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Foundational hybridity and its reproduction

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HANDELSHØJSKOLEN

Foundational hybridity and its reproduction

Security sector reform in Sierra Leone

Peter Alexander Albrecht

Doctoral School of Organisation
and Management Studies

PhD Series 33.2012

FOUNDATIONAL HYBRIDITY AND ITS REPRODUCTION

Security sector reform in Sierra Leone

Peter Alexander Albrecht

PhD Dissertation, June 2012

Copenhagen Business School, Department of Business and Politics

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1 Introduction

In July 2005, I went to Sierra Leone's capital, Freetown, for the first time. As an intern at the Kofi Anna Centre in Accra, Ghana, I was sent there to research security sector reform (SSR).¹ Shortly after my arrival, a number of expat advisers, primarily from the United Kingdom (UK), shared with me their perspectives on state-building and SSR. First, they said that Sierra Leone as a state had collapsed, and that security was the pre-condition for long-term development to occur. Second, SSR, involving re-building the armed forces and police, a Ministry of Defense, Office of National Security, and Central Intelligence and Security Unit, had been successful and was crucial to building peace in Sierra Leone after a decade of conflict. Third, even though most external actors had concluded that 'non-state' actors enforced 80-90 percent of justice and security in Sierra Leone, it was nevertheless the state that had to be re-built.²

Sierra Leone's civil war began in 1991 with attacks by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) on Bormalu, a village in the eastern part of the country, and ended officially in 2002. The protracted conflict contributed in large part to the breakdown of the patrimonially networked governed space that had characterized is Sierra Leone since its independence in 1961.³ This is not the story of an effective and legitimate state that progressively fell apart. Rather, it is the story of a country that had historically been integrated with alternative logics and forms of power, embodied in part by paramount and lesser chiefs. Herein lies the foundational hybrid order upon which Sierra Leone rests.

In the late 1990s, international efforts, led primarily by the UK, to make and consolidate peace in Sierra Leone, became synonymous with SSR as state-building (Jackson and Albrecht 2011). Support was given to contain and ultimately overhaul the armed forces,

¹ From 2005 onwards, I returned to Sierra Leone several times in different capacities to explore the SSR process in detail: see Albrecht 2005; Albrecht and Malan 2006; Albrecht and Jackson 2009; Albrecht 2010; Albrecht and Jackson 2010; Jackson and Albrecht 2011; Albrecht 2012; Albrecht and Jackson 2012.

² While not supported by statistical data, such estimates emerged in the case of Sierra Leone in 2002 (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:42) and are cited in most current policy-related literature on informal or non-state justice. See for example: OECD 2007c; UNDP 2009; Chirayath and Woolcock 2005; USAID 2005.

³ Patrimonialism in the case of Sierra Leone, Richards (1996:34) says, "involves redistributing national resources as marks of *personal* favor to followers who respond with loyalty to the leader rather than to the institution the leader represents. Patrimonialism is a systematic scaling up, at the national level, of local ideas about patron-client linkages, shaped (in Sierra Leone) in the days of direct extraction of forest resources, about the duty of the rich and successful to protect, support and promote their followers and friends." For a general discussion of patrimonialism see Chabal an Daloz (1999).

which had staged two coups in 1992 and 1997. Support was also provided to establish national security sector coordination and intelligence organizations and to re-establish the Sierra Leone Police (SLP). The collapsed, but internationally-recognized Sierra Leonean state was to be re-built; security was seen as not only a prerequisite for this process to begin, but its very foundation.

1.1.1 The puzzle

In the brief considerations above lies the puzzle that defines the scope of this dissertation. Why should the state be re-built and why was so much effort put into doing so, when the experts pushing state-building forward saw the state of Sierra Leone as having ceased to fulfill its primary functions? By extension, why were no alternatives considered feasible when, by international estimates, non-state actors, such as customary leaders, are the primary providers of justice and justice in the Global South and deal with an estimated 80-90 percent of disputes?

These puzzles suggest two fundamental questions that will be investigated in this dissertation. The first question addresses the reasons why the western universalist state concept came to guide SSR in Sierra Leone and why proponents of state-building considered the concept to be of such fundamental importance to stability in Sierra Leone and beyond. This becomes even more pertinent because, as Andersen (2010:29) argues, state-building “will not lead to the establishment of the ‘bordered power-container’ we know as the Weberian state: The central government in the state-being-built will remain unable to uphold a monopoly on legitimate violence and extend its authority evenly through the entire territory of the state” (see also Rothberg 2004:28; Wulf 2007).

The second question addresses the widely-held belief that 80-90 percent of disputes are dealt with by non-state actors. How might authority be conceptualized when actors such as paramount and lesser chiefs, who are in effect neither state nor non-state, are the primary makers of order?

I address these questions empirically by analyzing data gathered from international policy-making processes around SSR, interviews among some of the key actors of Sierra Leone’s

SSR process and ethnographic fieldwork in Peyima, a small town in Sierra Leone's Kono District. Peyima is historically known for its considerable diamond deposits in the past, and one of the strongholds of the RUF during the 1990s.



View of Peyima and surroundings from a hill above the town.

1.1.2 The argument

This thesis argues that SSR failed by its own standards to establish a ‘centrally-governed state’ and that a primary reason for this failure can be attributed to the concept of authority that state-building manifests and that much academic thinking supports. This concept of authority projects a split between society and state that guides the state-building effort; it is referenced in much of the existing literature on ‘failed’ and ‘fragile’ states (Helman and Ratner 1993; Fukuyama 2004; Rotberg 2004; Englebert and Tull 2008; Ghani and Lockhart 2008; Goldstone 2008; Call 2008:1499). Inherent to this view of authority is the

conceptualization of a political entity, a bordered power container, i.e., the state, which stands above and at the same time encompasses, controls and regulates society.

In Sierra Leone's state-building efforts, the practices of traditional leaders and their productive effects in the justice and security field were acknowledged. However, state-builders failed to respond adequately to the central role of paramount and lesser chiefs in governing Sierra Leone's countryside. First, they did not recognize the resilience and productivity of local actors and institutions and their authority to appropriate, interpret, translate, reject and above all shape the elements of what was offered through SSR.⁴ Second, they did not recognize the hybrid nature of all justice and security actors, who draw their authority to act from numerous sources across physical and symbolic space, in local and national domains.

In my theoretical framework, I analyze the concept of 'hybridity', drawing on Latour's concept of assemblage and Bourdieu's concept of field of practice (see Chapter 1). This framework proposes an understanding of authority that transcends dichotomous categorizations of state and society, and the real and ideal. This concept of authority is characterized by a hybrid order that captures what authority means in Sierra Leone more accurately than the 'failed state' analytical framework.

Hybridity denotes the fact that authority always already emanates simultaneously from multiple sources, including sacred and other customary powers, kinship and secret society membership, as well as from an operative decision-making center of government, *inter alia*, bureaucracy and legislation. This concept of hybridity departs from recent studies, which point out that making order takes places in the interstices, contestation and 'hybridization' between state-based and liberal practices and local customs and 'everyday' life (Richmond 2010, 2011; Boege et al. 2009; Brown et al. 2010; Moe 2012; Roberts 2011). This thesis argues that the 'liberal state' and 'tradition' do not exist independently from one another. In fact, making such a distinction establishes a dichotomy between two separate domains that does not accurately project the simultaneity inherent to the concept of hybridity.

⁴ This resembles a more general discussion on development processes as discussed by Ferguson (2006 [1994]:284) and (Mosse 2005:14).

In the remainder of this introduction, the notion of state-building embedded in the international policy concept of SSR is explored, followed by an outline of the state concept critiqued in this thesis. Drawing on policy discourse as well as academic literature, this is the basis for arguing that talking of a hybrid order more accurately captures what authority encompasses in Sierra Leone. Central to this discussion is the meaning of ‘state-building’, and how it has been informed by concepts of ‘fragility’ and ‘failure’ of a centrally-governed political entity of the western universalist variety (see Helman and Ratner 1993; Goldstone 2008). I argue that the dichotomy between the state and other actors of authority inherent to SSR as state-building and the literature that underpins it obscures the fact that authority has many sources with multiple origins. The introduction concludes by suggesting that these analytical views on what ‘the state’ is ignore the history of how Sierra Leone emerged as a political entity, the foundational hybrid order upon which it is based and the role that paramount and lesser chiefs in particular have played in that process.

Finally, I outline the structure of the analysis presented in the thesis by summarizing the contents of each chapter.

1.2 Security Sector Reform as state-building

SSR centers largely on transforming ‘failed’ and ‘collapsed’ states into ‘effective’ and ‘legitimate’ political entities. As a concept, SSR originated in international policy-making and is connected to state-building as part of “the process of restoring (or building) the functionality of state institutions” (UN and World Bank 2007:22). That SSR originated in the policy-making environment helps explain why the term has been under-theorized to the degree that it has, and why relatively little attention has been paid to querying the assumptions it is based upon, apart from the well-known mantra of security being a precondition for development (see Egnell and Haldén 2009; Sedra 2010; Denney 2011; Krogstad 2012a).

The international debate among policy-makers and policy researchers has in large part been a definitional exercise of what is variously referred to as security system

transformation, security system reform, justice and security reform and security sector reform. Generally speaking, these terms refer to a process leading to a similar condition: the “effective and efficient provision of state and human security within a framework of democratic governance” (Hänggi 2004:10).

Based upon the principle that “national authorities” are to ensure “effective and accountable security for the state and its peoples” (UNSG 2008), the state takes center stage as the political entity that articulates authority. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), for instance, holds that “state-building” should be the central objective for “good international engagement in fragile states”: “The long-term vision for international engagement in fragile states is to help national reformers to build effective, legitimate, and resilient state institutions, capable of engaging productively with their people to promote sustained development” (OECD 2007b:1).

State-building is conceptualized as transcending post-conflict reconstruction processes and is considered an integral feature of sustainable development. The state is the backbone of long-term peace and stability. There are various policy definitions of what policy-makers think constitutes ‘the state’. In a paper titled *Building the State and Securing the Peace*, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) suggests that “[the] *state* equates with: (a) the *institutions or rules* which regulate political, social and economic engagement across a territory and determine how power and authority are obtained, used and controlled (i.e., constitutions, laws, customs)...” (DFID 2010a). While DFID does recognize the role of non-state actors who engage in social and political activity, they are defined predominantly as marginal to decision-making (civil society organizations) or as ‘informal groupings’ (e.g., gangs and drug cartels) (ibid.).

In line with this concept of authority, a widely-accepted definition of which actors should be engaged in SSR stems from OECD’s *Guidelines on Security System Reform and Governance* published in 2004. They state that SSR should encompass core security actors such as the armed forces, security management and oversight bodies, including ministries, as well as justice and law enforcement institutions and non-statutory security forces (OECD 2004:5).

These types of organizations engaged in SSR indicate a movement away from a focus on civil-military relations towards development of systemic approaches to ‘effective governance’, ‘oversight’ and ‘financial mechanisms’ for administering the use of force (Albrecht and Jackson 2012). At the core of SSR is the image of an effective and legitimate state that establishes a coherent system of regulation, accountability and democratic governance. This should come as no surprise, since SSR donor agencies represent political entities in which the economy, politics and security are centrally-governed.

In the next section I explore why the state came to such prominence; why instability, disorder and chaos in one part of international society were considered to have global ramifications, and why ‘the state’ was vital in shoring up these global threats. This is, I believe, fundamental to understanding how SSR became integrally linked to a state-building agenda.

1.3 ‘The problem of the state’, the cold war and the war on terror

1.3.1 The neo-liberal concern with the wrong kind of government

Compounded by the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s and consolidated by the terrorist attacks on the United States (US) in 2001, ‘the state’ in international thinking is considered vital to the process of preventing disorder and chaos in unregulated physical space (Coletta 2007:393). This was the case in Sierra Leone in the late 1990s, as SSR programs pertaining were rolled out, a UK-backed military intervention was undertaken and as a British national was appointed as Inspector-General of Police in response to the country’s lengthy civil conflict (See Chapter 4).

From the onset of international intervention in Sierra Leone, state-building always already underscored the separation between the state and society. It was the state of Sierra Leone and its institutions acting as a bordered power container standing above while at the same time encompassing, controlling and regulating society that were to be isolated and worked upon.

State-building emanates from a seismic shift in international thinking around external intervention (Englebert and Tull 2008:106). The 1991-2002 war in Sierra Leone and international responses to it took place during this period. A neo-liberal concern over excessive government dominated international policy discourse in the 1980s and 1990s and resulted in an emphasis upon privatization and the outsourcing of previously public goods and services such as security (see Abrahamsen and Williams 2007:134; Rose and Miller 1992:198; Sen and Pratten 2007:3). Neo-liberalism came to represent a shift from 'Keynesian welfarism' towards a political agenda that favors the ideal of a competitive market through privatization, deregulation and liberalization (Larner 2000:6; Lee and McBride 2007:1).

For example, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank established structural adjustment programs (SAPs) in Sierra Leone (Keen 2005:22) and elsewhere to limit state involvement in economic management of the market by conditioning the allocation of aid on public sector restructuring and privatization (Hameiri 2007:130; Englebert 2000:8; Van Dijk et al. 2007:12; Bertelsen 2009:214).

However, it is a paradox of the neo-liberal mode of state operation that it does not de-select the "will to govern" (Rose 2006:155). On the contrary, "the failure of government to achieve its objective is to be overcome by inventing new strategies of government that will succeed" (Rose 2006:155). The failure of the SAPs to "bring Africa back on the path of growth" is one reason why it became commonly accepted that it was "the lack of state capacity and institutional quality" that had led to economic stagnation in Africa (Englebert 2000:8).

State-building in Sierra Leone fit the neo-liberal agenda. Throughout the early phases of SSR, state-builders assumed that by increasing the capacity of administrative staff to enforce order and by applying the normative content of reforms – accountability, democratization and the rule of law – popular legitimacy would follow, which in turn would sustain the order of the state (see Egnell and Haldén 2009:35).

1.3.2 The globalization of western universalisms?

Underpinning the concept of state-building, Andersen (2010) argues, is Weber's definition of the state. In this view, the state is comprised of several political institutions that exercise legal sovereignty, which is binding on all citizens within its territory. Considering the general dominance of the Weberian state model in the social sciences, as Bartelson (2001) has pointed out, it is not surprising that the model also dominates the mindset of today's international policy-makers (UNDP 2010; UNSC 2010; DFID 2010b).

A raft of academic literature supports this view. Fukuyama (2004) focus on the necessity to build the capacity of state institutions; Dauvergne (1998) and Kabutaulaka (2005) emphasize the fit between the modern state and the society over which it is meant to rule. Social groups are inferior to the sovereign state, but since sovereignty is based on popular legitimation, the state is subservient to society as a whole (Bendix et al. 1992:2008).

What these authors have in common with policy-makers is their propensity to evaluate states in terms of institutional capacity and compare their performance to what they consider to be the ideal state. They establish a binary opposition between the 'domestic' and the 'foreign' as fixed features of the modern inter-state system, and take the state to be a static, timeless and territorial 'container' that encloses economic and political processes (Brenner et al. 2003). In this view, the political entity that emerged through state formation in the post-colonial world is considered a flawed imitation of the mature western form. Sierra Leone might have fallen into conflict in the early 1990s, but its history since independence in 1961 has been characterized in much academic work as the steady, yet inevitable trajectory towards collapse (see Keen 2005; Peters 2006).

The order provided by the western universalist model of the state rests on a monopoly of violence, which is one of the constitutive characteristics of Weber's definition of the state (Gerth and Mills 1958:78). By extension, creating or reforming the political institutions comprising the security sector strikes at the heart of what makes a modern state (Egnell and Haldén 2009:35). In Weber's own words:

A 'ruling organization' will be called 'political' insofar as its existence and order is continuously safeguarded within a given *territorial* area by the threat and

application of physical force on the part of the administrative staff. A compulsory political organization with continuous operations (*politischer Anstaltsbetrieb*) will be called a 'state' in so far as its administrative staff successfully upholds the claim to the *monopoly* of the *legitimate* use of physical force in the enforcement of its order (Weber 1978:54).

Moreover, Weber emphasized that the use of force by any other type of organization would only be considered legitimate if it was permitted or prescribed by the state.

While the 'monopoly of the legitimate use of force' is often put forward as key to Weber's notion of the state, it evidently does not define it comprehensively. Legal order, bureaucracy and compulsory jurisdiction over a territory are among its equally essential characteristics (Weber 1947:252). This complex of factors emerged only gradually in Europe, and in Weber's view is only fully present where legitimacy is located in a body of bureaucratic rules that determine the exercise of political authority. Thus, the state bureaucracy is a method designed to dominate, but such domination must be consistent with widely-held values that Weber refers to as legitimacy.⁵

It is in the conception of the bureaucratically-managed state that the rationale of state-building can be found, i.e., the state as a necessary set of institutions that contains instability and disorder. In this context, it becomes relevant to consider in greater detail the discourse on 'state failure' that has been dominant in legitimizing internationally-led processes of state-building world-wide and came to guide UK support to Sierra Leone in the past decade.

1.4 The technical failure of the state

The policy logic of state failure is simple. It occurs when, as Andersen (2010:39) notes: "The state has ceased to fulfill its functions, its institutions have collapsed and the country

⁵ Weber distinguishes between *Macht* and *Herrschaft*, where the latter is translated as authority by Parsons and Henderson (Weber 1947). Power needs readiness to be followed in social life, it is never absolute, and thus 'legitimate *herrschaft*' means 'legitimate, or non-coercive rule'. *Macht* means 'coercive rule', and it is of course *Herrschaft* that is sought in the state-building effort. In brief, *Herrschaft* lies at the basis of Weber's typology of legitimacy upon which a relationship of domination rests, where organization rests upon orientation to a rule or a principle rather than upon compliance to commands (see Spencer 1979:124).

has descended into chaos and anarchy which spills over the borders of the state". In turn, Milliken and Krause (2003:4) identify the three fundamental functions of the state as security, representation and welfare, whereas Rotberg (2004:2-4) outlines a more comprehensive list, including health services, infrastructure, law and order and education.

While some of these functions are, in these three scholars' view, more important than others, the "provision of security is the most fundamental service states provide, in the sense that security is a condition for the provision of all other services" (Eriksen 2011:231). SSR reflects this rationale, as its role in state-building is based on the assumption that security is a pre-condition for development (see Chapter 3).

The 'stateness of the state' is founded on performance, i.e., the state's capacity to make rules, exercise control over territory and people and plan official goals and implement these plans successfully (see Jackson and Rosberg 1982:6).⁶ The very distinction between the state and its antithesis, the non-state, lies in the concept of capacity, and certainly, many academics suggest that by the 1990s, Sierra Leone lacked the capacity to exercise control over its territory and to fight a war against the RUF (e.g. Keen 2005).

In turn, the state's capacity to exercise authority within its territory is a pre-condition for its right to retain legal sovereign status. Following this rationale, Goldstone (2008:285-286) argues that effectiveness and legitimacy are the two "general qualities that states must possess to remain stable"; it is in states where these qualities are lost that failure occurs. Effectiveness reflects how well the state carries out state functions. Legitimacy, in turn, exists when elites and the population perceive state actions as "just" and "reasonable" in terms of prevailing social norms (ibid.). Sierra Leone was considered to lack both; indeed, Keen (2005:16) notes, "development seemed to be going into reverse" in the post-colonial years; already "by the late 1970s, services across the country were clearly in decline" (ibid.).

⁶ An alternative yet similar definition of 'state capacity' is proposed by Englebert (2000:8), which is "generally understood to refer to the capacity to design and implement policies, make credible commitments, run an efficient bureaucracy and provide constraints to opportunistic behavior." Englebert (2000:8-9) suggests that there are three approaches to understanding the weakness of African states: 1. Africa's stagnation, poor governance and weak state capacity derive from its low level of civic culture and social capital; 2. African countries have weak institutions and adopt poor policies because of their ethnic diversity; 3. African leaders, having inherited artificial political entities from colonialism, resort to neo-patrimonial strategies to foster their power and prevent the dislocation of their peasant societies.

In my research on the concepts that underpin state failure and state-building, I found an assumed juxtaposition between ‘authority’ and ‘the state’. I suggest that this juxtaposition is problematic if we wish to understand how justice and security are enforced in rural Sierra Leone, and how different elements of SSR have been translated into localities across the country.

We should not start from a concept of the western universalist state and measure the legitimacy and effectiveness of all other political entities against it. Rather, we should understand that the authority to make order in the justice and security field of Sierra Leone is expressed by a number of actors, including the state-sanctioned police, chiefs, community-policing actors and institutions such as secret societies (see Chapters 6 and 7). The presence of these multiple order-making actors in Sierra Leone and indeed, in other Sub-Saharan countries, indicates a very different state formation experience as compared to the countries of Western Europe.

1.5 European state formation and the colonial legacy

The literature on politics and states in Africa suggests a disconnect, or tension between the legal status of states on the one hand, and the everyday exercise of authority and state control on the other (see Chabal and Daloz 1999; Mamdani 1996; Mbembe 2001; Lund 2006). If we assume that African states are not ‘working’ as they should because they have failed to “adopt the formula that has worked elsewhere” (Clapham 2002:789), we follow normative assumptions about African politics and society, including a notion of the “problematic state” in Africa (Hyden 2006).

Before concluding the introduction, this section lays the foundation for arguing why looking at how order is constituted in rural Sierra Leone is better conceptualized as foundationally hybrid. A key to understanding why this is the case is found in policies of indirect rule during the colonial era, a distinctly different experience from that of state formation in Europe.

1.5.1 The classic tale of the western state

As suggested in different ways by Giddens (1985), Mann (1993, 1995) and Tilly (1975, 1995), the genesis of the western nation-state was the unintended consequence of a long-term and violent process of political expropriation of pre-existing deliberative assemblies, including, *inter alia*, rival nobility or trading bourgeoisie, ubiquitous peasant societies and the church (see Merkl 1977:464; Schulze 1998; Clapham 2000:6-7).⁷ Indeed, Anderson (1991:7) suggests that ‘the nation’ was erected on the often-violent fiction of cultural homogeneity, an imagined, if unevenly enacted, sense of ‘horizontal fraternity’.

Only after a monopoly of physical violence was established by bargaining, co-optation, legitimation and sheer coercion, did the political setting of legal institutions and appointed rulers in Western European countries come under the control of ‘the public’. The making of states, i.e., the building of centralized, differentiated organizations with a monopoly of coercion over a defined territory, can not be said to come from within a distinct society, since state and society are inseparable in the process of state-making. Rather, the making of states is the result of external conflicts (Barkey and Parikh 1991:527).

In Western Europe, tax extraction, for instance, ranged from outright plunder to the bureaucratization of taxation in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Both these tax methods depended on power holders heading state-making processes and pursuing advantages of security within a territory (Tilly 1985:181). It was through this process that one of the underpinnings of stateness was established, that of asserting territorial sovereignty through the monopolization of violence by permanent and visible military and police forces. Such activities were not intentionally undertaken to build states; they were the result of ousting formerly needed middlemen such as the nobility. From this perspective, current state-building processes tend to invert the social logic of European state formation, in which the

⁷ Bayart (2000:244) problematizes this point, arguing that we cannot simply assume a correlation in Africa between war and state formation, as it occurred in European history, “where the necessities of war favoured the creation of absolutist states with bureaucracies operating on rational principles, the development of systems of fiscal pressure and extraction and, in the last resort, mass democracies. The comparison, while useful, cannot be pushed too far, as a range of other cultural and economic factors were relevant in the European case.” And yet, “*there is also no reason to suppose that similar developments will not take place, since conflicts are a fertile source of social transformations*” (ibid: italics added).

coercive formation of state monopolies preceded both the juridification of political authority and the enhancement of state capacities (Jung 2008:39).

The next section provides insight into how state formation occurred in Sub-Saharan Africa, and why we must be cautious to assume any immediate similarity with state formation processes in Europe. In the case of Sierra Leone, ‘deliberative assemblies’ were not expropriated, but rather established and consolidated. Warriors-turned-chiefs became central to how rural areas were governed, drawing their authority to do so from a multitude of sources, and thereby becoming constitutive of a foundational hybrid order (see Chapter 5).

1.5.2 The logic of incompatibility and the hybridity of authority

The separation of local middlemen, traditional leaders, and colonial institutions was never under consideration by colonial administrators in Sierra Leone. Indeed, the colonial state relied on local intermediaries and alliances with local chieftain institutions to keep territories and populations under their control at a minimum cost. Thus, local intermediaries became integral to the political entity that emerged.

Recognizing that the colonial state was an appendage to colonial military and administrative complexes does not negate the importance of agency of the colonized in shaping the encounter (see Comaroff and Comaroff 1993:xi-xii; Ray and van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal 1996:29). As Cooper (1994:1529) notes, “while the conquerors could concentrate military force to defeat African armies, ‘pacify’ villages or slaughter rebels, the routinization of power demanded alliances with local authority figures....” This was not just a matter of ‘adaptation’ or ‘resistance’ to colonial initiatives; it demonstrates that colonial administrative policies were appropriated and shaped by the colonized.⁸ It is in this history that the key to understanding the hybrid order in Sierra Leone lies (See Chapter 5).

⁸ As De Bruijn, van Dijk and Gewald (2007:10) have argued, drawing on Lonsdale (2000), no matter how constraining circumstances can be in environmental, economic, political or social-cultural terms, African societies have demonstrated time and again numerous ways in which such conditions are negotiated in often unexpected ways. Such conditions never become so totalizing or hegemonic that all creativity in countering or coping with the circumstances African societies are subjected to is annihilated.

The concept of hybridity helps explain the particular variety of authority that was shaped by colonial and post-colonial state policies and localized figures of authority. Beginning in the colonial period, the kinds of authority called upon included an extended system of constitutional and administrative rules of law, tradition, autochthon status, secret society membership and ancestral ties. This use of multi-faceted sources of authority to make order reflects hybridity, i.e., an assemblage of different logics. This assemblage is not that of two pure forms of ‘bureaucracy’ and ‘tradition’, but rather of two concepts that become constitutive of one another. It is the product of constantly evolving and contested, mutually antagonistic and integral sources of authority that become inseparable when subjected to empirical scrutiny.⁹

Sklar (1993, 1999) refers to notions of ‘mixed government’ and ‘mixed polity’, and suggests that constitutional or extra-constitutional traditional authorities are central to how authority is expressed (Englebert 2002:346; Bank and Southall 1996:407).¹⁰ This implies that the state, colonial or post-colonial, was never the only kind of order-enforcing authority. In fact, given the existence of several kinds of authority, the state will always already be challenged by other logics, sets of knowledge, practices and forms of power (Bertelsen 2009:212). Thus, hybridity as a concept helps to capture these different logics within one conceptual framework and suggests the multitude of registers that are available to be drawn upon, notably by paramount and lesser chiefs, in Sierra Leone and other Sub-Saharan African countries.

⁹ In this context, we should be careful about applying Ekeh’s (Ekeh 1975) ‘two publics’ and Mamdani’s (Mamdani 1996) notion of the Janus-faced state, divided between an urban power that speaks the language of civil rights (citizens), and a civil power that claims to protect customary rights (subjects) (see Fanthorpe 2001:368). Both create much too pure categories of spheres of authority, even though they both have made a critical, and not dissimilar, contribution to understanding that which is not well-captured by notions of the western universalist state. Ekeh argues that the experience of colonialism in Africa led to two publics, and that the continent’s current problems have to do with the dialectics between the two (Ekeh 1975:91). The civic public signified a political community that came with certain rights, privileges, duties and obligations (Ekeh 1975:92). In the other public, the individual sees his duties as a moral obligation to benefit and sustain a primordial public. Mamdani (1996:18) argues along similar dichotomous lines, separating civil power and customary power, rights and custom, freedom and tradition.

¹⁰ Another concept is Menkhaus’ (2006-2007:78) “mediated state,” a state where “the central government relies on partnership (or at least co-existence) with a diverse range of local intermediaries and rival sources of authority to provide core functions of public security, justice, and conflict management in much of the country.”

The views of external actors of what ‘the state’ is and ought to be ignore the fact that, in practice, a broad range of actors and institutions enforces order. This is not an attempt to set up new dichotomies of the ideal state vs. the reality of how order is enforced, a distinction that characterizes much of the recent literature that addresses the concept of hybridity (Mac Ginty 2010; Richmond 2010, 2011; Boege et al. 2009; Brown et al. 2010; Clements et al. 2007; Darby 2009; Debiel and Lambach 2010; Kraushaar and Lambach 2009; Moe 2012; Roberts 2011). Rather, it is to suggest that the state-centric approach leads to a reductionist conceptualization of authority, and thus an inaccurate analysis of how authority is expressed in the context of Sierra Leone (see Chapter 5, 6, 7 and 8). This is the reason why I propose an alternative concept of authority to make order that stems simultaneously from numerous sources and consists of not two or more pure sources, but a multitude of always already hybrid forms.

