

***“Learning by failing is not a pleasant process. But it is still a process.”***

## **INTRODUCTION**

The obsessive zeal of, or interest in a single thing, idea or subject, constitutes the greatest enemy of understanding. Monomania, as it is called, is usually required for academic ventures. This contradiction is nothing more than dramatic irony which one ought to admit in one's attempt to attain deeper knowledge. This study, underpinned by the required academic monomania, is fostered by a will for understanding; understanding of a whole world beyond the western developed societies.

The dissertation is based on a fairly simple observation. Post-war Sierra Leone remains a weak state. The international community has intervened intensively in the country since the end of civil war in 2002. External donors have provided major financial and substantial assistance and diverse non-governmental organizations have carried out varied programmes on the ground throughout these eight years. Nevertheless, Sierra Leone ranks at the bottom of the Human Development Index of UNDP, in fact at position one hundred and eighty, one before Afghanistan and two before the end of the list.<sup>1</sup> The great majority of the citizens continue to live under the poverty line defined by the income of one dollar a day. As the recent incidents of political violence in the capital Freetown attested,<sup>2</sup> the desirable stability in governance is still in jeopardy. Regarding the issues of international security and transnational crime, the country clearly runs the risk of becoming a conduit for illicit drug trafficking.<sup>3</sup>

The plausible question as to why this occurs is inevitably raised. In an attempt to reach an explanation, the concept of legitimacy is summoned and the following research puzzle is put forward: What, if any, insightful explanations can the conferment of legitimacy over the diverse authorities provide in the understanding of post-war Sierra Leone as a weak state?

As the first chapter describes, this research puzzle was constructed on the field and is completely different from that of the submitted proposal. The change was necessary and the new direction was the result of a deliberate reasoning. Two observations during the first few days of the fieldwork as well as the literature on ‘state fragility’ prompted the researcher to pose the specific main question and to break it down into researchable sub-questions that are discussed at the start of the second chapter, under Methodology.

Legitimacy is a central issue in the debate on ‘state fragility’. Several scholars have paid particular attention to it (Chesterman *et. al*, 2005; Einsiedel, 2005; Menkhaus, 2006; Lund, 2007; Papagianni in Call and Wyeth, 2008; OECD, 2008; Boege *et. al*, 2008; Overbeek *et. al*, 2009). However, the empirical study of legitimacy is almost exclusively confined to developed countries. Weak states are usually characterized by heterogeneities which render the existence of a political community doubtful and thus, the application of concepts such as legitimacy, originating from the idea of ‘common good’ and shared expectations, difficult and

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Human Development Index of UNDP in 2009, available in <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2009/> [last accessed: 10 September 2010].

<sup>2</sup> Violent clashes between rival political youths occurred in the capital Freetown in March 2009, in <http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJJOE52F0IA20090316> [last accessed: 10 June 2010].

<sup>3</sup> A Venezuelan – registered aircraft with a 600kg cargo of cocaine crash-landed in the country in 2008, in <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7504953.stm> [last accessed: 20 May 2010]. The recent UNODC report in October 2008 estimates that at least 50 tons of cocaine cross West Africa annually bound for Europe, in the document of Joint Vision for Sierra Leone available in <http://www.sl.undp.org/who.htm> [last accessed: 25 June 2010].

to an extent problematic. In addition, the social and political environment often alters constantly in weak states leaving the gathered relevant data, if at all available, valid only for a short period of time.

In this framework, the present inquiry questions who has the right to rule according to Sierra Leoneans and where this right comes from. The objective is not solely the knowledge regarding different pathways of justification and consent as with the fields of anthropology or sociology. It goes a step further and by taking into account the debate between academia and donors on fragile, failing and failed states, focuses on the outcomes of granted legitimacy over the diverse authorities for the state itself. In other words, it investigates the link between 'state fragility' and the concept of legitimacy in the context of the sub-Saharan country.

Based on individual fieldwork research the study also deals with the explication of the work on the field which from the researcher's standpoint, is as equally significant as the main subject. If disregarded, it would inflict on the validity of the study that stems from the answer to 'how you did it'. Furthermore, it would dismiss the difficulties faced, the mistakes which were made and the decisions which were taken on the field, all of them undoubtedly determinative for the outcomes of this study.

The first chapter undertakes to explain how the research puzzle was constructed on the field. Analyzing its meaning, it further considers the significance of the posed question and clarifies the current state of knowledge to which the study aims to contribute. It also explains the reasons for the type of research that was carried out and addresses the epistemological difficulties of the concept of legitimacy, namely the problems of its conceptualization and measurement.

The second chapter analyses the applied methodology as well as the reasons for its espousal. Bringing the reader into the field, it also describes the methods applied in collecting qualitative data and the limitations of the research. Furthermore it explicates the work on the field and discusses the issue of security and the emerging ethical concerns.

The third chapter pertains to the authorities that are or are not viewed legitimate by the respondents. Drawing the perceptions of the people about the authorities, it additionally analyses the sources of granted legitimacy and subsequently, examines the extent to which these sources are in consistency with those given in literature.

The fourth chapter proceeds to discuss the link between the conferment of legitimacy over particular authorities and the fragility of the Sierra Leonean state. Unanticipated conclusions and a realized, acknowledged impotence direct the debate towards the assessment of the analytical value of the concept of legitimacy.

Finally, the answer to the main question is provided and the secondary findings are pinpointed. Ideas for potential future work are presented as well as some policy recommendations.

This dissertation would have not been completed without the contribution of many people. I would like to thank, first and foremost, professors Jolle Demmers and Mario Fumerton for granting me the requested extension for submission. Particular thanks to my supervisor Mario Fumerton. Furthermore, I am indebted to professor Chris van de Burg for his encouragement when the completion of the project seemed to be unfeasible. His conviction that 'There is

always a way to get out' may be true; undoubtedly it reassured me. I must express my heartfelt thanks to professor Georg Frerks for reading an earlier draft of this dissertation and providing insightful suggestions. Some of these suggestions induced me to rediscover the final structure and content of the present thesis. I would also like to thank my colleagues Mathjis Gloudemans and Ester van den Berg for their detailed commentaries and enduring support when my confidence failed me. In addition, I am grateful to the researchers Fons van Overbeek and Theo Hollander for helping this rookie.

Moreover, this dissertation would have not been completed without the patience and support of professor Nick Margaris, director of the National Geographic Magazine (Greece), who overlooked my counter-productive anxiety and provided me the time and the faith required to accomplish the task. On the home-front I would also like to thank my brothers and my friends for their constant encouragement. Last but not least, I am deeply grateful to my 'new' local friends in Sierra Leone who rendered feasible the conduct of this research providing me the unique opportunity to live with them.

## **CHAPTER 1: PUTTING FORWARD THE RESEARCH PUZZLE**

### **1.1. Before the field**

Without a doubt, the fieldwork research determined the way in which the study progressed by establishing three temporal levels, namely before, on and after the field.

Before entering the field, the social researcher has usually focused on a significant social phenomenon, has identified the relative part of social theory and has decided on the kind of evidence that he will look for. However the field in post-war environments is unforeseeable and may reserve great surprises.

The 'Joint Vision' is a document drawn up by the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office (UNIPSIL) and the other UN agencies in Sierra Leone. Having been released since May 2009, the document defines the general framework for the cooperation of the UN with the government and other national stakeholders in order to consolidate the peace and stability in the country. It is comprised of twenty-one programmes, supports the implementation of the Government's Agenda for Change and covers the crucial period from 2009 to 2012, given that presidential, parliamentary and local councils' elections are scheduled for 2012.

My initial aim, as described in the submitted proposal, was to capture the reactions of the authorities and individuals towards the implementation of the Joint Vision's programmes. The authorities would play an active role in externally induced programmes that might or might not be seen by the wider population as legitimate. From the researcher's standpoint, this study, adopting the omitted view from below, could shed light in the interaction between grassroots, local actors and external parties of intervention and in turn, contribute to current policy-making.

In order to acquire a general picture of the reactions of local people towards the intervention of the international community in the country, I began reading the local paper Cocorioko and the other Sierra Leonean newspapers available on the internet. Although I gradually ascertained that they were not reliable sources, I set up a database classifying the relative articles by date of publishing and by the international community agency to which it pertained.

As the time of entering the field was closing in, I started to wonder about the adequacy of my contacts and my accommodation. I had established two contacts: a Nigerian PhD student who was to go to Freetown during the same period in order to conduct his research and an employee of an international NGO who had already spent nine months in Sierra Leone and who's contract was to expire two weeks after my arrival on the field. Furthermore, I was to spend the first week in western Freetown with Raymond's elder brother. Raymond is a fellow Sierra Leonean student of my roommate in Holland. Thereafter and for the rest of the research period, I was likely to stay in hostels in Bo and Kenema.

I was also concerned about the limitations of the research. I did not know if the time-frame and the budget allocated would be sufficient. Furthermore, I was not sure if I would need a translator. I knew that English was the official language of Sierra Leone and that Krio - Pidgin English – was the lingua franca that connected the majority of the population. However the east, where I intended to conduct the main part of the research was dominated by Mende and this tribe had its own language. Regarding the issue of health, I had received

the required vaccinations and also obtained an adequate quantity of anti-malaria tablets and a small first-aid kit. Without doubt, I had not realized the extent to which the health factor could determine my research.

## **1.2. First week on the field: Incentives for focusing on the concept of legitimacy**

On entering the field and staying in a house with a Sierra Leonean family, I soon realized new limitations. There was electrical supply only on Sundays and Wednesday mornings. Contaminated water - because of the exposed and filthy pipeline network - was available as running tap water only in the evenings, while the only potable water was bottled or that in marked plastic sachets. On the third day on the field I woke to discover that I had been infected by bacterial conjunctivitis, an eye irritation. Needless to say, I was unprepared and as I had undergone laser-surgery for myopia three years earlier, I was very troubled. Fortunately, conjunctivitis is quite a common infection in Africa and one of my new local friends was a nurse in the Connaught hospital.

I had spent the first five days without making any progress in my research. On Sunday the family with which I was staying went to church. Being aware of my position on the field, I joined them and it was an unexpectedly beneficial decision. After Mass, I was introduced to a professor of Fourah Bay College and to an employee of the European Commission. The first contact brought me in touch with Professor Pratt of the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies in the College; the second linked me to the Head of the Delegation of the European Commission in Sierra Leone, Mr. De Bruycker. However, the most invaluable consequence of going to a church was that I had started wondering about a concealed authority and its role in post-war Sierra Leone.

The next morning, professor Pratt was quite clear after a call to Mr. Kamara, Head of Governance Unit of UNDP: 'Unfortunately, the implementation of the UN Joint Vision has not started yet. They still strive to raise the funds.'<sup>4</sup> After this frustration, I met my contact, the NGO employee, and we spent a couple of hours discussing the situation in Sierra Leone and the importance of NGOs. The next day I went to Mr. DeBruycker's office. He confirmed that the implementation of 'Joint Vision' had not yet begun, and advised me to focus on the activities of the European Commission. Thus, after a week on the field, not only had I not made any advances in the inquiry, but it was obvious that I had to construct a new research puzzle.

Freetown is a noisy city amidst hills and a sweep of beach. The status of extreme poverty, the constant smell of burning garbage, and the everlasting traffic congestion in tangled roads without traffic lights, do not render the idea of a walk attractive. However, from the first moment that one goes out, it is understood that all these factors constitute a hectic way of life which lasts twenty-four hours a day, with or without electricity. People struggle daily for their livelihood, go to their jobs, make friendships and plan their own future. They seek welfare and entertainment. They strongly believe in Pan-Africanism and have their own history of freed slaves and colonial masters proclaimed in each corner of the city. Without doubt it is a society and not only a place for research.

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<sup>4</sup> Author's 1<sup>st</sup> diary, p.20, 8 March 2010.

After my appointment with Mr. DeBruycker I returned home. That evening I went out with a local friend and as his brother was a chief in a village, a comprehensive conversation about the traditional rulers and the politics in Sierra Leone transpired. While returning back to the house again, I noticed that the city was plunged in absolute darkness apart from the Special Court close to the house and the American Embassy up on the hill. This picture was the final motivator for a simple reflection: On the one hand, there were pastors, paramount chiefs, politicians and a quite weak state and on the other, there were NGOs, the United Nations, the European Commission and diverse donors such as Kantafi of Libya who offered the magnificent mosque in the east part of the town. But who was actually in charge?

**Ph.1: Kantafi's mosque in East Freetown**



**Ph.2: Neighborhood in Freetown**



The recognition that there is indeed a society and the presence of too many dispersed authorities initially prompted me to focus on the concept of legitimacy. Although the observation that there is an entire society in Freetown eight years after the end of civil war was not unexpected, it advanced my reasoning beyond the alleged chaos which, in accordance with literature, usually prevails in post-war environments, and directed me toward the social contract theories of the state where the concept of legitimacy is central. Likewise, the dispersed authorities in Sierra Leone, which greatly diverge and frequently oppose each other, were intriguing and induced me to bring them together in an analysis so as to measure their relative power. Legitimacy in its simplest definition as "...the thinkability of institutions, ideas, policies and procedures" (Schatzberg, 2001:1) suited this purpose, as it could provide a unique common axis for the evaluation of the disparate authorities.

### **1.3. The new research puzzle**

Nonetheless, the two observations would remain unconnected and would finally have been overlooked, if the researcher was not convinced that the concept of legitimacy is derived from empirical evidence and not from a moral conviction that people can think and act according to their common interests and should decide who has the right to rule. Coercive force employed by authorities cannot explain observed levels of compliance with commands, rules and laws (Hurd, 1999). Therefore, individuals do, to some extent, choose particular authorities and voluntarily obey them. Legitimacy, as a concept, is meant to capture precisely this preference

(Levi *et al.*, 2009) under the condition that the willing obedience is not due to self-interest or habit, but rather caused by a considered belief that it serves ‘the common good’, or in other words a collective interest (Gilley, 2009).

Being aware that the essence of legitimacy stems from empirical evidence and not from subjective moral convictions, the researcher returned to the literature on the field of conflict studies. He focused on the link between the discourse on ‘state fragility’ and the concept of legitimacy because Sierra Leone is clearly a weak state. The following research puzzle was put forward:

*What, if any, insightful explanations can the conferment of legitimacy over the diverse authorities provide in the understanding of post-war Sierra Leone as a weak state?*

In this way, the broad journalistic question as to who has the right to rule according to Sierra Leoneans and where this right comes from, merged with a particular academic debate and the study further acquired the goal of investigating the link between ‘state fragility’ and legitimacy in the context of Sierra Leone.

#### **1.4. The discourse on ‘state fragility’ and its link with the concept of legitimacy**

The ambiguous term of ‘weak state’, such as the terms failing, failed or collapsed state, appears in the discourse on ‘state fragility’. It is applied to describe a type of fragile state, usually that in the beginning of the continuum of a declining state’s performance. Having recently emerged on the agenda of international donor organizations, the discourse on fragile states has also raised considerable debate within academia. Several scholars have paid attention to it, as ‘...the problem of fragile states (...) now represents one of the most serious and fastest growing challenges in the areas of development, peace and security policy.’ (FDFA Working Group 2007, 45).

There is no consensus about what state’s failure, or in general ‘state fragility’, entails and how to calculate it. For academia, the various definitions of the state’s failure stem from the respective interpretations of the state. Thus, Ignatieff who adopts a Weberian conception of the state, claims that failed states are characterized by an ‘inability to maintain a monopoly of the internal means of violence’ (2002:117), while Zartman, who interprets the state as a social contract in the tradition of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau, defines the collapsed state as the one whose ‘basic functions are no longer performed’ (1995:5). For donor organizations, the indicators of ‘state fragility’ are shaped by their prior interests. So the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) pays attention mainly to security issues, while the International Monetary Fund (IMF) focuses on economic factors. Nevertheless, as the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) posits, ‘States are fragile when state structures lack political will and/or capacity to provide the basic functions needed for poverty reduction, development and to safeguard the security and human rights of their populations’ (OECD, 2007).

This definition as well as all the other attempts to define ‘state fragility’, suffers from various drawbacks (Engberg – Pedersen, Anderson and Stepputat, 2008:24-25). Considering for instance, the difficulty for conceptualizing and measuring the lack of political will, one fairly espouses Cammack’s argument that ‘these analytical frameworks are quite general and

difficult to use in designing specific interventions' (2006:27). Furthermore, 'the features of weakness combine in different ways and can change over time' (Torres and Anderson, 2004:6), thus 'state fragility' can only be captured by looking at several dimensions simultaneously (Overbeek *et al.*, 2009). In this frame, many scholars have contended that the fragile state is often used as a 'catchall' term (Rombouts, 2006).

Moreover, one of the main critiques in the debate on fragile states is that the discourse employs a narrow state-centric conception. Conforming with the criticisms of Ignatieff and Duffield about the current interventionism as an attempt in constructing 'a humanitarian empire' or for 'the containment of borderlands', some scholars have detected stable hybrid political orders where diverse customary authorities, such as religious leaders or chiefs, harmonically cooperate with the state (Boege *et al.*, 2008). In these cases a 'mediated state' is created, state authority works with local intermediaries '...and the state's relationship with local governance structures is negotiated, not purchased or coerced.' (Menkhaus, 2006). Or better yet as Boege highlights:

*"In hybrid political orders, diverse and competing authority structures, sets of rules, logics of order, and claims to power co-exist, overlap, interact and intertwine, combining elements of introduced Western models of governance and elements stemming from local indigenous traditions of governance and politics, with further influences exerted by the forces of globalization and associated societal fragmentation (in various forms: ethnic, tribal, religious). In this environment, the 'state' has no privileged monopolistic position as the only agency providing security, welfare, and representation; it has to share authority, legitimacy, and capacity with other institutions"* (2009:17).

The concept of legitimacy is deemed to be a central issue in the debate, in both the discourse and the critiques. Considering the discourse, legitimacy is referred to as a causal factor, such as the state capacity or the will of elites, either in fragility or resilience of the state (OECD, 2007). However its relation with 'state fragility' remains to a considerable extent obscured. Ambiguous or general comments such as '... legitimacy plays a complex additional role in shaping expectations and facilitating political process.', or '... the long-term vision for state-building in fragile states is to help national reformers build states that are not only stable but also legitimate'(OECD, 2007), confuse the scholar about the value and the function of legitimacy. Is the conferment of legitimacy over the state an intentional goal of the state-building process as with social and political stability, or is it a 'usually necessary' (Yang 2005:68) condition for stability itself? Does the legitimacy over state's authorities ensure that the state is not a weak apparatus and performs properly? Such questions inevitably arise. As the consequences of the conferment of legitimacy over the state are not clarified, the distinction between input and output legitimacy (Scharpf, 1999; Kratochwil, 2006), as well as the definitions and the classification of the diverse types of legitimacy such as embedded legitimacy (OECD, 2008:17), or performance legitimacy that comes from effective and equitable service delivery (OECD, 2008:17), seem to be meaningless. In actual fact, a multidimensional social concept without confirmed function and value, is studied.

