, 31,800 opted for vocational apprenticeship (59%) public works (1%) formal education (23%) and agriculture 9,231(17%). A large number of these ex-combatants, some estimates put this figure as high as 80%, had levels of literacy that were little more than those achieved from a basic primary education, so most opted for apprenticeship skills or no form of economic reintegration at all (**ibid**). The, apprenticeship training was limited to only six months which for many fell short of the time required for effective capacity building.(**DDR in Africa- Stephanie Hanson-2007**) Most of the ex-combatants who opted for reintegration did so (for fear of reprisals) outside of their communities of origin. (**Sierra Leone Country Programme**) For those who opted for apprenticeship training, a major benefit of the programme was a monthly stipend they were entitled to during the course of their study. The issue of the payment of stipends also greatly made agriculture unattractive even though some 33% of all excombatants were farmers before the war. Only 17% opted for this option this was so because, unlike apprenticeships and formal education, no monthly stipend was budgeted for those who opted for agriculture(**Reintegration of Excombatants 2002**) It has been suggested that in some cases trainees engaged in double dipping-registering for more than one reintegration option and so benefitted from more than one monthly stipend (**NCDDR UPDATE-2002**). Those who went through the training qualified for imported start up kits.

The formal education component was not immune from challenges the programme faced. The component was supported with tuition, books, learning materials, uniforms, school bags and a monthly stipend but only for a year. On a case by case basis

depending upon the performance of the child, the support would continue. But because the reintegration component lasted for just three years at most, many of those placed in secondary schools did not graduate before the programme came to an end (**DDR in Africa-2007**). The luckiest were those who before the war had already matriculated and could consider an entry to a university or other tertiary education institution. Many of those who had already acquired the qualifications to be considered for tertiary education went on to graduate and are now gainfully employed. In spite of the attractive reintegration figures, thousands more who actually registered for the programme did not benefit at all. There is for example a case load of 3,500 who were only given a $150 one off package payment. There were thousands in Kailahun and Kono district who though officially registered for economic reintegration received no formal reintegration opportunity (**Kono District Recovery Committee Report 2002**). A residual case load at the end of the programme, they merely benefitted from some shelter programmes funded by CRS, UNIOSIL and other international NGO's. Some of the reasons why these residual cases may not have benefitted were that funds were exhausted before the programme ended (**Reintegration of Excombatants 2002**) and in some cases the 'double-dipping' practices of the ex-combatants themselves meant they were unable to focus on any particular option before the programme ended.

Not all of the contractors employed to deliver the training had the required capacity and equipment and some of programmes were poorly delivered. in some cases, there was a dearth of training outlets to accommodate large case loads, (**Kono District Recovery Committee Report-2002**)

Although there is no study yet to actually ascertain the number of trained ex-combatants who are actually employed in the options in which they are trained, the general opinion of those who worked on the programmes is that only about 20% of those trained have actually moved into employment linked to the area for which they were trained.

At the end of the programme a survey was undertaken by the Information and Sensitization Unit to identify the DDR success stories. It met with very little success as most reportedly sold off their start up kits and returned to the mines.

 The current estimates of youth unemployment in Sierra Leone suggest that as many as 70% are without work (**After War Creating Jobs for Peace-2009**). The setting up of the National Youth Commission charged with youth empowerment and employment is one initiative. It remains to be seen if it will remain free from political influence.

Within the informal economy the increase in commercial bike taxis has helped ameliorate this problem. The bulk of those engaged in the bike taxi trade are young people many of whom are ex-combatants who resorted to mining and the commercial bike trade after selling their tool kits some out of frustration because they were unable to find gainful employment in the formal sector (**Reintegration of Excombatants-2002**)

A recent Small Arms Perception Survey funded by the ECOWAS Small Arms Control Programme (ECOSAP) UNDP and the National Commission on Small Arms further

reveals that many of these riders estimated at 70,000 are part of the drug and gun running trade in Kono between Sierra Leone and Liberia..

With armed robbery on the increase and the list of unemployed urban youths growing coupled with the probability that 50% of post conflict countries relapse into violence (**DDR and Stability in Africa-2007**) the government cannot afford to continue tribalising and politicising youth unemployment. The hard reality is that ten years after the reintegration of over 70,000 ex-combatants, the greatest threat to Sierra Leone's fragile peace remains youth unemployment.

<u>Information</u>

<u>A place to remember: the Sierra Leone Peace Museum</u>

On 13 November 2012, the peace which followed Sierra Leone's war will have lasted longer than the war itself. The remarkable reconciliation, growth and stability seen in the last decade have allowed the country to say goodbye to the last UN Peacekeeper on its soil in 2011. In 2012, the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) will complete its mandate of trying those "bearing the greatest responsibility" for crimes committed during the war, and be the last institution dealing directly with the war to close. Today, Sierra Leone has moved from under the shadows of 'post-conflict reconstruction' and is now fully engaged in building a prosperous, peaceful country.

This idea, that Sierra Leone has entered a new phase and left the old behind, has become a motif in today's political discourse. The theme for Sierra Leone's 50th independence anniversary last April was "looking forward." The Sierra Leone Conference on Development and Transformation, a personal initiative of President Ernest Bai Koroma, looks to draw up a road map for the country's next 50 years.