1.6 Conclusion

State-building was constructed around the concept of the western universalist political entity that stands apart from, and yet encompasses, serves and is accountable to society. As an approach to ‘weak’ and ‘failed’ states, state-building is the articulation of the neo-liberal propensity to diagnose, prescribe and cure (see Rose 2006:155). While neo-liberalism is not a principled rejection of government, it insists that failures of government to achieve its objectives can be overcome by simply inventing new government strategies that will succeed (ibid.).

Neo-liberalism addresses the chaos that constitutes the ‘failed’ state by separating ‘state’ and ‘societal’ forces; the former are isolated and worked upon to constitute an ‘effective’ and ‘legitimate’ state. However, to do so in the attempt to establish a centrally-governed state indicates a fundamental disregard for the long-term historical processes of state formation both in Europe, from which the western universalist state entity emerged, and in Africa.

Indirect rule became the colonial state’s attempt to identify and fixate interlocutors between colonial administrators and the population in the hinterland, in part to facilitate tax

collection (Fanthorpe 1998:116; van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal 1996:42). In the case of Sierra Leone, the approach led to the emergence of semi-autonomous administrative units or chieftaincies, which became and remain the focus of struggles for political control in rural Sierra Leone (Tangri 1978; Allen 1968; see van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal 1996:42).

In the particular case of SSR as state-building as conducted in Sierra Leone, the process entails a fundamental overhaul of several institutions identified as belonging to the state system. The armed forces, the police, intelligence services and ministries were identified, isolated and worked upon as constitutive of the justice and security field. Inherent in this process was an attempt to marginalize, ignore or eliminate not only the ‘societal’ forces within institutions considered to be part of the state system, but also a variety of hybrid organizational forms in the justice and security field, such as warlords and traditional leaders who were either criminalized or considered to fit uneasily into the category of ‘state institutions and actors’.

This thesis argues that the state-building exercise of separating ‘state’ and ‘society’, and working on the former in isolation does not preclude hybrid institutions and actors. Indeed, it was inevitable that SSR would reproduce rather than eradicate the hybrid nature of the security and justice field.

1.7 Outline of the thesis

This thesis consists of eight chapters, an introduction and a conclusion. Chapters 1 and 2 outline the concept of hybridity, and how it was operationalized. Chapters 3 and 4 explore the emergence of SSR in international policy-making and how it became integral to UK-supported state-building in Sierra Leone in the past 14-15 years. Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 describe and analyze how Sierra Leone’s foundational hybrid order was produced historically through indirect rule and the emergence of secret societies, and how this order was reproduced more recently through police reform. The following is a brief summary of the chapters:

Chapter 1, *Conceptualizing hybrid orders – beyond a state-centric approach*, critiques the state concept that underpins SSR as state-building and suggests the need for a more multi-

faceted conception of what authority to make order entails. I propose to disaggregate not only the concept of state, but also how the authority to govern, regulate and order space is articulated in academic and policy discourse.

I argue that giving preferential treatment to the state as a political entity and identifying it as ‘weak’ or fragile’, ‘effective’ or ‘legitimate’ is a fundamentally biased analysis. This approach obscures the fact that authority has many sources with multiple origins.

I suggest conceptualizing authority as a hybrid order of assemblages that take shape and fall apart in a security and justice field. In that process, these assemblages inter-link languages of both ‘stateness’ and ‘public authority’. Hybridity is foundational because it lies at the very base of how Sierra Leone emerged as an internationally-defined political entity.

Chapter 2, *The study of security sector reform in Sierra Leone – reflections on methodology*, describes how I approached the study of assemblages and foundational hybrid orders in the justice and security field, how I accessed the field and the methods I used to collect and organize data. The chapter also presents the multi-sited approach that I applied and the different locations in which data was collected.

Chapter 3, *The emergence of security sector reform in the security and justice field*, explores how SSR developed internationally in both discourse and practice to serve the state-building agenda of transforming failed states into functioning, centrally-governed political entities. Following the rationale of the notion of a failed state, it was the state as a bordered power container and the institutions that comprise it that were to be isolated and worked upon through state-building.

SSR as state-building as it emerged in international policy-making led to a specific set of articulations of how to re-compose the justice and security field. SSR thus came to shape approaches to state-building in Sierra Leone, as experiences in Sierra Leone shaped approaches to SSR and state-building as a concept, a set of policies and program practices.

Chapter 4, *Re-composing the justice and security field*, looks at how Sierra Leone's failure as a state has been articulated academically and how SSR became one of the important components of the state-building process that followed.

Considered to lack both 'efficiency' and 'legitimacy', it was Sierra Leone's perceived failure as a state that led to a devastating and brutal conflict and spurred the UN and the UK, in particular, into action. Through the deployment of troops and numerous programs labeled SSR, a process was begun that sought to transform the country into a centrally-governed and permanent political organization which could capture and retain the monopoly over the means of physical and symbolic violence and contain instability, disorder and chaos. Despite international intentions to establish a state-centric approach to providing justice and security, the hybrid order of authority expressed in Sierra Leone historically was reproduced in the SSR process.

Chapter 5, *The making of hybridity: the history of chiefs in Sierra Leone*, argues that SSR could not do anything but reproduce a hybrid order, because hybridity lies at the very foundation of how Sierra Leone emerged as the political entity and was "forced to behave (externally) as if it was a Weberian (territorial) state", as Peters (2006:44) puts it. Rather than constituting a centrally-governed state, Sierra Leone became a multi-centered system of governance in which assemblages of power clustered around paramount and lesser chiefs. This is, in short, the hybrid order that state-building ultimately reproduced.

Chapter 6, *The reproduction and consolidation of hybridity through police reform*, describes how police reform that was clearly intended to be a vehicle for state-building reproduced Sierra Leone's foundational hybrid order. Rather than supporting an internationally-driven vision of a re-organized justice and security field that was to project 'stateness', the position of paramount and lesser chiefs was corroborated.

Chapter 7, *Integral hybridity: The Poro effect in the justice and security field*, moves the analytical focus from the productive effects of SSR to how the male secret society as an element in the foundational hybrid order is an integral component of the justice and security field. The chapter explores a space within the field of justice and security where

disputes are settled that do not fit into the discourse on state fragility and state-building policies.

Chapter 8, *Hybridity enacted: a case of diamond theft in Kamara Chiefdom*, demonstrates that while state-building may have failed according to its own standards as a component of state-building, SSR has been productive in shaping the organization of the justice and security field. The chapter also draws on analyses in the previous six chapters and explores how elements of international SSR discourse, programs and historical developments confirm the hybrid order that characterizes the justice and security field.

2 Conceptualizing hybrid orders – beyond a state-centric approach

2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines a critique of the state concept that underpins SSR as state-building and suggests the need for a more multi-faceted notion of what authority to make order involves. This is not only a call to disaggregate the state concept, but also a call to disaggregate how the authority to govern and regulate space is generally articulated in academic discourse.

Giving preferential treatment to the state – whether it works or not, how it works, whether people act in the name of it or as if they were its representatives – injects a bias into the analysis. It obscures the fact that authority has many sources with multiple origins.¹¹ I suggest that conceptualizing authority as a hybrid order of assemblages that simultaneously articulates languages of ‘stateness’ and ‘public authority’ better captures this condition. The hybrid order is foundational, because it defines how Sierra Leone emerged as a political entity when the Portuguese began to visit the area in the late 15th century and named it “Lion Mountain”.

This chapter begins by presenting elements of empirically-founded literature that explore authority in contexts where enforcing justice and security is not the exclusive domain of formal state institutions (Hansen and Stepputat 2001, 2005; Sharma and Gupta 2006; Abrams 2006 [1988]; Mitchell 2006 [1999]; Ferguson 2006 [1994]; Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Lund 2006; Juul and Lund 2002). Authority to make order cannot be applied to when *an* actor – the state, traditional leader or elders – acts, because such pure institutional categories do not exist (see Latour 1987:118-119).

Rather than speaking only of ‘languages of stateness’, as do Hansen and Stepputat (2001), I argue in favor of adding the concept of ‘languages of public authority’. Together, the two

¹¹ It is worth noting that legal pluralists in studies on customary or ‘living law’ have long recognized the existence of more than one legal order and that law may originate from various sources of authority – state and non-state. They explore the relationships, contestations and complementarities that state law may have with alternative norm-based or rule-making systems of order (Griffiths 1986; Black 2002). Radical or strong legal pluralism (as opposed to legal centralism) does not give conceptual priority to the state (i.e., that law should only be *of* the state) or that the state should engage only with those alternative normative orders recognized by the state), but accepts that alternative legal systems of order or “private governance regimes” may be equal to or indeed exclude the state (Griffiths 1986; Teubner 2003; Lehman-Langlois and Shearing 2009).

languages of authority – stateness and public authority – more accurately capture the syncretism that characterizes how order is enforced in Sierra Leone. Notions of autochthony, which are particularly important in West Africa (Lentz 2007:43), reference to legislation and symbolic representations of uniforms come into play simultaneously and assemble to constitute authoritative expressions.¹²

I propose a model of hybridity that combines Latour's concept of assemblage and Bourdieu's fields of practice.¹³ Thinking in terms of assemblages and how people, things and discourses come together and fall apart in a field brings dynamism to how processes of enforcing order are seen. Such a perspective also points to the unexpected and often unpredictable course of how an assemblage unravels. At the same time, however, to paraphrase Bourdieu, 'objective structures' exist that are independent of the consciousness and will of agents.

Thus, applying the concept of field has the advantage of elaborating on the resources – capital forms – available to a variety of actors, and does not privilege or necessitate any clear demarcation of whether they belong on one or the other side of the state-society split. To understand how these forms of capital are enacted, I propose that we engage ritual theory (Abélès 1986; Connerton 1989; Gluckman 1949) in its political manifestations, and the symbols that are put on display as part of assemblages in the justice and security field.

In sum, hybrid orders are best analyzed as assemblages that are structured by field dynamics. This explanation takes into account that while we can never make social life fully predictable, we can explore the likelihood of how a criminal act will be acted upon and by whom. For example, in Peyima, the small town in the Kono District where I conducted my fieldwork, it was likely that a case of diamond theft would lead to the

¹² I will not go into a lengthy conceptual debate on the formation of nations and nationalism as conceived by a number of so-called modernist scholars who problematize and challenge perennial and primordial readings of the national community (Breuilly 1993; Mann 1993, 1995; Gellner 1983) and ethno-symbolism that seeks to mediate between modernists and perennialists (Smith 1986, 1995, 1998). I will note here, however, that 'autochthony' in the context of this dissertation differs from, but at the same time relates to, the concepts of nation and nationalism as part of an administrative center and network of power (see Schulze 1998:99; Breuilly 1993:1).

¹³ Latour is not the creator of the concept of the *assemblage*. Deleuze and Guattari use the French terms *agencement* and *dispositif*, which are usually translated as *assemblage*, and considered it a "site at which a discursive formation intersects with material practices" (Crary 1992:31). Latour's combination of actors, discourse and things in the assemblage resemble this line of thinking.

involvement of the chief and eventually the police (See Chapter 8). Yet, precisely who would be involved and in what way could not be predicted, and therefore had to be subjected to empirical investigation.

2.2 Languages of stateness + languages of public authority = hybrid order

2.2.1 Disaggregating the state

To capture the empirical reality of a place such as Peyima, we need a more inclusive conception of actors, processes and practices of authority in the security and justice field than what is captured by the concept of ‘the state’. A first step towards a concept of hybridity is to disaggregate the notion of authority, not only of the state, but also of traditional leaders, into a variety of different practices in the lives of ordinary people. In this perspective, the enforcement of security and justice is considered a field of action that is historically produced through particular discourses and practices that, in turn, constitute particular subjects and objects of governance. Rather than seeing the post-colonial state as weak or powerful, this approach emphasizes its multiple shapes and sets of rules, as well as its dis-unified center.

This multiplicity is captured in much of the empirically-founded literature that explores authority in contexts where it is not necessarily the prerogative of state institutions to enforce order (e.g. Hansen and Stepputat 2001, 2005; Das and Poole 2004; Lund 2002, 2006, 2008). On the one hand, an approach of this nature enables us to understand “the operation of authorities in a disaggregated manner and to de-emphasize the state as the ultimate seat of power” (Sharma and Gupta 2006:9). On the other hand, it supports the importance of “examining the dispersed institutional and social networks through which rule is coordinated and consolidated, and the role that non-state institutions, communities and individuals play in the mundane processes of governance” (ibid.). This analytical perspective expresses a ‘multitude-ness’ of what and who holds the authority to govern and exposes it to investigation, which the depiction of the ideal state as a Leviathan does not.¹⁴

¹⁴ Hobbes’s (1985) Leviathan may be dismissed in today’s world of liberal democracies, but it could be argued that at the source of state-building discourses lies the concept of a ‘benevolent Leviathan’, a strong

Hansen and Stepputat (2001; 2005) take us further in this analysis. In their explorations of how to conceptualize the post-colonial state, they reject the concept of the state as an ahistorical entity that has certain assumed core functions (Hansen and Stepputat 2001:1). On one level, this analytical approach is in accord with the Marxist-inspired thinking of Gramsci and his reflections on the logic of how the state functions. Gramsci rejects that specific governmental institutions, together comprising “the State”, are the effective far-reaching instruments of a “dominant group” (Gramsci 1971:182): “[T]he state is conceived of as a continuous process of formation and superseding of unstable equilibria ... between the interest of fundamental [i.e., dominant] groups and those of the subordinate group...” (ibid.).

In this way Gramsci de-naturalizes the state by portraying it as embedded in politics and therefore as an unstable, partial construct with a social foundation. This understanding of the state as unstable and interest-driven is not always addressed in literature on fragile and weak states. If it is addressed, it is done so only superficially (Stepputat et al. 2007:16).

The political and ultimately unstable basis of the state construct is further captured in Mitchell’s (2006 [1999]:176) questioning of the state as “an actor, with the coherence, agency, and autonomy that this term presumes.” Similarly, Abrams (2006 [1988]) and Taussig (1991), each in their own way, de-naturalize the state as a set of unitary, technical and neutral institutions of governance, pointing to their political, violent and partial foundation (see also Emirbayer 1997:285)¹⁵. The aim of these authors is to render probable that the modern state is not a singular source of power, and following from this, to outline how it may be unfolded and conceptualized (see also Aretxaga 2003:395).¹⁶

government as the most reliable and effective form of government.

¹⁵ Emirbayer (1997:285) makes the point that holistic theories and ‘structuralisms’ posit self-subsistent ‘societies’, ‘structures’ or ‘social systems’ as the exclusive source of action. Proponents of these approaches, from neo-functionalists to many historical-comparative analysts, all too often fall back upon the assumption that it is durable, coherent entities that constitute the legitimate starting points of all sociological enquiry.

¹⁶ In Latour, we find a parallel argument for moving beyond Durkheimian thought of society as a separate ontological domain that can explain religion, law or politics. Instead, Latour (2000:113) argues for a concept of ‘society’ that is “composed, made up, constructed, established, maintained and assembled. It is no longer to be taken as the hidden source of causality which could be mobilized so as to account for the existence and stability of some other action or behaviour” (see also Latour 2005:45).

To do so, Hansen and Stepputat (2001) also seek inspiration from Foucault (1978, 1991), who sees the state as the effect of a wider range of dispersed forms of power.¹⁷ It is precisely the intensity of the unitary imagery condensed within the state that is an obstacle to understanding politics as the means by which we render our worlds governable (Dean 2001).

A simulacrum, “it” – the state – appears as a structure that stands apart from, and above, society. The conceptual separation between the state and society and the political significance of maintaining a boundary between the two domains are themselves important mechanisms to generate resources of power through inclusion and exclusion across boundaries (see Mitchell 2006 [1999]:174+175). Inherent in this imagined split between state and society is the creation of boundaries between those practices and spaces that are considered to form part of the state and those that are excluded (Nugent 1994).

The state as a unitary actor might be a social fact as Abrams (2006 [1999]:122; see also Kapferer and Bertelsen 2009:6) suggests, but it is not a fact of nature. This leads to a problematization of the state as a material object of study, whether concrete or abstract, while taking “the *idea* of the state” seriously (Abrams (2006 [1999]:122). From this follows the need to study the internal and external relations of political and governmental institutions – what Abrams refers to as the state *system* – without postulating the reality of the state. Thus, the state encompasses both a system of tangible institutions and an idea of

¹⁷ Foucault’s position in the social sciences, and particularly in anthropology, is precarious. While he has been a source of great inspiration (Carrier 1992; Knauf 1994; Coronil 1996; Mosse 2005), applying his theories to ethnographic data is methodologically problematic. Foucault’s focus was on the Western nation-state, specifically France. It should be self-evident, therefore, that his considerable contributions to the workings of power and the governing of societies cannot simply be extrapolated to analyses of the provision of security and justice in rural Sierra Leone. Indeed, Dean (2010), in his development of the concept of ‘international governmentality’, admits that Foucault’s work drew mainly on the history of European countries and made very little reference to how the arts of government operate in an international domain, which would preclude both the world outside Europe and international politics. A more serious methodological problem stems from Foucault’s ontological point of departure – his academic discipline. “Foucault was not a sociologist nor a social scientist,” Callewaert (2006:74) insists. He was a philosopher and a specialist of the history of sciences and knowledge, who questioned the very possibility of social science. He reconstructed the ‘liberal’ understanding of man and society as discourse, and was in this process describing the history of knowledge rather than social history (Callewaert 2006:91). In sum, therefore, while Foucault might be helpful in aiming the arrow, he will not help us hit the target. This should be part of any researchers ‘participant objectivation’ (Bourdieu 2003), prior to applying Foucault’s analytical considerations to data collected through ethnographic fieldwork.

what it is or ought to be, and allows us to see it as both illusory and a set of concrete institutions, distant and impersonal as well as localized and personified.

Inherent to the perspective that Hansen and Stepputat, among others, put forward is the danger of over-emphasizing the state. This is hardly a subverting critique, insofar as the aforementioned scholars all explicitly engage with and seek to understand its sociology. However, one is left wondering what exists between the cracks of the disaggregated political entity that we refer to as the state. It is to this area of the research that I now turn.

I argue that authority should be understood as an amalgam of languages of stateness and public authority, which suggests the multiple sources that constitute the authority to make order. For example, legal documents, community policing discourse introduced through SSR, secret society membership and autochthon status obviously do not emanate from the same source of authority. And yet, paramount and lesser chiefs in Sierra Leone potentially draw on all of these different sources simultaneously to reflect the hybrid order they embody.

2.2.2 Between the cracks

It is the distinction between system and idea that causes Hansen and Stepputat to insist upon exploring the parochial sightings of the state. This particular outlook leads to a spatially- and conceptually-dispersed representation of what ‘it’ is (see also Das and Poole 2004:6). Hansen and Stepputat emphasize that “modern forms of state are in a continuous process of construction,” and argue that this process takes place through “globalized registers of governance and authority” (Hansen and Stepputat 2001:5). They refer to these registers as ‘languages of stateness’ that are comprised of three practical languages of governance and three symbolic languages of authority.¹⁸

¹⁸ The three languages of governance include: 1. “the assertion of territorial sovereignty by the monopolization of violence by permanent and visible military and police forces”; 2. “the gathering and control of knowledge of the population – its size occupations, productions, and well-being – of this territory”; 3. “the generation of resources to ensure the reproduction and well-being of the population: in brief, development and management of the ‘national economy’.” The three symbolic languages include: 1. “the institutionalization of law and legal discourse as the authoritative language of the state and the medium through which the state acquires discursive presence and authority to authorize”; 2. “the materialization of

“The essential thing is,” Hansen and Stepputat note, “that a state exists only when these “languages” of governance and authority combine or co-exist one way or the other” (ibid.:8). Territorial sovereignty and the monopolization of violence constitute examples of the former, while the materialization of the state in a series of permanent signs and rituals exemplifies the latter (Hansen and Stepputat 2001:7+8). A study of the state must discern and explore how these different languages are produced, including their emic meanings,¹⁹ and how the state is appropriated, translated and articulated by people, symbols, texts, iconography and practices.

A disaggregated approach to exploring the state is the first step towards its de-naturalization and constitutes a fundamental challenge to notions of its universal reach. At the same time, the approach that Hansen and Stepputat apply needs to be adjusted because, as noted above, it appears somewhat state-centric (see Bertelsen 2009:213). Both scholars are pre-occupied with exploring the disaggregated nature of the state to a degree that leaves little space for developing further how other types of authority may be conceptualized, what languages they speak, and how they are co-constitutive of authority.

The two authors address this criticism themselves by noting in their later work that ‘sovereign power’, taken to refer to state authority, might project itself as “given, stable and natural,” but that it is never able to achieve the status of a ‘master signifier’. Indeed, Hansen and Stepputat (2005:3) argue for disaggregating the concept of ‘sovereign power’ itself: “Whether exercised by a state, in the name of the nation, or by a local despotic power or community court, [it] is always a tentative and unstable project whose efficacy and legitimacy depend on repeated performances of violence and a ‘will to rule’.”

Therefore, there is a gap between the state idea and the reality of more or less contradictory programs, initiatives and statements that people encounter (Gupta 1995). One is left wondering whether these fragmentary, local, personalized and frequently unsatisfactory

the state in a series of permanent signs and rituals: buildings, monuments, letterheads, uniforms, road signs, fences”; 3. “the nationalization of the territory and the institutions of the state through inscription of a history and a shared community on landscapes and cultural practices” (Hansen and Stepputat 2001:7-8). Apart from stating what the languages are Hansen and Stepputat do not systematically elaborate their functions in any great detail.

¹⁹ An emic account is the description of behavior or beliefs in terms meaningful to the actor making the account. In other words, an emic account comes from a person within the field of analysis, in this case that of justice and security.

encounters can really be ‘it’. Furthermore, there is a tendency to establish a dichotomy between ‘the ideal’ (idea) and ‘the real’ (system), rather than seeing both these analytical categories as articulated equally in practice, never fully detached from one another, yet never fully realized.

Instead of speaking of ‘languages of stateness’ alone, I consider it useful to add the concept of ‘languages of public authority’ to emphasize the syncretic and hybrid character of government officials, paramount chiefs and other groups that in the case of Peyima in Kono District vie for a role in the enforcement of order.²⁰

The next section discusses how these languages – stateness and public authority – are simultaneously constituted in order to articulate authority. This lays the basis for discussing hybrid orders.

2.2.3 Languages of authority

By adding ‘languages of public authority’, I am challenging and circumscribing a number of Hansen and Stepputat’s (2001:7-8) symbolic and practical ‘languages of stateness’. I question the assertion that the state only exists when these languages “combine or co-exist” and suggest that the addition of the concept of ‘public authority’ recognizes the hybridity of the actors and institutions that combine to make up the justice and security field. Furthermore, I question the relevance of specifying whether the state, in fact, exists or not and argue that authority to make order, whether performed by a police officer or a town chief, always does so in some way, shape or form. This statement in turn demands a specification of additional languages, such as belonging, autochthony and the act of boundary-making, that are central to the notion of authority as it practiced in Peyima.

This is not an argument for setting up clearly separable languages that would take us back to dichotomous thinking. Rather, I argue that the vantage point from which the establishment of order is articulated is constitutive of where the languages are located along a continuum between ‘stateness’ and ‘public authority’.

²⁰ Rouveroy van Nieuwaal (1996:62) uses these terms – ‘syncretic’ and ‘hybrid’ – to denote that on the one hand chiefs engage within the hegemonic state in alliances, and on the other hand they resist state practices.

It makes a difference whether the register that actors draw upon to act in the justice and security field is derived from the imagery of tradition, including sacred and other customary powers, kinship and secret society membership, or from the imagery of an operative decision-making center of government and bureaucracy and legislation. Yet, with respect to Sierra Leone, paramount and lesser chiefs are able to draw on these languages simultaneously, making them a prime articulation of the hybrid order.

The empirical inseparability of these languages is evident because registers of both ‘stateness’ and ‘public authority’ come into play simultaneously, not only in the formation of assemblages of a multitude of actors, things and discourses, but as embodied by individuals. This is the case, for instance, when a local police officer – who derives his identity and authority from languages of stateness – claims that he is working for and takes orders from the paramount chief. The paramount chief, part of the system of the state, is therefore not antagonistic towards it. At the same time, as an autochthon and a member of the secret society of a particular place, the Chief derives his authority from his relationship to a physically-defined locality.

The hybrid order that the entanglement of the two languages creates is evident, but the component parts of this order do not lend themselves to investigation in their pure form, not least because the paramount chief gives shape to, but is also shaped by the state of Sierra Leone (see Chapter 5). The languages that may be considered of a state order may simultaneously be considered in terms of public authority, as I elaborate below regarding the language of territory, symbolic language, language of autochthony and language of relationality. Herein lies the basis of hybridity: both languages are articulated simultaneously and frame the discussion of the four languages of authority that are central to order-making in localities such as Peyima.

Language of territory. First, one of the most important languages of public authority, which is also one of the central practical languages of stateness, centers on the assertion of territory by monopolizing violence through permanent and visible security forces. This monopoly is only tenuously held by the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) in Peyima, and is shared between state officials and traditional leaders, each of whom constitute hybrid categories of actors. The hybrid nature of both parties is accentuated by the fact that the monopoly to

enforce order is shared, that chiefs draw their authority from a variety of sources (state law, ancestral ties and secret society membership) and that chiefs and police officers draw on each other's capital to act in the justice and security field (See Chapter 8). Hence, the hybrid nature of both parties is accentuated.

Symbolic language. A second language of authority that does not automatically conflate with the stateness of an institution is expressed in the materialization of authority in signs, symbols and rituals, including, *inter alia*, buildings, uniforms and licenses. Symbols reproduce the imagination of an authority, perhaps the state, perhaps the chief or a combination of the two as hybrid societal centers, who, in principle, are capable of issuing what Bourdieu calls the 'last judgment' (Bourdieu 1999a:67).

Because one authority is contained within the other and vice versa, i.e., they draw on the authority of one another to act in the justice and security field, it matters little which institution has the final say in a given case. In the aforementioned case of diamond theft, discussed in detail in Chapter 8, it was not significant whether it was the chief or the police who made the final ruling. The fact that the chief and police officer were dependent upon each other's articulation of authority brought the case to closure.

Lund (2006:691) emphasizes that "symbols of public authority are not moored to specific institutions"; indeed, they are evident in secret society membership and initiation marks, in legislation and mining licenses and inscribed on police uniforms. Such symbols do not merely signify one group's challenge of another's authority to enforce a particular order. They express the conglomeration of various actors who in themselves are hybrid in nature and carry hybrid symbols of public authority.

Language of autochthony. A third language of authority is articulated by employing notions of belonging and autochthony that establish symbolic boundaries inside and outside a given physical locality. Autochthony is not merely used to claim "access to rights as citizens within a state" (Leonhardt 2006:70), but also in relation to more localized claims to tribal identity, strongly expressed in Peyima, and the ability to point to a 'home land' or a 'home village', which literally implies an origin "of the soil itself" and "a direct

claim to territory” (Geschiere and Jackson 2006:6).²¹ This is not surprising when the colonial history of Sierra Leone is taken into account, where the colonial policy of indirect rule led to the emergence of semi-autonomous administrative units and what Fanthorpe (2001:372) refers to as ‘extreme localization’ with regard to identity and belonging in rural areas of the country.

However, claims to authority through autochthon status in a particular village or chiefdom, and the symbolic capital that flows from this claim, are not simply of colonial (state) origin and construct. They also arose out of transformed pre-colonial configurations of first-comers and late-comers in a particular locality (Lentz 2007:45). As suggested in Chapters 5 and 7 respectively, the institutions of the chiefdom and the secret society are strong tokens thereof. Claims of autochthony are thus inter-twined with colonial and post-colonial state formation, but cannot be reduced to these processes. Reference to the ‘publicness’ rather than the stateness of this claim is a way of emphasizing this point.

Language of relationality. A fourth crucial language of authority relates to the relationality of groups and individuals and the setting up of symbolic boundaries between autochthons and allochthons, i.e., secret society member and non-members, chiefs and police. This type of boundary-making serves to exclude some and include others in making order, and to demarcate lines of symbolic authority between the police and the chief.

What is at stake is an ability to draw on capital forms to construct and defend, but also when necessary, to demolish boundaries between inside and outside a locality.²² Chapters 7 and 8 show how these languages of relationality are articulated at various times. They occur between members and non-members of the secret society, for instance, and between the paramount chief and the police as they seek to solve cases of theft together. The

²¹ This is not to deny that autochthony and kinship do not figure centrally in languages of stateness as well, constituting a powerful expression of boundary-making. Herzfeld (1992), for instance, explains in the context of Western bureaucracies that kinship is “one rich source,” “a common figure” in the production of separation: “Outsiders do not deserve our attention, while those of ambiguous status must either be incorporated or fought.” The politics and rhetoric of kinship and identity, and the manipulation of both to serve hierarchies of power, is as central to the organization of ‘state bureaucracies’ as it is to security and justice in Peyima. When applied, it provides a strong basis for day-to-day solidarity.

²² As Lamont and Molnár (2002:167) note, “boundaries are part of the classical conceptual tool-kit of social scientists.”

significance of these boundaries is the distribution of authority that they designate and the access to resources that they dictate.