In the counter-discourse on 'state fragility', the conferment of legitimacy becomes an indicator of uncontested stakeholders. It guides scholars such as Jung, Lund and Menkhaus to the detection of 'twilight institutions' (Lund, 2008) and to the observation of the conjunction 'of competing and conflicting organizing principles and social practices' (Jung, 2008:38) in post-colonial states.

Therefore, two correlations, in other words theoretical tools, considering the concept of legitimacy can be underlined in the debate on 'state fragility'. Firstly, the lack of state's legitimacy generally yields 'state fragility' and secondly, the conferment of legitimacy over particular authorities indicates that these authorities have a justifiable and acceptable power. The latter is based on the conceptualization of legitimacy and is a tautology, as will become evident at the end of this chapter where 'the problems involving definitions and measurements' (White, 2005) regarding the concept of legitimacy are addressed. With regards to the first correlation, which is mainly implied in the debate, an understanding thereof requires the researcher to study the literature on legitimacy in the broader fields of social and political science.

Although one may rule using exclusively coercive power, this cannot last for long (Zelditch, 2001; Tyler, 2001). Legitimate power makes governing easier and more effective (Tyler, 2006) and facilitates the exercise of domination (Weber, 1968). As David Easton claims, 'The inculcation of a sense of legitimacy is probably the single most effective device for regulating the flow of diffuse support in favor both of the authorities and the regime' (1965:278). Therefore, 'every authority system tries to cultivate a belief in its legitimacy' (Zelditch and Walker, 2003:217). Generally, as individuals bestow legitimacy on their authorities, they comply with the established rules and accept the applied policies (Hanberger, 2003; Isaksson and Richardson, 2008). Considering particularly the legitimacy of the state, one of its major effects is an 'increased likelihood of compliance with governmental rules and regulations (Levi and Sacks, 2007). Furthermore, it may induce citizens to more willingly conform to laws, and to decisions of legal authorities such as the police and the courts (Tyler, 1990). A state perceived as legitimate, can expect widespread public cooperation for policy implementation or voluntary acts such as voting (Levi, 1997), and widespread compliance with tax collection or for instance, conscription (Holsti, 1996; Tyler, 2008). To sum up, the conferment of legitimacy over the state positively affects the compliance of citizens to laws as well as diverse constraints such as taxation. It allows citizens to be critical without being uncooperative (Gilley, 2009:148) and thus, ensures to an extent the stability of the state itself.

The review conducted, elucidates the underlying relation between 'state fragility' and legitimacy by inserting a fundamental stage. The lack of legitimacy over the state authorities yields lack of citizen compliance which subsequently leads to 'state fragility'.

### **1.5. The significance of the posed research puzzle**

In this framework, the research investigates the outcomes of granted legitimacy over disparate authorities, towards the 'state fragility' in the context of Sierra Leone. The case becomes especially complicated because some of the authorities under study are non-state actors who are also bestowed with legitimacy. Considering these non-state actors, there is no explicit relation between their granted legitimacy and 'state fragility'. In a few cases such as Bougainville or Somaliland, legitimate non-state actors contribute to a stable hybrid political order (Boege *et. al*, 2008); in others, they promote their own interests leading to the state many traits of fragility such as poverty and corruption.

Clearly, the link between the concept of legitimacy and 'state fragility' is obscured but nevertheless given in the literature (Ayoob, 1995; OECD, 2007). The task of its deliberation

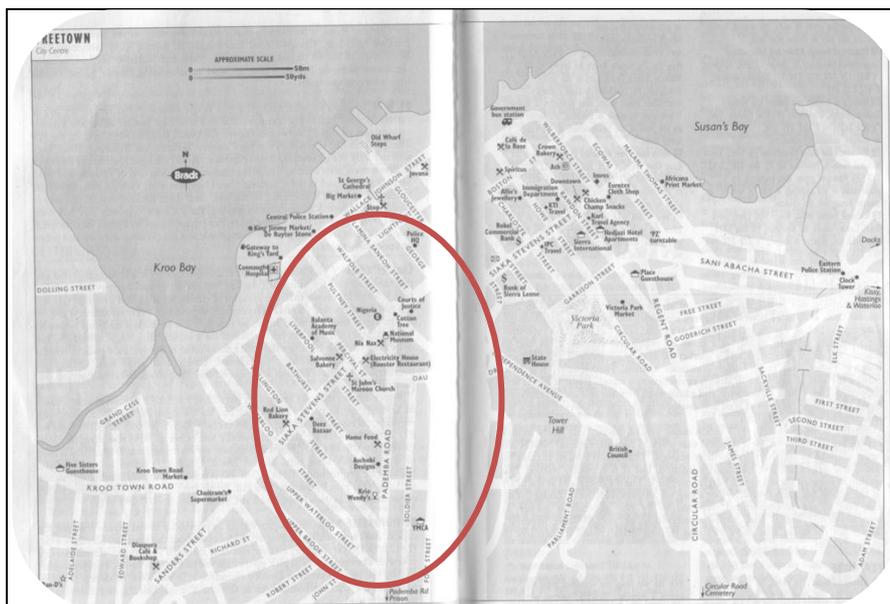
is considerably significant. However, as Kelman stresses, the risk of employing legitimacy in order to explain political phenomena is that ‘in trying to explain too much, it ends up explaining too little’ (2001:55). Being aware of that, the researcher attempts to examine the analytical value of the concept.

This study does not aim only to offer or actually test a potential complementary analytical frame. Two more objects constitute its rationale. The first pertains to the disparate authorities and has to do with the assessment of their relative power, assuming that the power of an authority is derived from its supporters and that it grows in accordance to a growth in support. Without a doubt, this is an ambitious object which, if accomplished, may provide the direction toward revising current policy-making approaches. The obstacle is obvious to say the least; the support of an authority does not exclusively stem from its legitimacy. Although relations based on coercion are not observed in the country, networks of patrimonialism and clientelism are retained in the Sierra Leonean society and determine to a great extent the support toward the authorities.

The second object pertains to the sources of the constructed legitimacy. As the research starts from the point that there is a given granted legitimacy by individuals over the authorities, it detects the active sources of legitimacy on the ground and thus, may enrich scholars’ poor understanding about the process of rebuilding legitimacy in post-war states (Einsiedel, 2005). Examining the degree to which these sources are in agreement with those given in literature, which steer the applied ‘top-down’ policies, this study may contribute to the verification of the latter, or to the exposure of fallacious theoretical conclusions.

The research was carried out in three areas: in West Freetown and specifically in the circled region depicted in Map 1, in the small town of Kenema in the eastern province of Sierra Leone and in a village in the district of Moyamba which lies in the southern province of the country. Therefore, the study offers a representation only for these areas and the risk of misleading conclusions lurks in any attempt for its generalization at a level of a broader region or the whole country.

**Map 1: Region in West Freetown where the research was conducted**



## 1.6. The type of Research conducted

Before addressing the many problems in the conceptualization and measurement of the concept of legitimacy, it is necessary to elucidate the kind of research conducted. As the researcher had carried out a literature search regarding the concept of legitimacy, he clearly understood what Margaret Levi postulated in her presidential address at the annual conference of the American Political Science Association in 2005: ‘Legitimacy is a complex concept that includes many elements, but no one – including Weber himself – has successfully sorted out which of the various elements are necessary or how to measure indicators or their interactions.’ (Levi, 2006:13) However, according to the fundamental criteria of social analysis, one can say that one knows the meaning of a term to the extent that ‘he can identify and match the indicated elements or factors in the world ‘out there’’ (Kratochwil, 2006:302).

Confronting this quandary, the researcher ‘stepped back’ and focused on the reasons why he had chosen the concept of legitimacy. One of them was that legitimacy would provide the aforementioned common axis for the evaluation of the many different and dispersed authorities. Legitimacy could serve this purpose because it is not exclusively a descriptive term which describes a property but, as Kratochwil aptly argues, is one of appraisal such as the word “goodness”. It was thus clear that the researcher’s interest in the concept was mainly because of the concept’s ‘links with other concepts within a semantic field’ (Kratochwil, 2006:302-307) such as rule, law, authority and belief. From this standpoint, it was not necessary to provide a definition of legitimacy which would become fixed and ‘operationalized’ through the elaboration of indicators, but rather, a definition of the links between legitimacy and other concepts e.g. the link between legitimacy and rule → legitimate rule.

While trying to define these links and find relative indicators, the researcher realized that their meaning was prone to subjectivity. Their essence could be understood no more than the extent to which the essence of for instance, ‘good father’ is understood. The meaning of such terms e.g. ‘legitimate rule’ and ‘good father’ seem to have a ‘hard core’ but this is nothing more than the ‘bold’ coincidence of diverse interpretation. This ascertainment induced the researcher to conduct qualitative research regarding the concept of legitimacy.

## 1.7. Conceptualization of legitimate object

Legitimacy is the ‘central issue in social and political theory’ (Beetham, 1991:41) and ‘the master question of politics’ (Crick 1993[1962]:150). As Box 1 illustrates, there are various definitions of the term which focus on diverse aspects and objects of legitimacy, some on its causes and others on its effects.

However, as mentioned earlier, this study deals with particular conceptual links of legitimacy, in other words, objects that may or may not be legitimate. The first implicit step toward their elaborate definition is their specification. At this point, it is worth noting the weakness of the frequently concealed legitimate objects in Box 1 (written in bold italics) to function as a guide. The state constitutes only one vague authority in Sierra Leone; political power is exercised by the President Ernest Bai Koroma as well as by the paramount and local chiefs; policies are carried out by INGOs as well as by the government of APC. The study focuses on

the potential legitimate authorities and institutions<sup>5</sup> which are grouped in Box 2. The reasons for their selection are explicated in the second chapter, under Methodology.

#### **Box 1: Definitions of legitimacy**

- ‘Legitimacy is the product of satisfying felt needs and solving perceived problems’ (Hanberger, 2003:258).
- Legitimacy is ‘precisely the belief in the rightfulness of the *state*, in its authority to issue commands, so that those commands are obeyed not simply out of fear or self-interest, but because they are believed in some sense to have moral authority, because subjects believe that they ought to obey’ (Barker, 1990:11).
- Legitimacy is ‘the normative belief of a political community that a *rule or institution* ought to be obeyed’ (Papagianni in Call, C.T. and V. Wyeth 2008:49).
- Legitimacy is ‘the thinkability of *institutions, ideas, policies and procedures*’ (Schatzberg, 2001:1).
- ‘Legitimacy is always a matter of accepting that something is right’ and ‘*something* is legitimate if it is accord with the norms, values, beliefs, practices and procedures accepted by a group’ (Zelditch, 2001:33,40).
- Legitimacy is the social influence derived from feelings of ‘should’ and ‘ought to’, namely from appeals to an ‘internalized norm or value’ (French and Raven, 1959:16)
- Legitimacy is ‘the belief within members of society that there are adequate reasons to voluntarily obey the commands of authorities’ (Tyler, 1997:323).
- ‘A *state*, meaning the *institutions and ideologies of a political system*, is more legitimate, the more that it holds and exercises political power with legality, justification, and consent from the standpoint of all of its citizens (Gilley, 2009:11).
- Legitimacy is *political power* that was ‘fully proper’ or ‘appropriately exercised’ in accordance with given ‘norms’ (Rawls, 1993 [1996]:137,225).

#### **Box 2: Potential legitimate authorities**

- i. Police force
- ii. Civil Service
- iii. President Ernest Bai Koroma
- iv. Government of APC
- v. Regime
  - Institution which defines the existence of and the relations between the president, the cabinet and parliament
  - Institution of elections
- vi. Chieftaincy
  - Institution of chieftaincy
  - Paramount chief of Nogowa chiefdom
  - Local chief of the village
- vii. INGOs
- viii. Chinese agents of intervention

<sup>5</sup> The need for the distinction between these two objects (institutions and authorities) was revealed in the realm of politics as the regime obviously differs from the political officials (Einsiedel 2005:19).

Having clarified the objects of legitimacy that concern the research, one can take the following step towards their elaborate definition. This second step engages a crucial observation. Authorities are legitimate for carrying out specific actions and institutions are legitimate for serving specific purposes. So, for instance, a professor is typically legitimate for teaching students but he is not legitimate for dispensing justice in the court. Similarly, the institution of police is legitimate for the protection of citizens but not for defining the way of governance.

The third step is the settlement of an issue which pertains to the sort of variables into which legitimacy fits. The question raised is simple: Is legitimacy a categorical variable, allowing one to say that something is either legitimate or not?

Gurr speaks of the 'intensity' of legitimacy (1971:186) and Beetham claims that 'legitimacy is not an all-or-nothing affair' (1991:19-20). Likewise, White argues that 'nothing in real world politics is purely legitimate or illegitimate' (2005:4). Towards the same conceptual direction, Gilley treats legitimacy as a continuous and not dichotomous variable because 'to use a dichotomous variable would be to make the further claim that legitimacy is a sharply discontinuous aggregate function, in which society acts with complete obedience as conditions worsen until one day it acts with complete disobedience' (2009:11). Keeping within the above framework, the view that legitimacy is a continuous variable is adopted for this study, and is taken further by assuming the reasonable relation that as more people believe that an authority or an institution is legitimate, the more legitimate it in fact is.

This relation sparks the resolution of an issue which emerges because people are the relevant subjects of legitimacy. Individuals grant legitimacy to the authorities or institutions. However which group of people should determine how legitimate an authority or institution is, constitutes a matter of concession.

Several researchers may argue that the frequently omitted grassroots is the actor who grants legitimacy and thus, determines the legitimate authorities and institutions. This idea, derived from the noble will to reach the people on the field, suffers from the inherent vagueness of the notion 'grassroots'. Although the notion is often invoked in academia and policy-making, it seems useless on the field. Consider for instance, if the poverty status appoints who belongs to the grassroots in Sierra Leone, one should choose an accurate income range which will define the limits of the income of individuals who fit into the 'grassroots' category. In addition to this task, sound reasoning for the exclusion of the other categories must be given, something which is unfeasible. Likewise, categorization on the basis of job status or educational level suffers from the same drawbacks.

The political scientist Bruce Gilley claims that '...if we are to choose a single set of citizens as the most relevant subjects [...] the best one would be all citizens' (2009:9). Hopcroft, Hurd, Kelman, Tyler, Levi, Gibson, Weatherford and the majority of the scholars who study the issue of legitimacy seem to agree with him. Nevertheless, one may stress that the opinions of different people do not carry the same weight. Some people are more headstrong than others; some can easily persuade others. Particularly in countries such as Sierra Leone where the rate of illiteracy is very high, many individuals can be manipulated. Thus, the researchers ought to choose critical players on any given issue and area.

Although the latter argument is reasonable, it cannot contribute to the theoretical conceptualization of the legitimate objects. A selection of individuals, inevitable on the field, is essentially guesswork which cannot be defined in a systematic way and justified in theory. In this study Gilley's argument is adopted and all citizens are thus regarded to constitute potential respondents.

The fourth and final step toward the elaborate definition of the legitimate objects in this study is the reminder that the meaning of legitimate objects such as that of 'good father' is subject to interpretation. Thus, one should work on an abstract level in order to create enough analytical room for diverse interpretations and then reach a definition. The definition of Schatzberg may be a good example for that level. For this study, an authority becomes more legitimate to carry out a specific set of actions, as the number of citizens which consider it justifiable to carry out this specific set of actions, increases. Likewise, an institution becomes more legitimate to serve a specific purpose, as the number of citizens which consider it justifiable to serve this specific purpose, increases.

The above definitions are evidently different from that of Gilley (2009:11) and Beetham (1991:20). They are not based on the distinction of the three alleged constitutive sub-types of legitimacy that together define the notion of 'rightfulness', namely the views of legality, the views of justification and the acts of consent (Beetham, 1991). This shift is deliberate. The acts of consent are perceived as unconscious acts in the definitions in literature (Gilley, 2009:7). From the perspective of this study, such acts which are not consciously made by individuals, cannot be associated with the conscious act of the conferment of legitimacy over authorities.<sup>6</sup> Regarding the views of legality, it is deemed that the sub-type, if there is indeed one, is incorporated in the broader sub-type of justification and its distinction may further obscure the analysis in the context of Sierra Leone, where conventional and written laws contest or preserve norms and values.

### **1.8. Measurement of legitimate in the term legitimate object**

The number of individuals who view an authority as legitimate, determines how legitimate this authority is. The higher the number, the more legitimate the authority. Although this relation appears to constitute an obvious tool for the measurement of legitimacy, it is clearly insufficient. To begin with, one has to coin particular indicators in order to understand if a respondent deems an authority legitimate.

The conferment of legitimacy over authorities can be detected by individuals' attitudes or behavior. An exclusive focus on attitude, which is common in many relative studies such as that of Weatherford (1992) and Levi *et al* (2009) may lead to invalid results when considering two possibilities. Firstly, expressed attitudes may not respond to the real ones and secondly, individuals' behaviors may contradict their attitudes. On the other hand, behavioral indicators such as boycotted elections, draft dodging or civil disobedience may suffer from 'the assumed

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<sup>6</sup> Even if there is unconscious conferment of legitimacy over authorities, it is not in the interest of this study. Furthermore, there are unconscious acts of consent as well as unconscious acts of denial. Even if they are accepted somehow as indicators of legitimacy, these behaviors can both be dismissed in the analysis without altering the outcomes considering the legitimate authorities.

connection between legitimacy and the indicator itself which might not be true' (Gilley, 2009:11). In this framework, both attitudinal and behavioral indicators are summoned.

Considering behavior, acts of disobedience, mistrust, cooperation and compliance will be studied and interpreted as indicators of (non-)granting legitimacy. These effect indicators<sup>7</sup> are based on the effects of conferring legitimacy as given in the literature (Holsti, 1996; Levi, 1997, Hetherington, 2005; Tyler, 2008). Thus, they do not cause any problem in the attempt to further explore the outcomes of granting legitimacy and the danger of tautology is eliminated.<sup>8</sup>

Regarding attitude, similar effect indicators, in other words claims such as 'I strongly agree that the police have the right to make people obey the law' or 'I believe that we should comply with any decision made by the chief and elders' council', will reveal the conferment of legitimacy towards the authorities under study. Furthermore, claims such as 'I am very satisfied with the regime in the country' or 'the president is bad (1) or very good (5)'<sup>9</sup> will constitute potential indicators depending on their argumentation.<sup>10</sup> Unfortunately, these indicators of legitimacy cannot be systematically defined. Their link with the conferment of legitimacy itself is based on the reasonable presumption that one cannot be satisfied with an authority that one deems illegitimate.