It is important, however, that the war, its causes and consequences are not pushed to the side in the desire to embrace this renewed Sierra Leone. The nation must also take with it the lessons learnt from the conflict. The Sierra Leone Peace Museum will open in 2012 and will hopefully mark the end of the post-conflict period. It will provide a place for discussion, study and reflection on a tragic and significant part of Sierra Leone's history.

The Peace Museum's first objective is to ensure that the conflict is not forgotten. Through an extensive and unique archive, the Museum will document the history of the war and the peace processes. The archives will contain the public records of the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), as well as other materials relating to the conflict and peace process. These archives will comprise the most detailed historical record of what took place during the conflict, and will provide original source material for those researching the TRC and the SCSL.

Part of the Museum will be set aside as a memorial in honour of victims of the war. The TRC report called for a number of reparations to address the needs of war victims. Although limited steps have been taken to address material needs of some of the victims, the TRC report recognised that memorials provide "continued public acknowledgment of the past and address the need on the part of victims for remembrance."[145] The memorial, as well as the Museum as a whole, will seek to address this need by providing a fitting place to remember the war's victims.

The Peace Museum memorial should not be an imitation of other memorials, other conflicts, other places. To that end, the Museum has launched a public competition to design the memorial for Sierra Leone. That process, of creating a memorial, will provoke many questions as to what a memorial should be, and why we are creating it. The competition is an opportunity to examine the past, and to consider what the nation wants for its future. To encourage this debate, the Museum Committee will pick a number of its favourite design entries and present them to the public, allowing for a broad debate before it decides on the winner.

The Museum, and its memorial, will stand as a bridge between the countries's troubled recent past and a more peaceful future. Its presence will in itself stand as a commitment not to repeat the mistakes of the past. President Koroma reaffirmed this commitment in his Address at the State Opening of Parliament, "We will never allow the violent to take our country back to the era of gross violations of our rights."[146] To achieve this we must understand what caused the conflict to make sure we can prevent the same causes returning and to empathise with the suffering of its victims so that we appreciate the value of peace.

To help prevent conflict in the future, the Museum will preserve the conflict's history and actively tell that story to future generations. The Museum is currently collecting original artefacts and designing other exhibits that will form an engaging exhibition in its premises. The exhibition will introduce visitors to the key events, actors and organisations and give them a sense of the experience of those who lived through the conflict.

The Museum's potential to help prevent future conflict is something that can only be realised by those managing the Museum once it has been established. The committee designing the Museum has had many ideas: from creating a mobile museum that would take some exhibits around the country, to organising special events in the Museum for school groups. The design has been inspired by examples from other countries, such as Desmond Tutu's Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, which supported curriculum reform to teach apartheid in a way that supported reconciliation. A similar idea was recommended by Sierra Leone's TRC report, which recommended that "human rights and peace studies should be introduced into the curriculum at

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[146] President Ernest Bai Koroma, Address at the State Opening of Parliament, 10 October 2011.

schools."[147] The Peace Museum will be mandated to develop programmes, like curriculum reform, that support this third objective of conflict prevention.

Finally, the Museum hopes to strengthen Sierra Leone's human rights culture. Seeing history through the lens of human rights can provide a tool for understanding what went wrong. The horrors suffered by civilians, particularly women and children, during the conflict can best be understood as violations of their basic human rights. Indeed, this is how the war's atrocities were viewed by the Special Court. As human rights underpin international humanitarian law, the Special Court prosecuted those with the greatest responsibility for these human rights violations. By looking at human rights and international humanitarian law, we can separate out those actions which are criminal even in the context of a war.

The conflict was not only the cause of many human rights violations, but also the product of such abuse. The TRC came to the conclusion that human rights violations helped cause the conflict, noting that, "it was years of bad governance, endemic corruption and the denial of basic human rights that created the deplorable conditions that made conflict inevitable."[148] By using the discourse of human rights to tell the history of the war, its causes, and conclusion, the Museum will help give citizens relevant examples of what human rights means and why ensuring human rights are respected is fundamental to the long term peace of Sierra Leone and the well-being of its citizens.

The Museum arose from the Government of Sierra Leone's desire to see part of the Special Court's site transformed into a memorial after the Court's closure. The Court has brought together representatives of the Government, national institutions (such as the Human Rights Commission) and civil society to design and build the Peace Museum. Although start-up funds were provided by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, this committee is also seeking funds for the Museum's running costs from private individuals, foundations and the Government of Sierra Leone.

These four objectives   documenting the history of the conflict, honouring the war's victims, building peace, and strengthening the human rights culture   define the mandate of the Peace Museum. Various organisations, working individually and together, have attempted to achieve each of these tasks. Now that the war and its aftermath are behind us, it is vital that the Peace Museum is established to ensure that the lessons from the conflict are firmly imprinted and to allow for the constant renewal of Sierra Leone's commitment to peace.

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[147] Para 94, Chapter 3, Volume Two, Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report, 2004
[148] Para 11, Introduction, Volume One, Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report, 2004

If you are interested in the Peace Museum or wish to support our work, please visit the Museum's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/slpeacemuseum