The language of relationality also allows people to occupy certain positions in the justice and security field, and thereby becomes an essential medium through which people acquire status and monopolize resources. In the end, insiders and outsiders are created (Lamont and Molnár 2002:167). Whether individuals establish boundaries as part of an explicit strategy or because they follow norms, these boundaries become inseparable from the practiced context within which they are set up.

2.2.4 The hybrid condition

Recognizing hybridity as a key characteristic of how authority through these different languages is articulated forces us to take into account its different sources. As a concept, hybridity is a way of critiquing separations and categorical divisions of what a state is and what it is not and what is ideal and what is real. It is also a way of encompassing the institutional formations that exist between the pure and the hybrid itself (Strathern 1996:520). The term hybrid affirms the existence of a myriad of differently sourced forms of authority, which do not exist in isolation from one another or in a dichotomous relationship between state and non-state, state and tradition, but instead permeate and partly dissolve one another. It is their quality of simultaneity, and the fact that they exist because of, not in spite of one another, that makes orders hybrid. In Latour's (2007:3) terms, they are organizations on top of organizations.²³

This hybrid order of stateness and public authority facilitates an exploration of the way that actors in the justice and security field simultaneously draw on different registers and logics and languages of authority. This re-configuration also raises the question whether public authority can be juxtaposed with the 'stateness' of an institution, as Lund (2006:686)

²³ 'Hybridity' (or 'plurality') is thus a comprehensive concept denoting inclusion of the public and private sectors, civil society and communities, as well as international and transnational entities (Bayley and Shearing 2001).

implies in his discussion of home-town associations, chieftaincies and vigilante groups that operate in the twilight between state and society, public and private.²⁴

On the one hand, it is useful to follow Lund (ibid.) and argue that multiple government institutions, traditional institutions and “emerging institutions and organizations” such as vigilante groups are integral to the justice and security field. On the other hand, as suggested above, it is also important to emphasize clearly that since each actor within the justice and security field draws upon numerous different sources of authority, it is impossible to establish clear distinctions between state and society (or non-state), public and private.

‘Tradition’, for example, cropped up in numerous discussions with informants during my fieldwork. It was mentioned often by the chiefs, who saw themselves as mediators of the past and the present and ‘as guardians of custom’.²⁵ Chiefs and other authoritative actors in Peyima used ‘tradition’ to explain a wide range of practices and institutions in the justice and security field, from the British colonial system’s reliance on chiefs to the emphasis on secret society membership, ‘black magic’, autochthon status and lineage.

Tradition is understood here as a way of making sense of past lifeways, which in Peyima are used as a source to bolster authority to act in the field of justice and security. The inheritance of an authentic tradition is illusory, because those who project it themselves embody an order established through processes of hybridification of different sources of authority. The use of a defining tradition exemplifies the objectification of a symbolic

²⁴ Just as the state idea, its symbols and resources may be drawn upon as sources of authority, notions of tradition, identity and locality confer legitimacy on institutions’ claims to public authority. The term ‘local’ in contrast to ‘national’, for instance, is often invoked to assume a spatial mapping between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ the chieftaindom. It is important to note, however, that by imagining the primacy of certain levels over others, we are likely to overlook the central question of how this primacy is established in a social and political process. Augé’s (1995) construction of the ‘anthropological place’, in all its simplicity, is alluring: “simply a place,” he notes, “the one occupied by the indigenous inhabitants who live in it, cultivate it, defend it, mark its strong points and keep its frontiers under surveillance, but who also detect in it the tracks of chthonian or celestial powers, ancestors or spirits which populate and animate its private geography.” This concept of an ideal type of ‘anthropological place’ takes seriously the sources of authority that exist in local spaces, but also appears somewhat romanticist, representing a yearning for essence, for the pure and unpolluted. Rather, what is at stake is the conglomeration of numerous sources of authority into hybrid actors operating in the justice and security field.

²⁵ As von Trotha (1995:469) says: “a chief should not only be, if he wants to survive in new political settings, an intermediary between the past and the present, but also be an agent of the present and an intermediary between the present and the future.”

construct (Cohn 1980:217). Tradition is not a coherent body of customs, lying “out there” and reified, a thing to be discovered; it is a dynamic model that shapes individual and group experience while also being shaped by it. The point is that what appears as tradition is constructed in the present, meaning that the content of the past is modified and re-defined according to current significance (Linnekin 1983:41-42).

In the field of justice and security, tradition becomes a rallying point and a symbol of power and authority. In this respect, paramount chiefs in Sierra Leone are equipped to enter the justice and security field by drawing not only on their status in formal legislation, but also from their autochthon status as descendants from those individuals who founded the chiefdom – or town – over which they rule. This cannot be understood in terms of the ‘stateness’ of an institution, or even necessarily, as van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal (1996:48) notes, as the mobilization of forces against the “hegemonic projects of the state”. Rather, it should be explained in terms of the combination of different sources of authority, of both stateness and public authority.

Above, I outline a concept of authority that is hybrid, which takes into account the multitude of sources that are constitutive of the order that is produced as a consequence. However, while I have spoken of authority as a hybrid order of different languages, I have not outlined the mechanics underlying hybridity as a concept. To do this, I now turn to Latour and Bourdieu in an attempt to avoid a dichotomous approach and to combine dynamism and structural effect in the analysis.

2.3 The productive tension between Latour’s assemblage and Bourdieu’s field²⁶

Thinking in terms of assemblages brings dynamism to how order is made, because the concept points to the unexpected and partly unpredictable ways in which hybrid order is practiced. At the same time, ‘objective’ structures exist that shape these assemblages. Unlike the state-focused analytical approaches outlined above, the importance of the hybrid approach is that it does not give preferential treatment to either ‘the state’ or the

²⁶ I find it necessary to spend some time on the debates that took place between the two scholars, given the tensions and disagreements that existed between them in their respective epistemological points of departure.

‘local level’. It looks at the authority of each actor as well as assemblages that emerge from numerous sources, simultaneously.

The notion of the hybrid order lies at the very basis of my attempt to overturn dichotomous views of authority. I suggest exploring crimes and their resolution within the justice and security field as heterogeneous, yet integrated justice and security assemblages that form and fall apart in a given locality (see Callon 2006:49; Leander 2010a:16).²⁷ This is a view of practice that draws on Latour’s concept of the network and Actor-Network Theory (ANT) more generally (see Strathern 1996:520).

Taking its point of departure from semiotics and social constructivism, ANT demonstrates how knowledge and truth is produced in the encounter between and among actors. From this perspective, the dichotomies we use to categorize the world set up false distinctions, and separate what are networked entities that in turn constitute a hybrid order.²⁸ We separate the inseparable, as it were. I suggest that this is precisely what is at stake with respect to the languages of authority discussed above: languages of stateness and public authority do not exist in pure forms.

As ‘radical constructivists’ (Vandenberghe 1999:35; on Latour, see Amsterdamska 1990:495)²⁹, proponents of ANT such as Callon (1986), Latour (1987) and Law (1994) focus on descriptions, re-descriptions and constructions of reality, but not on reality itself or on making claims about the ‘state of the world’ (Levi and Valverde 2008:808). Instead,

²⁷ In this regard, I have drawn inspiration from Abrahamsen and Williams (2011:3) who recently coined the concept of ‘global security assemblages’ in order to explore the evolution of the private security industry and “new security structures and practices that are simultaneously public and private, global and local.” Concretely, ‘global security assemblages’ that constitute processes of disassembly and reassembly are “transnational structures and networks in which a range of different actors and normativities interact, cooperate, and compete to produce new institutions, practices and forms of deterritorialized security governance” (ibid.:89). They are “complex hybrid structures that inhabit national settings but are stretched across national boundaries in terms of actors, knowledges, technologies, norms and values” (ibid.:95).

²⁸ Latour (1999:83) refers to “the most dramatic split” between humans and science in the phenomenological tradition, a split which we may apply to relations between other commonly used dichotomies such as those between state and society or private and public. To take the comparison further, it becomes a world between “a world of science left entirely to itself, entirely cold, absolutely inhuman; and a rich lived world of intentional stances entirely limited to humans, absolutely divorced from what things are in and for themselves” (ibid.).

²⁹ On reality, Latour and Woolgar (1979:236-37) argue: “By observing artefact construction, we showed that reality is the consequence of the settlement of a dispute rather than its cause. If reality is the consequence rather than the cause of this construction, this means that a scientist's activity is directed not toward reality, but toward these operations on statements.”

they aim to document the processes, networks and actors through which the world is assembled. The Nature/Culture divide is, for Latour (1993:29-35), emblematic of our “modern constitution” and efforts to split the world in this way represent modernity as we know it.

Yet, Latour (1993) stresses that the divide has never been accurate; I find inspiration in his deliberations to suggest that languages of stateness and public authority cannot be divided either. The world has always been composed of hybrids, challenging epistemological divides such as ‘nature’ and ‘culture’, but also, as I suggest above, ‘public’ and ‘private’, ‘state’ and ‘society’, ‘ideal’ and ‘real’. The point of scholarship is not only to demonstrate the instability of ontological categories, but to embrace these hybrids and not seek to relegate them to either end of a binary opposition (Latour 1993).

Through this lens, *ad hoc* constellations of people, things – or props, as Leander (2010b:13) calls them – ideas and resources produce a given situation. The diamond theft case described in Chapter 8 does not simply show the superior position of the paramount chief in resolving the matter, but more accurately, that his authority to act on the case of theft depended on his relations with the Local Unit Commander of the police. Thus, resolution only happened by the combined force of the two figures that came to enact a hybrid order. In other words, SSR did not institute overpowering articulations of stateness, but as the case of theft suggests, it reproduced hybridity, of which police reform is absolutely central (See Chapter 6).

Like Foucault, Latour considers non-human relations such as architectural arrangements and textual formats to be significant actors; hence his notion of *Dingpolitik* rather than *Realpolitik* (Latour 2005). Things or props, in particular, play a key role in Latour’s approach: not only do they become objects of human activity, but human activity is just as dependent on the response from and interaction with these elements. Thus, the non-human agent can be as important for the construction of a given social reality as the human actor. (A case in point is the stone in Chapter 8 that was not only stolen but never found again, and yet caused numerous figures of authority to act). This means, for example, that the presence of police uniforms, a potentially valuable stone, artifacts or buildings make people act and interact in a particular way, both with things and with other people. Agency

thus appears as a continuum, “a power differentially expressed by all material bodies” (Bennett 2004:355).

Emic languages of stateness and authority and pieces of legislation are treated as temporary assemblages of actants, including people and their position, police uniforms, legal codes on chiefly authority, discourse on autochthony, international debates on SSR, physical structures and ideational concepts. In Chapter 6, I show how assemblages that consist of these elements take form and analyze the past decade of police reform in Sierra Leone and how it has been translated into Peyima. It is the networked combination and composition of these people, things, spaces and words that I intend to explore – it is this fundamental hybrid constellation that does something, has sufficient coherence to perform actions, produces effects and alters situations.

Thinking in terms of assemblages and how people, things and discourses come together and fall apart in a field brings dynamism to how processes of enforcing order are explored. At the same time I argue with Bourdieu that ‘objective structures’ exist that are independent of the consciousness and will of agents.

Juxtaposing Bourdieu and Latour in this way is not without problems. Eyal (2010) argues, for instance, that Bourdieu’s concepts of ‘space’ and ‘field’ represent an ‘objective’ moment of scientific inquiry with which it is possible to construct a representation of the total context of action. If so, Bourdieu’s approach runs entirely counter to Latour’s sociology of science, and his avoidance of privileging any point of view as the ‘truth’ or as ‘objective’.

Bourdieu himself expresses disdain for Latour’s – and Callon’s (1986) – attempt to challenge the distinction between human and non-human agents and considers it little more than a “literary game” (Bourdieu 2001:63-64). He regards Latour as a “naive observer”, who describes only the things he can make sense of, such as texts, conversations, instruments and rituals (Mialet 2003:615). Indeed, Bourdieu has said that because Latour objectifies the idiosyncratic individual who acts, rather than the position he or she occupies in social space, his work has constituted a “return upon the private person” of the

researcher, denounced ethnographic writing and brought in thinly-veiled nihilistic relativism (Wacquant 1989:35).

In turn, Bowker and Latour (1987:717) refer to Bourdieu as the most ‘sociologizing of sociologists’, as he sees society as a separate ontological domain that can explain religion, law and politics (see Latour 2000:113; 2005:84). “Bourdieu takes a neutral field like linguistics”, they argue, “and discovers society, or a neutral social community like academia, and discovers social determination.... What happens when he takes an ideologically-charged field like social science, or a community like that of sociologists? He discovers truth” (Bowker and Latour 1987:717).

Thus paraphrasing Latour, justice and security should not be understood as a field to be studied independently, but instead as networks of people and of things, as a way in which the world is assembled and as an attribute that is attached to events, people, documents and other objects when they become part of order-making. The result is a theoretical approach that emphasizes a Nietzschean critique of static analytical tools as incapable of capturing the dynamism and flow of the world we study. Indeed, such theories have the pernicious effect of imposing artificial fixity of our view on those relations (Valverde 2005:452).

Although they appear at odds, it is possible to combine Latour and Bourdieu; doing so does come with some benefits. It locates Latour-inspired justice and security assemblages – people, things and discourse – in the justice and security field. Bourdieu’s field of practice provides analytical categories that help clarify the resources that give shape to assemblages, i.e., different species of capital that are made available in the field.

When I apply Bourdieu’s concept of field to Latour’s assemblages, I depart from the latter’s ‘radical constructivist’ approach and argue that structures do exist, and have an effect on how actors, things and discourse assemble. Thus, I combine the unpredictability of the assemblage with the structuring effect of the field. This makes it possible to say something about how order is constituted, but not precisely what the order looks like in practice, which must necessarily be explored empirically. In the following section, I go into some detail on how Bourdieu’s field of practice has informed my study.

2.4 The justice and security field

2.4.1 The structure that shapes the assemblage

Thinking in assemblages, and how people, things and discourses take shape in the field points to the partly unpredictable way in which this happens. Following Bourdieu, ‘objective structures’ also exist that are independent of the consciousness and will of agents (or actants). Bourdieu has been criticized for employing the concept of ‘the field’ – ‘the economy’, ‘the political sphere’, ‘the state’, ‘academia’, ‘science’ and so on – as distinct spheres whose contents are clearly bounded and separate from one another (Eyal 2010). However, as Leander (2010b) notes, “the fixity” of the field should not be overstated; in fact, the concept may help lead us away from “blind and uncritical statism”, where the state is taken to be an actor with the coherence, agency and autonomy that the term presupposes.

Bourdieu characterized his work as constructivist structuralism:

By structuralism or structuralist, I mean that there exist, within the social world itself and only within symbolic systems [...], objective structures independent of the consciousness and will of agents, which are capable of guiding and constraining their practices or their representations. By constructivism, I mean that there is a two-fold social genesis, on the one hand of the schemes of perception, thought, and action which are constitutive of what I call *habitus*, and on the other hand of social structure, and particularly of what I call fields and of groups, notably those we ordinarily call social classes (Bourdieu 1989; emphasis added).

Habitus explains regularity by referring to the social embedding of the actor, the fact that actors are socially formed with relatively stable orientations and ways of acting.³⁰ These are the processes that give shape to assemblages, which in turn help us see social reality in dynamic, continuous and processual terms. The concept of fields of practices, and the type of capital, whether symbolic or economic, that can be drawn upon to lay claim on the ‘stake at stake’ lie at the heart of this discussion.

³⁰ The stability of the habitus is expressed in habits, disposition to act in a certain way and schemes of perception that order individual perspectives along socially-defined lines (see Keyes 2002:240).

In Peyima, the status of being an autochthon is central to the demands that can be made in the justice and security field. It may also be assumed that this claim outweighs those that can be made by a non-Kono or a police officer. In turn, involving a chief in international discussions of how best to formulate and develop SSR activities is close to unthinkable; the languages of authority that these two groups of actors articulate are not immediately interchangeable. Yet, it is SSR policies that speak to and of the state, which are incorporated into programs in order to transform how the justice and security field is organized in Peyima and beyond. In turn, it is inevitable that the logic of stateness that saturates the policies of SSR is shaped by their translation into Sierra Leone, in Freetown as well as in Peyima.

Bourdieu's usefulness in the context of this thesis is his persistent attempt to understand both agent and structure and both discourse and action (Bourdieu 1989; Callewaert 2006). Equally important, like Latour, Bourdieu was preoccupied with transcending some of the key divides in the social sciences, including inside and outside and public and private (Leander 2010b). Complexity, fluidity and instability (Leander 2010a) are three words that must be added to the equation, since "the social world is far too fluid and complex to be captured through the analysis of *a* social field. There is no *one* logic of a field to be uncovered" (Leander 2010a:6).

A further destabilizing factor is that a field never simply *is* - it has to be reproduced continuously in practice, it has to be enacted. It is in this process that the potential for change lies, not least because the capital from various fields might be deployed to change access and control over a stake at stake. In Peyima, lethal accidents, violence, tribal tension, theft and unlicensed mining all came to constitute (potential) points of destabilization of power constellations among the actors of the field, if not the field itself. It is when these events occur that the 'stake at stake' is accentuated. It is at this point in time that assemblages begin to take shape, consisting of actors (criminals, victims, chiefs), things (stolen goods, uniforms) and discourses (explanations, oral manifestations of authority). In turn, it is how these assemblages take shape within the field that must be investigated empirically.

2.4.2 Capital: sources of authority

The concept of how assemblages take shape in the justice and security field constitutes a framework to structure how authority is played out in practice in Peyima. The social field has been described as “a set of objective power relations that impose themselves on all who enter the field and that are irreducible to the intentions of the individual agent or even to the direct *interactions* among the agents” (Bourdieu 1985:724).

The field is a structured space of positions; the relations among these positions are determined by the distribution of different kinds of resources, referred to as forms of capital (Bourdieu 1984:226-256). Paramount and lesser chiefs may draw their authority from being autochthons and secret society members who are embedded in state legislation, while the police as state agents can only draw on their status as state actors. This means that as a rule, the resources available to the former category of actors will always trump those of the latter, because of the hybrid order that chiefs forcefully embody.

The nature of power can be explained by examining the relationship of actors to specific types of capital. The types of capital are: ‘economic capital’ (i.e., material wealth in the form of money, stocks and shares); ‘cultural capital’ (i.e., knowledge, skill and other cultural acquisitions as exemplified by educational or technical qualifications); and ‘symbolic capital’ (i.e., accumulated prestige and honor). However, in practice, these three forms of capital are entwined and provide actors with different capacities to act in a given field (Abrahamsen and Williams 2011:102; Thompson 1991:14).

The concept of field thus denotes a social space within which rules are generated through competition around a ‘stake at stake,’ with numerous, often conflicting, logics coming into play. The logic inherent to what is ‘fair’ and ‘legitimate’ necessarily depend on the position that an actor occupies in the field. Competition could be over how the enforcement of security and justice should be organized and who should benefit from community resources such as farming and diamond mining (i.e., land). The boundaries of the field are defined by who influences the ‘stake at stake’, in terms of physical as well as symbolic forms of power – and violence.

While physical punishment is always a possibility, it is symbolic power that has a considerable ordering and stabilizing effect – power that is not perceived as such, but which is the source of legitimate demands on the services of others (Brubaker 1985). In Peyima, these demands were embedded in languages of authority such as autochthony and constant references to the ‘founding fathers’ of the village. It is the taken-for-granted understanding of the world (*doxa*), the implicit and explicit rules of behavior, and valuation of what confers power onto *someone*, i.e., what counts as ‘capital,’ that define the field (Leander 2010b; Bourdieu 1990:54). Symbolic capital emanating from the status of being an autochthon, secret society or political party member are thus credits that define difference. They are a “power granted” to those who are recognized in a particular way and that allows them to impose recognition on others (Bourdieu 1985; Bourdieu 1989; Bourdieu 1998 [1994]:8).

I have explored above how the hybrid order may be articulated in terms of assemblages that take shape and fall apart in the field, constituting one way of transcending dichotomous thinking between state and society, the ideal and the real. I conclude this chapter by exploring the ways in which assemblages and the field are reproduced, introducing the concepts of rituals as structural and structuring parts of these processes.

2.5 Ritual enactments and projections of the assemblage

The mechanics of rituals determine how assemblages, the field and, by extension, a hybrid order take shape and are reproduced. In analytical terms, when the concept of ritual is applied to the justice and security field, it provides a language to describe what assemblages do and the patterns of practice that they help create in the field.

The concept of the *political* ritual is useful in exploring the way that authority assembles in certain formations and is articulated through the distribution of capital (Bourdieu 1987:103). Bell (1997:128) talks about the political ritual as “a particularly loose genre,” but one that comprises “those ceremonial practices that specifically construct, display and promote the power of political institutions (such as king, state and village elders)....” In other words, public ritual and symbolic displays – inherently political because of the

distribution of authority that they enact – become explicit expressions of symbolic power and violence (see Bourdieu 1990:118).

In Peyima, ritual performances were expressed on numerous occasions. Secret society members would frequently meet in and around Peyima; every time they did so, all non-initiates were forced to go inside their houses. What was on display was the hierarchy that existed within the township between initiates and non-initiates (See Chapter 7).

Ritual performances were also evident at chiefdom elections and court hearings held by the chiefs. In both instances, the ritual practice was not an instrument of the chief's power, but was itself the production, reproduction and negotiation of power relations (Bell 1992:196). Also in both instances, the position of the chief, the way that he spoke to, and was spoken to by those present demonstrated his formal position at the top of the Chiefdom hierarchy.

The structural effects of the field require reproduction in practice. This is all the more the case in Peyima where few decisions over land disputes and crimes committed within the township are recorded. Oral documentation is therefore vital, and requires the continuous staging of authority in order to repeat and reinforce the rules of the game and hierarchies of power. Both the ritual performances of secret society members and the court hearing during the case of diamond theft mentioned above are examples thereof (See Chapters 7 and 8). Such continuous staging of authority underscores the fact that the claim of authority is an inherently fragile social achievement that no society may take for granted.³¹

Historically, demonstrations of political power through ritualized performances and symbolic displays of authority in Sierra Leone are tied to languages of autochthony, with underlying magico-religious references to the ancestors who established the settlement (town and Chiefdom), as well as to tribal identity that includes a strong territorial component (Fanthorpe 2001). It was the opportunity to articulate these symbolic languages of authority that came to define the right to land for farming and mining.

The exploration of assemblages along political ritual lines is not meant to indicate that participants in these practices see the ritual act as the group's re-formulation of itself and

³¹ This follows the basic understanding of Rouverroy van Nieuwaal (1996:55), in discussing state-chief relations, that no societies are "static, unchanging units, but are in a constant process of development."

the straightforward act of communicating and enacting its traditional values. Participants in political ritual acts are aware that “ritual activities are themselves the very production and negotiation of power relations” (Bell 1992:196). This is an analytical approach that demonstrates the inherent dynamism of the assemblage and allows us to explore strategies that individual actors put into place to communicate their status and manage the relations (and networks) of power that they are part of.

The exhibition of symbols, including those of a discursive nature, and the monotonous reiteration of rhetoric about origin (see Abélès 1986:395), family relations and tribal identity, in combination with the irregular presence of ‘uniformed personnel,’ gives a good indication of who makes order and how the authority to do so is distributed. These symbolic acts provide insight into the reproduction of the field and the forms of symbolic capital that are being drawn upon. The authority to enforce a particular order is that which is being ‘reproduced through ritualized, everyday confirmations’, which can be spectacular and public or secret and menacing (Hansen and Stepputat 2005:7). Ritual practices and symbolic representations thus become central to the analysis of how assemblages are enacted and how hybridity is reproduced.

2.6 Conclusion

The underlying assumption of most state-building is that the state – a particular and historical entity – is or has become ‘weak’ and ‘fragile’. This implies that the state must take it upon itself to act according to the imagery and shape of a ‘unified’ actor that is both willing and able to hold a monopoly of violence over a given territory and serve the people who live within its borders. The chapter has critiqued this concept of state, which underlies most SSR processes, and suggests instead that authority should be conceptualized as a hybrid order of assemblages, articulating languages of both ‘stateness’ and ‘public authority’.

The first step in conceptualizing hybridity is to de-stabilize the ahistorical and apolitical undercurrents that sustain the notion of the unitary state. To do so, I take my point of departure in empirically-founded literature and disaggregate the concept of the state into a

multitude of discrete practices in the everyday life of ordinary people. From this, it becomes evident that the state encompasses both a system of tangible institutions and an idea of what it is or ought to be (omnipotent and omnipresent). Thus, we may see the political manifestation of the state as both illusory and as a set of concrete institutions; distant and impersonal, while also localized and personified.

Hansen and Stepputat (2001:5) emphasize that the modern state is in a “continuous process of construction” and that this process takes place through “globalized registers of governance and authority,” which they refer to as ‘languages of stateness’. I propose an adjustment of their approach, introducing the additional concept of ‘languages of public authority.’ This supports my analytical departure from a notion of authority as inherently bound to ‘the state’ or ‘the stateness’ of a particular actor to a notion that takes more seriously the multitude of sources from which authority emanates. In doing so, I adjust the languages that Hansen and Stepputat propose – symbols, monopoly of violence – and add new ones – autochthony and boundary-making.

This approach captures more accurately the syncretism and hybridity of order enforcement in Peyima than state-centric approaches do. It is the productive tension between the languages that constitutes the hybrid order. However, the languages do not constitute separate entities, the distinction between state and society, the ideal and the real. They are articulated simultaneously, and mutually constitutive, reflecting the fact that authority always already emanates from multiple sources, and thus constitutes a hybrid order.

I conceptualize this hybrid condition by combining Latour’s assemblage and Bourdieu’s field, locating justice and security assemblages within a justice and security field. Thinking in terms of assemblages brings dynamism to the process of order enforcement by demonstrating the unexpected and unpredictable ways in which it often unfolds. At the same time, ‘objective structures’ exist independent of the consciousness and will of agents, giving shape to how people, things and discourse come together as assemblages. Bourdieu’s concept of field provides useful analytical categories for clarifying the resources that shape the assemblages, i.e., the different species of capital that are available in the field. As such, I combine the unpredictability of the assemblage with the structuring effect of the field. This makes it possible to say something about how order is constituted,

but not precisely what the order looks like in practice, something that is best explored by using a variety of qualitative data collection techniques.

In Chapter 2, I discuss how the concepts of hybridity, assemblages and field have been operationalized and subjected to my empirical research. I also present the methods that I used to collect data, including a brief presentation of the sites in which I carried out my fieldwork.

3 To study security sector reform in Sierra Leone – reflections on methodology and methods

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents methodological reflections on how I approached the study of justice and security assemblages and the foundational hybrid order in Sierra Leone. The theme of the study, and the analytical framework developed to address it, calls for a research methodology that combines a range of different types of data which help to analyze the mutually constitutive relations of local, national and international political dynamics, as well as the relationship between discursive representations and practices in local settings. The study thus reflects an epistemological movement within sociology and anthropology away from ideas of holistic, ‘integrative’ ethnography (Baszanger and Dodier 2005) based on studies of ‘complete’ cultural communities.

First, the chapter provides insight into how the methodological principles of location-work, situational analysis and multi-sited ethnography were combined to study what I refer to as justice and security assemblages within the framework of extended case studies. Following particular cases of crime enabled me to conceptualize the exploration of specific situations, and how the cases moved through time and space. This meant exploring specific cases as they occurred and who and what became involved in resolving them how and where. These methodological considerations are followed by a short presentation of the different sites in which I carried out the fieldwork, including Peyima (the village), Tombodu (the chiefdom), Koidu (the district), Freetown (the capital) and London (the international).

The chapter then explores how I accessed the field in Peyima, the village where I carried out fieldwork in 2008-2009 and Freetown, where I had worked prior to beginning my PhD fieldwork. I then consider the concrete methods that I used, interviews, collection of texts and observations, as well as how informants were selected. Finally, the chapter reflects on the researcher’s position and the way in which different social locations came into play during the course of the fieldwork. My being a white Danish middle-class man in my 30s with no particular religious conviction and a student evidently influenced the type of data that I was able to collect. While my identity does not disqualify my data, it certainly shapes what I collected and how I collected it.

3.2 Studying security and justice assemblages

This study centers on understanding how justice and security are enforced in Peyima, Kamara Chiefdom and Kono District, and interlinks processes in the locality with policy processes and practices in the national and international domains. I show how SSR has reproduced a hybrid order, and not established the state-centered system as envisioned through internationally-led state-building. I do this by tracing the associations between the different components that constitute justice and security assemblages (cf. Latour 2007:7). Following this line of thinking allows me to capture the unpredictability of lived life. It helps me not to default to a position of externality, thinking that if only I rise high enough above lived life I will obtain a panoramic view of social phenomena's regularity, order and logic. In square terms, how assemblages take shape cannot be explained by some general fact – or structure – from which it descends. This does not, however, mean that there are no structuring effects that work upon how assemblages take shape.

This approach requires a combination of various components of analysis, including ethnographic fieldwork and a study of the wider political and historical context in which the locality under scrutiny is positioned. Unlike Latour, I operate with a concept of a field that has a structuring effect upon how assemblages of actors, things and discourse are established. This approach draws on Bourdieu's (1988:782) attempt to integrate "into a single model the analysis of the experience of social agents and the analysis of the objective structures that make this experience possible."