This study distinguishes four combinations as depicted in Table 1, and will focus on the last two, namely on cases where the expressed attitude and the observed behavior are in consistency. It will describe the claims and actions invoked each time, explaining where it is deemed necessary, the reasons why they are perceived as indicators of the conferment of legitimacy. Finally, several potential indicators, behavioral and attitudinal, are listed in Box 3 so as to clarify to a greater extent what type of evidence the researcher is looking for.

**Table 1: Possible combinations between attitude and behavior that reveal legitimate or not authorities.**

	<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Legitimate authority or institution</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> case</b>	(+)	(-)	?
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> case</b>	(-)	(+)	?
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> case</b>	(+)	(+)	(+)
<b>4<sup>th</sup> case</b>	(-)	(-)	(-)

<sup>7</sup> Bollen and Lennox distinguish between 'indicators that influence, and those influenced by, latent variables', calling the former causal indicators and the latter effect indicators (1991:305). Legitimacy is clearly a latent variable.

<sup>8</sup> Consider for instance, that the researcher coins an arbitrary effect indicator and subsequently, detects legitimate authorities based on it. The conferment of legitimacy will have the initially assumed effect. Therefore, grave problems of empirical validity and the danger of tautology emerge.

<sup>9</sup> They constitute claims that authorities are evaluated 'as they are', rather than compared with an ideal-type.

<sup>10</sup> The arguments will reveal if positive evaluations are due to the satisfaction of personal interests or due to the satisfaction of a perceived common interest. Needless to say, only the evaluations of the latter type are indicators for the conferment of legitimacy.

### **Box 3: Potential behavioral and attitudinal indicators**

#### **Behavioral indicators**

##### **Acts of disobedience, mistrust, cooperation and compliance.**

- Participation in incidents of political violence such as that in March 2009.
- Welcoming of INGO field workers.
- Voluntary payment of taxes.
- Poor election turnout.
- Mockery of the police force during checks.
- Reporting complaints to the local chief.
- Voluntary participation in community work.
- Participation in public and private political conversations.
- Solidarity between people in the neighborhoods.

#### **Attitudinal indicators**

##### **Claims of [non]compliance; judgments and their reasoning.**

- I strongly agree that the police always has the right to make people obey the law.
- I disagree that one should always pay one's taxes as this money frequently ends up in private pockets.
- I do not believe that the local chief is always right. You should not comply with him but should act according to your beliefs.
- I am not satisfied with the President because he does not do what he says. He is not reliable.
- I am satisfied with this government because it attempts to provide basic goods and services for the people on the ground.
- I am satisfied with the government because it equally distributes each gain allocated to the entire population.
- I like this regime because everybody is equal and can vote.
- I believe that INGOs try to profit from our poverty and misery.

## CHAPTER 2: ON THE FIELD

### 2.1. Methodology

The method of qualitative research constituted only the broader strategy of the study and clearly, not its methodology. The latter concerns the procedure of inquiry.

The first concern of the study was the detection of the existing authorities in Sierra Leone and subsequently, the selection of several thereof for further examination. At the outset of a research study in a post-war environment there are only signs as to who could be in authority and ‘new’ authorities may emerge at any level of the investigation. Being aware of this, as well as the time limitation, I started locating and examining potential authorities such as the United Nations, the police force and the INGOs. Some were soon neglected, while others came to be added. After three weeks on the field, the list of authorities had been finalized.

Although there is available evidence concerning the legitimacy of more authorities, the authorities in Box 2 (Ch.1 // p.12) constitute the chosen subjects under study. Their selection is deliberate. The civil service and the police force are two key agents of state administration (Tyler, 2004; Levi *et al*, 2009) and thus, two main authority components of the state. The judiciary branch could be included in the study as well; however the informants, who face economic constraint to assert their rights through lawyers, perceive judiciary a distant authority which does not relate to, or affect them. Paramount and local chiefs constitute traditional authorities who at the same time are official agents of the state, rendering Sierra Leone a hybrid political order (Skalnik, 2004; Fanthorpe, 2006; Sawyer, 2008). INGOs are comprised one key non-state actor in the state building process in the country (Fanthorpe, 2002; Hanlon, 2005) and the Chinese agents of intervention, comprise the interesting and often overlooked, adverse pole of the respective western agents and donor organizations. The presence of the President Ernest Bai Koroma acquires particular significance, as the ‘enlightened leadership’ is a debatable theme in externally induced policy-making in weak states<sup>11</sup> and a common phenomenon in African countries (Schatzberg, 2001) considering Julius Nyerere in Tanzania, Nelson Mandela in South Africa but also, Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe and Mobutu Sese Seko in DRC. The institutions of regime are examined so as to understand whether Sierra Leoneans perceive and embrace democracy and whether the country is indeed ‘in transition to democracy’ (Carothers, 2002; Ottaway, 2003). Finally, the legitimacy of the APC government is studied, as an alarming tribal and regional division is witnessed in the electoral behavior of Sierra Leoneans (Overbeek, 2008).

Based on the aforementioned selection (Box 2 // p.12) and definitions, the following three sub-questions were initially put forward:

- How legitimate are the authorities and the institutions listed in Box 2 viewed by the respondents?
- How is the legitimacy of the authorities and the institutions listed in Box 2 constructed?
- To what extent do the detected sources of legitimacy in the context of Sierra Leone correspond with those given in the literature?

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<sup>11</sup> Consider for instance, the debate concerning Hamid Karzai in Afghanistan or Xanana Gusmao in East Timor.

These questions fulfilled two of the objects of the study, namely the measurement of legitimacy granted over the authorities (and the simultaneous implied assessment of authorities' relative power) and the comparison of the sources of building legitimacy in a real context, with those in literature.

The last object of the study, the investigation of the link between 'state fragility' and the concept of legitimacy in the context of the sub-Saharan country, required an array of explorative sub-questions which would take the outcomes of the first two sub-questions into further consideration. As there are many facets of 'state fragility', (OECD, 2008; Overbeek *et. al*, 2009) which remain so obscure in literature such that the term 'state fragility' itself is considered by several scholars as a 'catchall' term (Rombouts, 2006), the following questions were posed:

- To what extent does the lack of legitimacy of the police force and the civil service cause the lack of compliance of citizenry with these authorities?
- What misconceptions regarding the function of a state does the legitimate president promote by his performance?
- Can the legitimate APC government be deemed as proof of state stability in post-war Sierra Leone?
- What does the legitimacy of the regime demonstrate for the intentional transition of the country to democracy?
- How do the legitimate institution of chieftaincy and its agents affect the political order in Sierra Leone?
- In what ways do the legitimate INGOs affect the function of the state?
- To what extent do the legitimate Chinese agents of intervention in the country affect the mentality of the people towards the regime and the discourse on development?
- To what extent is the concept of legitimacy fruitful in capturing 'state fragility' in Sierra Leone?

The last sub-question was inevitably raised as it was gradually ascertained that unraveling the relations of causality between legitimacy and particular outcomes is extremely difficult. Claims that the conferment of legitimacy over an authority, or the lack thereof, result in a certain outcome, are surely deserving of skepticism.

As mentioned above, the research was conducted in a region in West Freetown, in the small town of Kenema and in a village. These three areas were not the outcome of a random choice. The process of decentralization in Sierra Leone has become a key strategy for the government and a main priority in the agenda of donor organizations. Decentralization may result in the reduction of poverty and the improvement of service delivery in rural areas. Furthermore as an act of devolving power to levels lower than that of central government, it may encourage the transparency and the accountability of key actors 'building local participation in public decision-making processes, empowering communities and increasing their sense of security' (Overbeek, 2008). Although many scholars maintain reservations about these outcomes (Ribot, 2001; Johnson, 2001 in Schou and Haug, 2005; Smoke, 2003), the European Commission will have spent fifteen million euros in the interim between 2006 and 2014, the

United Kingdom eight million pounds and the World Bank twenty million dollars, for supporting the decentralization effort in the country<sup>12</sup>.

In this intriguing frame, the study approached societies on three different levels, namely in the capital, in a small provincial city and in a village. The specific small city in the East and the village in the South were selected because they were approachable through my contacts and are dominated by the Mende tribe which mainly supports the political party in opposition to the present government, and is often accused for generating political violence such as the incidents in the capital Freetown in March 2009.

A final but equally significant detail on the applied methodology constituted the time during which I read the book on the history of Sierra Leone. As the study would be grounded in fieldwork research, I decided to enter the field only with superficial knowledge about the establishment of the Colony in Sierra Leone for ‘some fifty nine pounds worth of trade goods’ (Alie, 1990:51) the Christian missions in hinterland, the declaration of the Protectorate on 31<sup>st</sup> August 1896 and the eras of Milton Margai and Siaka Stevens. This decision allowed me to focus on the contemporary political situation in the country and to search for current explanations during the fieldwork. Reading comprehensively the history of Sierra Leone after the experience in the field was surprisingly enlightening, to say the least.

## 2.2. Time on the field

Table 2 provides a timetable of the fieldwork conducted. The way that the time was spent on the field shaped to an extent the further tactics followed and was obviously neither good, nor bad.

**Table 2: Time on the field**

Places	Dates
West Freetown	03-03 to 19-03
Kenema	20-03 to 02-04
Village in Moyamba district	03-04 to 09-04
West Freetown	10-04 to 13-04
Kenema	13-04 to 26-04
West Freetown	26-04 to 05-05

## 2.3. Contacts, Accommodation and Sampling

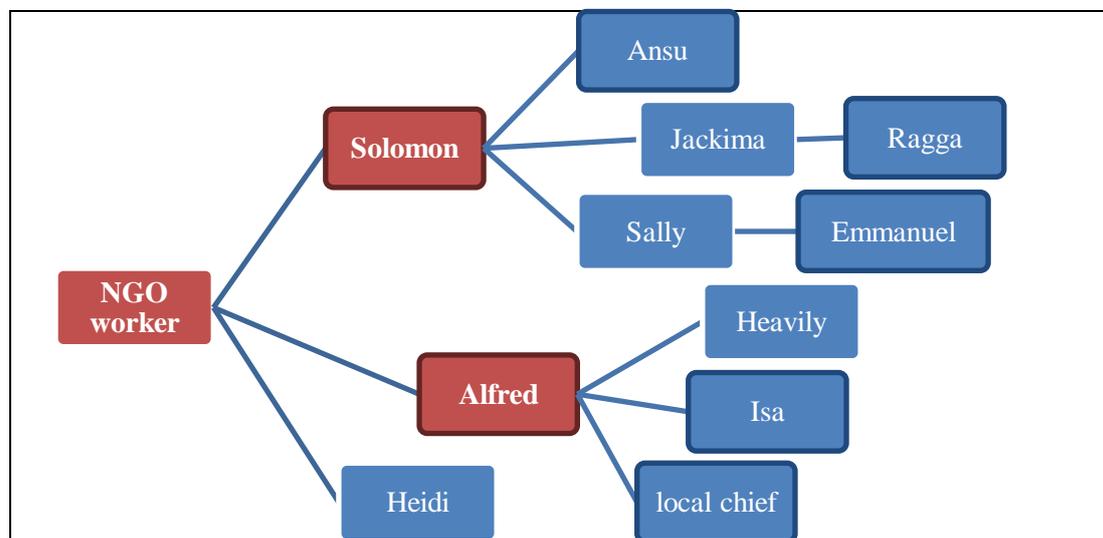
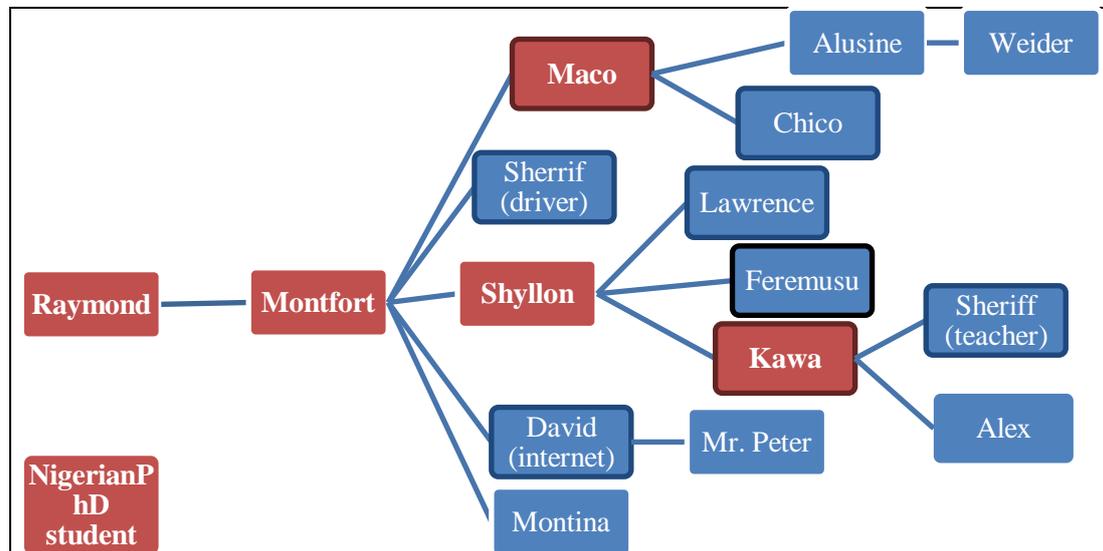
A researcher may be associated with many individuals on the ground. However he cannot consider all of them as contacts, as a particular initial relationship that goes through specific stages is required for this label. Regarding the start of the relationship, regular association and trust constitute only two of its characteristics. One should also give thought to the promised potential of that person as a contact, before he starts labeling it as one. Moving forward and until the end of the relation, the researcher constantly attempts to assess the real potential of

<sup>12</sup> In the Country Strategy Paper for Sierra Leone, available in [http://ec.europa.eu/delegations/sierra\\_leone/eu\\_sierra\\_leone/political\\_relations/partnership\\_framework/csp\\_and\\_nip/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/delegations/sierra_leone/eu_sierra_leone/political_relations/partnership_framework/csp_and_nip/index_en.htm) [last accessed: 05-07-10]

the contact and persistently contemplates if this potential has been hyper-utilized. The intensity is reduced when he starts devoting time to a second individual whose promised potential seems to exceed that of the assumed remaining, unutilized potential of the existing contact.

As Fig.1 illustrates, one of the contacts, namely the Nigerian PhD student, who was perceived as established, did not bear any crop. However Montfort, the individual who provided me with accommodation the first week as well as whenever I was in Freetown, yielded an unexpectedly significant number of new contacts on the ground. Alfred, a friend of the NGO employee accommodated me in the village and Shyllon, a friend of Montfort, in Kenema.

**Fig.1: Contacts, their interrelation and some of the informants.** The contacts are written in red boxes, while individuals who I was closely associated with, are written in blue boxes. All the informants are written in outlined boxes irrespective of color. Worth noting is that all the contacts did not constitute informants and that some associates led to several informants.



As explicated in the conceptualization of the legitimate authorities and institutions, all individuals in the three regions constituted potential informants. Due to time limitation, I applied the method of chain-snowball sampling (Nichols, 1991:70) slightly modified. Firstly, I selected a few of my informants based on certain character traits which they displayed. Individuals who showed strong attitudes, who were not easily persuaded and who exhibited leadership qualities, were chosen. Secondly, I only chose one informant among individuals who were closely associated, had similar incomes and had a comparable educational level, assuming that good friends and people closely associated tend to have similar opinions for certain subjects. As the variable of legitimacy was not considered as a categorical one, the final goal of the study was not to claim that an authority or institution is (or is not) legitimate. Thus, I was not afraid and, in fact, attempted to elicit contrasting attitudes and to observe diverging behavior, moving in different social environments and associating with different circles of people. Particularly in the cases of West Freetown and Kenema, the sampling began from two different points and yielded two different chains.

No survey was conducted in the frame of the study. Thus the outcomes are valid to the extent that the individuals whom I chose are representative of the populations in the three regions. As a whole, this remark emerges from the problem of generalization inherent to qualitative research. It does not reduce the validity of the outcomes but instead, ensures their scientific value.

#### **2.4. Techniques**

The time on the field and the contacts that I acquired rendered feasible the application of techniques for collecting naturally occurring as well as generated data (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003:34-38). Both forms of evidence were required for the subject of the research and the combination of the respective techniques proved greatly beneficial. It yielded an amalgamation of my interpretations and those of the local people, as well as simultaneously allowing for the gathering of detailed data and the portrayal of a broader context.

Regarding the techniques for collecting generated data, I applied the biographical method and in-depth, unstructured interviews of individuals or pairs. Listening to narratives of life, I became affiliated with my contacts, created a relation of trust with them and formed an 'intimate' code of communication built on their personal stories and experiences. Personal photos or a simple question such as 'Why did you decide to become a teacher?' constituted opportunities for such penetrations.

As far as the interviews are concerned, all were conducted in person. Regarding particularly the people with whom I closely 'worked', my tactic was based on the reflection that the interviews usually last two hours but the relationship exists at least as long as I am in the field. As the above schedule (see Table 2) was settled on early in the fieldwork, there was no need for haste. In the beginning of our association, I would express my desire to interview them at some point by grabbing the opportunity from apt opinions of random discussions about politics, western societies, poverty or religion. As the time was not 'now', this early warning was harmless and nothing more than a test of our relation as well as their predisposition. As we moved up levels of acquaintance, I conducted constant informal interviews. There was no barrier in the formed friendships which prevented me from asking

serious, probing, follow-up questions concerning beliefs, opinions and feelings. My purpose was to use, to an extent,<sup>13</sup> the final in-depth interviews as an opportunity for the verification of the collected data.

Identifying common interests and matching my profile further with the forthcoming informants was also a crucial process which not only facilitated the interviews, but on the whole, established my personal relations on the field. Thus for Solomon, reggae was our favorite music, while for Sheriff both of us were addicted to studying.

The focus of the interviews was always the same, namely the individuals' perception and assessment of authorities. However the starting point was different. For the amputees the introduction was the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Report, while for David, an owner of a small internet café in west Freetown, it was the popularization of Facebook and the profit of his small enterprise. Furthermore, before the video camera or the recorder were turned on, I informed them about the superficial part of my research which stood for 'how is the situation in Sierra Leone?' and some relative questions that I intended to ask. This brief discussion on one hand resulted in our clandestine coalition against the camera or the recorder and on the other, in their impulsive answers to the crucial questions.

Clear, short questions which were usually 'open', inquired about one matter each time. Their degree of generality varied and depended on their purpose (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003:148-152). Irrelevant questions were dropped in for required intermissions, as naturally, it is exhausting, if not annoying, for one to analyze his perception on politicians, human rights and finally civil service in comparable depth, even though the interviewer is equally interested in all of these subjects.