Furthermore, exploring how assemblages form in the justice and security field has required an exploration of how SSR emerged and developed in part from international experiences in Sierra Leone and from experiences elsewhere in Africa and beyond. Simply put, a focus on the productive effects of internationally-driven SSR programming in Sierra Leone and the hybrid order through which it is translated into a locality such as Peyima requires an analytical reach beyond the local.

Although rural localities may have spatial boundaries in people's minds and on maps produced by the state – and Peyima is no exception – they cannot be regarded in the

classical anthropological sense as ‘bounded cultural wholes’ or as ‘holistic legal systems’ (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:1-5). Indeed, this is the fundamental premise of foundational hybridity: unpolluted essence does not exist and is therefore not there to be revealed (see Czarniawska 2007:14). This, in turn, does not mean that regularities, patterns and ways of doing things do not exist. International, national and local institutions, officers, advisers, ideas, aspirations, laws, material resources, policies, program and evaluation documents shape and sustain, produce and tear down components of justice and security assemblages as they amass and as they fall apart.

3.3 Location-work, situational analysis and multi-sited ethnography

A structuring principle of my fieldwork that allowed me to study justice and security assemblages was to ‘follow’ the conflict, the idea, the case, the person. This allowed me to conceptualize the exploration of a specific situation or event, and how it assembled and disassembled in different localities, moving through time and space. I explored cases of theft and acts of violence in Peyima and Kamara Chieftdom, and analyzed who and what became involved, how and where. The criminal acts always already had the potential to instigate authoritative acts to resolve a matter – be they local or extra-local. They were analyzed as situations that articulated the interests and strategies of actors, disclosing processes which were otherwise hidden or impossible to examine, because they did not happen. Simply put, assemblages would not take form if a crime did not occur.

3.3.1 Location-work

Gupta and Ferguson (1997) suggest the concept of ‘location-work’ to discuss ‘the field’ and ‘fieldwork’ – “it is *in* the field that the actual *production* of accounts can be studied” (Czarniawska 2007:9). They argue for working “with an attentiveness to social, cultural, and political *location*” and emphasize the need to self-consciously shift and realign one’s own location “while building epistemological and political links with other locations” (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:5).

The use of 'location' is not to be conflated with a methodological return to studying locally-bounded communities. Location-work is the analysis of how different actors, including the researcher, are located and positioned in the field – including the contradictions and ambivalence of changing positions in different contexts. Gupta and Ferguson suggest a focus on “*shifting locations* rather than *bounded fields*” (ibid.:38). This point reflects precisely the multi-dimensionality – the multi-sitedness – of location in different contexts. Location-work is thus a particular aspect of fieldwork that focuses analytical attention on how social relations and modes of differentiation cluster together and are recognized and/or mobilized.

Like Gupta and Ferguson, Haraway requires critical, mobile positioning to change the focus of the researcher and to research positions in reflexive and self-critical ways, in relation to both production and analysis of data. This aspect of location-work is methodological in nature in the sense that it relates to how research is produced and how a researcher produces knowledge (Guba and Lincoln 2005). Similarly, location-work relates to analyzing how informants position themselves and each other. Location-work thus also implies the act of analyzing the politics of location, i.e., the informants' simultaneous 'situatedness' and positionings in social spaces.

This is an analytical strategy with a double focus on both the social locations and positions of the researchers and informants. It thereby turns our attention to the dynamics of positioning in which all social actors are embedded. In sum, just as I adopted a particular position qua my identity, a chief, a Temne, a young man or a police officer occupied different positions in the justice and security field.

Thus, epistemologically, knowledge is always historically- and socially-mediated and constructed. Meaning and truth are temporary products of ongoing struggles and negotiations for stabilizing visions and perceptions of the social world – and of what counts as legitimate knowledge and research (Guba and Lincoln 2005; Laclau and Mouffe 1985). There is no definite and objective truth to which the researcher has privileged access through means of objective procedures, no “well-polished Cartesian mirror of the mind” (Smith and Hodkinson 2005:916).

“With all respect to various authorities who say otherwise” Czarniawska (2007:18) notes, “only beings with consciousness are able to construct knowledge and have opinions; ‘subjectivity’ is therefore the necessary requirement for any kind of knowing.” In other words, I do not aim to establish a model that includes a phenomenological understanding of the field or an underlying objective truth. My goal is to offer a theoretically-informed and qualified analysis that acknowledges subjective experience. It is only through these subjective experiences that a fuller understanding of practices will be captured.

3.3.2 Situational analysis

In my study of justice and security assemblages, I found it useful to capture them through ‘situational analyses’ (Gluckman 1961; van Velsen 1978; Mitchell 1983). This approach helped shed light on the practices and maneuvers of actors in a specific situation by relating them to the structural position they occupy in social fields (Lund 1998:40), be they villagers who live and work in Peyima or international advisers who spend a period of time in Sierra Leone.

A situational analysis begins with a specific occurrence and links it to contemporary and historical events in order to understand the significance and complexity of the situation (ibid.:41). This implies relating the situation to broader dynamics of the field that shape the possibility of an assemblage to emerge (and to fall apart). The perceived criminal act – the event itself – was an assemblage that triggered other assemblages to form in the justice and security field. This necessitated following cases around, from when an act of theft occurred, for instance, to when meetings were held at chiefdom level and the SLP were involved (See Chapters 7 and 8).

The situation is temporarily-staged and spatially-bound, and although it is ‘an occurrence out of the ordinary’, it is seen to reflect ‘everyday practices’ with respect to how people act when crimes are committed. Such ‘situations’ lie at the foundation of the data collected for this dissertation, as they gave me vital insight into the process whereby crimes are dealt with and resolved, the issues that are at stake in such cases, how positions of authority are represented and what official discourses are at work (Alvesson 1996:50). Such insights

emerge from paying attention to a variety of factors, including spatial location of the actors who constitute the event, conveying relations of power and authority, organization of the meeting site, timing of the event, display of material symbols (flag, dress, furniture, etc.), concrete actions, gestures and postures and speech acts (including official speeches, small talk and gossip among participants).

3.3.3 Multi-sited ethnography

The fact that assemblages are variously sourced and form in unpredictable ways and that data to analyze them come from various physical places in time and space and in different locations of the justice and security field may be articulated by using Marcus's (1995) concept of multi-sited ethnography. In the context of this dissertation, multi-sitedness means following actors, things and discourses – or actants, humans and non-humans (Latour 1993) – temporally and spatially as they assemble, disassemble and re-assemble in the justice and security field, both as crimes and as discourses that describe or are meant to guide practice (various SSR policies, for instance). In other words, to paraphrase Czarniawska (2007:17), there is a need to see my fieldwork as a mobile ethnography.

A major critique of multi-sited ethnography is that some of the in-depth understanding that comes from staying put in the same place is lost. First, however, collecting data in different locales was necessary because the focus of this study is on how SSR as a policy concept emerged and reproduced a hybrid order in Sierra Leone. Second, the different spaces and places in which fieldwork was carried out provided useful perspectives on the different components of justice and security assemblages. Third, the multi-sited approach allowed me to cross-check gathered data, and finally, the approach helped me honor the fact that foundational hybrid orders cannot be explored if the focus is limited to one site alone.

Components of international projects and advisers, police officers and chiefs may assemble in a locality as the product of numerous processes that are specific to a particular event. Assemblages are not merely the structural effect of field dynamics, which is why the process of assembling is never entirely predictable. However, structuring local and extra-local constitutive effects of the field come into play. Some actors, things and discourses

were situated in the ‘field site’ of Peyima, others in Tombodu, Koidu and farther afield in Freetown and beyond. This meant that the field of research extended across time and space and that a narrow focus on one location alone – Peyima – would have limited the scope of the study of how SSR supported the reproduction of foundational hybridity.

To summarize, a key question to ask when deploying a multi-sited approach is where the site or the field is. Exploring how SSR has reproduced a hybrid order is, in fact, an exploration of SSR assemblages and their journey through time and space where it engages a myriad of localities (London, Freetown, Koidu, the headquarter town of Kono District, Tombodu and Peyima). While SSR does have a shaping effect with respect to the localities it is translated into, it is at the same time incorporated into and shaped by how authority is distributed within them, specifically, the justice and security field.

In the following sections I present the localities that were included in my study. The way that SSR policy travels, becomes part of and detached from individual assemblages in London as well as Peyima, means that they never are (or were) free-floating or de-territorialized (i.e., fetishes or abstractions) and never become part of and detached from an assemblage in entirely similar ways. Thus, SSR assemblages emerge in part as the product of field dynamics, and are appropriated and translated in physical space and different settings, even if those setting are temporary. This is to say that SSR components are articulated at different points, including in policy discourse and program designs and simultaneously overtaken and shaped by international advisers, police officers, chiefs and community policing groups.

3.3.3.1 Peyima – the village



View of the main street in Peyima and Bafi River.

Peyima is a small town in Kamara Chiefdom, Kono District.³² It lies on the banks of Bafi river, has around 2500 inhabitants and is known for its diamond deposits. While fairly close to the largest town in the district, Koidu, it is relatively inaccessible, particularly during the rainy season when the path through a forested area that leads to the town is flooded. Peyima's main authorities are town chief Gborie and a group of elders; police come to the township only if summoned.

Due the glut of workers who have migrated to western Kono in search of quick diamond riches, the demography of Peyima reflects the tribal composition of Sierra Leone, with the most numerous tribal groups being the Temne, Mende, Limba, Kuranko, Mandingo and Konos. The economy has been focused primarily on alluvial mining, a labor-intensive process in which gravel is dug and sifted, i.e., 'washed' for gems. During the mining season, which in Peyima starts after Christmas, diggers spend their days exposing, sifting and washing gravel under the watchful eye of a gang foreman. He, in turn, represents an investor, who may also hold the right, given by the town chief, to exploit the land. Alternatively, the investor may collaborate with someone in town that does have that right, and may be based elsewhere. Commonly, the diggers are male, poor – but not always young.

Peyima, like other diamond-rich towns, was occupied by the RUF during the civil war and became a rebel base from around 1996 until the early 2000s. During this period, most of the town's population fled to Guinea or Freetown. Those who stayed behind were forced to work with and for the RUF fighters, pointing out where there were diamond deposits and doing the actual mining. People began to return to the destroyed town after the war officially came to an end in 2002.

Kono – and with it Peyima – was originally chosen as the location of my fieldwork because the conflict hit particularly hard in the district, and because of its importance as a diamond rich area (Reno 1995). I was interested in exploring what SSR, which had been

³² The Kono as an ethnic group are northern-based and Mande-speaking, and live in an area of about 2,178 square miles in Kono District of the Eastern Province of Sierra Leone. The Mende live to the south and the Kuranko live to the north. The eastern and western boundaries of the Kono area are marked by the Kissy and Temne ethnic group groups, respectively. At the time of the 1974 government census there were approximately 13,000 Kono living in the District; according to Thomas (1983), the total population in the District is 328,930 (a census in 2004 recorded a population of 335,401) (GOSL 2004b:3).

hailed as a great success by many of those involved, might look like in such a setting.³³ As it turned out, the war did not take center stage during my fieldwork, while mining, the most important source of income generation in Peyima, ended up doing so. During my time in Peyima and Kamara Chiefdom, people spoke about the golden days of the 1970s and 1980s, when diamonds were plentiful, before the horrific events during the decade-long war, when villagers had to choose between saving their own lives and those of their children.

At the same time, it was the present that was of interest to me, i.e., what making order in a small town such as Peyima meant and who was involved in doing so. Diamonds were scarce when I arrived in Kono, and Peyima's inhabitants were preoccupied with making ends meet from day to day. I decided to pay attention to what people told me rather than steer the conversation to topics of the past. You have 'to follow the actors themselves', Latour (2007:12) notes, learn what their collective existence has become for them, and so I did.

The initial purpose of my study was quite squarely to explore how SSR was appropriated and translated into a locale where the state was not immediately present to make order; Peyima seemed like a good place to do so.³⁴ Its proximity to a police post in the chiefdom headquarter town of Tombodu nine kilometers away and its relative inaccessibility meant that the police was not immediately present, but could be summoned. Its proximity to Koidu also allowed me to split my time between Peyima, Tombodu and Koidu, in order to pursue a multi-sited approach. (For instance, a crime committed in Peyima may initially become a matter for the police in Tombodu, the headquarter town of Kamara Chiefdom, then taken up by the paramount chief, and only after that, sent to police headquarters in Motema division).

Peyima was suitable for my fieldwork for other reasons. Because its mining activity attracts tribes from across the country, its town authorities had to deal with inter-tribal

³³ In addition, one of my first encounters with a person from Sierra Leone was with a man from Kono, Patrick Tongu, who was a course participant at the Kofi Anna International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Accra, Ghana, where I worked in 2005.

³⁴ I paid visits to and discussed my research in several other chiefdoms, including Nimikoro, Nimyama and Sandor.

tension. Furthermore, crimes involving diamond theft were likely to occur, which provided insight into which authorities became involved and how, when such cases arose, and how hybrid orders were made explicit.









Different steps of the alluvial mining process.

3.3.3.2 Tombodu – the chiefdom headquarter town

As Kamara Chiefdom's headquarter town, Tombodu was also central to my fieldwork. The paramount chief is officially based here, the town's police post is located in the center of the town, as is the Local Policing Partnership Board Chairman. If ever the police were called to Peyima, one of the two officers manning the post in Tombodu would respond.

3.3.3.3 Koidu/Sefadu, its surroundings and Motema police headquarters – the district

Approximately 20 kilometers away, Koidu/Sefadu was important as the headquarter town and economic center of the district. Eastern Kono depends primarily on agriculture for income generation. Western Kono, however, has been dominated by mining in the areas around Koidu, Yengema, and Sefadu since the early 1930s when British surveyors discovered gem deposits. Mining concessions were initially owned and operated by the British, then by several companies that included both British and Sierra Leonean managers (TRC 2004:7-18).

From 1988 and onwards, mining concessions were government-owned, and leased by several companies, notably Branch Energy Limited, currently named Koidu Holdings Limited (TRC 2004:24-25; Keen 2005:151-152). A number of studies have explored the impact of mining on Kono, how it has fundamentally shaped social and political life, and its general importance to Sierra Leone's economy (Conteh 1979, Rosen 1973, Reno 1995). Numerous studies have analyzed the region's strategic importance during the war (Keen 2005, Peters 2006). Kono remains an economic center in Sierra Leone, even if deposits are becoming more scarce and difficult to access, and therefore continues to be fought over by the country's two primary political parties, the All Peoples Congress (APC) and the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP).

Western Kono shows the scars of conflict and poverty: abandoned houses are now overgrown with grass and other vegetation. Mining has made its undeniable, visible impact, and has turned parts of rural Kono into a moonscape dotted by abandoned mining pits inundated by exposed underground waterways. Tropical forest is now barren and often fails to return to the greenery typical of this part of the world. Instead, these areas are caught up in their own seasonal cycle, alternating between muddy washes and packed red clay or dust.

Koidu/Sefadu town is the place where most diamond dealers are based, including those trading small, rough diamonds that have been dug without a license. As the district headquarter town, it is also where the District Council is located, as well as Tankoro police station, a division covering eastern Kono and Koidu town. However, Peyima falls under Motema police division, and while Koidu was my base away from Peyima, Motema was a central location with respect to accessing the police hierarchy, particularly the Local Unit Commander, and gaining access to and participating in meetings of the Local Policing Partnership Board of the division.

3.3.3.4 Freetown – the capital

While I did not spend much time in Freetown during the fieldwork, it was a crucial site for data collection, in particular with respect to written material and interviews. As the center

of the state system, it is where most government agencies and bi-lateral and multi-lateral donor agencies are located. Furthermore, I also met with a number of key security sector actors in Freetown, both during my fieldwork and on previous projects (Albrecht and Jackson 2009; Albrecht and Jackson 2010; Jackson and Albrecht 2011).

Richards (1996:31; cf. Peters 2006) speaks of “a long history of violent opposition between ‘bush’ (the forest) and ‘town’ (established patrimonial authority linked to overseas trade).” It is a tension that harkens back to colonial rule and the administrative distinction between Colony (Freetown) and Protectorate (rural Sierra Leone), the latter of which was governed indirectly (Brownlie 1979; Wylie 1969). While chiefs thus became integral to governing the countryside of Sierra Leone, this was not the case in the capital and the broader Western Area.

This circumstance accentuated the importance of conducting research outside Freetown. I worked on the assumption that the rule under chiefs and how they appropriated SSR components would be crucial to how the justice and security field was organized.

3.3.3.5 London – the international

I use London as a common denominator for the international level, but interviews were also conducted elsewhere, including Bordeaux (France), Cheshire and Birmingham in England. While no observations relevant to this dissertation were made in these locations, I spent a considerable amount of time – before and after my PhD research – with numerous people in the UK who had been important to how SSR was approached in Sierra Leone. The capital of Sierra Leone’s former colonial master, London as a site for data collection was crucial, not least with respect policy-making processes around SSR.

3.4 Extended case studies

The situational analysis of how assemblages take form and fall apart in different sites was viewed as constitutive of particular extended case studies,³⁵ because assemblages in the justice and security field extend beyond the particular locality and event (Gluckman 1961; Epstein 1967; van Velsen 1978; Mitchell 1983). An extended case study consists of a detailed examination of a sequence of events over a rather long period of time where the same actors are involved and in which their social positions are specified (Mitchell, 1983).

As such, it was a useful method in my research because it takes into account how actors, discourses and things are governed by different and sometimes conflicting norms and usages. It emphasizes the process aspect of a particular social phenomenon and traces the events in which the same set of main actors are involved (Mitchell 1983:194). The focus in the extended case study on process allows for a time-oriented perspective on both continuity and ruptures in ongoing events (Moore 1987).

In this sense, the extended case study allows the analysis to go beyond the immediate issue of order enforcement to de-construct larger processes of power that are integral to field dynamics and thus affect how assemblages take form. In other words, the immediate issue might appear to be a criminal act, but a thorough analysis of actors, actions and claims made reveals how social processes evolve. Only by combining observations of how a case of theft is dealt with, for instance, and subsequent discussions with the individuals involved, is it possible to reach a comprehensive understanding of precisely how order is made in a concrete situation.

A case study focuses on a particular place and specific events, but these places are neither bounded nor isolated (Gupta and Ferguson 1997). Peyima, Tombodu, Freetown, and London are all connected by political and productive processes, events, times, places, people and things. In this way, a case study is simultaneously specific and also related to larger processes (Hammar 2007:53) and multiple sites. This does not mean that cases are necessarily representative or generalizable. Rather, they are to be perceived as what Moore

³⁵ The Manchester school was the first to conceptualize the 'extended case-study' as 'extending out' from the field (see Burawoy, 1998).

(1987) calls a 'diagnostic event', in that they reflect the larger processes under investigation and reveal the tensions and dynamics of social change.

I chose to follow crimes that occurred in Peyima and Kamara Chiefdom. Since few cases are recorded in this local justice and security system, being present, waiting for 'something' to happen and observing how people reacted to a criminal act was important. To understand normal types of crime, two research assistants carried out a survey among 90 respondents in Kamara Chiefdom, Nimikoro Chiefdom and Nimiyama Chiefdom. The answers to the survey resulted in a basic inventory of 'threats to security', and included issues such as 'abusive language' ('threatening remarks'), theft of poultry, palm oil and diamonds, acts of physical violence (fighting and rape) and disagreements over land demarcations.³⁶

I chose the cases explored in this dissertation because they were rich in detail, included a number of events and had the potential to constitute in-depth narratives of how various types of authority came into play to constitute a hybrid order and its reproduction. These cases were studied as diagnostic, rather than for the ability to generalize from them.

This was an inductive process, pursuing a strategy of grounded theory where the notion of 'foundational hybridity', for instance, was derived from data (see Charmaz 2005; Thomas and James 2006). While I did not have a clear theoretical framework that I went out to 'test' in the field, I did have a clear sense of the area that I wanted to explore, at least on a rudimentary conceptual level that changed fundamentally as the project progressed: how non-state actors create order in rural Sierra Leone. The theoretical reflections of this

³⁶ In addition, for the project regarding SSR in Sierra Leone that I conducted in 2007-2009, a survey of 250 respondents was carried out, indicating listing three broad categories of crimes: 1. *Social violence, including sexual violence*: rape, gendered violence, street violence, drug taking, youth unemployment, armed theft, unlawful allocation of land, town mining, chiefs' misallocation of land; 2. *'Classic' security threats*: inadequate coverage of security forces, too few SLP night patrols, bribery of security forces, lack of screening of security personnel, use of ex-combatants as security personnel, poor judicial system, inadequate conditions of service for security personnel; 3. *Wider environmental threats from outside the community*: predominance of small arms and smuggling, international smuggling, criminal activity related to drugs, smuggling of people, especially children) (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:192). Primary information was collected from 250 respondents through questionnaires, group discussions and focus group interviews. The survey gathered information about the following issues: 1. The visibility of the armed forces and the SLP; 2. The degree to which changes relating to the security system transformation process have been accepted by the local population; 3. The degree to which the armed forces are accepted by the population; 4. The perceived impact of security SSR; 5. Knowledge of SSR processes.

dissertation, including that the ‘non-state’ concept does not help us understand how authority is articulated, developed from this point of departure.

There is, of course, a danger in selecting some cases over others. Walton (1992) argues that a duality is inherent in the use of the term ‘case’. Cases imply particularity. They are situational and provide specific, limited views of social life. At the same time, cases are presented under the pretense of doing something more, of implying that something general is being said from the particular (ibid.:121). This claim to generalizability, Nuijten suggests, makes it important to elaborate the background upon which cases are presented and to make conscious theoretical reflections on the way we present the cases. For example, it is important to reflect on whether a case is intended to convey how conflicts are normally settled or whether the case is chosen to trace how different, even diverging, elements may be decisive in the resolution of a conflict (Nuijten 1998:26-7).

In this research, I use the extended case study approach in both senses, made up of triangulated data. These case studies were analyzed in relation to the greater number of less detailed cases that were collected through conversations, observations and by research assistance.

3.5 Accessing the field

3.5.1 Peyima

Accessing reliable data on how order is enforced in a place such as Peyima is a challenge, if only because life in a small rural town in Sierra Leone is so radically different from living in places such as Freetown, London or Copenhagen. Furthermore, a lot is at stake when a crime is committed, both for the criminal and for the victim. Losing a valuable stone – perhaps the only one found for several mining seasons – or the death of someone are issues that need to be handled with sensitivity. Naturally, it took time for people to open up to a stranger and engage in conversations on these issues. Moreover, white people who come to Kono commonly are investors, and therefore are seen to equate with access to much needed cash. Therefore, I spent quite a lot of time telling people both inside and

outside Peyima why I had come to ask questions, and talking to them about my research (without taking out my recorder).

Before arriving in Kono District, I had met Patrick Tongu, the Regional Director of a national non-governmental organization called the National Movement for Justice and Democracy. Patrick was an acquaintance rather than an informant, but he helped me get settled in Kono, and eventually I stayed in his compound on the outskirts of Koidu whenever I was in town. Most importantly, one of his employees, Fasalie Marah, helped me get around for the first period of my fieldwork.

Fasalie had previously been in the army and had worked in the mining industry buying and selling stones for The Red Lion, one of Koidu's many diamond offices. He had been unemployed for a while, however, and Patrick had taken him in (he and Patrick were both from Sewafe, Nimiya Chiefdom). As a native of Kono, and given his general knowledge of the district, his assistance was crucial and ended up being quite formative for the way that my fieldwork developed. He was an important source of information about how mining works in Kono, how people steal stones from one another and secret society practices, and introduced me to the informal diamond market and diamond dealers.

My first contact with people from Peyima came one day when Fasalie took me to visit Motema police headquarters to speak to the Local Unit Commander. In his office sat Isaac, the town's Local Policing Partnership Board member at that time. He knew Fasalie, who had mined in Peyima and had built one of the markets in the town. I was introduced and we agreed that I could talk to them about how they provided security for the town.

A few days later, I came to Peyima for the first time and encountered an extremely formal affair organized for me. Isaac had gathered 20 people for a meeting; after he made a long speech about the importance of keeping the peace in town, I was able to talk briefly with people attending the meeting about why I had come to Kono. I returned over the next couple of weeks and slowly started to build relationships. I was careful to emphasize my identity. I was white, and kids were yelling 'white man' after me; some broke out in tears when they saw me. (Apart from white people looking different, children in Peyima are told

that the devil is white). Clearly, I was not going to change that part of my identity. Kids yelling and staring at me would be part of my existence in Peyima until the day I left.

However, being a student means that you are poor in Sierra Leone, and I was able to convince people that I had not come to invest in mining, even though they knew that relatively speaking, I had more money than most of them. Formally, I was considered a student, and therefore without money, an identity that they were more or less willing to accept.

Within the next couple of weeks, I spoke to Isaac about staying in Peyima overnight, and I was introduced to Jimmy Sadr, one of the town authorities, a descendant of chiefs (but not currently the chief). I was allowed to stay in a small house next to his. I would spend more and more days in Peyima, returning to Koidu ever so often to re-boot. It was on the veranda of this house that I spent most evenings with people from the town, drinking palm wine ('pojo', an alcoholic drink from palm trees considered a gift 'from god to man'), smoking cheap cigarettes, talking about events that had occurred during the day, in the mines, in town, in Freetown and the world outside. In the morning I would sit with people and drink instant coffee with powdered milk before going to see someone in town, in the mining areas or just hanging out in my house, digesting what I had experienced.

3.5.2 Freetown and beyond

Unlike Kono District, which I had never visited prior to beginning my PhD, I had been to Freetown and the Western Area on many occasions in different capacities. Working for the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Accra and for International Alert, a London-based non-governmental organization, I had coordinated and headed relatively large policy research projects related to SSR in Sierra Leone (Albrecht and Malan 2006; Albrecht and Jackson 2009; Albrecht 2010; Albrecht and Jackson 2010; Jackson and Albrecht 2011). The focus, structure and purpose of these studies were state-centric, the approach that I try to break with in this dissertation. This PhD deliberately steps away from discussing the 'successes' and 'failures' of SSR as a state-building

exercise, and explores how order is established in its own right, and the role, if any, that SSR came to play in establishing, consolidating or reproducing that order.

The projects that I had previously been involved in dealt with how and under what conditions UK-financed SSR as a set of internationally-driven policies and programs were implemented in Sierra Leone. Having carried out these studies meant that I had good networks among the main players in Sierra Leone's security sector and among the international advisers who had been involved in the country's SSR process. I had established a working group for the aforementioned policy project, including the Permanent Secretary to the President, Chief of Defense Staff, the Inspector-General of Police and the National Security Coordinator. These people were easily accessible, spoke relatively freely with me about my project and were helpful when my PhD fieldwork occurred.

The fact that I had been in a position to contact DFID when I began to canvas the key people in Sierra Leone's security sector – and the fact that DFID is a primary donor of SSR programming – meant that my initial access to key security actors was relatively easy. After all, I had ended up telling their story in my previous engagement in Sierra Leone, and they were happy to tell their part of it and keen to project their version of what SSR was and their role in making it a success. Switching my identity from a 'practitioner' to an 'academic' did not matter much in terms of access, and I was able to have the same conversations with people as I did prior to my PhD research: relationships had already been established.

3.6 Engaging and leaving the field

A number of ethical concerns should be taken into account when conducting a research project that addresses how people live, particularly in settings where financial gain and status are at stake and where people are poor. These concerns include how to enter a new field setting, how to develop relationships with people, how to be attentive to the situation, knowing when to step back, how to listen and how to leave in such a way that other

researchers may find receptive communities (Bernard, 1995; DeWalt and DeWalt, 2002: 195-209).

First, the safety of people who participated in this study was crucial. I often spoke to people in private, sitting on a huge rock on a hill above the town, during the day at my house when most people were working, in the pojo corner and in the mining areas. Clearly, speaking to people about how to steal diamonds, trick or overpower local or extra-local authorities and about secret society matters (which is strictly forbidden) were sensitive matters.

In addition, people inevitably gossip about one another, which is an effective way of obtaining information.³⁷ A golden rule is not to 'gossip back' or disclose information about other community members that could compromise confidentiality (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2002). However 'talking about people', say, talking about someone who wants to challenge the town chief or a person's overt use of physical or symbolic force clearly requires a reaction and engagement so as not to appear distant and ignorant. A lot of the men around my age were frustrated by the lack of job opportunities, for instance, and often blamed the chief and elders for this.

Generally speaking, I maintained the principle of informed consent by being clear about why I was in Peyima. That said, I did, of course, do what I could to get people to tell me about the sensitive issues that I was in Kono to explore. In the beginning of such conversations I would always explicitly ask if it was okay if I turn on my recorder. In the latter part of my fieldwork, I was comfortable enough in my relationships with townspeople that I often turned on my recorder during my evening conversations with people without asking first. I simply assumed that it was okay.

While I stayed with one family in Peyima, I was careful to entertain good relations with a variety of people. I came as close as I could to becoming friends with men of my own age, some of whom were struggling to make ends meet in a resource-scarce environment. These

³⁷ Often it seems clear that what is said during an interview which has been scheduled beforehand, recorded and written down will be used as information. It can seem less obvious that information acquired during informal discussions and participant observation also contribute to the data collected for the analysis (DeWalt and DeWalt 2002:198).

included Taylor Kondeh and Ibrahim ‘Kalilu’ Kamara, both of whom I present in greater detail in later chapters. Furthermore, during the mining season after Christmas, I made it a habit to meet with miners, usually in a bar, and as I got to know people from Peyima well, they would come to the place I stayed in Koidu where we could discuss sensitive issues.

It was also evident that I was going to leave Peyima eventually – and given that it is a mining town with a history of considerable finds, the townspeople were used to ‘white people’ coming and going. They accepted that I was a student, but they also told me that they hoped that I would come back and invest in mining activities. While I did get attached to people in Peyima, I never went ‘native’; I was always clear about the fact that I would be there only for a short period of time and then go home (Bernard 1995).

3.7 Research assistance and languages in the field

The use of capable research assistants was important for this study. During the first period of fieldwork, I realized that it would be useful to have ‘insider assistance’ from people who knew whom to address in order to obtain the right kind of information and how to get in touch with people. Furthermore, the information that people would give to a white man was likely to be different from the information they would give to a black woman from Kono, who spoke the local languages, knew her way around and had done research for other organizations in the past. What I found particularly useful was to have research assistance to locate and record interesting cases in Kamara Chiefdom outside Peyima. This gave me a deeper insight into the nature of cases that arose that I was not privy to and the opportunity to follow-up on events that might be of interest.

Because I am not fluent in Kono, interpretation was also an issue. Although most people speak Krio, old people sometimes do not, and at times it was vital to have assistance in this regard. In the early stages of my fieldwork, Fasalie translated my discussions with people who spoke Kono. As I came to know people in Peyima, however, people who spoke English (and Krio) would assist me. Working with people who lived in town meant that I got both research assistance and interpretation in one person. Inevitably, after a meeting I would discuss what was said during an interview with the person helping me that day.

They would pay attention to little things such as reactions to certain questions, if they thought lies had been told and would compare what they thought people really meant with what they actually said. It was then left up to me to make up my own mind, and triangulate information that I was given by other people.

3.8 Collecting and producing the data

This thesis is based on data gathered from mid-2005 until February 2011, centered around seven months of fieldwork in Kono District during 2008 and 2009. During the period of five to six years, I travelled to Sierra Leone 11 times for up to four months per visit in a number of capacities. Each visit built on preceding visits, in the sense of establishing relations with actors in Sierra Leone's public service, and thus each in their way contributed to this dissertation.

My approach to data collection follows the imperative of triangulation between different forms of data produced in the field: textual and public discourse analysis, participant observation and interviews/conversations. In this section I primarily focus on how data was collected during my fieldwork in Kono District.

3.8.1 Text

Textual and public discourse analysis included the review of secondary sources, newspaper articles, academic articles, donor reports, and ministerial and legal documents. Analyses of these texts are central to exploring the emergence of chieftaincy historically, i.e., state formation, the emergence of SSR as a policy concept and how it developed in the case of Sierra Leone specifically. The texts were on one level regarded as preparation for interview and research questions.

On another level, the underlying grammar of different concepts in these texts, including their historical and ideological connotations, was also critical. This included how the concept of 'community' was used in discussions about Local Policing Partnership Boards and the way that 'legitimate authority' and 'the state' were produced in discourse. In

particular, however, what was omitted from the literature on fragile or failed states became a central preoccupation, including in-depth discussions of the order that exists when the state is not located at the center of making it, and the words we use to describe this order.

In the course of my previous projects that centered on writing the history of SSR in Sierra Leone, I gained access to considerable amounts of written documentation, including internal reports, angry email exchanges among advisors, letters from Sierra Leoneans demanding that certain advisors be sacked and formal letters from the President requesting assistance. This information – much of which was classified – was not on DFID's file, but was given to me by advisors who had played a key role in the Sierra Leone SSR process, particularly in its early stages (1998-2002). While this dissertation is not intended to provide a chronological overview of the SSR process in Sierra Leone, this information was central to understanding how external actors in particular perceived their role as part of Sierra Leone's SSR process. I also gained access to the SLP library, a small room with piles of reports, books and essays by many of the police officers who had traveled to the UK to take law enforcement classes.

3.8.2 Participant Observation

Participant observation was a vital data collection technique in Peyima and Kono District in general. My analyses would not have been possible without having pursued a multi-sited participant observant approach, sometimes as a participant, sometimes as an observing non-participant shadowing an informant, even if neither role was from an insider's perspective (Czarniawska 2007:14+21).³⁸ While I might have been considered a participant in the general sense, I was always a stranger, someone who was in Kono for only a short period of time, and, most tellingly, a white man. In this capacity I often participated in public events, including section chief elections in Nimikoro, local court sessions, hanging out in the mining area, in the pojo corner, at the house I was allocated in Peyima, at (if not

³⁸ This is not dissimilar to Bourdieu's (2003:282) reflections on participant objectivation, namely that "one does not have to choose between participant observation, a necessarily fictitious immersion in a foreign milieu, and the objectivism of the 'gaze from afar' of an observer who remains as remote from himself as from his object."

in) rituals, at the police station in Tombodu and Motema, and at the informal diamond market in Koidu.

In other words, I made use of observations, both when events occurred and when meetings relevant to my study were taking place, including between and among different categories of inherently hybrid authorities (state officials, chiefs, politicians, NGOs, partnership board members). The importance of this technique is clear, as it facilitates an understanding of what is going on, rather than what should be going on (as presented in formal documents and, at times, interviews) (ibid.:33).

3.8.3 Qualitative in-depth interviews

Participant observation and general observations were combined with qualitative interviews and, in particular, casual conversations, in order to deepen my understanding of practices that I had seen or points that people had made. I conducted more than 100 interviews and had countless conversations on how miners steal from one another, how work in the mines is organized, what would happen if a non-initiate went into the bush of the secret society, ambitions for the future, and so forth.³⁹ Because of the nature of what I spoke to people about (how to be a successful criminal or the implications of being a secret society member, for instance), I found that the best way to approach interviews was through informal conversation, rather than following a pre-designed interview guide.

Often, it was a matter of having a situation explained, i.e., who was involved how and why; it was also a matter of dissecting the details of a case to explore what was general about it and what was specific according to the interviewee. The purpose of the interview was not only to gather ‘factual’ information. It was also to explore reflective speech acts that communicated interviewees’ representational and operational models and definitions of key concepts such as ‘community’, ‘authority’, ‘state’ and ‘chieftaincy’, to name but a few.

³⁹ In the selection of informants, I covered both the official categories (chiefs, speakers, elders, state officials, police officers, NGO workers, youth leaders, and so forth) and representatives of the rural population, taking into account gender, age, level of education and socio-economic position. I conducted a total of 40 interviews with rural residents and approximately 100 semi-structured interviews (not including informal conversations) with the official categories of actors.

Furthermore, I set out to explore the relationship between cases that I followed, the strategy that those involved in the cases used, their understanding of what had happened and the perceived fairness of the outcome. Interviews can often be quite formalistic and confined to ideal models of action at first-time encounters. While this does provide useful information on official discourse of 'how things ought to be', it does not always reflect actual practice. At the beginning of my fieldwork in the autumn of 2008, there was sometimes a sense that people were telling me what they thought I wanted to hear. Finally, it may sometimes be a challenge to describe in nuanced detail how rules are made and then broken or circumvented. In my attempt to go more deeply into the meaning of a particular event and what people made of them in terms of how authority was exercised, it was therefore an advantage to combine interviews with observations.

During fieldwork, it proved relatively easy to speak to chiefs, police officers, state officials, NGO workers, representatives of political parties and other public figures of importance in the local political landscape. At the same time, however, I was of relatively little interest to Kono's paramount chiefs, because I had not come to mine, and therefore was not a potential source of income.

Going beyond these categories of authoritative figures was not an obstacle in Peyima. I did not experience resistance to my speaking to the different tribal heads in Peyima and the old women in town. However, while I sought to secure a valid representational sample of interviewees, it was also clear that I connected better with men around my own age. Four of them, Kono and non-Kono, became indispensable 'sounding boards', people that I trusted to speak what they believed to be the truth. With these men, I developed what became the closest to friendship that I experienced while doing my fieldwork.

3.9 The positioned researcher

I conclude these reflections on methodology and methods by outlining some of the elements of how I, as a researcher, took up various positions in the field. For an ethnographer, positioning in the field is inevitable and should be taken into account when analyzing data (Hammersley and Atkinson 1992:80-81). Indeed, the social distance and

immediate unfamiliarity between me as the researcher and those who were being studied, made the potential for ‘violent’ communication very real because of my ignorance of what could and could not be said (Bourdieu 1999b:609-610). This is an asymmetry that can never be completely overcome, but one that can be reduced by spending lengthy periods of time in the field where, momentarily, glaringly obvious social and cultural differences are forgotten. Combined with making use of locally-recruited research assistants, some of this asymmetry may also be decreased. One might hope to reach a reflexive state of thinking, where it is not the relation to the object, but the object itself that is being explored and analyzed (Wacquant 1989:33; Bourdieu 2003:286).

Following Gupta and Ferguson’s location-work (1997) and Haraway’s (1991:195) notion of “politics and epistemologies of location, positioning, and situating,” the question of my positions as a researcher is crucial. As reflections on location-work and situated knowledge indicate, there is no simple answer. There is embodied location as well as strategic positioning during fieldwork. Hasse (2000:43) writes that we are always participants in the social space within which we do fieldwork and observe, we are always interpreting as well as being interpreted. My embodied and social position – white Danish middle-class man in his mid-30s, without any particular religious conviction, single, university-based PhD student and non-Kono speaker – constitutes the backdrop of how I, as point of departure was located. There was no way that I could ‘pass as’ or be ‘taken for’ one of the informants myself (Grünenberg 2006; Fortie 2000). My participation was always visible – I was always already positioned as the white man who had come as a student to ask questions.

That said, social location does not necessarily determine what we see or how we see it. Rather, social location is relational and contextual and changes which modes of differentiation that are the most apparent – whether they be gender, age or race (cf. Bourdieu 2003:283). This was also apparent in the way that I was positioned during the fieldwork. While I stood out by my skin color, my age and gender naturally determined the way that I spoke to people in town, be they old men or women or men my own age.

In most cases I encountered hospitality, friendliness, confidence and willingness to spend time with me, even if some of the informants were busy people. While not everyone understood – or cared about – why I was in Peyima, most of them wanted me to understand

the context correctly. At times I felt like I was an entertainment figure, an albeit brief escape from difficult circumstances – and as a source of free cigs, coffee and pojo. Some informants emphasized how they found it important to share their opinions about life in Peyima. Often, I was positioned as the external listener to whom people relayed frustrations about not having money, not finding any diamonds, being excluded from decision-making despite being a secret society member and so forth. My position as a stranger could thus both enable and disable communication. I might not have been a native to the Peyima habitat, but this also meant that I had no long-term interest in the place, and therefore could be trusted with certain personal information (cf. Czarniawska 2007:21).

The question of race and nationality was important, but they were not the only ones of relevance. Being a trustworthy person also played a role in terms of positioning, gaining access and carrying out my fieldwork. At the end of the day, I was only in Peyima because its inhabitants allowed me to be there. Due to the importance of trust in establishing rapport and confidence, I often used the ‘snowball’ method, citing my contacts in different networks. This was particularly the case when talking to diamond dealers and miners. Being introduced and recommended by others who ‘already knew me’ clearly made it easier to build immediate trust.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has explained how I approached the study of hybrid orders methodologically, and the data techniques that I applied to do so. Following Gupta, Ferguson and Marcus, I introduced the concepts of location-work and multi-sited ethnographic work as central tenets, which emphasize the movement in time and space and multi-local positioning of both the researcher and the researched. I integrated location-work into my fieldwork by exploring how actors, discourse and things assemble in certain ways in the justice and security field and by pursuing a multi-sited research strategy in Peyima, Tombodu, Koidu, Freetown, London and beyond. I organized the data that emerged from this approach according to principles of the extended case study.

This chapter reflects on the researcher's position and how different social locations came into play during the course of fieldwork, furthering or hindering relations with informants. This fieldwork was primarily carried out in Peyima, a small town in Kamara Chiefdom, Kono District, but data was also drawn from extended periods of work on other projects in Freetown and London. Fieldwork was divided into three overlapping stages: an initial orientation and mapping stage in Kono District and Kamara Chiefdom specifically; a second stage of immersing myself in the field, building up relations and discussing the contours of my fieldwork; and a third stage where I carried out systematic interviews and participant observations.

The data material consists of interviews, collection of texts, including academic literature, notes written by villagers in Peyima, reviews of the SSR program and notes of an autobiographic nature. The informants were selected according to their involvement in cases of crime and in formulating, designing and implementing SSR policies and programs. I also interviewed a number of individuals who were not involved in committing or solving crimes, but who had specific knowledge, for example, about the hierarchy of power in Peyima, in Kono, and Sierra Leone in general. Furthermore, I endeavored to include a variety of positions, in particular in relation to age, tribal identity, autochthon status and an individual's role in the secret society bush.

4 The assembling of security sector reform in the security and justice field

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how SSR developed in discourse and practice internationally. It describes how SSR became a central assemblage in the justice and security field and the form that state-building took in order to re-establish failed states as functioning, centrally-governed political entities. In this state-building process, the state as a bordered power container and the institutions that comprise it – standing above and at the same time encompassing, controlling and regulating society – were to be isolated and worked upon. In this regard, a creeping reductionism is evident, caused in part by the propensity of state-builders to reproduce the state-society split. This resulted in attempts to eliminate or criminalize hybrid actors who did not fit easily into the construct of centrally-governed state institutions and actors.

In the late 1990s, as SSR programming began in Sierra Leone and as the clustering of security and development was taking place in the justice and security field, a coherent concept of the security sector had not yet emerged. A clear sense of which institutions to work upon – the armed forces, the police, the judiciary or all of them simultaneously – was not evident. In the years to come, this question came to dominate practical aspects and discussions of SSR. What was clear in the late 1990s, however, was that the object of SSR was to support and simultaneously build centralized, differentiated organizations with a monopoly of coercion across a territory – i.e., the state.

The first section of this chapter explores some of the assumptions upon which SSR as a set of policies and programs was based. It provides an overview of a number of the key themes in the SSR debate. These include the concept of fragile or failing states and their security apparatus as well as the international security environment that emerged after the end of the Cold War.

Subsequently, I outline the process whereby SSR emerged, based initially on developments in the UK's DFID and then multi-lateralized through the OECD and the UN. The variety of SSR that came into being during the 1990s was dominated by a push from development

agencies to an extent that has not been possible since the War on Terror and the militarization of international politics that it entailed.⁴⁰

Regarding the central role played by development agencies in shaping the SSR agenda, a subsidiary argument of this chapter also argues that SSR is explained more accurately as the consequence of developmentalization of security rather than the securitization of development (Albrecht et al. 2010). This is not an argument for a less intrusive form of state-building. Indeed, seeking to re-establish failed states as functioning, democratically- and bureaucratically-governed entities is a fundamentally *more* intrusive exercise than ‘merely’ providing training and equipment to the police or the military of a given country. Rather, it is to suggest that SSR was constituted by a reciprocal relationship between development and security, and that development agencies in the 1990s sought to colonize the security field as much as security organizations sought to colonize the development field.

The chapter concludes by analyzing the policy concept of the ‘multi-layered approach’ that attempts to involve ‘non-state’ actors in SSR activities, including, *inter alia*, traditional or customary authorities and community-based policing groups. However, apart from establishing a dichotomy between the state and the non-state, the multi-layered approach was considered by international policy-makers and experts to be an interim strategy until such time when “the state can take over service provision” (OECD 2007a:28). In other words, how state institutions operate and should be operated may be discussed, but it is the state as a centrally-governed political entity, that is to be built and consolidated.

⁴⁰ The “War on Terror” was initiated by the US and its coalition partners in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 11 September, 2001. Its aim was “to root out and destroy not only al-Qaeda, but all international terrorist organizations that supported, associated with or shared its ideology of global jihad” (Sherman 2010:59). Indeed, in the words of George Bush, US President at the time of the terrorist attacks: “Our war on terror begins with Al Qaida, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated” (Bush, Address before a joint session of the Congress, 20 September 2001).

4.2 ‘War-shattered states’ → SSR → ‘market democracies’

Until the end of the Cold War, security and development were considered relatively autonomous fields of intervention. As they merged up through the 1990s, war and conflict were seen as integral to that process and became mainstream in development discourse (Duffield 2001). Donor agencies regarded the lack of development as a cause of insecurity instead of an issue of inequality or injustice (Albrecht et al. 2010:74). Indeed, the shift from macro-development approaches to ‘good governance’, ‘pro-poor’ policy-making, sustainability and poverty reduction was considered a figurative reflection of the desire to contain ‘failed states’ that had come to represent areas of potential instability. The process of merging security and development led to what has often been described as the securitization of development (Duffield 2001, 2006; Harrison 2001, 2004; Craig and Porter 2003; Abrahamsen 2004, 2005; Fraser 2005).

SSR as one of the instruments of state-building emerged during the relatively short period between the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the War on Terror (Albrecht et al. 2010:80). The global distribution of power and capital after the Cold War has often been highlighted as one of the main reasons why the intervention in Sierra Leone combined with SSR was possible. Conflicts were no longer considered tokens of US-Soviet proxy wars, but as part of a complex of weak or failing states, ethnic violence and poverty (Lacina 2004).

In the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, this shift confirmed the political and economic hegemony of the core countries of international society, the United States in particular, and the generic West in general (Clark 2001).⁴¹ Discourses centered on what the correct or proper political entity might look like, revolving around democratic ideals and the unconstrained operation of the market for capital and labor. International bi-lateral and multi-lateral donor agencies became bearers of an increased trans-national flow of neo-liberal ideology that was supported by overlapping concepts of human rights and liberal democratic norms.

⁴¹ My use of the term ‘international society’ is inspired by the English School, rather than the ‘international system’ of American realism, the latter of which proposes that the anarchic international system is governed on the basis of transcendent parameters of state power and interests. Advocates of this constructivist approach argue that interaction among states is governed by norms, implying a fundamental volatility of international society’s ontological basis (Mayall 1991:8-17; Reus-Smit 1999).

Following this line of argument, the legitimacy of the correct manner of governance proposed by Paris (1997, 2001, 2004) and other proponents of the liberal peace thesis could hardly be questioned. In one agenda-setting article, Paris notes that the problem of peace-building is not the objective of political and economic liberalization, but the measures taken to achieve it (Paris 1997:57). In other words, his purpose is to correct the ‘how’ of peace-building rather than the ‘why’:

Peace-building agencies should preserve the principal goal of liberal internationalism – the transformation of war-shattered states into market democracies – but re-think the way in which they pursue this goal, seeking in particular to limit the conflict-inducing effects of political and economic liberalization in war-shattered states (Paris 1997:58).

In sum, therefore, failed states are to be built to reflect the state-centric, western universalist model.

The ephemeral concept of legitimacy expressed in international discourse should be viewed in light of the concentration of capital forms in geographically-specific parts of the world and within the framework of the global distribution of power. “We are told,” Douzinas (2003:169) argues, “that the new world order is based on respect for human rights” (and, it might be added, democratic governance and liberal economies). This “moral order,” he continues, “provides legitimacy to a new configuration of power relations” (ibid.:173).

To back up these claims about the potential power and capital of the liberal democratic nation-state, and to legitimize external interventions to support the building of this type of political entity, a number of views on the non-western world have been produced by both academics and policy-makers. Abiew and Keating (1999:80) argue that one of the primary reasons for developing the discourse and practice of peace-building, in which the concepts of state and state-building are closely connected, had to do with a ‘substantial increase’ in internal conflicts that followed the end of the Cold War (see also Paris 1997:54).

The notion of a sudden surge in the number of conflicts has been quantified and, in turn, used to provide the evidence that externally-supported or -driven state-building was a

necessity. Findings in Eriksson, Wallensteen and Sollenberg's data on armed conflicts from 1946-2002 show that there were 31 ongoing conflicts in 2002, of which 26 took place within states.⁴² In 1991-1992, 50 out of 54 active conflicts were of an intra-state nature (Eriksson et al 2003:594), which accounts for the largest number of conflicts for the entire post-World War II era. Following Jakobsen (2002:270) and Lederach (1997:6), it may be argued that while there has been no permanent rise in the number of conflicts following the Cold War, the international environment in which international interventions have proliferated has been characterized by relative instability.

Moreover, conflicts after World War II have largely taken place *within* the borders of politically-defined state spaces (see Gantzel and Schwinghammer 2000). The growing internationally-perceived legitimacy of interventions in intra-state conflicts should thus be seen as the consequence of changes in the global balance of symbolic and physical capital and power, rather than as a sudden surge in the number of intra-state conflicts. It is as part of these general developments in international society that I now turn to how SSR assembled in international policy-making circles.

4.3 Merging security and development in the justice and security field

The emergence of SSR was based on an assumed integral relationship between development and security, and the need to narrow state-building down to one core component that could be operated upon. The concept originated from narratives of policy-makers and academics about the failure of governance and the waning and disappearance of state capacity and legitimacy, which resulted in the intensification of intra-state conflict.

The focus on fragility, i.e., lack of capacity, emerged after the end of the Cold War, and was accentuated by the post-9/11 understanding of the security-development nexus. The absence or weakness of government control in the Global South was assumed to be a direct

⁴² Of the last five of the 31 ongoing conflicts, four were so-called 'internationalized intra-state' armed conflicts, meaning that the government, the opposition or both sides received support from external governments. Only one was of an inter-state nature (Eriksson, Wallensteen and Sollenberg 2003). Wallensteen and Sollenberg (2000:648) define a violent conflict as "a contested incompatibility which concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths."

threat to the security of Western states. “Rogue and failing states,” Coletta (2007:393) argues, were looked upon as “the ones most vulnerable to exploitation by millennial groups.” Hence, ensuring or strengthening government authority and control emerged as the main solution to problems of both security and development.

4.3.1 Effective + legitimate states = human security

As formulated in the mid- to late 1990s, SSR was, on the face of it, not explicitly or conceptually centered on working on state institutions. It emerged in the wake of the ‘human security’ paradigm, within which the individual rather than the state became a priority for multi-lateral and bi-lateral donor agencies (see Kaldor et al. 2007; Ball 2010:32, Sedra 2010:16). The Human Development Report, published by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 1990, argues that development must focus on people, even though they are grouped by country, rather than on the security of national (state) boundaries, and on advancing health, education, political freedoms and economic well-being (King and Murray 2001:587).

However, ‘human security’ was formulated with the important and somewhat contradictory caveat that the state should continue to be the key provider of these services. That the state should have the mandate to make order in the justice and security field was not questioned. Any alternatives to the state and its centrally-governed institutions as the sole enforcers of order could hardly be imagined.

The primary questions in this state-centered policy-making discussion were how and towards whom these ordering effects were to be directed and how states could fulfill their functions effectively and legitimately. Lack of development was seen as a cause of insecurity and financial support was now starting to be allocated to the production of defense white papers and the building of ministries of defense and intelligence services in Sierra Leone and beyond (for Sierra Leone see Ashington-Pickett 2010:20; le Grys 2010:43; Gaeta 2010; Kondeh 2010).

4.3.2 ‘Securitization of development’ → ‘developmentalization of security’?

SSR emerged along the lines of the ‘developmentalization of security’ rather than the ‘securitization of development’. This focus constituted an attempt to depart from train-and-equip programs,⁴³ where training and military hardware is provided to make internal and external security forces more effective (see Sugden 2006:10).⁴⁴ Characterized as ‘holistic’ in scope and ‘politically sensitive’ in approach, SSR as one of the practical expressions of state-building was structured to deal with the governability of a country’s internal and external security institutions. Moreover, emphasis was put on their democratic accountability through ministerial management and external oversight by parliaments and civil society organizations. In other words, a technical process was articulated in languages of stateness (see Sedra 2010:16; Albrecht et al. 2010:75; van de Goor and van Ween 2010:98; Fitz-Gerald 2010:163; Hutton 2010:197).

During the 1990s and early 2000s a primary focus on individual military and police institutions and technically-driven reform efforts was giving way to an approach that regarded security and justice as part of a single system, underpinned by concepts of accountability and rule of law (Bryden and Hänggi 2005:26; OECD 2007a, b and c; Albrecht et al. 2010:75). On paper, therefore, SSR can be seen as a considerably *more* intrusive approach to state-building than train-and-equip programs. Figuratively speaking, SSR seeks to tear the state apart in order to build it back up from within. It targets not one organization within, but the justice and security field as a whole. In other words, the system of related actors would be re-composed as a set of centrally-governed institutions that resembles a state of the western universalist variety.

Train-and-equip is ultimately about building up the effectiveness of a security institution, but rarely considers how the justice and security field as a whole is affected, and how power is distributed across it. This narrow and rather technical approach was pursued

⁴³ The two approaches are often conflated, however, as was the case in Sierra Leone, where “training and equipping the new army and police force” has been seen as constitutive of SSR (Bellamy and Williams 2005:183).

⁴⁴ The SSR label has been applied to train-and-equip activities in other countries. In Liberia, for instance, DynCorp, a private security company, was contracted by the US Government to train 2,000 men to become Liberia’s new army. While initiated under the SSR label, the process was conducted without engaging Liberia’s legislature or other organizations in defining the nature, content or character of the new army.

globally in its purest form by the US from 2001–08.⁴⁵ SSR, however, had been formulated in opposition to the train-and-equip approach, based on the assumption that isolated and targeted projects such as military training ultimately do not help establish ‘the state’ as the all-important bulwark against instability, disorder and chaos in otherwise unregulated physical space. In the case of the US, therefore, the rising concern with insecurity and terrorism was detrimental to the advancement of SSR as the ‘developmentalization of security’ (see Sherman 2010; Ball 2010).

4.3.3 The US, SSR and the effects of 9/11

9/11 had three major implications for how SSR developed within the US, which consequently shaped how SSR could be operationalized globally. First, the terrorist attacks led to the most comprehensive revision of the US national security architecture and policy since the end of World War II, including a sweeping expansion of executive authority and a broad erosion of civil liberties.

Second, these changes led to a disproportionate militarization of US foreign assistance in areas of strategic interest to the US, not least in Iraq and Afghanistan (Coyne 2011).⁴⁶ According to Sherman (2010:59), this type of assistance has often undermined or contradicted principles of democratic governance, reinforcing repression and radicalization. Third, this change in US security policy has provided justification for a few countries to repress dissident and opposition movements under the mantle of counter-terrorism, while making it more difficult to challenge such practices internationally (ibid.).

⁴⁵ Between 2001 and 2008, the budget of the US Department of Defense eclipsed the combined resources of the Department of State and USAID by a factor of 350:1, compared to 10:1 in other Western governments. Furthermore, until recently, US-funded SSR projects were not called “SSR.” Most of them still are not, as they fall under such rubrics as military assistance, police training and democracy and governance. Under the Bush administration, the priorities of counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism meant a relatively narrow focus on training military and police as complements to – and eventual replacements for – international forces. Prioritizing hard security has meant that oversight mechanisms of recipient countries, parliament and the judiciary in particular, suffered as a consequence (Albrecht et al. 2010:81).

⁴⁶ For instance, the US Department of Defense was placed in charge of police reform in Iraq and Afghanistan, which has meant an emphasis not on community policing and civilian protection, but on engaging the police in military-led counter-insurgency operations. In Iraq, US military police officers trained civilian police, despite State Department pleas for a ‘military-to-military and cop-to-cop’ approach.

With specific reference to the intervention in Sierra Leone in 1999–2000, the realization of the fundamental militarization of foreign policy after 2001 was captured during an interview with Clare Short. As the Secretary of State for International Development when DFID was actively formulating SSR policies and intervening in Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and Iraq, Ms Short noted:

The possibility of absolutely merging commitments to development with all your other instruments of foreign policy, including the military, which was conceivable in those days [in Sierra Leone], is now sort of lost [because of Afghanistan and Iraq], but I think it will come around again (Clare Short, interview, June 2008).

“We were a new Government, there were no mixed messages then,” Short continued, referring to debates over Iraq:

You can see a country like Britain taking on the idea of a stronger, multi-lateral world order, and this is all pre-Iraq obviously, where there was an aim of deploying troops alongside the objective of having a strong international law, well-organized states (Clare Short, interview, June 2008).

Short captures a dominant discourse among bi-lateral and multi-lateral agencies in the decade that followed the end of the Cold War and prior to the announcement of the War on Terror in 2001. SSR as a comprehensive solution rather than merely an extension of train-and-equip is the result of the particular worldview that existed in the aftermath of the Cold War. The ‘well-organized state’ that Ms Short mentions – effective and legitimate, to paraphrase Goldstone (2008:285-286) – was considered pivotal in combating instability and chaos. Unlike programs that merely make individual justice and security providers more effective, however, SSR became a matter of building the ability of ‘the state’ to execute security governance. Above all, this was to be sought by increasing the capacity of administrative staff to enforce order and the normative content of reform (accountability, democratization and rule of law).