Moreover, certain structured questions such as 'I will say some words and you tell me what comes to mind' during the interview, or questions such as 'Do you want to add anything else?' at the closing stages were aimed at ensuring the interviewee's desirable sense of mastery in the conversation. The latter in particular, also signaled the end of the interview which was only the end of its intense atmosphere, as afterward we either went out or did scheduled work together.

Regarding the venues and the timing of the interviews I made both good and poor choices. The combination of a proper time and place was not always feasible. Although it was morning and we were alone in the house in Kenema, Kawa had to do laundry after the interview, so he was nervous and displayed low-efficiency which contrasted his performance on previous days. On the contrary, the yard of a church on a relaxing afternoon was the ideal environment for interviewing Solomon and Ansu while drinking coca-cola.

In addition, the means by which interviews were conducted proved to be especially significant. Notes were never kept during the interviews. Firstly, this method would not prevent me from analyzing what I was hearing and secondly, through summarizing or writing down specific words I would confuse my interpretation with those of the informants. Therefore I used a voice-recorder and a video-camera allowing the interviewee to choose each time. However the two means were considerably different. The recorder could be left on the ground, out of sight, but the same could not be done with video camera which I was obliged

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<sup>13</sup> Needless to say, the disposition of both the interviewer and the interviewee are totally different in every-day association from that during in-depth interviews.

to look through. Furthermore, use of a recorder never necessitated the interruption of the discussion in order to change a one hour cassette. On the other hand, interviews by video-camera provided me with rich material of non-verbal expressions and reactions.

Regarding the techniques for collecting naturally occurring data I applied the method of participant observation from the field of ethnography as well as documentary and discourse analysis. Persistent observation either as a participant or as totally detached from the environment, yielded diaries of field notes.

The introduction letter from Professor Pratt had provided me access for interviews in ministries, in UNDP and in a couple of civil society organizations in West Freetown. Likewise, the number, the diversity and the personalities of the contacts that I acquired on the field, secured me access to visit and stay in a village, as well as to go out at night and drink beer in petrol stations, to visit other houses and amputee camps and to watch debate contests between students in a school. However this access allowed only for my physical presence while the duration and quality thereof rested on me. Securing access and building informal and meaningful relations were clearly on-going processes which required time, comprehensive discussions, oftentimes irrelevant to the research subject, the creation of common experiences, frequent phone communication when I was away, and so on. Considering particularly the participant observation, I seized opportunities that emerged and also created others by for instance, spending a weekend in Tiwai Island with local friends and not white people.

### **Ph. 3: School Debate**



Certain documents, such as the report of a local conference, were offered to me, while others, such as the school-book of governance, were purchased. However, in most cases I had to 'locate' them and subsequently ask to take or borrow them. As far as the discourse analysis is concerned, posters in the streets, newspapers and magazines were all subjects for analysis. Taking it a step further, music video-clips by local artists, popular stand-up comedies and Nigerian soap-operas on television, were also probed.

Regarding the fieldwork notes, I maintained a simple daily account referencing what I did, where I went and who I met. This proved beneficial as reading it I can recollect, even now, each individual day spent on the field. Beyond these simple brief descriptions, I kept notes on incidents and behaviors which I observed and wrote some initial thoughts about the analysis of evidence.

Regarding the proper place and time for taking notes on the field, I had chosen convenient, neutral and quiet bases in West Freetown as well as in Kenema and had created a daily routine. However, sometimes the interim between the observation of an incident and jotting down the respective notes drew into hours and inevitably resulted in the deficient account of the observed subject. These cases induced me to keep notes more frequently and constituted the cause for realizing the complementary role of a voice recorder as a second notebook. Nevertheless, the situation was more complicated as there was almost always a need to choose between rest, writing down notes and collecting new data. I had to also be aware of my position on the field and take into account the cost of saying 'no' to a suggestion by a new friend for various activities such as a simple walk. Under these circumstances, I constantly selected where I would be and many of the aforementioned possibilities for participant observation remained just that.

Considering the nature of notes kept, disentangling the facts from my interpretation and from the direct quotations, was an unexpectedly difficult task which I constantly had to carry out. An effective choice between a detailed versus a broader scope was always at stake and oftentimes I stopped writing, reflecting on what words I should use to describe the observed phenomena. The use of inaccurate words from the start would probably generate an initial unintended interpretation which would give specific direction to the subsequent analysis.

A photographic camera was also a supplementary means for field records. It provided a mode of recording crucial details even though these were somewhere in the background. The picture of President Koroma in a public bank was one of them. Furthermore, regarding the documentary analysis, photos of documents are as valuable as the documents themselves. Finally, as my schedule included revisiting the same places, it allowed me once again, as with the interviews, to desert any hurried behavior. I took the first public photo alone in Kenema after two weeks in the town quite easily and without suspicion as I was widely and positively recognized. Particularly in Sierra Leone, the locals' consent for photographing them is usually bought; but from my perspective, the only choice was to be given it out of respect.

## **2.5. Limitations**

The limitations tackled on the field were as equally determinative as the techniques applied for the outcomes of the study. They were quite different from those assumed before entering the field and to a certain extent, shaped my daily routine.

In contrast to the perception of people in Freetown, the electricity and water supply conditions in Kenema were far worse. As it was the end of the dry season, the nearby hydroelectric power-station could not produce electricity. Apart from a particular Friday night and the next morning, there was no supply at all. Regarding the water supply, the town did not have any network whatsoever. Fortunately we could obtain contaminated water from a well in the back yard of the house and by adding Dettol the water could be used for showering and laundry.

Once again, potable water was either bottled or that available in marked plastic sachets. In the village, there was only stream water and obviously no electrical supply.

Under these circumstances, priorities changed drastically. First of all, I had to remain healthy and clean. Laundry was an entire process and washing my face or teeth required stored potable water. In addition, I had to be aware of the remaining battery-power of the mobile phone and video camera and grab any opportunity for charging them. My laptop was simply useless.

Considering linguistic limitations, many people in the village could only speak the language of the tribe. I gradually learned basic phrases such as ‘good morning’ or ‘how did you sleep?’ and became somewhat approachable through my amusing inadequacy. Needless to say, Alfred and David were always at my side. Alfred was also the translator in the interviews from the local chief and two respondents. For those who mistrust translators, I put Alfred to the test. I asked him after some weeks to translate once again the prototype recorded interview. Information that was not impulsively verified or remained blurry after this second translation was ignored.

Clearly, there were also the limitations of fatigue and psychological pressures, as I was not accustomed to such distressing images of life. The worst limitation that I confronted however was the ‘forced’ hunger in Kenema by my will for a ‘balanced’ position in the field. I found myself trapped by the poverty of my local friends. There was cholera in two villages one month before entering the field. Thus I had to be extremely careful about food and I established a set routine. One day I would have lunch at an expensive restaurant in town where a portion of fried chicken cost about six euros. However the restaurant was in the street and people, with whom I would probably spend the afternoon or the evening with, often passed and greeted me. Without doubt, I could not go there again the next day because I would be considered as another white rich man. Thus the following day I would buy enough bread and canned beef from a particular shop to eat with the young boys in the house. However I could not repeat it again the next day as this time, my relation with the boys would be at stake. On the third consecutive day I would drink coca cola and fanta. After two or three soft drinks one is no longer hungry.

Finally, together with these unexpected difficulties I also had a surprising privilege in West Freetown: Montfort’s car.

## **2.6. A huge mistake and two detrimental self-limitations**

The results of the study are also grounded on the mistakes that I made and realized on the field. I tended to observe certain facts while others which occurred passed by unnoticed. I was already forty days on the field and had concluded on the absence of childhood in Sierra Leone. In this part of the world, boys of eight years of age had to carry water, ‘earn’ their meal or work, in order to make a profit for their families. Thus, the common protective relation between parents and children was apparently absent. When I saw a mother buying chips for her daughter before their trip back to Freetown on the public bus, I disregarded it. I realized the danger that lurks in ‘fixed conclusions’ three hours later, when I actually saw the little girl eating her chips.

This knowledge proved especially significant as it induced me to notice evidence that clashed with earlier fixed conclusions. For instance, from the first weeks on the field I had observed that there was considerable social trust at the level of neighborhoods in West Freetown as well as in Kenema. Neighbors provided each other with water; children helped to tidy up their neighbors' house and often ran errands on their behalf; in the evenings neighbors gathered and discussed various subjects which mostly included the day's gossip. However, I had not noticed the security bars in the windows, the broken glass and the trip-wire on the fences and the multiple locks behind many doors. Clearly, such insecurity cannot conform to wide social trust.

The second danger that I realized was what Goodhand calls 'conflict fetish', 'the automatic assumption that violence is the problem and the only lens through which to look at people's lives' (2000:15). I was in a taxi in Freetown when I noticed that the driver had hung a photo from the mirror. The photo depicted him and his son, standing in front of the newly bought taxi in which I was sitting. Without doubt, this evidence was not relevant to violence. However it carried a significant social meaning as it demonstrated a will for life, creation and social mobility. Its omission would lead to an erroneous understanding of life on the ground.

A third incident is also worth noting as it illustrates the most significant mistake which was made, fortunately in the beginning of the fieldwork, and resulted in one of the first rules for my research. I was to meet Nikki, a Dutch researcher who was in Freetown during the same period as me, for the first time at seven o'clock at Mamba Point. I informed Montfort about the appointment and he offered to drop me off as he wanted to visit some friends who stay in the area. It was evening, Mamba Point was far away from the house and Montfort's idea seemed practical. I accepted the offer and we started to look for fuel as the car did not have enough. However, there was another, fake fuel-crisis in the gas stations<sup>14</sup> and we only reached Mamba Point at half past eight. Montfort had been there only once before, five years earlier. For him and for the majority of the local people, Mamba Point was quite expensive. I asked Montfort if his friends lived close-by and although they did, it was now quite late to visit them. He suggested waiting for me in the car. I was not to worry as he had taken both his mobile-phones with him, a phenomenon common for Sierra Leoneans, and he would thus have something to do. For obvious reasons I could not let him wait in the car. I took him with me and we sat at a table with Nikki and another two Americans. Unfortunately, I found myself in one of the haunts of white NGO workers as well as Lebanese entrepreneurs who Montfort particularly dislikes. One of the two Americans at our table clumsily displayed his wallet filled with dollars; due to Montfort's presence I had to follow the local norm about money regarding what I would order; and to top it all off, I could not discuss anything with Nikki as I had to direct the whole conversation toward the Mundial and the heat of Africa. I had to find a way to make Montfort feel comfortable as he is extremely smart and although I was a friend of his brother, he knew me only a week.

The mistake was my initial question regarding where Montfort's friends live. Clearly, I could not cope with all the potential answers and in this hard way I learned what one can and cannot ask in the field.

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<sup>14</sup> Such crises frequently transpire in order to raise the price of petrol and diesel.

## **2.7. Issues of ethics**

Countless pages have been written in social research about the issues of ethics. To this day, I do not know how ethical I was in the field. In any case, I allow my local friends to judge me and time will prove what kind of relations I built. Apart from particular individuals, I avoided conveying the title of the master's programme that I am attending. 'Conflict studies' sounds quite aggressive and in fact, is quite popular in Sierra Leone. Many people want to study conflict resolution and work for the United Nations or the European Commission. This emerged enthusiasm is a result of the intervention that is usually forgotten in literature and its consequences are rarely analyzed. I will never forget the surprise in Montfort's face when I told him that there are no United Nations offices in my country. Regarding 'human rights', many natives consider it a western notion which is at least vague if not 'harmful for the African tradition'.<sup>15</sup> 'For these reasons I chose the moderate and ostensibly theoretical title of 'political science'.

As with the majority of issues in conflict studies, legitimacy is a provoking and sensitive subject. Furthermore its explanation requires time and a vocabulary including terms such as power, willing obedience, rights and common good. In this framework I did not inform particular individuals what I was looking for. The paramount chief in Kenema and the local chief in the village knew that this research pertained to the role of the Political Party Registration Commission. The majority of individuals on the ground believed that this study concerned the political parties in Sierra Leone. The above subjects were not chosen randomly but were the results of reflection. For the former, I needed a subject which would not focus on their potential authority; for the latter, I needed an intriguing topic which would be easily understood and oriented towards legitimacy.

One of the most difficult moments in the research was when I told Montfort that I was not his younger brother's best friend in Holland. Raymond has not been to Sierra Leone for four years. Suddenly, he called his brother and told him that one of his friends is coming to stay with them. Thus, one can imagine that when I arrived at the house they treated me like they would treat Raymond. This humane behavior obliged me to confess an inconvenient truth.

One last ethical issue is the anonymity that I ought to preserve in this study. I do not refer to the name of the village as it is meaningless. It is a village in the Moyamba district and has a population of about five hundred people. For the individuals on the ground I employ nicknames. I cannot explain why I chose them for the sample without, to an extent, exposing their identities. I accept this cost concerning the accuracy of the study.

## **2.8. Playing with identities**

The very first question that local people ask a white person on the ground is 'What is your mission here?' Clearly Freetown and generally Sierra Leone is not yet an attractive tourist destination. The answer to this question is not only crucial because many psychologists have stressed the significance of first impressions, but also because the researcher may not have the time or the opportunities to change this first impression. In other words, his forthcoming position on the ground is at stake to an extent which may be proved determinative.

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<sup>15</sup> Author's interviews with Isa, village, on 6 April 2010 and with Kawa, Kenema, on 17 April 2010.

The tool-box used in responding to this question as well as to all the relevant questions was the various identities that I carried, some of which are listed in Box 4. I had acquired these identities through studies, work experiences, activities, existent friendships on the ground, through my nationality or just through the places of my accommodation. I could combine them in a different way each time emphasizing different aspects of myself and different facts. There was only one criterion; I never invoked an identity that I could not stand behind.

**Box 4: Several Identities invoked**

- MA student of ‘political science’ or ‘conflict studies’.
- Civil Engineer.
- Employee in National Geographic Magazine, Greece, who intends to write an article about Gola Forest and Tiwai Island.
- Friend of Raymond in Holland
- Friend of Kawa, staying with him in the same house.
- Free-lance journalist.
- Greek.
- Friend of Alfred from Freetown.

However, equally significant with the aforementioned identities was my look. I was frequently mistaken for Lebanese or Arab and these were, without doubt, inconvenient identities. Lebanese people constitute rich elite in the country and it is widely perceived that they exploit Sierra Leoneans, while Arabs are often diamond-traders.

**Ph. 4: A trip to Tiwai Island and Gola Forest for writing the relative article was the ostensible reason for visiting the East Province**



## **2.9. Attitude, Behavior and Tactics in the field**

The first stereotype that I had to confront on the field was that of the white and thus, rich man. The ace up my sleeve was the fact that I stayed in neutral, local houses and subsequently the unexpected answer to their question ‘Where do you live?’.

Furthermore, tactics such as eating bread slowly in the street, were aimed at giving a different picture of the white-man, rather than the usual one of the person who walks quickly, straight to his contacts, smiles with awkward politeness when glancing at local people and lunches in ‘expensive’ restaurants.

Many people stopped me in the streets and asked ‘Friend, where is my lunch?’ while others who just greeted me or passed by, were equally hungry. These are two different behaviors that had to be taken into account on the field. Responding compassionately to beggars would be false. I would reinforce the fallacious stereotype that white people are rich. Furthermore, the observers would not understand my charitable response as in this part of the world almost everybody, equally hungry and poor, embraces the quote ‘One man, one burden’. If one could help other people, these should be ‘his people’.

On the other hand, responding timidly to beggars was meaningless. I had to therefore demand respect by being calm and employing the strict response: ‘Why is it assumed that I should give you money?’ Although this behavior is usually neglected in the guides of social research, it was the right choice. If I wanted to approach individuals, I would have to be equal to them in every way.

Oftentimes I summoned my prior exposure on the field. I would narrate funny incidents, refer to friends that I left behind and would meet again, use words or phrases that I had learned and so on. Clearly, each place was different but in the same part of the world. By eating monkey in the village, I showed respect to another culture and by buying juice for Solomon I was simply friendly and polite. I silently negotiated my autonomy many times but not always with success. In my case, and as far as specific contacts were concerned, being honest about my feelings was relieving and proved beneficial as our relations were getting stronger. Fortunately I never underestimated them. Thus, I was deemed uninterested and not naive when Alex pretended to be an ex-combatant because of the scars on his arm; scars which many Sierra Leoneans have on different parts of their bodies and are made by the traditional healers in order to ensure good luck, welfare, health and protection against witchcraft.

Reading local newspapers during the preparation prior to the field work provided me with a great tactic. My subject had been changed and the database that I had prepared was useless. However, I had acquired wide knowledge about the latest news on the ground and could participate in discussions regarding current gossip, news or scandals. In this way, I could locate more ‘intimate’ pathways towards my new subject.

Finally I carried a great tool, the travel guide of Sierra Leone. Showing it to people who did not usually travel and rarely saw tourists, allowed me to attract their interest. The guide was evoking their proud identity of freed slaves, their famed intellectual past and the country’s natural tropical beauty. Positive feelings were connected to me. Furthermore, I got a first impression of how the locals perceive their country and I could invoke, to an extent, a feeling that I came to the country in order to visit its sites and not only as another researcher.

## 2.10. Security issue

In a field such as Sierra Leone, one is not permanently concerned with the problem of security. However it does remain an issue and many times it may emerge and determine the route the research takes.

After only eight days on the field, I met Mr. Peter outside the neighborhood internet cafe. He saw the UN-Joint Vision document and asked what exactly I was searching for. After a brief discussion concerning my research, he told me that he had founded a small NGO for the street children and would like to arrange an appointment in his office the next morning to discuss it further. As his office was close to the neighborhood I accepted and went. In order to understand exactly what his NGO is about, at the end of our second conversation Mr. Peter asked me if I would like to join him on his usual evening course to Ecowas and Wilberforce streets where many street children lived. I did not have enough contacts and Mr. Peter was a potential one. However the idea of being in the center of Freetown, at midnight, with a person that I knew only a few hours, was not attractive. Nevertheless, I accepted. I verified that Mr. Peter was a good friend of David, who was a trustful friend of Montfort. I informed Montfort about the forthcoming walk and asked his brother Maco to call me at 01.00 a.m. Going out with Mr. Peter I apologized for not taking the camera with me as we had agreed. What I saw was distressing and not exciting, and when convinced about his work, I asked Mr. Peter to schedule another evening outing. Two nights later, we were again walking the same streets, but this time I had my camera with me. However the situation was totally different as prostitutes and pimps had made an appearance and the bras, children around seventeen years old who had lived in the streets for many years and were now supervising the younger children, were nervous and less co-operative.