4.4 Amalgamating security and development in the UK and the emergence of SSR

In the late 1990s, DFID played a critical role in developing SSR as a set of policies and programs. The beginning of this process has often been dated by a speech given by Ms Short on 9 March 1999 at King's College in London. In the speech she states: "We want increasingly to integrate a security sector reform perspective into our country programmes and into the thinking of other donors and multi-lateral development institutions" (Short 1999). By embracing SSR in this manner, DFID crossed an important threshold as a development agency with its acknowledgment of a direct link between the security sector and poverty reduction (Hendrickson 2009:3; DFID 1999, 2001b, 2002).

As the head of a new Government department established in 1997, Ms Short was charting new territory. Her agenda, however, was motivated by politics. Short was neither a development expert nor particularly interested in the subject matter. She was, however, in the process of building a power base in 1 Palace Street, DFID's new address in London.⁴⁷ She did this by engaging *in* policy-making as well as *with* the security services, which, according to Short, were looking for new roles to play in the post-Cold War security environment.⁴⁸ SSR emerged on the basis of struggles over policy-making and the power to define foreign policy priorities by DFID, in collaboration – and confrontation – with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in particular, but also with the Ministry of Defence (MOD).

⁴⁷ When I talked to Short in 2008, she explained to me that her appointment as Secretary of State for International Development had been an act of punishment rather than reward: "He [UK Prime Minister Tony Blair] was annoyed with me for taking transport seriously, and it was a big drama. As I said at the time, if I was given the choice between transport and development, I would have chosen transport. But then again, a lot of people were not put into the jobs they'd had in opposition" (Short, interview, June 2008).

⁴⁸ Short provided interesting detail about the politics of merging security and development and the evolving role of DFID relative to other UK agencies: "When I first went to DFID, the MI6 would come and see me, and say: 'don't you think we should work together in Africa?' And I'd say: 'we're working with governments. I don't think I necessarily want to work with somebody spying'. And at that stage, this was before the War on Terror, all these people were looking for new jobs, Cold War is over, what's their job? You know, diminishing role, diminishing budgets, we are the coming thing, they want us. I am not interested. And then, I got very interested in the military, due to the Sierra Leone experience, you know, and the Uganda experience and so on. And then somebody in MI6 came and said: 'you do know, don't you, that in Africa we always get direct access to Presidents, they always want to know us; they are interested in our kind of guys'. And I said: 'Oh, really'. And then I thought, I mean, we included them in security sector reform and I thought: 'Right, in that case, we want you to be part of this as well', which we did. The guy from MI6 interested in Sierra Leone I got to know and like – so there's another little piece of story. At that stage, you've got MI6, and the military, to a degree, short of a job. And *there is constant disorder and chaos, and really a need of re-building states*" (Italics added).

Under Ms Short's leadership, DFID began to play "a leading role in several aspects of foreign policy, especially in relation to UK policies towards Sub-Saharan Africa" (Williams 2004:916).⁴⁹ And indeed, Ms Short explained why SSR and Africa were top priorities at the time:

We were in that Cold War phase where there was a massive growth in conflict, new kind of conflict within and between countries causing enormous suffering and holding out the prospect of development in Africa. I mean, you couldn't be intelligently interested in development in Africa and not be very focused on how you bring all these conflicts to an end. If you're serious, it drives you into these issues (Clare Short, interview, June 2008).

Policy-making processes are in general both internal and external to a policy-formulating community, and "policy ideas are important less for what they say than for *who* they bring together, what alliances, coalitions and consensus they allow, both within and between organizations" (Mosse 2004:649). SSR not only reflected the emerging conviction that security was a pre-condition for development, it became an important driver of merging security and development. Ms Short was driven to make DFID an important player in Whitehall and UK foreign policy and SSR was a vehicle for doing so: "For us, of course, [becoming involved in SSR] meant really getting into the policy-making, including [with respect to] the security services" (Clare Short, interview, June 2008).

4.4.1 The ever-changing assemblage of SSR and Sierra Leone's role in its articulation

It is often noted how Ms Short's speech at King's College explicitly defined the security sector: "the military, paramilitary and intelligence services, as well as those civilian structures responsible for oversight and control of the security forces" (Short 1999). Ms Short was equally clear that SSR would not involve the police or the wider criminal justice system (*ibid.*). This separation within DFID of what may broadly be referred to as internal

⁴⁹ That Short was on a mission to establish and consolidate DFID's power base was undeniable: "Short interpreted her department's remit broadly and as a consequence became embroiled in a variety of departmental turf wars: notably with the Ministry of Defence (over who should lead security sector reform initiatives) [and] the FCO (over where to focus the pooled DFID-FCO-MoD funds for conflict prevention)..." (Williams 2004:916).

and external security provision had real consequences in Sierra Leone. Keith Biddle, a retired British police officer who was appointed to be Inspector-General of Police in Sierra Leone in 1999,⁵⁰ recalls from this period:

CHAD [Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department] was running the show regarding security in the military, and came out on visits. On the other hand, you had the Government and Institutions Department, which said that they would retain all policing aspects throughout the world under all circumstances, because it was about governments and communities, and not military solutions to conflict. There was a lot of turf war involved in this. Logically, the police should have been part of the security sector reform part, and DFID, in 1998, in fact issued a book [sic] that stated that the police are actually dealt with on their own provisions.

So security sector reform was not part and parcel of what we were doing and never formally became part and parcel of what we were doing. There was clearly a lack of integration of thought in London (Keith Biddle, June 2009, interview, France).

The fact that direction of police and defense programming did not come from the same office in DFID had serious consequences for how SSR unfolded, and led to rivalry on the ground. Robert Ashington-Pickett – adviser to the Office of National Security (ONS) within the Sierra Leone Security Sector Program (SILSEP) from 2000 to 2003 – articulated this type of rivalry well. Indeed, he was part and parcel of it:

It is a regrettable fact that many government departments, especially in the security sector, create unproductive rivalries, petty jealousies and prejudices towards other security agencies. Inappropriate, exaggerated identification with one's own programme can also arise, leading to isolation among SSR advisers and overprotectiveness of one's agency or department. At times, this behaviour is imported into post-conflict arenas, where it creates a new arena for rivalries to be played out, thus undermining key SSR principles and setting a bad example. While

⁵⁰ Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, then President of Sierra Leone, appointed Biddle as Inspector General of Police (IGP) in November 1999. Biddle was appointed to the position for an initial two-year period, which was extended until June 2003. He had come to Sierra Leone as head of the Commonwealth Police Development Task Force (CPDTF), which was planned to start in 1997, but delayed until 1998, due to the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) coup (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:36).

SSR programmes in Sierra Leone benefited from the [...] professional behaviour, they still suffered from inter-agency rivalries and turf battles (Ashington-Pickett 2010:32).

In later communication with Ashington-Pickett, these general reflections were concretized. Keith Biddle had become Inspector General of the Sierra Leone Police when Ashington-Pickett arrived. According to Ashington-Pickett “there was competition between Biddle’s vision of the police and the other intelligence agencies, since he [Biddle] was partisan and had little experience of national intelligence and inter-agency cooperation” (Ashington-Pickett, email, August 2008).

Such turf issues were partly a consequence of inconsistencies in London about what SSR entailed, inconsistencies that translated into Sierra Leone. In both places, decision-making and thinking were only partially connected and were primarily determined by personalities rather than by a comprehensive framework of conceptual SSR thinking. Therefore, while state-building and SSR may be presented as coherent policies and programs with clear aims and objectives, this does not reflect their disorderly and multitudinous origins in power struggles or how they are transformed from one context to another and shaped in numerous physical locations (i.e., London and Freetown). Biddle recalls:

No one was coordinating this [i.e., various programs] in DFID, because we were reporting to separate desks, some dealing with country-specific issues, others with humanitarian matters. DFID didn’t regard community policing as part of SSR at that stage (Keith Biddle, interview, June 2009, France).

The reciprocal relationship between policy compromises in London and the practices of formulating processes of change in Sierra Leone supported the formation of SSR as a policy assemblage in the justice and security field. In brief, new policies were being formulated in London while events that called for security-oriented programs occurred in Sierra Leone.

Peter Penfold, UK High Commissioner in Sierra Leone, was one of President Kabbah's close international allies at the time.⁵¹ When the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) coup took place in May 1997, Kabbah, who had been elected in 1996, was overthrown and fled to Conakry in Guinea. During this time, Penfold recalls: "I used [UK] ODA [Overseas Development Assistance] funds to keep the government going in Conakry – to show that the government was still active" (Peter Penfold, March 2008, interview, Freetown).

During his exile in Conakry, Kabbah did some thinking, Penfold told me, about actors to engage in security-related programs. Unwittingly perhaps, Penfold explained how SSR became the articulation of a reciprocal relationship between discussions in London and thinking in Conakry – from inside the displaced Sierra Leonean state that, for the time being, had no country to govern. From the period immediately after the AFRC was ousted to when Kabbah was able to return to Freetown, different elements of SSR as state-building were coming together. Penfold explained:

At that time [upon return from Conakry in May 1998], there was a strong feeling from people around Kabbah to do away with the army. The argument was that if you looked at history, military coups had prevailed, and we came back [from Conakry] with those ideas still going around. But we brought in some military experts, and produced a plan, identifying the ideal size of an army to be around 6,000. That was sufficient for the army to do what it had to, and it would be bearable [financially]. We also discussed getting the police going – and I argued that assistance to the police was equally important, if not more. Then we don't have to resort to military.

What we also said at the time, although the police was becoming moribund, there were enough good people around. In the military there were none. It's no good getting the police operational if we don't look at the judiciary, the prison services, and so forth. And so it began – what was demonstrated at the time, a reason for the

⁵¹ Penfold was blamed by the British government for an illegal arms deal that became known as the Sandline affair. As a consequence, he retired from his diplomatic career after serving nearly forty years with the Foreign Office (see: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/events/newsnight/1807756.stm>).

coup, there was an inadequate intelligence system. Short, ODA [sic] Minister at the time, she very quickly realized the link between poverty and security. She came in with a personal commitment. I remember that I said to her that I fully supported her in that. She, back home in London, began to assemble the idea that you needed this integrated policy as security sector reform. Essentially, it was joining the Departments, and the FCO, ODA [sic] and MOD were able to develop relationships (Peter Penfold, interview, March 2008, Freetown).

As the above indicates, the concept of SSR was based on concrete experiences in Sierra Leone, among other places, and an emerging DFID that was aiming to establish itself as force to be reckoned with in the UK. SSR as state-building, constitutive of a particular set of articulations of state re-composition in the justice and security field, should therefore be seen not as a structuring effect produced in isolation from and external to the context of Sierra Leone. On the contrary, what was emerging as SSR emanated from numerous political processes in physical and symbolic locales of the security and justice field, interacting and shaping one another.

4.5 International debates on military expenditure

Short's 1999 speech on SSR at King's College occurred during a time when the role that development agencies could play vis-à-vis military, defense and broader security issues was being re-assessed by international donors and policy-makers (Ball 2010). For example, four donor meetings took place during 1992–93 in The Hague, Tokyo, Berlin and Paris, where it was decided that limits could be imposed on the military spending of developing countries. However, an OECD–DAC conference in Ottawa in 1997 recognized that merely imposing such limits would not be effective. Thus, an important shift occurred, whereby emphasis was placed on the need to strengthen budgetary decision-making processes, i.e., matters to do with the governance of security institutions in recipient countries (Omitoogun and Hutchful 2006; Sugden 2006:11).

In 2000, the 'developmentalization' of donor approaches to military expenditure and performance was further advanced when DFID decided that policy formulation, budgeting

and implementation in recipient countries' defense sectors should be handled in the same manner as other areas of the public sector. In brief, key concepts of 'transparency,' 'accountability' and 'comprehensiveness' were introduced into what planning the re-composition of the security and justice field might look like (DFID 2001a).

This new approach, characterized by being "process"-oriented or "governance"-focused, combined good governance practices and sound financial principles with security issues (ibid.). Attention was also directed towards the institutional framework for managing trade-offs between different sectors and for the effective management of the resources devoted to defense (Omitoogun and Hutchful, 2006).

As in the case of train-and-equip approaches to military and police reform, attempts to impose limits on military spending is less intrusive in its potential effects than SSR. SSR not only seeks to make a particular organization more effective or determine how it is resourced financially. It also seeks to re-compose the justice and security field in its entirety so that *how* the various bodies it encompasses are organized, inter-related and governed is worked upon and transformed.

4.6 The shaping power of institutional turf wars

The debates on military expenditure that occurred during the 1990s and Short's distinction between the "security sector" and the "criminal justice system" remained relatively far removed from conceptions of "holistic" approaches to SSR that developed up through the 2000s. These debates called attention to an inherent tension within the concept of SSR, which was reflected in organizational divisions that continue today, including within DFID. Debates about whether policing falls within the justice sector or the security sector continues: the justice sector is seen by some technical advisers as relating to human or individual safety, and the security sector is seen as relating to state or government security (Howlett-Bolton 2008).

To a large extent these debates reflected turf wars within DFID. As a result, while agreement was being reached on a preliminary definition of "security sector reform," there was no coherent concept of the security sector itself. It was also unclear what the

implications would be for policy development if some institutions and not others were included in the definition and implementation of SSR. It is worth emphasizing that these debates did not transcend languages of stateness. They dealt with issues such as whether the military and the judiciary should be considered part of the same system or as organizations within entirely separate domains, which was the way the concept of SSR was initially formulated by Short. Similarly, the distinction made between protecting the state and protecting the individual was formulated in a way that prevented discussion of the hybrid order in the justice and security field.

The SSR community at DFID remains relatively small, but it has been the most adamant in promoting what has become a growing trend to conceptualize and operationalize connections between security, development, justice and democracy. Indeed, in the mid-2000s, as Sugden (2006:12) noted, there was “an overwhelming [international] agreement that the UK is the leader in the field of SSR,” the “Godfather” of the variety of SSR that emphasizes the holistic approach.

The push for engagement in SSR was driven by many other developments, including a perceived ‘massive growth in conflict within and between countries’, as described by Ms. Short, and her ambition on behalf of DFID to establish political leverage and a clear and distinct identity vis-à-vis the FCO and MOD. This was true in London, and it was reflected in the field. The shift to security-related programming, as occurred in Sierra Leone in 1998–99, constituted a watershed for a development agency. Development and security were coming together as a means to establish, maintain and consolidate peace. As the concept of SSR and concomitant practices traveled through space and time, it was morphed accordingly by individual actors and institutions in the global justice and security field, but was nonetheless still recognizable. SSR, detached from its point of origin in DFID, was branching out and claiming new territory.

4.7 Branching out and colonizing the justice and security field

4.7.1 Blueprints as props: OECD developments

In the international field of policy-making, other European countries soon took up the SSR

concept. In the Netherlands, SSR became a vehicle for furthering civil–military cooperation; the government introduced an operative, cross-departmental SSR team in 2005. Germany also promoted a holistic approach to SSR, even though the country emphasized internal security organizations (Wulf 2004). Within OECD-DAC, the UK, the Netherlands and Germany further promoted the assembling of the security and development domains from which the SSR concept was emerging in the European context. As a multi-lateral agency, OECD–DAC came to play a fundamental role in giving further shape to the SSR concept of the late 1990s as it evolved into the 2000s. In this respect, the OECD was a vehicle for multi-lateralizing and transforming the assemblage of SSR that had first emerged in the UK.

Between 2000 and 2005, based on concrete experiences from post-conflict reconstruction, the OECD became the multi-lateral body which developed and designed the policy concept of SSR that is considered a blueprint for policy-makers and practitioners alike. This was initially done by producing the 2005 reference document *Security System Reform and Governance*, which states that “the overall objective” of SSR “is to create a secure environment that is conducive to development, poverty reduction and democracy” (OECD 2005b:16).⁵²

There is little doubt that the UK, and DFID in particular, has been and continues to be a key player within OECD in furthering SSR-related policy developments. DFID reputedly influenced the OECD-DAC (and UNDP) to promote SSR and the strong linkages that exist among these organizations. (DFID has for many years funded the programs and salaries of UNDP’s Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery.) In addition, an overlap of experts exists among organizations. For example, in the mid-2000s, DFID’s Senior SSR Advisor, who was deeply involved in UK programming in Sierra Leone, also chaired the OECD-DAC’s Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation Network.

⁵² The OECD has chosen the concept of “security system reform,” while others talk of “transformation” or “restructuring.” OECD’s usage of “system” as opposed to “sector” reflects the fact that the conglomerate of institutions involved in the reform process cannot easily be referred to as a sector, but rather as a number of institutions that fall within different sectors. The use of “transformation” rather than “reform” should also be viewed as an attempt to clarify and emphasize conceptually the extensive nature of the undertaking.

Between 2005 and 2007, two SSR documents were formulated which have become blueprints in international policy discourse for what SSR encompasses in the ideal-typical sense of the term. The 2005 reference document *Security System Reform and Governance* (OECD 2005b) provided a consolidated list of institutions to include in SSR, including core security actors, security management and oversight bodies, justice and rule of law institutions and non-statutory security forces. This could be seen as a checklist for those security organizations to be worked upon in order to establish a centrally-governed political entity.

The OECD–DAC *Handbook on Security System Reform*, which followed in 2007 and had strong UK backing, was produced to provide “guidance to operationalize the OECD–DAC guidelines on SSR and close the gap between policy and practice” (OECD 2007c:15). It morphed together hitherto separate domains. Unlike SSR formulations in the late 1990s, the police and judiciary were now placed together with military and intelligence services to constitute one seamless security framework. This shift reflected earlier thinking within DFID that security and justice were integrally linked, as both contribute to ‘community safety’ and ‘human security.’ The shift was also a token of the dynamism inherent to the SSR assemblage as ever-evolving, with components constantly being added and withering away.

These two documents capture the breadth of what ‘ideal’ SSR entails. The overall aim of SSR, as reflected in these documents, is to ensure that the security sector in a given country is capable of meeting the security needs of both the state and the people in a manner consistent with democratic norms, good governance and the rule of law (OECD 2005b). In addition, the OECD emphasizes the necessity of approaching not any one security provider in particular, but security providers as a system of actors, thereby addressing the overlap of security, law enforcement and justice simultaneously (Andersen 2006). This is the application of what has been dubbed a ‘holistic approach’ and a focus on the ‘governance aspect’ of security providers which have become fundamental to how SSR is formulated.

The commitment to the holistic norm is a key component of what developmentalizing security means, namely, to establish a system of institutions governed by civilians that can manage and direct internal and external security. This also emphasizes that governance is

not envisioned as just one set of activities on a par with other more technical approaches. The act of governing lies at the core of SSR and is, as such, one of the central implements to work on in order to strengthen the state as a centrally-governed political entity.

4.7.2 The global spread of a concept, labeling practices and a ‘stake at stake’ in the UN

The diffusion of SSR and its further development from how it was formulated in the UK and the OECD became evident as it was picked up in the UN system as a ‘stake at stake’ between different departments. The focus on governance sets SSR apart from train-and-equip approaches to strengthen national security and provide military assistance. This, however, has also made the concept appealing to actors beyond development agencies. Calling for a focus on governance and a holistic approach to the organization of security has provided a framework that explains why security institutions need support, rather than how it should be provided.

As an assemblage in the security and justice field, SSR thus took the position of a stake at stake that enabled the building of broad, albeit superficial, consensus among the different groups involved in UN policymaking. The OECD blueprint may not have been reformulated substantially, but SSR was becoming an important label in policy-making.

To illustrate this, it is worth quoting the UN Secretary-General’s report on the role of the UN in supporting SSR and subsequently, review how the SSR has fared within the UN system:

For the United Nations, the importance of security sector reform is that it demonstrates that security goes beyond traditional military elements and involves a much wider range of national and international institutions and actors. It also highlights the need for security arrangements that take into account the linkages between the different actors. Equally, security sector reform underscores that effectiveness, accountability and democratic governance are mutually re-inforcing elements of security. Thus, security sector reform offers a framework to assist

national actors, the United Nations and other international partners in implementing a shared vision (UNSG 2008:6-7).

By emphasizing that effectiveness, accountability and democratic governance are ‘mutually reinforcing’ and that SSR offers a framework for implementing a ‘shared vision,’ the Secretary-General downplayed the inherent tension that exists between different actors and their various interests. The security and justice field is no longer related to conflict, but rather a harmonious field of co-operation, without fundamental conflicts of interest. Clearly, this is not the intention of the Secretary-General, and later in the report he makes the point that SSR is a highly political process that requires knowledge and sensitivity (ibid.:11).

By trying to embrace the justice and security field as a whole, SSR policies in their holistic, all-encompassing configuration allowed numerous agencies within the UN to claim to be working within its remit. This was one of the conclusions from a review undertaken in 2006, which mapped out peace-building capacities in the UN system. Seven UN entities indicated involvement in SSR. Despite this, the report stated that “the overall UN capacity in SSR, understood as support both to governance and to the development of national capacity in core security operational tasks, remains limited, when not practically non-existent” (UN 2006:21).

SSR as an emerging constitutive assemblage of the justice and security field had become an international policy to which a number of UN agencies were now subscribing. As a formula to operate on dysfunctional political entities and establish them as effective and legitimate states, SSR was being taken up as one of the significant concepts *de jour* in the mid-2000s. Even agencies that had hitherto actively avoided engagement in the justice and security field were now using, articulating and fighting over how and when to apply the label.

From its point of origin, articulated by Short in the late 1990s, the concept of SSR was shaping speeches made far beyond Palace Street in London as part of an international working discourse in the justice and security field. Short might have articulated a process that was already under way, but the manner in which the concept was developed by DFID

in the late 1990s and early 2000s was given further shape by and shaping OECD-DAC and UN debates and other discursive developments. In short, SSR had become a stake at stake.

4.7.3 UN Development Programme >< Department for Peacekeeping Operations

In 2006, only the UN's UNDP and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) had dedicated resources – albeit limited – for working with questions of security governance, law enforcement and defense institutions. Little love is lost between the two agencies, and the fact that SSR was being discussed – and fought over – as a stake at stake is indicative of this. Both agencies considered themselves to be the natural focal point for developing a coherent UN approach to SSR. Having been actively involved in the conceptualization of the field in OECD-DAC deliberations, and having formulated its own approach to SSR and transitional justice in 2003, the UNDP considered it obvious that they should be in charge. In the end, however, the Secretary-General requested DPKO to host an inter-agency support unit for SSR; since then, the DPKO has been taking the lead in formulating UN policies.

This conflict did not only relate to power struggles, access to resources and positioning in terms of defining the contours and direction of the SSR concept. Organizational origins matter, of course, and the siting of SSR within DPKO affected the balance between the various elements of SSR and how it developed. UNDP tends to be concerned with governance and development, thus following DFID and OECD-DAC ('developmentalization of security'), whereas DPKO's main focus is on security and stability, which are more closely aligned to train-and-equip ('securitization of development').

However, the aim of both UNDP and DPKO has been to encompass the justice and security field as a whole and ensure that justice and security institutions are both effective and accountable. Comparing the SSR discussions in the UN with the OECD-DAC debates of the mid-2000s, it seems that the focus now is on the need for effective security institutions, especially with respect to the police and the military. In effect, the consequence within the UN has been a re-balancing of SSR towards a focus on

securitization rather than a developmentalization of SSR as promoted by DFID and OECD-DAC.

As the concept of SSR travelled from its inceptive articulations in London to other capitals in Europe and was used in debates and policies of intergovernmental forums, it continued to be formulated in languages of stateness. SSR emerged during the early to mid-2000s as an instrument of state-building that outlined ways to build the capacity of a given security organization, and was developed to support the transformation of the justice and security field altogether.

The UN Secretary-General's (2008b) notion that "security goes beyond traditional military elements and involves a much wider range of...institutions and actors" should be taken quite literally. SSR morphed and was articulated differently, depending on the institutional setting in which it assembled and the meaning that was applied to it. While the emphasis might have been different, however, it was evident that the overarching aim was the same, namely, to build a centrally-governed state entity that was legitimate and effective. This was the case even when the 'non-state' appeared on the stage of international policy-making. Yet while the non-state was an uncomfortable issue for SSR to deal with, it was a clear indication that developmentalization of security was occurring.

4.8 Separating state and non-state in the multi-layered approach

In debates on SSR, discussions on the 'effective and legitimate state' have included the engagement of non-state actors, which refers to, *inter alia*, traditional or customary authorities, community-based policing groups, restorative justice and mediation organizations and work associations (DFID 2004; OECD 2007a; DANIDA 2010; OHCHR 2006; Albrecht and Kyed 2011:10). One could argue that the articulation of this category of actors acknowledges a hybrid order, i.e., that the authority to act in the justice and security field comes from multiple sources in concrete physical space and from the symbolic space of the national level. And, indeed, its emergence in SSR discourse constitutes one of the most innovative elements of SSR as it has evolved since the 1990s within bi-lateral and multi-lateral development agencies. However, emergence of the non-

state also inadvertently re-produced the state as standing above, while also encompassing society.

In the discourse of international policy-making, the rationale of what has been dubbed a ‘multi-layered’ approach is that rather than providing support to those security and justice organizations that are tied specifically to the state idea and system, state as well as non-state actors must be involved in SSR processes simultaneously. “What fragile state justice and security delivery requires, therefore,” OECD (2007a:11) notes, “is a multi-layered approach. It is a methodology that is highly context-specific, targeting donor assistance to those providers – state and non-state actors simultaneously – at the multiple points at which actual day-to-day service delivery occurs.” This approach has been particularly pronounced in the area of justice, where informal mechanisms of dispute resolution, through customary law, for instance, are regularly included in rule of law programs. It is also an approach that DFID is more comfortable with, as it appears to be more in line with the mantra of development agencies, i.e., support of the poor, the vulnerable and the marginalized.

The 2007 OECD report quoted above, *Enhancing the Delivery of Justice and Security*, draws on a definition of non-state actors produced by DFID in 2004,⁵³ and argues that the intention is to “reinforce the already existing range of choice that users have in fragile states while developing providers’ service delivery to make it more effective, fair, accessible, accountable and rights respecting” (OECD 2007a:7; Scheye and McLean 2006). This realization by external actors was caused by their frustration with collapsed and fragile state institutions that were considered not to develop at a suitable pace; it also was also a genuine attempt to be what in policy-making circles is referred to as ‘context-sensitive’. Thus, the “local context should determine what development occurs when, how and in what order, as the provision of justice and security is based upon historical legacies,

⁵³ In 2004 DFID published its first coherent brief on the issue, *Non-state Justice and Security Systems*, which states that security and justice institutions presided over by non-state actors are “critically important in the context of DFID’s pro-poor approach to security and justice.” These actors,” the brief continues, “deal with the vast majority of disputes” and are “widely used in rural and poor urban areas, where there is often minimal access to formal state justice” (DFID, 2004:1). The brief recognizes that this approach to reform is politicized, is neither neutral nor technical, and raises broader governance issues. There often is no separation between providing security and justice, on the one hand, and local governance institutions on the other: “A person who exercises judicial (or quasi-judicial) authority through a non-state justice system may also have executive authority over the same property or territory” (DFID 2004:3).

cultural value systems, political calculations and intricate balances of power” (OECD 2007a:6).

Inherent to this debate, however, has been a separation of the state and the non-state and a consolidation of the two categories of actors in separate domains (Boege et al. 2009; Eriksen 2011; Albrecht and Kyed 2010, 2011). This means that while the importance of non-state actors is acknowledged, it is the conceptual principle of state-building, the centrally-governed political entity, that continues to dominate, a point of departure that is consolidated in the 2007 OECD *Handbook on Security System Reform*. This report states that a multi-layered approach “helps respond to the short-term needs of enhanced security and justice, while also building the medium-term needs of state capacity and critical governance structures” (OECD 2007c:17).

The category of a ‘non-state actor’ becomes etymologically defined by what it is *not*, namely a centrally-governed functioning state; it is ‘a local context’ in which other rules than those of ‘the state’ presumably apply. These rules are, however, precisely context-specific, locked in a black box labeled non-state, and therefore not to be spoken of in the same general terms as the state, its accountability and rule of law. This may be because the western universalist state is considered equivalent to the correct political entity, but it is certainly also because the language to eloquently talk about what ‘the non-state’ is, is poorly developed.

In sum, state-building remains innate to the multi-layered approach to SSR. OECD’s *Enhancing the Delivery of Justice and Security* (OECD 2007a), which represents the multi-layered approach in its most radical form, warns that whatever support is provided “to non-state systems [must] be balanced by the establishment of mechanisms to link them to state systems” (OECD 2007a:24; Scheye and McLean 2006:32). This assumption is not hybrid, but implies that the non-state exists in isolation due to the weakness, fragility or failure of the state. The multi-layered approach suggests that it is necessary to extend state control into areas where the influence of the state is limited or non-existent by means of building state legitimacy and capacity.

In other words, the multi-layered approach is not a matter of recognizing, working with and supporting a hybrid order. It is a plea to accept and work with the ‘local’ order that exists until such a time when the state can take over. How state institutions operate and should be operated may be under discussion, but it is the state as a centrally-governed political entity, standing above and at the same time encompassing, controlling and regulating society that is to be built and consolidated. “Benign neglect or toleration (by the state and donors) of non-state systems” may be necessary, the OECD (2007a:28) notes, but this is only “until the state can take over service provision.”

Multi-layered approaches to justice and security programming thus become tautological. They take the fragile or failing state as their point of departure and argue that it needs to be re-built because it has failed. Until this happens, swathes of other actors may fill in, and as such, ‘multi-layered’ becomes a means, not an end (Scheye and Andersen 2007; Baker 2007). “In the long term,” OECD (2007a:20) notes, “supporting the delivery of state justice and security may be the ‘first best’ solution. However, even with the political commitment of the government, most fragile states have exceedingly limited resources and means to provide safety and justice to their citizens in the short- and medium-term.”

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter describes how SSR emerged as an international policy-making concept in the justice and security field and produced a particular amalgamation of security and development. At first glance, this is an example of a securitization and subordination of the development agenda (Duffield 2001, 2006). However, with respect to SSR specifically, it is equally the case that this process of policy development has been one of developmentalizing security (Albrecht et al. 2010).

First, SSR assembled as a policy concept and branched out within the framework of development agencies. DFID initially articulated this melding of numerous processes, including post-Cold War changes in the global security environment, Short’s political ambitions in the UK as the head of a new department within a newly-elected UK government and events unfolding in places such as Sierra Leone. Thus, SSR developed as

a set of discourses and practices in the justice and security field emanating from numerous political processes and physical locales that interacted and shaped one another. Concurrently, and inter-twined with this process, the SSR agenda was promoted internationally to a large degree by DFID, as well as by other governments and multilateral agencies such as OECD-DAC and the UN.

Second, and of importance to the developmentalization of security argument, the justice and security assemblage that SSR came to represent did not simply constitute the advancement of train-and-equip exercises narrowly focused on making a particular security institution more effective (if not legitimate). On the contrary, SSR took form and was articulated in international policy discourse during the 2000s, when new development concepts were spawned and old ones were incorporated, dissected and reconfigured, including ‘good governance’, ‘holistic’ and ‘multi-layered’ approaches. Compared to only procuring equipment and providing training to armed forces, SSR thus constitutes a comprehensive and considerably more intrusive approach to state-building. Being holistic implies the targeting of not one organization within, but the justice and security field as a whole, as a system of related actors to be reassembled within a framework of centrally-governed institutions.

Introducing the multi-layered approach into the SSR discourse reflected a nascent realization that in re-assembling the justice and security field to form part of an ‘effective and legitimate state’, the engagement of so-called non-state actors would be critical in a fragile state setting. This was not, however, a fundamentally different approach to state-building, but rather an attempt to separate the state and non-state and work on both “until the state can take over service provision” (OECD 2007a:28).

However, the concept of justice and security assemblages that I deploy to analyze the hybrid order challenges the idea that non-state and state actors exist as pure entities to be worked upon rather than as inter-connected network of things, discourse and actors. The focus on the ‘non-state’ as separate from, and yet etymologically emerging from what it is not (i.e., a state), ultimately re-produces the split between state and society. State-building remained the primary goal of SSR, and the multi-layered approach was articulated to allow intermediate steps to be taken until the state would emerge.

In the next chapter I turn to how SSR as a component of state-building became part of re-composing the justice and security field in Sierra Leone. However, while it came to define the building of a state in Sierra Leone, as an assemblage it was inter-twined with a number of other activities and events, including a military intervention and the arrest of actors who explicitly articulated hybridity. At the same time, it proved to be inevitable that hybridity would lie at the base of this process, and thus inevitable that the hybrid order would be reproduced.

5 Re-composing the justice and security field

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how seeking to re-compose the justice and security field became one of the most important efforts of the state-building process in Sierra Leone, an effort that has continued to this day. It demonstrates that while SSR in the late 1990s became a vital element of this internationally-supported process of re-composing the Sierra Leone justice and security field, so was fighting a war against the RUF and arresting a number of war criminals. While the UK drove these actions forward in the name of the Sierra Leone state, they ultimately lay the foundation of reproducing the hybrid order of authority upon which Sierra Leone as a political entity rests.

Perceived by a number of academics to lack efficiency and legitimacy, Sierra Leone's eventual failure as a state led to a devastating and brutal conflict that spurred the UN and the UK in particular into action (Jackson and Albrecht 2010:6-7; see Fanthorpe 2006; Gberie 2005; Keen 2005; Pham 2006). However, since speaking in languages of stateness is the only way in which Sierra Leone may be articulated as a failed state, it can fail only in comparison to what is considered to be a functioning state. As this chapter demonstrates, Sierra Leone never was the kind of political entity envisioned through state-building, and therefore can not be measured according to the concept of the western universalist state (see Jackson 1990; Clapham 1996; Mamdani 1996; Herbst 2000; Young 2004; Englebert and Tull 2008).

By the mid- to late 1990s, articulating trends in global policy discourse, insecurity and conflict were “holding out the prospect of development,” as UK Minister of Development Clare Short put it, in Sierra Leone and elsewhere (Clare Short, interview, June 2008). Once underdevelopment and poor governance came to be seen by international policy-makers as the ‘root causes’ of fragility and failure (see Buur et al. 2007:9), they had to be addressed in order that Sierra Leone could emerge as a state that stands both above and encompasses, controls and regulates society.

This chapter first looks at the history of Sierra Leone and how it has been represented, not least in much academic writing, as destined to fail and collapse into conflict following its

independence in 1961. The chapter then explores the perceived state of dissolution that met external actors as they arrived in Sierra Leone in the late 1990s to embark on state-building.

The latter part of the chapter outlines the process of re-composition of the field, which occurred in the first stages of state building in Sierra Leone. Led in large part by the UK, these processes included a military intervention and arresting identified war criminals. They also included the initiation of a number of programs under the heading of SSR that together were to begin the process of transforming Sierra Leone into a centrally-governed political entity of the western universalist variety. While the history of the state of Sierra Leone may have been marked by a trajectory that led to failure, re-composition of the justice and security field would reverse this trend.

5.2 Sierra Leone's articulation as a failed state

When Sierra Leone became independent in 1961, Sir Milton Margai, the country's first prime minister, greeted the event with the words: "Sierra Leone will become a model state" (Allen 1968:305). This section outlines Sierra Leone's recent history and how it evolved as a political entity, eventually articulated by external observers as failing to emerge as a 'model state'.

5.2.1 Sierra Leone: underdeveloped and chaotic

In 1994, at the height of Sierra Leone's civil war, an article titled *The coming anarchy: How scarcity, crime, overpopulation and disease are rapidly destroying the social fabric of our planet* was published in *Atlantic Monthly*. Written by journalist Robert D. Kaplan, it vividly described the political entity Sierra Leone had become: underdeveloped, poorly governed and in a state of anarchy. Sierra Leone's conflict was seen as a prime example of "new war," i.e., war fought within a country, as compared to the traditional paradigm of inter-state war articulated in the 19th century by Clausewitz. It was also an example of what transpires when states collapse. Kaplan wrote:

Sierra Leone is... a microcosm of what is occurring, albeit in a more tempered and gradual manner, throughout West Africa and much of the underdeveloped world: the withering away of central governments, the rise of tribal and regional domains, the unchecked spread of disease and the growing pervasiveness of war. West Africa is reverting to the Africa of the Victorian Atlas. It consists now of a series of coastal trading posts, such as Freetown and Conakry, and an interior that, owing to violence, volatility and disease, is again becoming, as Graham Greene once observed, 'blank' and 'unexplored'. However, whereas Greene's vision implies a certain romance, as in the somnolent and charmingly seedy Freetown of his celebrated novel 'The Heart of the Matter', it is Thomas Malthus, the philosopher of demographic doomsday, who is now the prophet of West Africa's future. And West Africa's future, eventually, will also be that of most of the rest of the world (Kaplan 1994).

Kaplan's core thesis was that after the Cold War, Sierra Leone's "modern" state vanished, leaving its people to live in collapsing state spaces. In the absence of centrally-governed institutions, the people turned to traditional organizational modes of governance that were not constrained by modern law or human rights. Sierra Leone, Kaplan explained, had become an ideal type failed state, molded partly by conflict between the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), which had come to power through a military coup in 1992, and the main rebel group, the RUF.

Kaplan described the "withering away" of Sierra Leone as a governed space and what happens when the state as a bulwark against instability, disorder and chaos dissolves. Warlords, shadow economies, collapse and ensuing violence prevailed, along with environmental degradation, illegal trading, child soldiers and extreme violence against civilians. Atrocities committed during the war were unspeakably violent.

However, two questions emerge after reading Kaplan's analysis: What were the standards by which the Government of Sierra Leone failed? If languages of stateness are not articulated 'effectively' and 'legitimately', how and by what means is authority expressed, in order to make order?

5.2.2 The disappointment of patrimonial promises and its consequences

By all accounts, the Sierra Leone government after independence in 1961 failed to articulate stateness, which, according to most academic (and policy) accounts, contributed in large part to the conflict that began in 1991. However, measured against standards of effectiveness and legitimacy, Sierra Leone never experienced a state formation process that would cause it to become the form familiar to those accustomed to the centralized state that emerged in 19th century Western Europe.

This circumstance is often emphasized in the literature on post-colonial states, and African states in particular. The literature points to these states' low levels of civic culture and social capital, considerable ethnic diversity, and inheritance of what are often considered artificial frameworks of governance from the colonial state (Jackson, 1990; Clapham 1996; Mamdani 1996; Herbst 2000; Young 2004; Englebert and Tull 2008).⁵⁴

In the words of Peters (2006:44), "the international system of states from 1960 forced Sierra Leone to behave (externally) as if it was a Weberian (territorial) state." The Sierra Leone state is therefore better described according to Peters (ibid.) as a "personal-amorphous polity," a form that favors personal linkages between rulers and ruled, and resists bureaucratization. However, the "steady decline in state power" that Peters (2006:44) speaks of is not a decline from a bureaucratized and centrally-governed state. What the 'decline' has been from is therefore worth further investigation.

In his analysis of Sierra Leone as a 'shadow state' and why it collapsed, Reno (1995) emphasizes the significant accumulation of riches by the powerful few; a miniscule and shrinking formal economy; accelerating mass impoverishment; a crushing debt burden; and the collapse of basic state institutions. Since independence from the UK in 1961, Sierra Leone's political system was characterized by attempts to increase centralization of power and resources in Freetown and the continuing of the split in governing structures from the rest of the country (Jackson and Albrecht 2011:6). Part and parcel of this split was a continuation of the colonial bifurcation of western legal systems in Freetown and indirect

⁵⁴ Indeed, Tilly (1985) refers to 19th century state formation in Europe as 'organized crime', a top-down system which expressed the spatial logic of coercion and extraction and which was driven by war (Tilly 1985:304).

rule in the countryside based on a system of District Officers – with no executive powers from 1972 – and Chiefs exercising customary law. Indeed, one could say, lack of, rather than resistance to bureaucratization in the state system and beyond has in effect meant tacit consent to what Peters (2006:43) refers to as “the legalization of various states of domestic dependency, amounting at the most extreme to *de facto* domestic slavery.”

However, the failure of the state of Sierra Leone was not caused by the inability of a centrally-governed set of institutions – the state system – to provide public services. Rather, the leadership in Freetown failed to maintain the extensive neo-patrimonial network which had been established and consolidated during the post-colonial era (Reno 1995; Keen 2005; Peters 2006; Fanthorpe 2001). This was the case under the Margais, who ruled until 1968 when the mayor of Freetown, Siaka Stevens, who became Prime Minister and then President in 1972, as well as under his successor, Major General Joseph Momoh, who came to power in 1985 and was ousted in the 1992 military coup by the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC).

Richards, (1996) referring explicitly to Sierra Leone as a ‘patrimonial state’ where national resources were (and continue to be) re-distributed as marks of personal favor, considered this type of political entity to be in a double crisis in Africa in the mid-1990s. The price of raw materials was in free-fall and the termination of the Cold War had caused aid money to dry up. In addition, the best sources of minerals had been exhausted (see Peters 2006:32). As Peters (2006:6) notes, “Young people, socio-economically marginalized [from networks of patrimony], soon proved to be a large reservoir to be tapped by those who wanted to cause mayhem.” Indeed, the RUF recruited mainly from a social and economic underclass of people, such as poorly-paid diamond diggers (ibid.:5).

By the 1990s, Sierra Leone had developed into what Reno (1995) describes as “one of Africa’s most decrepit and weak states,” a dramatic use of language that leaves one wondering just how failed a state might become. Failed or not, according to Reno, the success and strength of the patrimonial network of Stevens and his successor, General Momoh, was also evident. Despite a “shockingly rapid economic decline and falling standards of living, the country remained immune from coups or popular uprisings which some outside observers had long predicted” (Reno 1995:148). Nonetheless, due to the

breadth and depth of the crisis that the country was considered to be in, the collapse of Stevens' patrimonial system would prove inevitable.

5.2.3 Demands for structural adjustments

Pressures on patrimonial networks were compounded by Sierra Leone's relationship with international financial institutions, the IMF in particular. To access IMF loans, Momoh agreed to the aforementioned structural adjustment program (SAP), but failed to comply with its provisions.⁵⁵ By late 1987, the country was approaching default and Momoh declared a state of economic emergency. This proved to be the final blow for the country that hit average citizens the hardest: electricity blackouts, petrol shortages and delays in paying civil servants for months on end became the harsh reality. In effect, both the system and the idea of the state were soon to become the target of violence.

In order to survive, the patrimonial regime was forced to choose between the accommodation of immediate patrimonial demands – for instance, by supplying cheap imported rice to its clients, including the army and the police⁵⁶ – and its longer-term needs for survival through the provision of jobs and educational opportunities for loyal subjects (Richards 1996). Momoh, a former commander of the army, did not want to upset the already delicate balance in the justice and security field and run the risk of a coup or uprising. But his choice to prioritize his personal short-term security came at a high cost. The educational sector, the health sector and other social services were now deprived of the extra resources they needed to survive, and the general public – young people in particular – became restive.

⁵⁵ In 1979, the IMF negotiated an economic stabilization plan, which included the demand that the Sierra Leone government limit state spending. This meant, in particular, reducing civil service expenditures. Minor government jobs were an important means of securing loyalty to the state system. However, Stevens also planned to host the Organization of African unity conference in 1980. This yearly conference – an opportunity for the host country to impress visiting presidents – left Sierra Leone with huge debts and an almost useless infrastructure. With total costs amounting to US\$ 200 million, equal to the country's entire foreign exchange reserves, the government sharply cut its budget for development and social programs (Peters 2006:32; 2011:43-44).

⁵⁶ Sierra Leone had a vested interest in declaring itself in food deficit. Food imports allowed the president to buy the loyalty of junior cadres by showing an interest in family welfare. Stevens gave exclusive import authorization to the former state-owned enterprises, in which he often had a share. In 1984, Sierra Leone imported almost three times as much rice as it did in 1978. Domestic production dropped more than 30% (Peters 2011:44).

5.2.4 A predatory justice system

Among other consequences of the reduction in patrimonial re-distribution were increasing problems in the justice system, where the lowest levels of administration in rural areas became more than usually strapped for cash. This resulted in village headmen and local court chairmen ‘paying themselves’ through arbitrary and excessive fines and exactions levied on young people (Richards 2005).

Appeals of such fines – impossibly expensive for most villagers, in any case – could be made to the magistrate’s court and eventually to the High Court. However, at the national level, appeals are heard in a special section in which a judge is advised by special assessors deemed to be experts in customary law (i.e., by traditional elders). There was a strong feeling among young people in the villages that elders make up the law to suit their own purposes.

The foundation and conception of what Reno (1995) refers to as the ‘shadow state’ is historically tied to colonial indirect rule that was a pragmatic response to the need of the colonial administration to govern the Sierra Leonean hinterland at a minimum cost. Post-colonial leadership in Sierra Leone, first under Stevens and then under Momoh, adopted this system of governance, and had limited incentives to embark on developing a political entity that, to the outside observer, would be considered a ‘strong state’. Rather, Stevens had been preoccupied with preserving political security and with preventing competitors from accessing resources channeled through institutions tied to the state system. This was evident in how he dealt with the mining industry, the police and the military.

5.2.5 Personalizing the state further – mining and security

As part of Stevens’ attempt to build a bulwark against competitors, the mining industry was nationalized. Through the National Diamond Mining Company (NDMC) created in 1971, Stevens came to control the mining and selling of diamonds. Chiefs, in exchange for a place on the board of the NDMC or access to its resources, co-operated with the

government (Reno 1995). Patrimonial economic politics also played out at the local level, where “strangers” – i.e., migrant laborers, not Lebanese businessmen⁵⁷ – were involved in illicit diamond mining under the protection of the local landowner. Since these local landowners, who were often paramount and lesser chiefs, could always threaten illicit diamond miners with prosecution by state officials, the diamond-landowning class was able to exercise practically unlimited informal social control.

Stevens not only nationalized mining, the most important source of income in Sierra Leone, but reformed the army and the police to ensure loyalty from both. Military officers with a Mende background were removed and replaced with northerners – Tens, Korankos or Yalunkas – the traditional supporters of Stevens’ the All People’s Congress (APC) party. In 1971, the army staged a coup led by Brigade Commander John Bangura, a Temne, but it failed. Stevens immediately received support from Guinea in the form of 200 soldiers who served as personal bodyguards (see Reno 2003:325). After the Guinean soldiers left in 1973, Stevens asked the Cuban government to help train a special APC militia. This militia was named the Internal Security Unit (ISU) and was much feared by the people.

5.2.6 From patrimonial failure to violent conflict

By the 1980s, the political and economic condition of the patrimonial system had weakened considerably due to the lack of available resources. Yet, while war was not inevitable, it became the outcome.

Eventually, sufficient pressure was put on Momoh to force a constitutional review in 1991.⁵⁸ However, in March of that year, the RUF entered Sierra Leone, seeking to overthrow the one-party APC regime under Momoh. In the following decade of war, Sierra Leone became known for the brutality shown by the warring factions towards the

⁵⁷ Lebanese traders achieved rapid prosperity in both small- and large-scale commerce in Sierra Leone from the end of the 19th century on (see Reno 1995).

⁵⁸ The constitutional review commission recommended the re-establishment of a multi-party state, which was approved by Parliament in July 1991.

population⁵⁹ and military coups in 1992 and 1997.⁶⁰ Furthermore, security assemblages of state-sanctioned soldiers, traditional hunters, rebel factions and dissidents from the security forces took form, sometimes fighting and sometimes colluding with each another (Richards 1996; Keen 2005; Peters 2006; Jackson and Albrecht 2010).

The stated aim of RUF was to fight government corruption and claim accountability for the country's mineral resources (Peters 2006:4). On the ground, however, this agenda was quickly replaced by taking control of rich resource areas such as Kono and a revolt against social and political figures of authority, *inter alia*, police officers and chiefs (Richards 2006; Fanthorpe 2006; Jackson 2007).

In 1999, as the RUF entered Freetown, witnesses described "well-organized operations to round up civilians who were later executed, attacked with machetes" (HRW 1999). The violence perpetrated by the RUF was broadcast globally when a journalist in the city managed to film the rebels and then peacekeepers in action. He recorded the rebels' burning to death a family that had refused to become human shields and paranoid Nigerian peacekeepers beating a mentally-disturbed child they had mistaken for a sniper. All of this is captured in the 2000 documentary *Cry Freetown* (Jackson and Albrecht 2010:7).

⁵⁹ A frequently cited Human Rights Watch report describes the approach adopted by the RUF as they entered Freetown in 1999: "The rebel occupation of Freetown was characterized by the systematic and widespread perpetration of all classes of gross human rights abuses against the civilian population. Civilians were gunned down within their houses, rounded up and massacred on the streets, thrown from the upper floors of buildings, used as human shields, and burnt alive in cars and houses. They had their limbs hacked off with machetes, eyes gouged out with knives, hands smashed with hammers, and bodies burned with boiling water. Women and girls were systematically sexually abused, and children and young people abducted by the hundreds. The rebels made little distinction between civilian and military targets. They repeatedly stated that they believed civilians should be punished for what they perceived to be their support for the existing government. Thus, the rebels waged war against the civilian population through human rights abuses. While there was some targeting of particular groups, such as Nigerians, police officers, journalists and church workers, the vast majority of atrocities were committed by rebels who chose their victims apparently at random..." (HRW 1999).

⁶⁰ In the first military coup in 1992 the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), a group of young officers headed by Valentine Strasser, came to power. Strasser and his successors were ineffective to the extent that there was an increase in the RUF's power until the involvement of the South African mercenary firm Executive Outcomes in 1995. Eventually, increasing demands in Freetown for elections, coupled with international pressure, persuaded the NPRC to hand over power to a civilian government. Following two conferences in the Bintumani Hotel in Freetown, elections were held in 1996; Ahmad Tejan Kabbah of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) was elected president. Two months later, discussion between the SLPP and RUF eventually led to the Abidjan Peace Accords of November 1996. The unwillingness of either party to agree to disarmament led to a breakdown of peace by early 1997. This led to the second military coup in Freetown, staged by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), and the democratically-elected SLPP government was subsequently exiled to Conakry, Guinea (Jackson and Albrecht 2010:9).

During the conflict, out of a total population of approximately 6 million, some 50,000 people were estimated to have been killed, around 500,000 became refugees and another 500,000 were classified as internally displaced (Horn et al. 2006). At the same time, the systems of governance and physical infrastructure of state institutions, symbols that clearly articulate the language and power of the state, had been destroyed by the RUF. Paramount and lesser chiefs had fled the countryside or been killed (Jackson 2007).

The signing of the Lomé Peace Accord in July 1999 formalized a ceasefire between the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF, and brought the civil war to a momentary end. However, the power-sharing agreements inherent in Lomé resulted in what Tull and Mehler (2005:395) have referred to as a “warlord’s peace.” Implementation of key areas of the agreement was painfully slow, and disarmament and demobilization deadlines were not met (CR 2000:83). By early 2000, the situation triggered further RUF violence and renewed conflict.

Following the brutality of the violence visited on the civilian population and the failure of the Lomé Agreement, the international community, including the UK government, was spurred into action (Jackson and Albrecht 2011:5). A group of senior UK politicians decided that they could not allow Sierra Leone to fall apart; the UK eventually intervened in 2000 during a period when UN peacekeepers were threatened by the warring factions and when the UN commander in the field, General Jetley, openly accused the Nigerian troops within the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) of colluding with the RUF to profit from illicit diamond mining. One year after the signing of the Lomé Agreement, Sierra Leone was yet again on the brink of falling apart.⁶¹

⁶¹ The UN intervention under the banner of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) was plagued by a number of issues immediately after deployment. A chronic lack of resources was exacerbated by misplaced faith in the Lomé Agreement itself, but also by fundamental disagreements at the top-level between the civilian Nigerian Head of Mission on the one side and Deputy Force Commander and Indian Force Commander on the other. In April 2000 a hostage crisis arose when several UN peacekeeping units were surrounded by a re-animated RUF; several units managed to fight their way out and many held out until they were rescued by UNAMSIL and UK troops. By mid-2001 there were around 15-17,000 UNAMSIL troops on the ground along with the UK troop contingent.

5.3 Sierra Leone and the UK

Given its historical colonial ties and for sheer humanitarian reasons, the UK was concerned with developments inside Sierra Leone. But UK interests in Sierra Leone had intensified due to other events as well. The so-called Sandline affair had occurred in 1998, which involved Tim Spicer, a former British officer in the UK army and owner of Sandline, a private military company that shipped arms illegally to Sierra Leone (see Abrahamsen and Williams 2011:154).⁶² Following this incident, there was widespread agreement at the highest levels of the UK government that a similar situation of diplomatic importance could not occur again (Clare Short, interview, 2008). Robin Cook, UK Secretary of State in the late 1990s, mentioned this concern to Colonel David Richards at a chance meeting between the two, immediately before the UK intervened militarily in Sierra Leone in 2000 (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:170).

Another story, based on hearsay, reports that Prime Minister Tony Blair had a predilection for Sierra Leone because his father had been a school teacher there (Jackson and Albrecht 2010:7). Clare Short mentioned to me in my aforementioned interview with her that “the first black person he [i.e., Blair] ever met was a Sierra Leonean” (Clare Short, interview, 2008, London). Ms Short also said:

“...suddenly Blair said he was interested in Africa, which I am afraid is a piece of public relations; after Iraq he wanted to soften the image. Because it is remarkable, he really didn’t engage [in matters to do with Africa] at all in the first term, apart from that one Sierra Leone decision [i.e., to engage in Sierra Leone]” (Clare Short, interview, 2008, London).

With Blair’s and Cook’s significant investments of authority, and a general sense, as Ms Short explained, that “we mustn’t do this to Sierra Leone” (Clare Short, interview, 2008, London), the UK eventually intervened militarily and went on to take a leading role in the state-building process that followed. Thus, the UK Government became part of a process that fundamentally altered how and by what means the stakes in the justice and security field were being fought over.

⁶² The arms shipment had been sanctioned, in part, by the then British High Commissioner, Peter Penfold.

The next section provides detail on what the failure of the state of Sierra Leone looked like on the ground to some of the key external advisors who arrived in Sierra Leone to take part in the state-building efforts. Subsequently, I explore in some detail about what state-building and re-composition of the justice and security field entailed, including not only an overhaul of the armed forces and establishment of an effective police force, but also a military operation and jailing of perceived war criminals.

5.4 The chaos of the hybrid order

It is difficult to articulate an order of hybridity that is forced upon you. It is a challenge to capture the logic in what appears to be a fundamentally disorganized justice and security field, when habits and dispositions to act in certain ways and schemes of perception are ordered according to and articulated in languages of stateness. Mike Dent, a retired UK Colonel, who arrived in Freetown in June 1999 as a member of a two-man advisory team to the Sierra Leone government's newly-established Ministry of Defense, did not see any order in the failure of the state, only illegitimate, makeshift expressions of authority.

Dent vividly described what he observed upon entering Sierra Leone. "You will appreciate," he once wrote in an email, "that the situation when we arrived in Freetown in June 1999 was 'fluid' and close to anarchic, with little or no effective police force, a myriad of different armed groups 'policing' the city, [and] with ECOMOG⁶³ providing security" (Mike Dent, email, 2008). He described the reality he had entered:

We found Freetown in complete disarray and still in a state of virtual war. The functions of state had practically collapsed with ministries in confusion and officials lacking clear aims and direction. Most businesses and government offices had been looted and vandalized during the January 1999 AFRC/RUF [rebel] attack and had not been repaired and much of the city's infrastructure had been destroyed

⁶³ It was the civil war in neighboring Liberia that prompted the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a 16-nation group formed in 1975, to set up an armed Monitoring Group – ECOMOG – in 1990. A non-standing military force, ECOMOG was composed of soldiers from the national armies of member states. In practice, Nigeria contributed most troops, material and financial backing. ECOMOG was deployed to Sierra Leone after President Kabbah was overthrown in the second military coup in 1997; it reinstated him in 1998.

or badly damaged. We were taken by car to the Ministry of Defence in Freetown to meet the Deputy Minister of Defence. On the journey from our accommodation, we passed through seven checkpoints manned by various groups of armed persons. From their dress it was difficult to ascertain if they were military, civilian, police or all three! The rule of law and order appeared to have broken down completely (Mike Dent, notes, 2008).

An order articulated by any standards other than stateness was not available to Dent. The symbolic appellation of stateness through law and legal discourse had vanished, and permanent signs and symbols such as buildings and uniformed personnel did not clearly express the stateness of the state. In the midst of conflict, the core language of governance, centering around territorial sovereignty and security forces, had morphed into indistinct assemblages. Dent continued:

There was no water, electricity or other public services operating in the city. There were also large numbers of armed military, SLA [Sierra Leone Army] and ECOMOG, paramilitary Special Security Division (SSD) Police, civilians and CDF [Civil Defence Force],⁶⁴ roaming the city, occupying buildings, manning checkpoints throughout the town using threats of violence to extort money from the populace to permit free-passage. The SLP force was totally ineffective, untrusted (sic) and seemingly corrupt at every level. The SLA was commanded and controlled by Nigerian officers, who, it was alleged, were misappropriating cash, supplies and equipment for their own personal gain. There were no communication links to towns outside Freetown other than via radio and satellite telephone and no safe road access to other parts of the country beyond Masiaka (Mike Dent, notes, 2008).

From Dent's perspective, from the perspective of someone who had come to lead a state-building process, this was what failure looked like.

⁶⁴ The CDF was a group of local militias comprised of Kamajors, Donsos, Gbethis, Kapras, Tamaboros and from the Freetown peninsula, the Organized Body of Hunting Societies that used methods similar to the RUF to fight fire with fire.