What I had not noticed is that the first outing was on Tuesday and the second was on Thursday. I had learnt a hard lesson: one can never know the field.

**Ph. 5: Street Children who gamble and rest in Ecowas Street**



Regarding the transportation from one city to another, I always travelled with the public bus. Much slower but safer, the trip was a unique opportunity for observation. In order to avoid carrying significant amounts of money, I had opened an account in a Sierra Leonean bank and

let everybody know. I would thus be condoned if my cash finished and nobody would even think of stealing my local bank card as my photo was on it.

### **2.11. Saving energy and time**

Looking at the timetable, one can see that I spent an unjustifiable weekend in Freetown. The total distance covered was 618 km and, as I travelled with the public bus, the total duration of the trip was fourteen hours. However I had to go back to the capital. I was to become the godfather of a new-born boy and would again meet my contacts, while attending a unique ceremony. At that time, this obligation seemed detrimental for the research which I had conducted in Kenema. However, it provided me access to a rare and locally-rooted occasion, an opportunity to remind my local friends in Freetown that I was still there and last but not least, two good meals. Saving time and energy in the field is a matter of opinion.

### **2.12. It is a whole trajectory**

By the presence of new people on the field the researcher can realize how far he has penetrated in life on the ground. Looking back, he will understand that he has completed an entire trajectory and he will acquire a consciousness of it as a whole and not only of one of its parts. He will remember the very first impressions which may have faded, and he will continue the research, now always keeping an eye on the very beginning of this trajectory.

Confidence, increase of the temporal depth of the correlations and better understanding of life on the ground may be some of the benefits for the researcher.

I was in Kenema for a second time, sitting in a petrol station and chatting with some friends about one's decision to enlist, when Solomon appeared with William. William was a Scottish man who worked in an INGO concerned with the effects of the engagement of amputees in FIFA football activities for the improvement of their lives. He had spent six days in Freetown and intended to spend another six in Monrovia, Liberia. Meanwhile, he would stay in Kenema for one day. After the required introductions, my company and I began to talk with William. Without realizing how much time I had been on the field, I started to appreciate William for being in Freetown and intending to go to Liberia; I felt that I was at home and that somebody had returned from a trip to such peculiar places to narrate interesting stories. Furthermore, I heard William convey a long monologue about his aversion towards the English who colonized Sierra Leone, invoking his Scottish identity and trying in this way to become approachable and friendly. Although my local friends were laughing, I saw a 'different' smile, implying probably that 'Every foreigner says the same things in the beginning.' I knew that William's approach was polite but totally inefficient. Sierra Leoneans do not have any hatred for their colonial masters. In fact, they are extremely proud for their history. At the end of the night, I returned home reflecting on the difference between the subjects discussed with the arrival of William and those before his presence, on the 'friendly' distance between him and the rest and on my first impressions when I was still in the airport in Lungi, or in the ferry to Freetown forty days ago.

## CHAPTER 3: LEGITIMACY AND ITS SOURCES

The previous chapter discussed the methodology employed and the chosen way of sampling informants. It explicated the work conducted on the field and narrated several incidents directly or indirectly determinative in the outcomes of this study. This chapter will deal with the initial three sub-questions, namely:

- How legitimate are the authorities and the institutions listed in Box 2 (pg 11) viewed by the respondents?
- How is the legitimacy of the authorities and the institutions listed in Box 2 (pg 11) constructed?
- To what extent do the detected sources of legitimacy in the context of Sierra Leone correspond with those given in the literature?

The authorities and the institutions listed in Box 2 (pg 11) will constitute the main units of analysis. Clarified populations on the basis of region or of social indicators such as educational status, income and age will be brought into play, wherever it is deemed necessary and feasible. Although attempts of employing analytic induction (Ragin, 1994:93-98) have been done, the small number of the informants, namely twenty-two, reduced the scientific significance and validity of the simultaneous clarification of concepts and categories. The first two sub-questions will be answered at once for each authority or institution, in this way avoiding repeated fragmentation. The evidence regarding the conferment of legitimacy over the police force and the civil service will be jointly presented due to the similarity of both cases. The third sub-question will be considered at the end of the chapter under the section 3.8. named: 'The sources of legitimacy: Literature versus real context'.

### 3.1. Two key state agents: Police force and civil service

'The policemen are trying. Look the police before ten, fifteen years I mean [...]. There is a continuing improvement despite the devoted scarce resources. However, the majority of the people continues to look at them negatively.'<sup>16</sup> claims an officer of high rank in the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The research findings do not contradict his statement. Although the common perception of the police force as a 'collaborator' with diverse agents during the war has gradually faded out, individuals persist to place no confidence in policemen. All the interviewees and the majority of associates on the ground argued that they are not satisfied with the police force as the latter tend to arbitrarily ask for bribes, intensify situations instead of settling them so as to 'gain something and put it in their pockets'<sup>17</sup> and 'misbehave doing what they do not want the other citizens to do'.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, all the informants were reluctant to trust and cooperate with policemen as demonstrated through various claims such as 'I do not want any relation with police [...]. It is not even good to have a policeman friend.'<sup>19</sup> or 'Even if I have right and go to the police station [...] to assert my right, they will not help me because I do not have any

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<sup>16</sup> Author's interview with an officer of high rank in the ministry of Internal Affairs, Freetown, on 14 March 2010.

<sup>17</sup> Author's interview with Kawa, Kenema, on 17 April 2010.

<sup>18</sup> Author's interview with Solomon and Ansu, Kenema, on 18 April 2010.

<sup>19</sup> Author's interview with David, West Freetown, on 30 April 2010.

money to give them.’<sup>20</sup> Regarding the primary right of policemen to force people to obey the law, the common response was that ‘[...] they themselves do not frequently uphold the law, they are corrupt.’<sup>19a</sup> implying that one should be suspicious when beckoned by policemen.

Various behaviors of citizens were observed and were in accordance with these perceptions. The two following reactions, which are most characteristic, reveal the mistrust towards the police force. Lawrence became furious, as the police signaled and stopped our vehicle in the centre of Kenema. He was forced, once again, to show his identity and drivers’ license, while explaining loudly and confrontationally to me that ‘they constantly stop people in order to take bribes. They took fifty thousand leones from a man and now they deny it and pretend that they do not know anything.’<sup>21</sup> Similarly on the way to the village, David responded aggressively and suspiciously to the policemen at all the checkpoints demonstrating in this way that ‘he knows his rights’.<sup>22</sup> ‘Sir, you cannot search my car without my consent’<sup>21a</sup> he said nastily to a policeman even though the officer stood two meters away from the vehicle. Since the beginning of the trip, he had argued that the police had created arbitrary checkpoints in order to extort money from travelers.

Clearly, the police force does not seem to be a legitimate authority for upholding the law in post-war Sierra Leone. Their presence is not linked with maintaining order mainly due to their corruption. This corruption, totally distinct from any perceived incapacity of the police for providing security, constitutes the reason for the lack of legitimacy of the police force. It takes neither the form of state agents pocketing revenues meant for the public coffers (Seligson, 2002), nor the form of agents who are embedded in diverse networks and expected to fulfill reciprocal obligations to other members. It somewhat stems from the extremely low salaries among civil servants which constitute a motive to ask for bribes and prey upon citizens rather than serve them (Bates, 2008; Kaldor, 1962-63).

### **Ph.3: Sign outside of national headquarters of police force, in Freetown**



<sup>20,19a</sup> Author’s interview with Sherrif (teacher), Kenema, on 20 April 2010.

<sup>21</sup> Author’s 2<sup>nd</sup> diary, p. 35, Kenema, on 29 March 2010.

<sup>22, 21a</sup> Author’s 2<sup>nd</sup> diary, p. 51, village, on 3 April 2010.

The same form of corruption was the basis on which fourteen of the eighteen respondents in Kenema and West Freetown directly challenged the authority of the civil service in carrying out the governmental administrative functions. Characteristic arguments were that of David considering the employees in National Power Authority (NPA) who demand bribes in order to connect residences to the main channel of electricity, and that of Solomon considering the employees in the immigration office at the airport who arbitrarily extend the duration of Lebanese businessmen's visas. From my experience, such arguments may be fairly substantial. I ironically found myself next to an impressive poster pertaining to the prevention of corruption whilst negotiating with the immigration officer on the bribe demanded for allowing me to leave the county as I had forgotten to renew my visa.

In the case of the civil service and as far as the four informants in the village were concerned, they could not express any relative attitudes whatsoever. Living exclusively in a remote rural area, they had rarely, or in some cases never, dealt with civil service agents. They were not provided with and thus, did not use any public network of water or electrical supply. Although two interviewees had once been to the clinic in the nearby town, the traditional healer constituted their typical health provider. Finally, the local chief and his speaker collected the imposed taxes but were nonetheless, not considered at any level, as civil servants.

### **3.2. The President Ernest Bai Koroma**

That one Friday evening that there was electrical supply in Kenema, people started to smile shouting 'Light is in town, Laderboot is here'.<sup>23</sup> They implied in this way that they were provided with light only when Laderboot, the president's personal bodyguard and thus, the president himself were in the city. However, the same people surprisingly claimed that the president 'is trying hard',<sup>24</sup> explaining further '[...] it was only now with this president that ministers from his cabinet, considered as big men, found themselves in the courts accused of corruption.'<sup>23a</sup>

President Koroma did an unprecedented act. He dismissed two ministers who were accused of corruption, in order to help the Anti-Corruption Commission, an official independent instrument, to conduct its investigation. This act, which became known even in the village, indeed resulted in the widespread respect for him without regard to one's particular political affiliation. All the informants emphasized it before deeming Koroma 'a good president who may perform well, even though he leads the APC party.'<sup>25</sup>

Clearly, the president's demonstrated will and, to an extent, his capacity to enforce and monitor rules and regulations (Levi *et al*, 2009) constitute the main sources of granted legitimacy over his authority. Koroma did not only spread the fear of detection for individuals who may act illegally but, more significantly (Scholz, 1998), bolstered the belief that people who do not comply with laws will be caught and punished without any exemption. He defied the detrimental but nevertheless, strongly embedded notions in the society of Sierra Leone, concerning 'big men' and the assumed ties between a leader and 'his people', and indirectly

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<sup>23</sup> Author's 3<sup>rd</sup> diary, p.13, 16 April

<sup>24, 23a</sup> Author's interview with Sheriff (teacher), Kenema, on 20 April 2010.

<sup>25</sup> Author's interview with Solomon and Ansu, Kenema, on 18 April 2010.

promoted equality for all before the law. Without a doubt, the locals recognized this principle's value and necessity.

### 3.3. The APC government

An alarming tribal and regional division is observed in the electoral behavior of Sierra Leoneans (Overbeek, 2008). There are two major political parties in the country: the ruling party of All People's Congress (APC) and the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP). APC is mainly voted for by the Temne tribe who live in the north and western districts, while SLPP is mainly supported by the Mende tribe who reside in the east and south provinces. Accounting for two thirds of the total population, these two tribes constitute the two adverse poles in the realm of politics. Their rivalry has its origin in recent mythology of the 1970s<sup>26</sup> and emerges exclusively 'when election time is in town'.<sup>27</sup> This political polarization is at odds with the much intermarriage between the two tribes and the settlement of many people in each other's land, evidence which is ignored or concealed by scholars who solely employ the analytical frames of tribalism and regionalism. In any case, it rendered the study of the legitimacy of government which is comprised by only one political party, particularly interesting.

However it was a fairly difficult task. Legitimacy may be a reason for political support. However the conferment of legitimacy over the government could not be proved by the act of voting for or against the APC. One may vote for the APC, prompted by tribalism, regionalism or by personal relations of reciprocity in existing networks of clientelism (Hyden, 2006:97).<sup>28</sup> Another may vote against the APC for the same reasons. Furthermore, both can conceal these reasons through the use of a relative political argument where the common good is ostensibly invoked.

Five of the eight illiterate informants<sup>29</sup> claimed that they recognize or do not accept the authority of the APC government by invoking their tribe and its historical bounds. For instance, 'I am an APC man. I am Limba by tribe and Temne are my neighbors, my brothers.'<sup>30</sup> Obviously these cases were neglected as they did not pertain to the issue of legitimacy but rather to that of political support on the basis of tribe or region.

Regarding the remaining interviewees, APC supporters clearly accepted the APC government because they voted for it. However their cases were also neglected. Their arguments did not reveal that this acceptance had to do with granting legitimacy over the authority; in actual fact, their arguments did not prove that this acceptance was not connected with other reasons for political support. For instance, David claimed 'I voted for them and recognize the authority of their government because I do not think that SLPP had set forward any project

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<sup>26</sup> The duel between the Temne warrior Sokobanna and the Mende Kendeka in the city of Bo determined the tribe that would govern the country.

<sup>27</sup> Author's interview with Kawa, Kenema, on 17 April 2010.

<sup>28</sup> As Kawa honestly admitted: 'One of the reasons that I vote for SLPP, is that some of my relatives are ministers in the cabinet, in the parliament. So, if I vote for them I will have a profit. Right? But if I vote for a man of APC that I do not know, I will not have anything. He will not do anything for me.' Author's interview with Kawa, Kenema, on 17 April 2010.

<sup>29</sup> Illiterate informants are those who had not attended more than the fourth year of primary school. Four of them could not read or write.

<sup>30</sup> Author's interview with Sheriff (driver), Freetown, on 29 April 2010.

such as the hydro-electrical power station in Bumbuna Falls or policy such as the free-health care service.<sup>31</sup> His political argument, grounded on the performance of SLPP, resembles the rational arguments pertaining to the legitimacy and the common good, but does not exclude the possibilities of political support towards APC for other concealed reasons. Furthermore, such political arguments, targeted at particular projects, were also raised by SLPP supporters who justified in this way their preference in the elections but not the reasons for conforming to their loss.

As it was expected, informative for the conferment of legitimacy over the government were ultimately nine interviewees, who had voted for SLPP and nonetheless, had accepted the APC government. As coercion towards them was not exercised by the APC, their expressed compliance with the government clearly indicated the conferment of legitimacy over the authority. Therefore, only the sources of granted legitimacy remained to be revealed. An investigation directed towards the procedural justice (Rothstein, 2009:313-315; Alagappa, 1995; Weatherford, 1992:150) which might have been perceived through the elections in 2007, proved inefficient. Many ballot-boxes were cancelled in the elections in 2007. The majority of them were in the south and east provinces. Furthermore, the result was announced thirty minutes before the scheduled time and thus, SLPP did not manage to appeal for poll cancellation on time. In this framework, the question posed focused on why the respondents accepted the unfair result. These reasons would obviously be identical with those for SLPP supporters subsequently recognizing the authority of the APC government.

The interviewees claimed that the elections were manipulated by Victor Angelo, the UN representative, 'who is now supervising the situation in Chad'.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, they accepted his intervention in the political governance as the country's economy is mainly based on external donors and agencies. Furthermore, the informants unexpectedly acknowledged that the recent remembrance of the war constituted a motive for their compliance with the unjust result. In Chico's words: 'everybody said: 'let's give them a try'. Now when the things get to the worse, we say 'let it be so' or 'it is God's will'. We have the experience of the war.'<sup>33</sup>

Thus, as proved, the recent remembrance of war and the international support (Pouligny, 2006: 190-196) towards the particular political party constitute the sources of legitimacy of the APC government. The former is frequently neglected in literature; the latter which, taking into account its necessity for the development of the country, simultaneously sets an indirect blackmail for the supporters of the other political parties, is a debatable source of legitimacy to say the least.

Finally, no reason for the refusal of the conferment of legitimacy over APC can be provided, as the three interviewees who claimed that they did not accept the APC government, confined themselves to clarify their political support towards SLPP on the basis of their tribe and region.

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<sup>31</sup> Author's interview with David, Freetown, on 30 April 2010.

<sup>32</sup> Author's interview with Solomon and Ansu, Kenema, on 18 April 2010.

<sup>33</sup> Author's interview with Chico, Freetown, on 1 May 2010.

### **3.4. The regime: The institution of the elections and the institution which defines the existence of and the relations between the president, the cabinet and the parliament**

Collecting the beliefs of the people on the ground as to whether they are satisfied with the current regime was a tricky task as well as appealing. The historical context was defined by a regime of one party for twenty five years, the war which lasted ten years and military junta for several interims. Two institutions, namely the institution of elections and the institution which defines the existence of and the relations between the president, the cabinet and the parliament constituted the components of the regime under study.

Six informants could not distinguish between the regime and the performance of a particular government. For instance, Weider seemed to prefer a military regime in comparison to ‘this democracy’<sup>34</sup> arguing that ‘when NPRC was in power in 1992, Freetown had continuous electrical supply.’<sup>33a</sup> Needless to say, such claims rendered even more difficult the relative inquiry.

Regarding the institution concerning the president, the cabinet and the parliament, the four informants in the village as well as another five in West Freetown and Kenema did not know how it performs. The proper interaction between the three agents remained obscure in the respondents’ initial descriptions and thus, no further questions probing the conferment of legitimacy over the particular institution were set forward. The remaining interviewees were able to portray the existence of and the relations between the president, the cabinet and the parliament. However, apart from two, they did not refer to the value of the room for peaceful collision of interests within the current regime given by for instance, one party forming the cabinet and another possessing the majority of the seats in parliament. The notion of the unity and indivisibility of power (Schatzberg, 2001) is deeply rooted in Sierra Leoneans’ mentality. Under these circumstances, the inquiry concerning the conferment of legitimacy over the institution was deemed worthless. The significance of the institution was not understood by the respondents in the first place.

In contrast, all the informants referred to the obvious advantages of the institution of elections. As Emmanuel explained ‘We know now that we can change the government every five years. So, if they will not do anything, we will change them.’<sup>35</sup> Clearly, the institution of elections based on the political equality of the individuals which stands for ‘one citizen, one vote’, is legitimate for determining the political actors such as the government and the parliament. Its acceptance stems from the justice that inevitably, at least in theory, it assures. The losers, either politicians or simple supporters conform to the view of the majority of citizens and are provided with the hope that the next time round, they may stand a chance of becoming winners (O’Donnell, 2007).

### **3.5. Chieftaincy: The institution and two of its agents**

The network of traditional authorities in Sierra Leone is particularly complicated and incorporates diverse actors such as the paramount and local chiefs, speakers and councils of elders. Without a doubt, its conjunction with the network of western typical state agents such

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<sup>34</sup> .<sup>33a</sup> Author’s 1<sup>st</sup> diary, p.30, 11 March 2010.

<sup>35</sup> Author’s interview with Emmanuel, Kenema, on 22 April 2010.

as mayors and city councils, results in the establishment of a hybrid political order. Paramount chiefs, who are elected for life by specific councilors in each chiefdom, participate in the parliament; local chiefs in villages collect taxes and deliver them to the treasurer of each sub-chiefdom and so on. Under these circumstances, the study examines the conferment of legitimacy over the institution of chieftaincy and over two particular agents thereof, namely the paramount chief in the Nogowa chiefdom where the central town is Kenema and the local chief in the village in the Moyamba district. Needless to say, the populations of all three regions of the research expressed attitudes for the institution itself, but considering the paramount chief, only the interviewees in Kenema were asked and likewise, considering the local chief, the interviewees in the village.

All the informants without regard to the area, age or educational level expressed their acceptance of and support for chieftaincy. Typical claims in Freetown such as ‘No, I do not agree that we should get rid of the chieftaincy. Chiefs protect and serve the people’<sup>36</sup> together with the more cordial statements in Kenema and the village such as ‘The abolition of the institution would be equal with our ‘cultural suicide’’,<sup>37</sup> clearly demonstrate the acceptance of chieftaincy by the interviewees.

Nevertheless, when the discussion was inevitably directed to the consideration of the way that chiefs are elected, ten of the eighteen interviewees in Kenema and Freetown, who all fell within the middle or high income range and had either a secondary or tertiary level of education,<sup>38</sup> clarified that they mainly support a different type of chieftaincy where the chiefs would be elected by all the tax payers, for a specific tenure. This preference, or in actual fact demand, did not seem to threaten the approval of the institution itself but to present a way for its desired survival, as illustrated by enlightening, plain statements such as ‘...I just say that they should not be voted for all their life but only for four or five years. This does not mean that I do not like chieftaincy. It is our tradition, our way of governing.’<sup>39</sup>

Concerning the legitimacy of the paramount chief in Kenema and the chief in the village, all the relative informants demonstrated respect and compliance to their traditional authorities. Claims such as ‘I believe that the paramount chief has always the right to make a decision and we should obey to it’<sup>40</sup> or ‘[...] the chief is in charge here’<sup>41</sup> proved the conferment of legitimacy over the particular authorities. Acts of disobedience and mistrust were not observed. On the contrary, various manifestations of cooperation and compliance with the chiefs were recorded, especially in the village. Among the most characteristic witnessed, were those pertaining to an incident of misunderstanding between the Christians and the Muslims, when the former performed a memorial rite without sending some of the cooked food, as the custom obliges, to the latter. The imam complained to the chief about this omission who immediately took action by scheduling a sort of reconciliation ceremony after two days, which proved to be successful. The ceremony was nothing more than a gathering, where after the speeches, the chief himself spoke to the people in attendance. Subsequently, some Christians voluntarily, as others did not, threw money into a plate and at the end, the imam,

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<sup>36</sup> Author’s interview with Sheriff (driver), Freetown, on 29 April 2010.

<sup>37</sup> Author’s interview with Ahmed, village, on 7 April 2010.

<sup>38</sup> The middle income range falls between 400.000 - 800.000 leones while the high income range lies above 800.000 leones (160€).

<sup>39</sup> Author’s interview with David (internet), Freetown, on 30 April 2010.

<sup>40</sup> Author’s interview with Balla, Kenema, on 23 April 2010.

<sup>41</sup> Author’s interview with Ahmed, village, on 7 April 2010.

always under the supervision of the local chief, took the plate and distributed a cake prepared by the Muslims, to the gathering.

Despite the plethora of behaviors observed, the absence of any informants who claimed that they were not satisfied with the chiefs but complied with their authority, led to an uncertainty. Once again, one could not detect the extent to which relations of patrimonialism or personal interests induced the respondents to affirm their support towards the chiefs, either through attitude or behavior. Statements such as ‘I am satisfied from our chief because he takes care of us’,<sup>42</sup> although structured on the service of common good, were deserved of skepticism. However the majority of the associates on the ground seemed to recognize, befriend and have positive attitudes towards these particular authorities. Furthermore, there were always some unnecessary but informative extensions of particular statements such as ‘Tomorrow we will go to his residence and you will take a photo of him. When you go back to your country, you will say to everyone that this is a good man, the paramount chief of Nogowa chiefdom.’<sup>43</sup>

The main source of the legitimacy of institution is, as evident from the claims above, the tradition of the African country. Chieftaincy is strongly embedded in the history of Sierra Leone. Pre-existing before the English colonization and reinforced during its era, as it provided a convenient method for the British rulers to administer the colony and the hinterland, chieftaincy created a historical account and gradually constituted the natural way of governance.

Concerning the two chiefs under study, they gain respect and acceptance due to their family-line and responsiveness. Both come from ruling houses and belong to the specific tribes who traditionally live in these lands. Their ancestors were also chiefs or members of secret societies<sup>44</sup> and thus, they themselves are justified for becoming chiefs. In addition, their perceived responsiveness to the people (Weatherford, 1992), especially in the case of the village, ensures their on-going acceptance.

Claims such as ‘we appealed to our paramount chief about the construction of the road because he listens to us, he is not like politicians who care only for votes’<sup>45</sup> or ‘I know that the chief will respond to whatever complaint I have’<sup>46</sup> demonstrate the perceived proximity between the particular authorities and the informants which inevitably results in the support of the former. This alleged ‘open’ channel of communication, irrespective of its effectiveness and outcomes, seems to be determinative for the legitimacy of the two chiefs.

### **3.6. International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs)**

Although eight years have passed since the end of civil war, many INGOs continue to carry out various programmes on the ground. Setting aside the much debate regarding their undertaken role and its consequences, the study examined their presence in the country from the perspective of the locals. All eighteen informants in Kenema and Freetown, apart from

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<sup>42</sup> Author’s interview with Solomon and Ansu, Kenema, on 7 April 2010.

<sup>43</sup> Author’s 2<sup>nd</sup> diary, p.37, 29 March 2010.

<sup>44</sup> Secret societies are the traditional civil society organizations in the sub-Saharan country which are used to supervise the paramount chiefs (Alie, 1990; AFREX, 2007).

<sup>45</sup> Author’s interview with Solomon and Ansu, Kenema, on 18 April 2010.

<sup>46</sup> Author’s interview with Joe, village, on 8 April 2010.

three, conveyed positive attitudes towards INGOs. Claims such as ‘they perform well, they really try and help the country to develop itself’<sup>47</sup> or ‘[...] they contribute to our welfare. They provide the slums with health services [...] and foremost, they inform the people about simple things such as HIV or malaria’<sup>48</sup> were typical. However some additional arguments elicited from the interviewees, necessitated the rejection of several of the expressed attitudes, as they proved irrelevant with the issue of legitimacy. These arguments revealed reasoning that stemmed from personal interest. Among the most characteristic was that communicated by Alfred, a Sierra Leonean INGO worker, who spontaneously confessed after the first questions: ‘I have a good job and salary because of their presence. Life here is not easy, is not easy at all. [...]’.<sup>49</sup>

Leaving the expressed attitudes aside, INGOs seemed to be accepted in both regions. The observed cooperation of locals with the INGO fieldworkers in slums such as Kroo Bay, the positive comments on the INGOs’ projects and efforts in the diverse newspapers and radio stations without regard to their own particular political affiliation as well as the displayed items such as calendars offered by UNICEF, Christian Aid and other INGOs in the homes of Sierra Leoneans which I visited, constituted some additional evidence of INGOs’ widespread positive recognition.

#### Ph. 4: Kroo Bay



In the remote village, although the INGOs had not yet carried out any project, their potential forthcoming presence seemed to be more than welcome by the informants. The reason was none other than the obvious one. ‘Many services and infrastructures, such as the school that we try to build alone for one year now, could be provided by them. In two villages in Blama they constructed clinics.’<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Author’s interview with Alfred, Freetown, on 3 May 2010.

<sup>48</sup> Author’s interview with Sheriff (teacher), Kenema, on 20 April 2010.

<sup>49</sup> Author’s interview with Alfred, Freetown, on 3 May 2010.

<sup>50</sup> Author’s interview with Ahmed, village, on 7 April 2010.

Taking into account such records and always keeping in mind the opinions of the three informants which can be summed up in the statement ‘INGOs were never a part of the solution in this country. [...] They care about their own agendas, not our welfare’<sup>51</sup>, one can contend that INGOs are generally legitimate to carry out their programmes. The acceptance of and the appeal for their presence is due to the belief that they provide services (Weatherford, 1992) and ‘welfare gains’ (Gilley, 2009). Their perceived efficiency, competence and distributive fairness bolster positive attitudes and stimulate individuals on the ground to accept and cooperate with them.

### **3.7. Chinese agents of international intervention in the country**

When staying and travelling in Sierra Leone, one cannot ignore the Chinese influence and intervention in the country. The huge Chinese clinic in the east part of Freetown, the Chinese radio station which is most easily accessible in the remote areas of the South and East provinces, the traditional healers who trade in the governmental bus and extol Chinese herbal medicine promoting it as they do their own; all undoubtedly manifest the friendly relations between the two countries.

The presence of Chinese agents in Sierra Leone is greatly accepted by the people on the ground. In actual fact it is desired as claims such as that of Balla, when passing a Chinese man who supervised locals in the construction of the road outside Kenema, illustrate: ‘I like them. They are hard-workers and they really help us. You see, if a Sierra Leonean was in his position, he would be in the bridge and drink poyo. But he stands exactly in front of them, to ensure that they work.’<sup>52</sup> Sheriff clarifies further the reason for this partiality: ‘The Chinese built the national stadium in Freetown, the Youyi Building, the hydro-electrical power station here. They look only at the development. And they give you what you need. [...] Look what they did in Angola. Angola was a mess. But when the Chinese went there, oh, amazing progress occurred.’<sup>53</sup>

The international relations between China and Sierra Leone were initiated at the end of the 1970s during the era of Siaka Stevens’ regime. From the very start, China aided in the development of the sub-Saharan country. The national stadium and the Youyi Building<sup>54</sup>, where the main ministries are accommodated, constituted the first two projects that were carried out in the African capital and subsequently became symbols of the friendship between the two countries, sightseeing for the few tourists, the background of many local music video-clips and characteristic meeting points in the every-day life of the inhabitants in Freetown. The hydro-electric power station in the area of Kenema, as well as other infrastructure, came to be added and ensured further cooperation. Since the end of the war, particularly after the China-Africa Summit in 2006, several workshops for Sierra Leonean journalists have taken place in Beijing and diverse scholarships for studying medicine or information technology have been provided, imitating the Russian fashion of the 1980’s. In turn, Chinese agents have undertaken agricultural projects in the Pujehun district and elsewhere as well as the construction of schools and stadiums.

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<sup>51</sup> Author’s interview with Maco, Freetown, on 1 May 2010

<sup>52</sup> Author’s interview with Balla, Kenema, on 23 April 2010

<sup>53</sup> Author’s interview with Sheriff (teacher), Kenema, on 20 April 2010.

<sup>54</sup> Youyi Building means the building of friendship in Chinese.

Even the informants in the village smiled at the neutral question posed ‘How do you feel about the Chinese intervention in your country?’<sup>55</sup> and stressed that ‘Chinese are good people, work hard [...] help us to get a better life.’<sup>56</sup> In this framework the sources of legitimacy of the Chinese agents are revealed. Their substantial attempts which are perceived to and may indeed improve the material well-being of the locals, as well as the historical account of the international relations between the two countries, provide the Chinese with the indisputable support of Sierra Leoneans.

### **3.8. The sources of legitimacy: Literature versus Real Context.**

At this stage of the research, the existing sources of legitimacy on the ground have been detected and brought to light. The consideration of their consistency with those sources given in literature is reckoned a primary task, as it may enrich scholars’ poor knowledge about the process of rebuilding legitimacy in post-war states (Einsiedel, 2005).

To start with, it was evident that the reason of the conferment of legitimacy over president Koroma was his perceived will and to an extent, capacity to reinforce and implement the law. His simultaneous, indirect strike against notions such as that of ‘big men’, was so unexpected of and desired by the people on the ground so as to result in the widespread acceptance of his authority. Judgments of him based on other criteria were deemed, if not worthless, of minor significance. In this frame, a reason frequently given in literature for legitimizing leaders, namely their submission to limits on their power (Alt, 2002; Ferejohn, 1999), was not brought into play by any interviewee. Although in western countries, the compliance of the heads of state to constraints enforced on them by law and external power, constitutes a major criterion for the conferment of legitimacy over them, it seemed irrelevant in the context of Sierra Leone. The absence of references to it, directed the investigation towards an appealing course: the reflection on Koroma’s broader performance.

Regarding the granted legitimacy of the government, surprisingly neither the provision of public goods and services, nor the procedural justice constituted its sources. In literature, the provision of public goods and services is frequently considered as a significant source of legitimacy of either the state or the government (Levi *et al.*, 2009; Gilley, 2009; Papagianni in Call and Wyeth, 2008; OECD, 2008). Terms such as ‘performance legitimacy’ (OECD, 2008) or ‘pragmatic legitimacy’ (Suchman, 1995) stem from this idea. By providing desired goods and services, an initial social order in an assumingly chaotic post-war environment is established. The existence of this social order satisfies the citizens; sentiment which instigates them to contribute with the protection of the social order by complying to the authorities which provide the goods in the first place. Gradually the social order is reinforced and the authorities gain more legitimacy, as new expectations of individuals are shaped and fulfilled, while the individuals in turn, comply with the government or the state. However this on-going process, which ultimately becomes self-enforcing, is not the case in the context of Sierra Leone. The inevitable distinction between the government of a political party and the ‘neutral’ state, unjustifiably omitted in literature, is fairly blurred in the country and the public goods are perceived as provided by the government of a political party and not by the state. Under these circumstances, the provision of particular public goods and services is not evaluated on

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<sup>55</sup> Author’s 2<sup>nd</sup> diary, p.58, 7 April 2010.

<sup>56</sup> Author’s interview with Joe, village, on 8 April 2010.

the basis of the absence of goods and services; it is evaluated on the basis of the potential provision of different goods and services. Thus, it is relegated to the level of the argument of political support; an absolutely distinct level from that of the arguments pertaining to the legitimacy of either the government or the state.

On the contrary, as far as external actors are concerned, the provision of goods and services is able to and in actual fact, functions as a source of legitimacy. As illustrated in the cases of INGOs and Chinese agents of international intervention in the country, the perceived, forthcoming or substantial gains in terms of welfare, induced the informants to declare the acceptance of and the support for the relative authorities.

Considering the case of the institution of chieftaincy and its two agents under study, the potential of tradition as a source of legitimacy, identified in literature (Weber, 1968; Hudson, 1977; Schatzberg, 2001; Chabal and Daloz, 2006), is undoubtedly confirmed. The tradition consisting of norms, established values and customs, renders the eradication of chieftaincy unthinkable for Sierra Leoneans. Nevertheless, focusing on the ten informants and the reasons for their support towards a modified type of chieftaincy where the chiefs would be elected by all the tax payers for a specific tenure, one easily reaches the following conclusion. Tradition is a historically bound concept and its value as a source of legitimacy may clash with and finally be reduced by, the adoption of new norms which will gradually constitute a novel tradition. Such norms, originating from the democratic school of legitimacy and from human rights, have already, to a degree, been diffused and embraced in the sub-Saharan country. In this frame, the intriguing question raised and obviously unsettled in this study, is shaped as to why locals adopt particular new norms while rejecting others.

Ultimately, particular personal (Weatherford, 1992) as well as sociological (Gilley, 2009) sources of legitimacy are inactivated if not non-existent on the ground. The citizens' political interest, in other words 'the feeling that political participation is worth the opportunity cost of trading off time and commitments from other occupations' (Weatherford, 1992:151), is fairly high in Sierra Leone. In actual fact, it is so high such that three informants, who all had a tertiary level of education, recognized the problem of intense politicization. As Sheriff put it: '...and we have now the problem that everything is connected to politics. It is not only about politics...'.<sup>57</sup> Nevertheless, the high political interest, a given source of legitimacy in literature which from the researcher's perspective, actually constitutes a facilitator for the bestowment of legitimacy,<sup>58</sup> does not imply but instead, threatens the existence of the political community on the ground. It does not actually equate with an individuals' interest in the political life from the perspective of common good, but rather with an interest propelled by the engagement in networks of clientelism and political patronage.

Likewise, contrary to what several scholars such as Ferguson (2003:14) and Snyder (2000:46) have assumed, the strong sense of national pride is not related with legitimacy in the context of the sub-Saharan country. The indigenous identity of 'freed slaves', mixed with the doctrine of Pan-Africanism,<sup>59</sup> irrationally merged with Nelson Mandela's achievements, Barack Obama's presidency and the setting up of the first Mundial in the African continent

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<sup>57</sup> Author's interview with Sheriff (teacher), Kenema, on 20 April 2010.

<sup>58</sup> Political interest and social trust, the extent to which citizens perceive each others as having good intentions, indicate the existence of a political community where the idea of common good is, to an extent clarified and thus the process of conferment of legitimacy is easier.

<sup>59</sup> Pan-Africanism originated in Sierra Leone and Ethiopia.

generates an intense nationalism in Sierra Leone. However this nationalism does not result in more legitimate state authorities and does not generally contribute to the legitimacy of any authorities under study.

Finally, in contrast to the theory of particularism which denies the existence of universal sources of legitimacy (Gilley, 2009), the recognition of the value of equality before the law in the case of the President, the recognition of the value of responsiveness in the case of the two chiefs and the recognition of the value of the new norms which clash with tradition in the institution of chieftaincy, prove that particular human rights may constitute universal values and thus, their assurance may constitute sources for legitimizing authorities worldwide.

## CHAPTER 4: LEGITIMACY AND ‘STATE FRAGILITY’

The previous chapter concentrated on the conferment of legitimacy of particular authorities and institutions drawing relative perceptions from the informants and the associates observed on the ground. In addition, it detected the sources of (non-)granted legitimacy and examined the extent to which these sources correspond with those given in literature. This chapter, divided into two parts, will undertake to fulfill the last goal of the study, namely the investigation of the link between ‘state fragility’ and the concept of legitimacy in the context of Sierra Leone. Taking into further consideration the results so far, the first part will deal with the aforementioned array of explorative sub-questions, listed under Methodology (Chapter 2 // p.17). The second section will inevitably proceed to evaluate the concept of legitimacy as an analytical frame.

### 4.1. Investigation of the link between ‘state fragility’ and the concept of legitimacy

According to the discourse on ‘state fragility’ and to the literature regarding the concept of legitimacy on the broader fields of political and social science, the lack of legitimacy of the police force and the civil service should supposedly yield a lack of compliance of citizenry with these authorities. However, the collected evidence proved that, in practice, people deal with the illegitimate authorities in a different way from that of disobedience. In most cases the informants and the associates observed on the ground, responded rationally to the venality exercised by policemen and attempted to take advantage in various ways by simultaneously perpetuating the undesirable deficiency of professionalism in the police force. Montfort for instance, willingly gave a thousand leones ( $\approx 0.20\text{€}$ ) to a policeman because ‘he adjusts the traffic in the junction before the church every Sunday and always tries to confer us priority in order to reach Mass on time.’<sup>60</sup> More significantly, the local chief and the council of elders in the village gave seventy thousand leones ( $\approx 14\text{€}$ ) to a policeman to overlook the settlement of a case ‘within the community.’<sup>61</sup> If the policeman had submitted a report of the incident, which involved the rape of a twelve year old girl who had been ceded by her family to a man, the case would probably have gone to court. These informal personal relations confirm that the widespread corruption of the state-agents creates self-reinforcing patterns of behavior in citizens irrespective of their distaste for corruption (Rose-Ackerman, 2001). Apathy stems from the belief that ‘everybody is corrupt’ and individuals adopt rational behavior based on the calculation of the perceived gains from their potential corrupt act, the fear of their potential detection and their sense of obliged compliance to the law.

These reactions, totally distinct from that of disobedience, render reality worse than what was expected. The state is forced to start from a ‘minus zero’ point in each attempt for an essential relative reform, as it does not have to only confront its corrupt agents, but also the emerging misunderstandings on the side of the people considering their identity and proper role as citizens of a state.

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<sup>60</sup> Author’s 3<sup>rd</sup> diary, p.57, 30 April 2010.

<sup>61</sup> Author’s 2<sup>nd</sup> diary, p.54, 5 April 2010.

### **Box 5: The accusation of corruption**

Through the campaign of the Anti-Corruption Commission the word corruption is quite common in post-war Sierra Leone. According to the people on the ground, this official governmental instrument performs very well as ‘it alerts the individual when it has already collected all the damning evidence from the various sources’ and ‘even ministers should be aware of their actions because they may find themselves against the Commission accused for corruption.’ Posters and stickers on the streets, on the stairs of the Youyi Building, the offices of district councils, national commissions and various civil society organizations encourage citizens to report observed cases of corruption. The campaign continues with booklets such as that of ‘The Biscuits’ in the Appendix (p.63) or mottos such as that in Ph. 4. In this framework, people accuse the policeman, the teacher, the trader in the market, the politician and the driver of the governmental bus, of corruption with the same ease. They do not seem to differentiate between the significance of corrupt deeds; for instance, between that of a woman who sells a smaller quantity of palm oil in the market at the price of a pint and that of a corrupt tax-collector. It is not certain that people have noticed that the accused man with handcuffs, who is depicted in the banner of the ACC outside Bo, wears a suit and tie. Thus, the main priority of the government, and rightly so, is the elimination of corruption in the high rank quarters whether it is in the public or private sector. In addition, the individuals on the ground do not seem to understand the links between corrupt persons and the qualified instruments that are responsible for their punishment to which one should appeal. Under these circumstances, the accusations of corruption, frequent and without follow-up either from the side of the officials or from the side of individuals, result in the establishment of the belief that ‘everybody is corrupted’ and subsequently, in apathy. Thus, the state does not encourage citizens to report authorities who do not perform properly, but induces them to adopt rational strategies to navigate themselves in everyday life; strategies based on the calculation of the perceived gains, the fear of detection and the sense of obliged

As far as the legitimate president Koroma is concerned, he seems to be an ‘enlightened leader’, or in weberian words a ‘charismatic’ one, in an unstable post-war environment. However, considerable misunderstandings regarding the function of the state are fostered by his performance on the ground. The boundary between the government and the state remains blurry, as the leader tries to ‘monopolize the levers of state command’ (Schatzberg, 2001:217). The customs authorities in the airport for instance, do not wear any other badge except for one which depicts the face of Koroma. Therefore, they do not constitute authorities of a ‘neutral’ state but are perceived as subordinates of the president. Considering posters illustrating the significance of paying taxes, a giant Koroma smiles with confidence beside diverse mottos such as ‘Pay your taxes. Independence means dependence on domestic sources.’<sup>62</sup> Once again, citizens easily assume that they should pay taxes because Koroma says so. Several informants do not even understand the reason for paying taxes. Taxation, aimed at the welfare of the society, is undoubtedly a new concept for Sierra Leoneans. But because it ostensibly contravenes personal interest, the reasoning for its payment should be well-communicated and clear.

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<sup>62</sup> Author’s 3<sup>rd</sup> diary, p.45, 28 April 2010.

Lastly, pictures of Koroma are hung in banks as they 'are public and not private.'<sup>63</sup> Under these circumstances, the locals perceive these banks as a part of a paradoxical 'governmental' sector and therefore, the meaning of the public sector remains misconceived. A step further, individuals also dismiss crucial criteria for judging political authorities, such as the management of public property. Subsequently, they adopt an electoral attitude vulnerable to political patronage and based on the clientele's behavior which secures direct individual benefits for the client.

Needless to say, the widespread conferment of legitimacy over the APC government cannot be deemed as proof of state stability in post-war Sierra Leone. It does not stem from the procedural justice that the elections in 2007 could probably have guaranteed, but rather from two problematic sources: the recent remembrance of the war and international support. Without a doubt, the recent remembrance of war gradually fades. It cannot in the long term, counterbalance grievances derived from the feeling of deprivation of basic needs (Azar, 1990) and that of the absence of any anticipated progress in the quality of life.

From this perspective, international support remains the only potential enduring source of legitimacy of the APC government; however it cannot constitute such a source as someday the international community has to logically withdraw from the country. Furthermore, the international support may not constitute a source of legitimacy in the first place, but merely a determinative factor for who is to lead. Pouligny warns that 'no intervention is perceived as 'neutral' or 'impartial' by local political and social actors' (2006:181). Her warning is illustrated by countries where an effective nationalistic political discourse was raised resulting in regimes such as that of Mugabe and renders international support a debatable reason for the conferment of legitimacy and state's stability. Moreover, moving into a more native-oriented level of analysis, as international support seems to play such a determinative role, it mutilates local political thought from the perspective of common good and reduces the sense of mastery in the life of the individuals creating the feeling of a compulsory choice.

Regarding the regime, it is evident that the informants as well as the associates observed on the ground, have not understood its operation and its significance. The value of the institution of elections is identified as it secures the rotation of power; a strongly rooted concept in African states (Schatzberg, 2001; 192-200). However power is perceived as 'it is eaten whole' and political dialogue runs the risk of exposing traitors. Under these circumstances, constituent elements of democracy remain ignored and the regime is without doubt, a hybrid political order (Boege *et al.*, 2009).

Taking also into account the existence of, and inclination to the institution of chieftaincy, this political order becomes more complicated and novel. The newly elected paramount or local chiefs are young and educated and thus portray a totally different profile from that of their predecessors; they do not represent an old-fashioned institution which may be eliminated in the next few years, but the indisputable belief in the rightfulness of a strongly embedded way of governance in African tradition. Under these circumstances, the chiefs perpetuate to an extent the networks of patrimonialism and clientelism. Although the western-type political actors may also perform the same patronage and participate in the same horizontal and vertical networks, the chiefs further contribute to the lack of transparency and to the rise of the relations of reciprocity by constituting yet another actor who ostensibly, does not have any

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<sup>63</sup> Author's interview with Balla, Kenema, on 23 April 2010.

political affiliation, is impartial<sup>64</sup> and paradoxically carries out ‘almost the same job with police and the courts.’<sup>65</sup> Using the ‘paternal’ and ‘familial’ metaphors (Schatzberg, 2001), they gain legitimacy at the expense of western-type local politicians as ‘they themselves have the direct command from the people on the ground to serve them [...] they do not go for the votes.’<sup>66</sup> This clash is further evident and revealed when a particular tradeoff between the president and the paramount chiefs is communicated by the informants: ‘His Excellency, the President goes to the inauguration of the paramount chiefs, not to that of local councils or city councils.’<sup>67</sup>

**Ph.8: The gate of the compound of the Paramount Chief in Nogowa Chiefdom.**



Considering the presence of INGOs in the sub-Saharan country, one easily rejects Sierra Leone as a case where external actors legitimize themselves at the expense of the state. In theory, by providing services, INGOs may undermine the state's own ability and reputation for effectively meeting the needs of its citizens. The great advantage of disposable resources of INGOs over a weak state simply raises this likelihood. However all the external agents in Sierra Leone, such as the INGOs, the UN and the European Commission, correctly channel their assistance on the ground through the APC government and the implementation of its Agenda for Change. This strict policy may result in the politicization of aid, as the latter is offered by a government of a political party, but it does not dispute the potential of the state as a service provider and allows for the possibility of the conferment of legitimacy over the state due to the provision of services.

Nevertheless, a quandary is created by the presence of INGOs in the country. This quandary is totally distinct from the following adverse likelihood, frequently described in literature. In theory, INGOs may occupy the most skilled and professional local employees depriving the relative sectors of the state such as those of education and health, of this personnel. Setting

<sup>64</sup> Paramount and local chiefs do not belong in any particular political party and do not have any particular political affiliation, in theory at least.

<sup>65</sup> Author's interview with Kawa, Kenema, on 17 April 2010.

<sup>66</sup> Author's interview with Balla, Kenema, on 23 April 2010.

<sup>67</sup> Author's interview with Solomon and Ansu, Kenema, on 7 April 2010.

aside the verification of such an event in the context of Sierra Leone, the study focuses on the fact that INGOs create a relatively rich, local aristocracy. The INGO workers live in residences and can provide for their families with their salaries which by local standards, are fairly high.<sup>68</sup> Thus it is only natural that Sierra Leoneans who confront poverty and vast unemployment, attempt to mimic their compatriots and seek jobs in INGOs. This trend obviously contravenes the accomplishment of the final intentional purpose of these humanitarian agencies, in other words, their withdrawal after the necessitated period of their performance.

Ultimately, the dynamic presence of INGOs exacerbates the low-esteem of an already weak state. Acknowledging the advantage of INGOs on disposable resources in terms of professional human capital as well as material, the state, in fact the government, seeks their contribution and is hesitant of carrying out initiatives. This lack of confidence was for instance clearly demonstrated at the meeting pertaining to the free-health care service for pregnant or breast-feeding mothers and children under five years old.<sup>69</sup> The state agents attempted to convince the INGO representatives to carry out the project, while the latter refused in an effort to secure and implement their own agenda.

**Box 6: INGOs on the ground: As the multinational companies do.**

At the start of their operation, the majority of employees are white people paid with international salaries. Gradually the organizations offer employment to local people providing them salaries which initially fall in the middle range of local income. As these new employees start to become professional, their salary increases to the high local range. Simultaneously the white personnel is reduced and additional, untrained, 'cheap', local workers are employed. Under these circumstances, some professional native employees seek to be transferred abroad to a worse situation, for instance to Sudan, in order to secure a salary increase of 100-200 Euros, extremely high for the local standards. When accomplished, they are satisfied as their families live richly in secured residences, back in the homeland. Likewise, the agencies are satisfied as they have professional, black, employees in their new base, paid with extremely low, by western standard salaries, but high by standards of their own countries.

Regarding the Chinese agents of international intervention in the country, their widespread acceptance entails the broader influence of people on the ground. There were two characteristic influences observed. The first pertained to the ideal type of regime. The Chinese represent the welfare secured in, and the success of, hybrid regimes for the locals. Under their presence, democracy is not exclusively challenged by regimes of the Islamic world. In the words of Shyllon: 'We need our type of regime. Democracy is for you, the western. Look at Nigeria. This religious turbulence had never happened when undemocratic Yar' Adua was in office. No, no. Look at China and its progress. It has become world's super-power within

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<sup>68</sup> The salary of a policeman is 185 leones (37€), that of a civil servant round 320 leones (64€) and that of an INGO worker 400 leones and above.

<sup>69</sup>The project of free health-care services to pregnant or breast-feeding mothers and children under five years of age was launched on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April, the day of Independence of Sierra Leone.

five-six years. And look its regime...'<sup>70</sup> The second influence relates to the discourse on development. The Chinese show Sierra Leoneans what substantial development stands for, by providing it. In this frame and confronting extreme poverty and the lack of infrastructure, Sierra Leoneans primarily focus on their materialistic development and the latter becomes their major expectation.

#### **Ph. 9: Youyi Building and National Stadium**



#### **4.2. Legitimacy as an analytical frame**

The notion of 'state fragility' is not demonstrated by specific indicators. Thus, the researcher was obliged to examine whatever he could, always taking into account the results so far. He analyzed the performance of legitimate authorities as in the cases of the president, the agents of chieftaincy and the INGOs; the quality and duration of the sources of legitimacy as in the case of the government; even the lack thereof as in the cases of the two key state-agencies, the police force and the civil service.

Facing this chaotic situation a feared deadlock was exposed. The concept of legitimacy as an analytical frame suffers significant limitations.

In his attempt to detect relations of direct causality between the conferment of legitimacy over particular authorities and specific outcomes, the researcher confronted scientific uncertainty and ran the risk of undesirable generalizations. Although the refusal of granting legitimacy over authorities has direct consequences as evident in the case of the police force and the civil service, the effects of granting legitimacy are less obvious. No one can assure for instance, that the aforementioned performance of the President is caused by his legitimacy or that it

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<sup>70</sup> Author's 3<sup>rd</sup> diary, p.16, 20 April 2010.

would be different if he was totally illegitimate. Easton has argued that making precise predictions about the consequences of legitimacy is ‘virtually impossible’ (1965:223). Clearly, his skepticism is well-founded.

Furthermore, legitimacy ‘stands at the center of an ongoing and mutually conditioning relationship’ (Gilley, 2009:144) between authorities and individuals and thus, its sources are confused to an extent, with whatever outcomes are detected. Taking into account this difficulty, which was acknowledged before the study began, as well as the likelihood that unknown sources of legitimacy may be identified on the ground (such as the remembrance of war) or that those given in literature may be absent (such as the provision of goods and services), the researcher avoided to define causal indicators for the conferment of legitimacy. This deliberate evasion secured the trimming of the concept of legitimacy from ‘[...] its cumbersome normative parts’ (Schaar, 1969:283-284) and allowed for its approach in a constructive positive way. The reassuring argument by Habermas that ‘one legitimation is as good as another, so long as it sufficiently contributes to stabilizing the system of rule’ (1996:290) provided a backing for the direction chosen.

Needless to say, under these circumstances the disposable tools were few and became even less as it was gradually ascertained that people could conceal the real reasons for accepting authorities in their expressed arguments or observed behaviors. Legitimacy is not alone in the game. It stands between the forces of coercion and the personal interest which may counter the common good. By keeping this correlation in mind, scholars should not be surprised by Kalyvas’ (2006) claim that perceived legitimacy may not lead to cooperation.

Ultimately, legitimacy is also ‘a mushy concept that political analysts do well to avoid’ (Huntington, 1991:46) for the following reason. The notion of ‘common good’, intertwined with the concept of legitimacy suffers from inherent vagueness. This vagueness is revealed with the incapacity to answer the philosophical question: ‘How common should the common good be, as to the final argument pertaining to the issue of legitimacy?’ or in other words ‘How many same personal interests gathered, constitute the common good?’

For these reasons, the researcher advocates O’Kane’s conclusion that legitimacy is inadequate as an explanatory social science concept (O’Kane, 1993). King et al. may be right when warning scholars to avoid ‘attempting to find empirical evidence of abstract, immeasurable, and unobservable concepts’ (1994: 110). However, from the researcher’s perspective, legitimacy should remain on the table as, even though detected through this difficult unorthodox way, it reveals to an extent the where, but does not provide the how scholars should search in each case study.

## CONCLUSION

Beginning with the final goal of this study, the analytical frame of the concept of legitimacy proved inadequate for capturing 'state fragility' in the context of Sierra Leone. As the notion of 'state fragility' itself is quite vague and not confined to specific indicators, the concept of legitimacy induced the researcher to examine whatever he was able to, through his analytical frame. At that point, the limited explanatory power of legitimacy was realized. By avoiding to define its causal indicators, the concept was not approached in a rigid normative way which would render the consideration of reality on the ground from the local perspective unfeasible and which might further result in the confirmation of presupposed biased conclusions. Nevertheless, this 'openness' did not contribute in unraveling the conferment of legitimacy over authorities from their granted support due to the individuals' personal interest. More significantly, it did not reduce the underlying uncertainty in the relation of causality between the conferment of legitimacy and certain outcomes.

Despite this failure, the study contributed to the detection of legitimate authorities in post-war Sierra Leone. Drawing the relative perceptions from the informants and the associates on the ground, as well as observing and analyzing the locals' behavior, the evident lack of legitimacy of two key-agents of the state was revealed, namely that of the police force and the civil service. Furthermore, separating the legitimacy of authorities from their granted broader support, the study showed the wide acceptance of president Koroma and the APC government as well as the recognition of chieftaincy and its agents. Ultimately, it exposed the problematic espousal of the current regime which was comprised of the institution of elections and the institution of the interaction between the president, the cabinet and the parliament and moreover, divulged the widespread acceptance and popularity of INGOs and the Chinese agents of international intervention.

In addition to these deductions, the study unveiled the existent sources of legitimacy in the context of the sub-Saharan country and examined the extent to which these sources are in accordance with those given in literature.

- Considering the provision of basic goods and services which is one of the frequently given criteria for granting legitimacy, it merely functioned as the reasoning for the peoples' support towards political parties in a tensely politicized Sierra Leone, without regard for the APC government or the SLPP. On the other hand, it did constitute a source of legitimacy in the case of external actors such as the INGOs.
- The recent remembrance of war is a significant, often omitted, source of legitimacy which may have a limited duration but can temporarily replace the absence of procedural fairness stemming from perceived flawed elections in post-war environments.
- Tradition is a historically bound concept and thus constitutes an erratic source of legitimacy. Whatever authority a tradition may legitimize today, may be considered illegitimate tomorrow under the tradition's modern command. Without a doubt, this is a totally different type of source from those which are correlated with granting legitimacy in an unequivocal way such as the responsiveness of authorities.
- The high political interest and involvement of locals as well as the intense nationalism on the ground do not constitute sources of legitimacy, nor do they facilitate the process of its conferment by strengthening the bonds of the political community.

- The responsiveness of authorities and the procedural fairness which the ‘one man, one vote’ elections secure, unexpectedly proved to be sources of legitimacy in the context of Sierra Leone. Thus, in contrast to the theory of particularism, it seems that there are certain sources for legitimizing authorities which exist and perform worldwide.

Four recommendations concerning policy-making in Sierra Leone can be provided from the results of this study. First and foremost, the government must separate itself from the state and its efforts should be primarily directed towards strengthening the weak state apparatus. These efforts must urgently yield an effective and trustworthy police force and civil service. Secondly, the implementation of the following elections must be carried out carefully so as to assure procedural justice. This need is imperative as the international support, interpreted as partial in the realm of politics, may raise nationalist discourse and the recent remembrance of war will inevitably and gradually fade. Thirdly, INGOs must determine and issue a schedule of their withdrawal from the country. A core programme of reintegration of their local professional personnel into state-agencies should be put into place prior to this. Finally, the significance of the regime should be clarified to the populace in order for the country to accomplish the intentional ‘transition to democracy’. The function and the meaning of democracy is clearly not confined to the existent widespread realized value of the institution of elections.

This study can be further expanded in various ways. To begin with, regions in the North or West Provinces, dominated in this case by the Temne tribe, could also be included in the fieldwork. Furthermore, other authorities such as the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the traditional healers as well as emerging powers such as musicians, the church and bible bashers could be incorporated in the list of the authorities under study. Lastly, more comprehensive future research can be carried out on legitimacy in the context of Sierra Leone. A richer toolbar is now available as the sources detected in this study can provide causal indicators for legitimacy.

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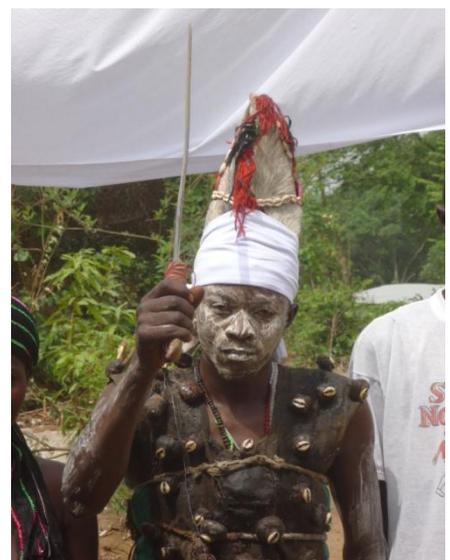
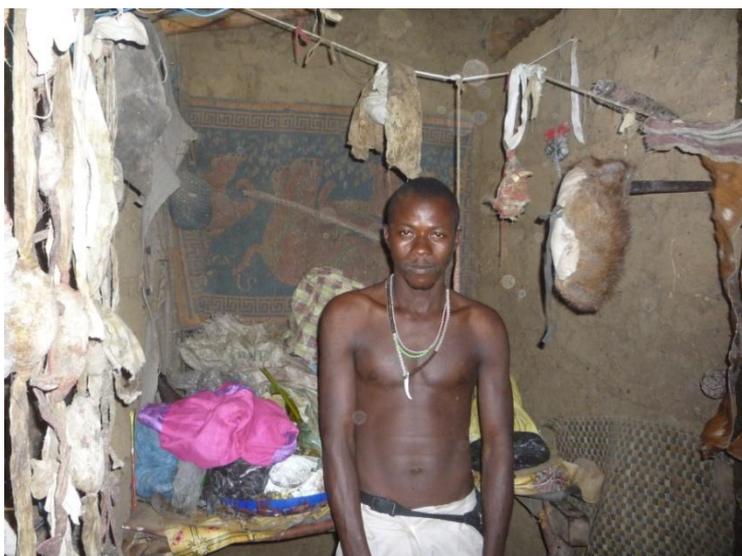
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## APPENDIX

**Ph. 10: Sign in Lumley Beach:** It is not only about clientelism and patrimonialism. There is free political thought.

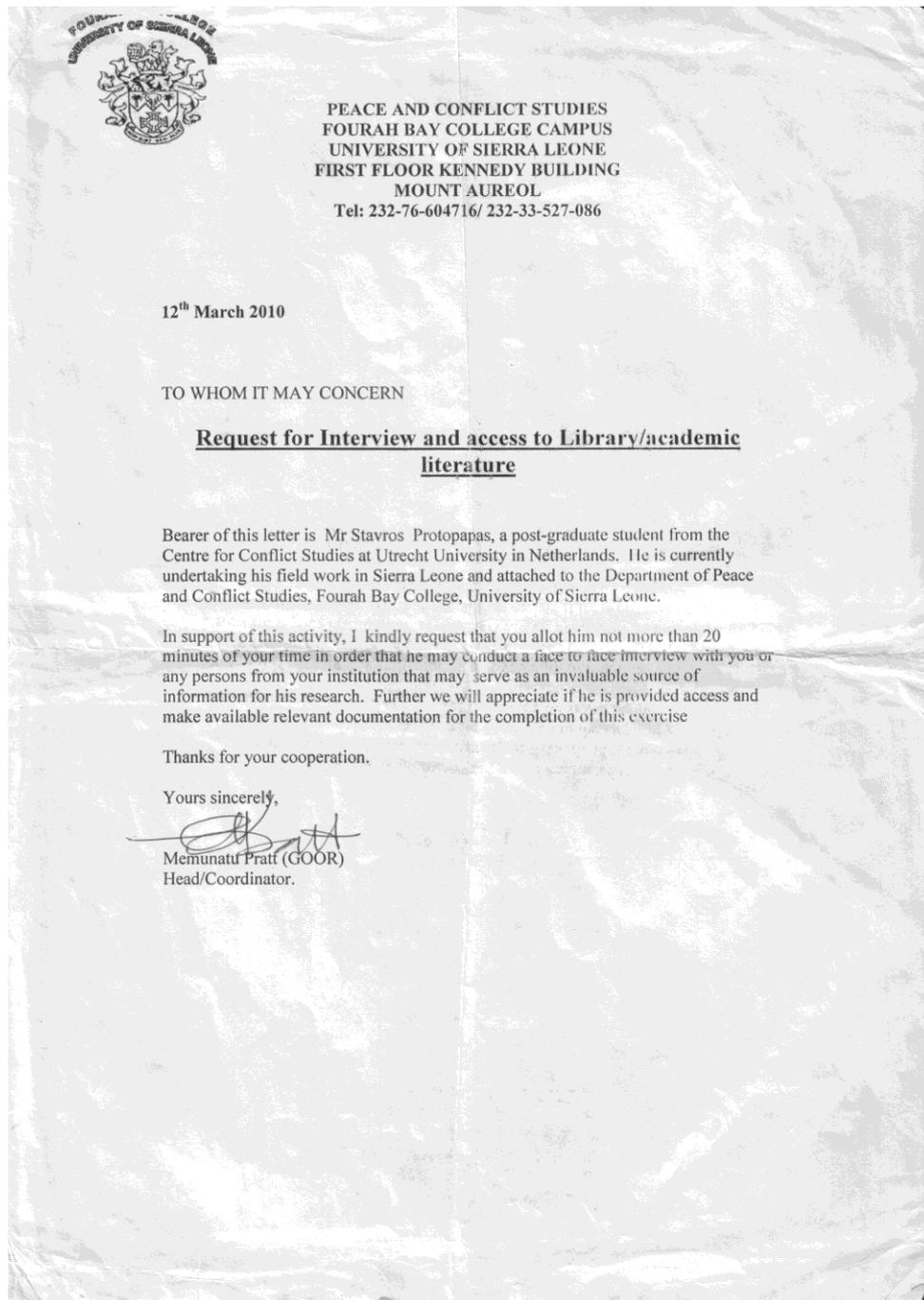


**Ph. 11: Traditional Healer in the upcountry close to Kenema:** A strong authority



Below there are some documents gathered on the field.

**Doc. 1: Request for interview and access to library/academic literature** Local Universities can provide the researcher with an extremely beneficial introduction letter which will ensure his access to official agencies and organizations. In a country such as Sierra Leone, professors in local universities are respected, while international academics are not offered the same esteem, thus the same letter originating from an external university does not provide comparable power in terms of access and support.



Doc. 2: Confession Document



WE PREACH CHRIST  
1st CORTH. 1:23

Tel: Pastor's Residence: 240095  
Church : 226908

Tower Hill  
P.M.B. 442  
Freetown  
Sierra Leone  
West Africa

Your Ref:.....  
Our Ref:.....

e-mail: betheltemple@multinet.sl

Date:

Dear .....

I wanted to be a blessing to you so I sent this letter to you because I care about your eternal destiny. Please know that God loves you and He has a great plan for your life! I have a very important question to ask you. If today were your last day here, do you know for sure, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that you would go to Heaven? Many times when I ask others this question, their response is that there is no way to know for sure, or that I've missed the mark too many times. But the good news is that there is a way to know for sure and it is not through our goods deeds. The Bible reads, "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." And "for the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." The Bible reads, for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. And you're a whosoever, right? Of course you are.

I'm going to say a quick prayer for you right now. Lord, I pronounce blessings over those reading this letter. Jesus, do a quick work in their heart and make Yourself real to them. Jesus, comfort them and their loved ones. Fill them with Your peace that passes all understanding. If they have never personally called upon the name of the Lord Jesus or if in past times they did, but have turned from You, I pray that they will call upon Your name and surrender all to You right now. If you would like to receive the gift that God has for you by asking Jesus Christ to come into your heart, say this with your heart and lips out loud right now.

Dear Lord Jesus, come into my heart. Take out the stony heart and give me a heart of flesh. Forgive me of my sin. Wash me and cleanse me. Set me free and change me. Make me the person that You called me to be. Jesus, thank You that You're coming back again for me. Fill me with the Holy Spirit and the joy of the Lord. Give me a passion to reach the lost, a hunger for the things of God, and a holy boldness to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I'm saved. I'm born-again. I'm forgiven and I'm on my way to Heaven because I have Jesus in my heart. Thank You Jesus.

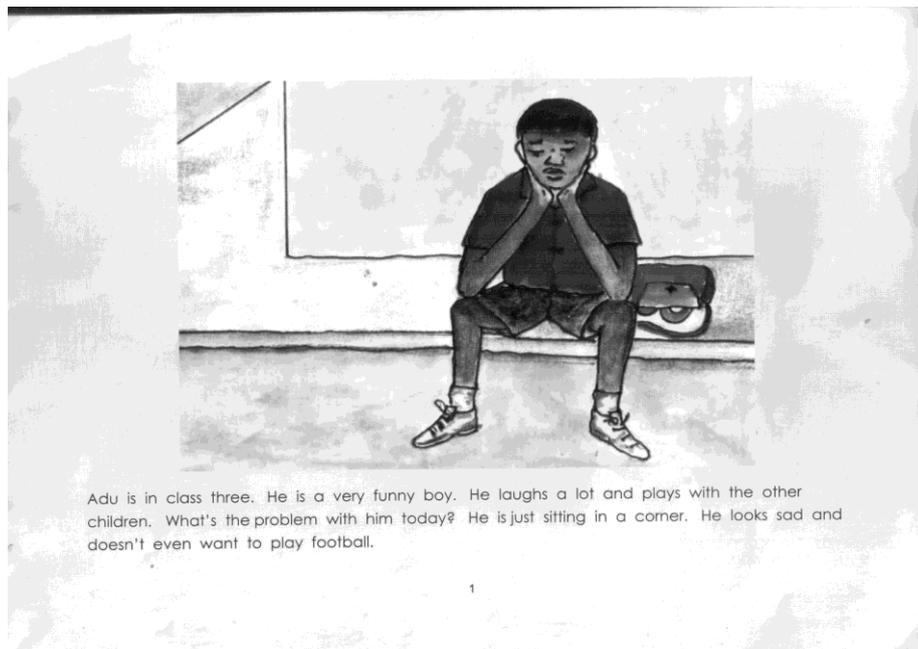
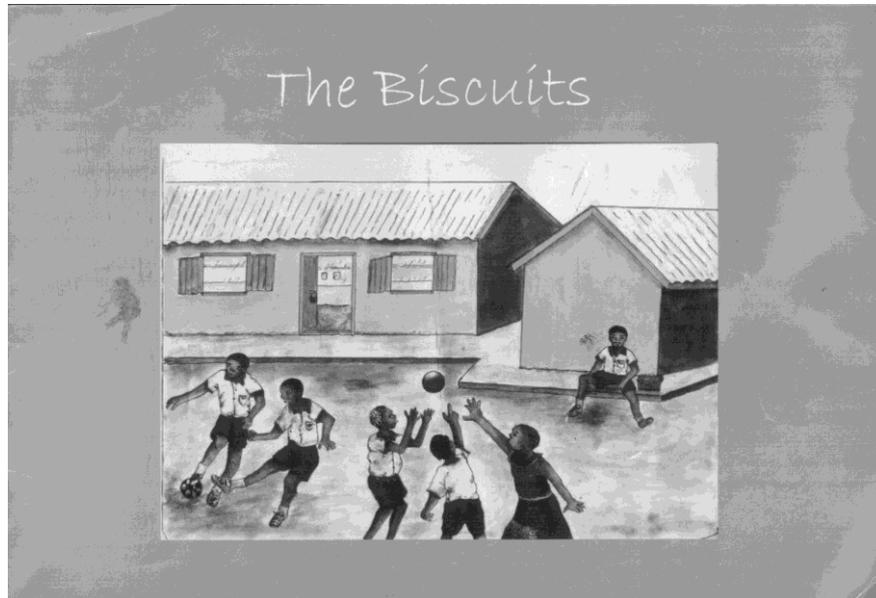
When you asked Jesus to come into your heart and to forgive you, He heard you and did so. All of your sins are now forgiven. Always remember to run to God and NOT from Him because He loves you and has a great plan for your life. That's VERY good news.

With blessings,

Pastor Abraham George  
Bethel Temple Tower Hill  
030-614-111

Please join us in our Sunday Morning's Worship at 10:30a.m. Do not hesitate to call on us for prayers or counselling.

## The Biscuits





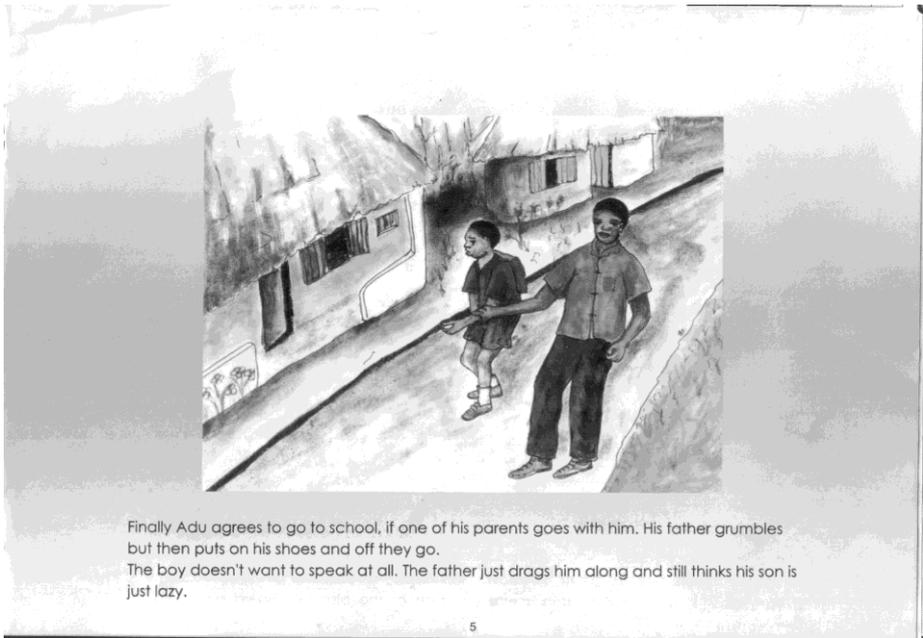
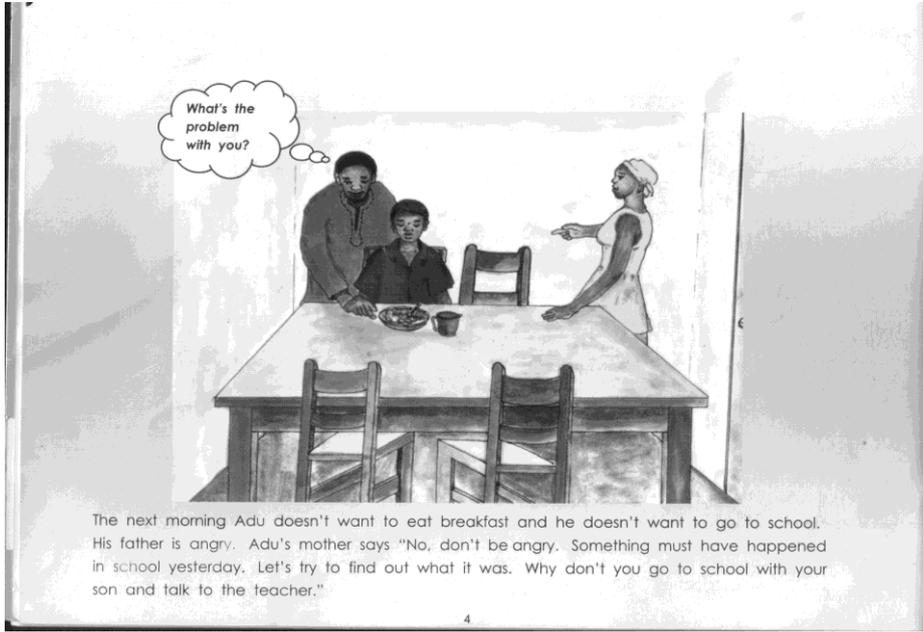
His best friends Hawa and Samuel from class four talk to him. "Come on, Adu, let's play! Hey, what's the matter with you?" But Adu doesn't even look at them. Hawa and Samuel walk away. They don't understand what's going on.

2



The groundnut soup is on the table when Adu arrives at home. He loves groundnut soup but today he doesn't want to eat. "What's the matter with you, Adu?" his mother asks. "Do you have a stomach ache?" But the boy doesn't answer.

3





When they arrive at the school yard, some children are playing. Hawa is there too. She greets Adu and his father. Then they meet some of Adu's classmates and Adu walks away with them. "What happened?" Adu's father asks Hawa. "Adu doesn't want to go to school anymore but he doesn't tell us why." "I know", she says. "Adu is strange. I asked some children from class three and they said it was because of the biscuits", Hawa answered.

6



The same day when Adu comes home, his mother has prepared some medicine for him. "Why medicine, Mum?" "Hawa told your father that it was because of the biscuits that you didn't feel well." "Oh, Mum!" Adu says. "It wasn't like that. See, our teacher always brings biscuits to school and sells them to us during lunch break. I didn't want to buy them and so she flogged me. She said that I had to obey and do what she tells me to."

7



In the evening Adu and his parents are eating together. Some other family members are also there. Adu's mother tells them what happened to Adu at school. "Wow!" shouts one relative. "That's corruption! You have to report to the school board."

8



The following day Adu's parents go to school with him. They want to talk to the headmaster. "Hey, Adu!" Adu's classmates are shouting at the gate. "Guess what happened! Several parents reported to the school board that our teacher beat us if we didn't buy her biscuits. Now she's no longer allowed to teach at this school."

9