5.4.1 The order of hybrid chaos

In the context of the war, a fundamental overhaul of the distribution of power within the justice and security field had occurred. This did not mean that an order did not exist, but the order that Dent observed was the rule of anarchy. In Freetown, civilians organized neighborhood security organizations street-by-street, so-called Civil Defense Units (CDU), as explained by Papa Ali, who lived in Freetown during the war, and had come to mine in Peyima in the 2000s where I met him. Having been a CDU commander, Ali explained that this system of self-protection had been organized out of sheer necessity: “Just to defend our area and properties because the rebels, when they drove the rebels out of the city [in 1999], they come and do some game, thief, and other things” (Papa Ali, interview, February 2009).

While Dent saw hybridity as chaos represented by consecutive checkpoints manned by unidentifiable security actors, Papa Ali was engaged in establishing localized spaces of order. This order however, was not articulated in languages of stateness, but in a kind of public authority in which Dent was dyslexic. “So the soldier joined the rebels,” Papa Ali explained, “so we stole the security. You are a civilian; the army is there to secure the civilians, to secure the state. But if the army turns against the state, who is to be security?” To Papa Ali, security – and insecurity – was something tangible to be produced, and if he did not produce it himself, somebody else would, and perhaps use it against him.

Keith Biddle, who in 1999 was head of UK-funded police programs in Sierra Leone and who would go on to become a central figure in re-establishing institutions to articulate an order of stateness as Inspector General of Police, regarded the CDUs as “extortion checkpoints.” The absence of what Biddle considered functioning state institutions led civilians to take the law into their own hands. Physical brutality was indeed reported at the checkpoints, as it was across the country, where forces wearing uniforms tying them to the state system and idea were in charge (Biddle, interview, June 2009).

People – and guns – could and did move freely into Freetown; in fact, the checkpoints were so porous that they were said to facilitate the particularly brutal attacks on the city that occurred in 1999-2000. Kellie Conteh, who became National Security Coordinator after the

war had ended, explained this from his perspective as a young Colonel in the army in the mid-1990s:

It came out clearly that we should begin to try and protect our towns by having task forces. They should be paying attention to attacks coming in and the size of the attack, the approach it is taking, and the kind of weapons they're having. I prepared something like that for Freetown. I wrote a memo to the force commander to say through all my visitations upcountry I am concerned that Freetown, especially with the perennial darkness in Freetown [due to lack of electricity], we don't seem to have any unit in place to counter attacks. I was even thinking of rebel attack in Freetown. You saw it everywhere they'll just spring up and boom! You would hear they've attacked Bo, boom! You'll hear they've attacked Kenema, boom! They've attacked another place.

When I come back from the provinces in the night you find these big trucks coming into the Freetown dark. The police at the checkpoints are playing the same old game. They'll just take from the driver whatever they can get and let him go (Kellie Conteh, interview, 2008).

Conteh, a man whose authority was generated by his being an army officer, articulated what Dent observed: namely the inability of those individuals claiming to represent 'the state' to act accordingly. The order established in the dis-articulation of the 'languages of stateness' was recognized by external advisors as chaos, rather than as the articulation of the type of public authority that emerged in the absence of permanent and visible military and police forces.

Biddle, Dent and Conteh all expressed what Andersen (2011:39) generally refers to as the "policy logic" of state failure: the state system within the internationally-defined territory of Sierra Leone had ceased to fulfill its functions, its institutions had collapsed. Sierra Leone had descended into chaos and anarchy. The aim of the external actors that came to Sierra Leone in support of President Kabbah and his government became one of detecting, isolating and working upon the armed forces, the police and intelligence services – all state organizations operating in the justice and security field.

However, re-composing the justice and security field was not only a matter of instituting a number of programs under the label of SSR. It also became a process of marginalizing, ignoring or eliminating the variety of hybrid organizational forms that were either criminalized or did not fit easily in the category of ‘state institutions and actors’.

5.5 Attempts to purge hybridity from the justice and security field

5.5.1 The power of the state idea

Dent expressed in the languages of stateness what the breakdown of the patrimonially networked governed space of Sierra Leone had become. Sets of institutions that demonstrated stateness in the justice and security field – articulated in visible forms of clearly identifiable enforcement – had fragmented. Accordingly, the messy distribution of capital within the justice and security field had generated a plethora of security-enforcing organizations with a multiplicity of effects. Each of them constituted separately-organized assemblages, drawing authority from numerous sources and spaces, including individual streets in Freetown (CDUs) and global political arenas (UN). From de-centered positions of power, a number of actors were thus seeking to lay claim to the legitimate use of force, but were not in a position to monopolize it.

Even as the ‘functions of state’, i.e., the state system, had apparently collapsed, however, as Dent observed, these were the institutions that continued to be a core stake at stake and a vital source of symbolic and economic capital to be fought over. For instance, actors who built armies of local militias and hunters organized around secret society membership and village safety outside Freetown were simultaneously laying claim to ministerial positions within Government. As an all-important political idea to be fought over, the centrally-governed state thus continued to manifest itself ideationally. However, a collapse in its systemic functions did not mean that the hybrid political formations that had come into existence were, or could be, under consideration as appropriate alternatives.

On the contrary, drawing upon the authority of an explicitly hybrid order was considered incompatible with the concept of a centrally-governed political entity. It expressed an intolerable breakdown of order. Thus, purging the justice and security field through the

criminalization and elimination of hybridity became an important element of the state-building effort. A state was to be built upon the rubble of the collapsed state; the languages of stateness were to mute the plurality of languages of authority that were being articulated. As an important part of detecting, isolating and working upon the state system, a number of hybrid actors considered criminals by external actors needed to be purged from the justice and security field.

5.5.2 Hybridity personified: Norman, Sankoh and Koroma

During the conflict of the 1990s, figures of power derived authority from sitting in government while also heading personalized security apparatuses. One of the central figures embodying that order was Samuel Hinga Norman, who led the mobilization and organization of the Civil Defence Force (CDF) on the national level. The CDF was widely perceived, most notably by the Sierra Leone Army, to be the SLPP government's *de facto* security force. The CDF, "Norman's militia" as Biddle called them, consisted of *kamajors*, a Mende term for traditional hunters (Keen 2005:90).

Keen (2005:90) notes that the "failings of government troops meant that civilians increasingly looked to their own devices for protection – and specifically to civil defence units."⁶⁵ The term *kamajors* was soon applied to civil defense groups across the country, a collective term for the Kapras and Gbetes among the Temne, the Donsos of Kono District and the Tamaboras of Koinadugu District and so forth (Keen 2005:90; Hoffman 2007:642).

Norman constituted the hybrid order brought to perfection, explicitly articulating stateness and public authority simultaneously. As the Regent Chief of Jiama-Bongor Chiefdom, he had built his power base as a key figure in the *kamajor* movement and was appointed SLPP's Deputy Minister of Defence from 1998-2002, and subsequently Minister of Interior from 2002-2004 (Fanthorpe 2001:365; Hoffman 2007:642). Many stories

⁶⁵ Keen (2005:90) further explains: "As hunters, Sierra Leone's kamajors were licensed to carry guns and knew the terrain near their home villages. Traditionally, kamajors had to be at least 30 years old, but as the war progressed, the term 'kamajor' was soon being used to describe more broadly-based civil defence organisations which included many younger people and relatively few professional hunters." The original kamajors were recognized for their ability to enter the forest and confront natural and supernatural beings, including dangerous animals like elephants, leopards and chimpanzees (Leach 1992:40-42). Kamajor rituals have tended to emphasize discipline, loyalty and self-sacrifice – qualities seen as lacking in the rebels and the army (Fithen 1999:196).

circulated about the infighting between the *kamajors* (and other irregular forces) and the army, incited by events such as the military overthrow of the SLPP in May 1997. Norman, however, was appointed to manage both the *kamajors* and the armed forces.

RUF leader Foday Sankoh, who was backed by Liberian President Charles Taylor, was not only pardoned of a treason conviction under the 1999 Lomé Peace Agreement, he was granted the status of Vice-President and given the coveted chairmanship of a Commission of Strategic Resources. At the same time, also after Lomé had been signed, the RUF behaved and considered themselves as the only legitimate governing body in the areas under their military control. (The particular way that the RUF was organized behind the frontline has been analyzed in great detail by Peters (2006)).

In collaboration with Sankoh and the RUF, Johnny Paul Koroma led the AFRC coup against the democratically elected SLPP government in 1997. While the AFRC was ‘kicked out’ of Freetown in 1998, as Peter Penfold noted (interview, March 2008), they, together with the RUF, invaded Freetown for the first time during the civil war in January 1999. After Lomé, Koroma was still at large, and eventually fled the country.

This list of actors is not exhaustive – it does not describe all the central actors in the war and their subsequent positions in the security and justice field. But these men, who were all indicted in 2003 by the Special Court, set up to try war criminals in Sierra Leone, are central to my discussion of hybrid orders. As Biddle noted, all three “were around. Don’t forget they were legitimate after Lomé” (Keith Biddle, interview, 2009, France).

Thus, a peace agreement signed by Sankoh of the RUF and Sierra Leone President Kabbah in the capital of Togo on 7 July 1999 was inadvertently constitutive of an attempt to re-establish the state-society split and to articulate figures such as Sankoh of the RUF in ‘languages of stateness’. Through the authority that a peace agreement constitutes, the rebel leader was transformed into a legitimate, governing actor that projected stateness. Sankoh’s access to the state, however, rather than constituting ‘statification’ of the RUF, led to a process of consolidation and the deepening of the very hybridization that Lomé had sought to eradicate.

While Sankoh was now Vice-President of post-Lomé Sierra Leone and in control of the ministry running the diamond industry, he did not speak or act according to expectations. Eventually, the hybrid construction that Lomé had realized and consolidated fell apart and led to the UK military intervention in 2000. Only by military means did a purge of the justice and security field of hybridity seem possible to outside observers. Indeed, only after the UK intervened militarily was the stateness of the state buttressed to the degree where it appeared to gain ground, both in legitimacy and certainly in the capacity to fight a war against the RUF.

In the late 1990s, however, the explicit (and to outsiders, intolerable) hybrid order articulated by actors such as Norman/CDF, Sankoh/RUF and Koroma/AFRC remained. Constitutive of the justice and security field, these three figures did not stand alone. ECOMOG was an active security organization at the time and intended to be a regional peacekeeping force. Primarily Nigerian in its composition, ECOMOG was seen as serving both the self-interest of its individual soldiers (who were allegedly involved in trading diamonds) and the wishes and policies of the Nigerian Government.

All of the armed groups “were running checkpoints and taking money off people”, Biddle recalls, “including the ECOMOG soldiers” (Keith Biddle, interview June 2009). In short, as one internal UK assessment noted in the late 1990s: “The armed forces have virtually ceased to exist.” Indeed, it was suggested that “the power held by the CDF extends in effect to a virtual monopoly of force in rural areas, which would be unchallenged if the ECOMOG force were to withdraw” (UK Government 1999). Norman, Sankoh and Koroma all claimed a significant share of the monopoly over the use of force, drawing on numerous sources of authority to make this claim. Indeed, the ‘war state’ that Sierra Leone had effectively become by the end of the 1990s was very much defined by these figures, certainly not by Kabbah, the democratically elected leader of the state, who was in exile in Conakry, Guinea, until 1998. With the support of the UK, however, this was about to change.

By this time, re-composing the justice and security field through state-building became about purging it of the kind of hybridity represented by these men. State-building standards required that no hybrid authority would be included in the centrally-governed set of

institutions that would constitute the justice and security field. The UK would only act in the name of such a state.

When Biddle became the Inspector-General of Police in Sierra Leone in November 1999, he was personally involved in coordinating the arrests of Norman, Sankoh and Koroma (the latter of whom escaped and was never found). In essence, these arrests continued the process of re-composing the hybrid order and re-establishing symbolic and physical space as the monopoly of state institutions. Thus, a state system was to be put in place that could determine the enforcement of security through the legitimate and capable use of ‘languages of stateness’.

Clare Short articulated the sentiment that hybridity was equal to collapse, anarchy and chaos: “We could not – we, being the British – could not let this fragile, but democratically-elected Government collapse. Now, I don’t think there was much theory behind that” (Clare Short, interview, June 2008). There was, of course, nothing but theory of stateness inherent in how UK actors perceived and acted upon what they experienced in Sierra Leone. For Short and other external actors, state-building was their conceptual articulation of relatively stable orientations and ways of acting. State-building might have appeared ‘un-theoretical’, but it carried with it a strong epistemological outlook on the world, what order looks like and by whom and what it is constituted.

And so, it is doubtful if the UK and other external actors, arriving in Sierra Leone where conflict determined the distribution of capital in the justice and security field, could have articulated what they observed as anything but chaotic, a state of emergency, illegitimate. Indeed, these actors coming in would have had to wage a war with their own epistemologies to accept the hybrid order as legitimate and work with it. Moreover, such an approach would preclude the possibility of establishing a coherent system of regulation, accountability and democratic governance articulated through ‘languages of stateness’.

In early 2000, the opportunity for a military intervention arose for the UK. While the Lomé Peace Agreement might have been a milestone in the attempt to make peace in Sierra Leone, the fundamentally hybrid nature of the governing structures, encompassing RUF and AFRC on the one hand and the Kabbah Government on the other, was evident.

Attempts to re-articulate the RUF and the AFRC in languages of stateness had failed.

The turning point, and one of the terminal blows to stability, came in early 2000, when people marched to Sankoh's house to protest RUF activities and approximately 20 demonstrators were shot by RUF supporters. The SLP, led by Biddle at the time, captured Sankoh; he was subsequently handed over to Government Forces and together with several senior RUF commanders taken into custody. The RUF were expelled from Government, which led to a stalemate. It was in this context that the UK intervened militarily.

5.6 Operation Palliser – the groundwork of a hybrid army

Operation Palliser was the UK's attempt to re-compose the justice and security field by military means. The following overview of the military intervention is provided from the perspective of the head of the mission, then Colonel – and now General – David Richards. This narrative demonstrates not only the coincidental nature of the intervention, but also that a hybrid order constituted by numerous forces lay at its very base, and thus was the point of departure of state-building. It could not be any different. And yet, simultaneously, it is evident that the intervention occurred in the name and on behalf of the state.

In early May 2000, the RUF was on the offensive. ECOMOG, the Nigerian-dominated regional force, had left Sierra Leone a few weeks earlier, and UN forces were under considerable pressure with hundreds of peacekeepers detained by the RUF. Richards recalls:

The SLA was very weak, having mostly disarmed and begun disbandment under the terms of the Lomé Peace Accord. As the situation deteriorated, I found myself bound for SL within 24 hours, on orders to find out what was happening and to prepare to conduct a NEO [non-combatant evacuation operation] should it be necessary (David Richards, original not dated).

However, what started as a NEO developed into a small- to medium-sized war operation. These developments were not directed by London. In fact, the order had been to conduct an NEO, and to then 'get out'. It was individuals on the ground who transformed the rules of

engagement, and gained support from political leaders back in London, “cutting out all the layers in between,” as Richards put it (David Richards, interview, 2008).

UK forces coordinated and sustained the efforts of the disparate groupings of Sierra Leoneans loyal to the state, because neither the Government of Sierra Leone nor UNAMSIL were able to. This group of Government Forces included the Sierra Leone Army and what came to be known as the ‘Unholy Alliance’, which began to form after the arrival of Richards in May 2000.

This had initially been in response to a call to arms by Johnny Paul Koroma, who led the remnants of the AFRC. Scaled down and disarmed under the Lomé Accord, the SLA numbered 2-3,000 personnel with a further 3,000 being trained at the time by a UK Short Term Training Team. The ‘Unholy Alliance’ consisted of a loose coalition of SLA, ex-SLA, AFRC and CDF combatants, but also elements of the West Side Boys (a splinter faction of the AFRC). Together, these different force units were directed by a Committee chaired by British Officers. Richards continued:

Unholy they may have been but, guided as they were at every level by British officers over the next few weeks, they succeeded in securing much of the inland road route between Freetown and Lungi, relieving the military and, of course, putting political pressure on Freetown and its beleaguered government. This at first ad hoc twin track operation, support to the UN on the one hand and assistance to the Government and its loyal armed groupings on the other, rapidly supplanted the NEO and soon became official HMG [Her Majesty’s Government] strategy (Richards, original not dated).

The UK’s intervention acted as the catalyst for a ceasefire, officially brokered on 10 November 2000 and signed in Abuja. By January 2002, the war was declared officially over. State House on Tower Hill was yet again to symbolize the state idea, make rules, exercise control over territory and people and plan and implement official goals.

Significantly, however, the military force initially constructed and worked on to fight the enemy, the RUF, the so-called ‘Unholy Alliance’, was itself a security assemblage constituted by numerous, inter-related force elements. Hybridity was thus embedded in the

very foundation of re-composing the justice and security field through military force. But it was, of course, the ‘stateness of the state’ that was focused and worked upon in the process, and the reason why an external actor such as the UK considered intervening in the first place.

In the process of ‘statification’, the ordering effects of hybrids may not have been eliminated altogether. However, SSR as state-building, as it took place, certainly appeared to be a purposeful attempt to do exactly that, even if it was not necessarily successful. This was not so much because some actors and not others were actively marginalized; but rather the consequence of how support was targeted at those institutions symbolically demonstrating stateness, including the armed forces, the police and intelligence services.

5.7 SSR as state-building: embedding hybrid reproduction

SSR as state-building came to mean the long-term continuation of the processes that I have described so far, namely a re-composition of the justice and security field in such a way that would project the imagery of order to external observers, as made by a centrally-governed political entity. The UK was integrally linked to and part of the driving force behind these processes, providing financial support and technical expertise. Elsewhere, comprehensive analyses have discussed what SSR in Sierra Leone entailed and described its different elements (e.g. Jackson and Albrecht 2008; Albrecht and Jackson 2009; Albrecht and Jackson 2010; Jackson and Albrecht 2011; Albrecht and Jackson 2012). The following is a summary of some of the elements of this process.

As state-building, the three main components of SSR included attempts to build a Ministry of Defence and an army, an Office of National Security and an intelligence branch and a police force. The initial focus was on containing and overhauling the armed forces, which had staged two coups in 1992 and 1997. President Kabbah considered disbanding the army altogether, and in fact did so for a short while in 1999 (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:23). An army was founded, however, which, as a continuation of the ‘Unholy Alliance’, became a security assemblage of numerous, inter-related force elements.

The planned military re-integration program assumed that 3000 fighters from the RUF,

CDF and AFRC would enter the post-war army. Thus, the foundation of a hybrid army, as it were, was established at the onset of SSR. A total of 2,091 former fighters from different factions ended up being absorbed by the state-sanctioned army of 12,000 personnel that was being built (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:64).

After July 1999, military support was provided by the International Military Assistance Training Team (IMATT), paid for by the UK and dominated by UK personnel. In addition to setting up training facilities, IMATT started a comprehensive military training scheme and mentored RSLAF members located in the newly-established Ministry of Defence. Support to the Ministry of Defence was prioritized as an exercise of institution-building in an attempt to concentrate control and management of Sierra Leone's security in an organization tied into the state system.

Establishing the ability to make order and in order to move beyond war-fighting was prioritized through establishment of the SLP. As early as 1996, President Kabbah had requested support from the UK to resurrect the central government's ability to make order within the borders of the country (Albrecht 2009:4; 2010:17). This exercise became known as *Operation Phoenix*, and was approached on the assumption that the SLP was recovering from crisis. It would now have to "reclaim its rightful primacy in the maintenance of public tranquility and law enforcement [...]. There is a need for visible targeted policing to be introduced on a twenty-four hour basis every day of the year" (CPDTF 1999).

Finally, SSR as state building included establishing the Office of National Security (ONS), which was another organization that could project languages of stateness. Headed by a National Security Coordinator, it was established under pressure from a number of external advisers to ensure that advice intended for the President was properly coordinated and assessed. As such, the ONS became a prime example of the vision of separating organizations that collect from those that assess intelligence, and of creating an organization aimed at establishing an autonomous space of operation for the state.

Establishing the ONS was an attempt to vest one organization with the authority to force a process of differentiation and concomitant subordination of alternative actors, including figures such as Norman and Koroma, and also paramount and lesser chiefs. Establishing

the ONS also constituted an attempt to ensure that activities within the justice and security field were properly overseen and that the different security actors involved were properly coordinated in the face of crisis.

These re-composition efforts of took place initially in a context where neither Sierra Leonean officials nor international donors and advisers were clear on what SSR would entail. According to one definition circulating in Sierra Leone in the late 1990s, SSR would deal with security and defense management, specifically institutions such as the ONS.⁶⁶ An alternative definition discussed at the time included the intelligence services (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:26-27). It was thus unclear which institutions to include and articulate through activities that were given the SSR label, and more importantly, how they were to morph into effective and legitimate organizations that would project and could be articulated in languages of stateness.

While these discussions reflected contemporary international debates on SSR, they fundamentally ignored how authority was distributed in Sierra Leone, neglecting the fact that figures of authority such as the chiefs had quickly resumed their positions in the rural areas of the country after the war ended. In no documentation, regardless of the state of the police, was the appropriateness of what was referred to as ‘SLP primacy’ questioned - not by international experts and not by Kabbah. This was the case even though in 1998, police headquarters were able to communicate with only three of the 38 police stations outside Freetown before the war and 8 vehicles were in use for a police force of an estimated 9,000 personnel.

In sum, SSR involved an attempt to project the image of a state standing above, while at the same time encompassing, controlling and regulating society. Yet, as the next chapters demonstrate, the SSR process reproduced the foundational hybrid order that has historically been part of how authority has been constituted in Sierra Leone.

⁶⁶ The ONS, located in the Office of the President, is the Secretariat of the National Security Council, providing advice and guidance on security matters to the Head of State. ONS was a response to what one observer plainly noted in September 1999: “Sierra Leone does not have a Security or Intelligence Service. Responsibility for security (counter-espionage, counter-terrorism and counter-subversion) and public order rests with the Special Branch (SB) of the Sierra Leone Police Service” (see UK Government 1999).

5.8 Conclusion

Re-composing a chaotic and anarchic security and justice field in Sierra Leone in the image of a centrally-governed political entity was attempted by military means, by seeking to eradicate hybrids that occupied central positions of authority and by initiating a set of programs under the label of SSR. However, purging the justice and security field of hybridity so as to constitute a clean justice and security field in which to articulate languages of stateness was never a realistic outcome. Criminalizing and removing figure heads such as Norman and Sankoh might have been a way of decapitating hybrid organizations, but ultimately it did not remove the hybrid order that they personified.

SSR as state-building constituting a reorganization of the justice and security field was seamlessly inter-twined with the criminalization of certain actors and intervening militarily. The institutions and practices commonly tied to the state as an idea and as a system had collapsed or withered away. This was the case to a degree where fragmentation had left the justice and security field open for numerous actors to engage in a fight over the stake at stake, i.e., to control the territory of the country and its resources.

Certainly, in Sierra Leone, the double pull of capital concentration on the one hand, and a parallel process of differentiation on the other, which would lead to the establishment of separate juridical, legislative and other fields, did not take place. However, this process of 'statification' was precisely what was supported habitually by the UK: state-building as the incorporation of 'languages of stateness' into and re-configuration of the justice and security field. Accordingly, the building of organizations began that could figure as centers of capital concentration and allocation of roles and responsibilities among clearly defined symbolic and physical spaces, e.g., internal and external security, information collection and assessment, the Office of National Security, the armed forces and the police. When the correct organization did not exist, it was created, which was the case with respect to the Office of National Security, for instance.

After January 2002, when conflict was officially declared over, SSR activities began to be established across the country. Yet, despite the insistence on the part of SSR policy-makers that the state-to-be-built would express only languages of stateness, a hybrid order was

reproduced. The following chapter analyzes how hybridity was produced in the long-term through state formation processes in Sierra Leone on the national level and in Peyima in Kono District on the local level.

6 The making of hybridity: the history of chiefs in Sierra Leone

6.1 Introduction

So far, this thesis has pursued two objectives. First, it has explored how the global policy debate on SSR developed in support of state-building and how it is articulated in languages of stateness. It has also analysed how re-composing the justice and security field in Sierra Leone attempted to eradicate hybrid organizational formations and actors. In this chapter, I argue that hybrid orders that simultaneously articulate languages of stateness and public authority are integral to and lie at the very base of state formation in Sierra Leone. Thus, it was inevitable that SSR as state-building would reproduce rather than fundamentally alter the order of hybrid organizational forms embodied by paramount and lesser chiefs in Sierra Leone.

The conflict in Sierra Leone during the 1990s fortified the breakdown of the country's patrimonially networked governed space. Assemblages formed within the justice and security field that were represented as chaotic and anarchic by external actors. These assemblages were the result of a state that had collapsed as a system, if not as an idea. The state, certainly as perceived by external observers, lacked both capacity and legitimacy. War leaders such as Koroma, Norman and Sankoh were arrested and jailed as criminals in the late 1990s and early 2000s, but the hybrid order that these men were constitutive of and emerging from could not simply be eradicated.

While 'war' and 'hybridity' might be mutually reinforcing, hybridity is not a function of war. Statutory techniques and practices of the colonial and post-colonial state in Sierra Leone were always already not so much challenged by as integrated with alternative logics, sets of knowledges, practices and forms of power that cannot be articulated solely through languages of stateness. Therefore, how vertical encompassment takes place must be explored within an analytical framework that is inclusive of the kinds of actors, processes and practices that constitute hybridity in the justice and security field.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Buur and Kyed (2007:xii) argue that "recognition of traditional authority" should not be seen as resulting from state fragility or failure. They should at least be seen in equal measure as the product of "contemporary global discourses on cultural diversity, pluralism, democracy, and community participation." As such, these processes fit democratic transitions, including SSR processes in sub-Saharan Africa. For the purpose of this

This chapter explores how hybrid orders of authority developed in Sierra Leone and the role that paramount and lesser chiefs, in particular have played in the country's colonial and post-colonial eras. Understanding how assemblages of actors, discourses and things take shape in the security and justice field is inter-twined with colonial and post-colonial state formation and the hybrid articulation of various languages of authority. In Sierra Leone, this process of hybridification was shaped around the colonial policy of indirect rule, a rule that refracted, in part, through traditional authorities and came to resemble what Mamdani (1996) refers to as 'decentralized despotism' (Keen 2005:10; Ferme 2004:85).⁶⁸

Even though the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) targeted them as figures of authority, chiefs returned to the localities from where they originated after the war ended in 2002, and continue to hold a crucial governing role in rural Sierra Leone to this day. The chapter explains why this was possible by exploring how Sierra Leone as a hybridly-governed state space came into being and how a hybrid order continues to constitute how authority is distributed locally in the township of Peyima.

The chapter concludes by outlining what I refer to as 'foundational hybridity'. It is the ability of chiefs to draw authority from a multitude of sources, both statutory and locally embedded that fuelled violence across Sierra Leone during the 1990s. At the same time, it was the foundational hybrid order that enabled chiefs to recapture their central role of authority after the war ended in the early 2000s.

6.2 Indirect rule = warriors → paramount chiefs

A turbulent late 19th and early 20th century in the Kono District saw local warriors, also referred to as warlords in Peyima during my fieldwork, who fought over trade routes,

thesis, however, the central role of paramount and lesser chiefs is not so much that they are an instrument of the state, but that they are constitutive of the political entity of Sierra Leone, and therefore inseparable from 'the state'.

⁶⁸ According to Mamdani (1996), "conservative regimes" – a category that includes Sierra Leone – preserved the rule of the chief and customary authority over ethnically-delineated realms. In these cases, the authoritarian nature of state power persisted because rule continued to be based on the customary and despotic power of the chief. Mamdani refers to the resulting post-independence constellation as "decentralized despotism."

control of land and the accumulation of dependent populations of clients and slaves.⁶⁹ The power of pre-colonial authorities in rural Sierra Leone was predicated on a mix of biological legitimacy, patrimonial largesse and military strength. In turn, popular allegiance was tempered by tensions between ruling and non-ruling houses of powerful lineages, between free men and slaves and between the potential advantages of ‘going it alone’ and forming alliances with rival strongmen (Abraham 1978; Kup 1962).⁷⁰

The epitome of a powerful Kono man was a successful warrior, a man capable of controlling people and resources and of clearing space and establishing new settlements. Such men achieved their positions of power and leadership by manipulating patron-client relationships, often along kinship lines, in which clients exchanged allegiance for resources and privileges (Hardin 1993:45). These warrior chiefs became integral to the colonial policy of indirect rule and are thus vital in understanding the foundation from which contemporary hybridity of paramount and lesser chiefs has emerged.

During the 19th century, warrior chiefs were furnished with the opportunity to re-invent themselves as a chiefly land-owning class and to maintain hegemony over the descendants of their former slaves and subordinates through tributary demands, agricultural corvées, polygyny and other ‘customary’ claims upon their labor and resources. In short, the type of authority that in the early 1990s made them a target of the RUF, lies at the heart of how state formation evolved in Sierra Leone. The British, like other empires, relied heavily, indeed primarily, on these chiefly forces that were neither ‘national’ nor ‘public’ but nonetheless central to the wielding of force and the maintenance of imperial authority (see Abrahamsen and Williams 2011:11). As such, the Freetown-based administration pursued

⁶⁹ The significance of the warrior has survived to this day, and was explained to me during my fieldwork in the village of Peyima as hierarchically above and separate from the chiefs. He is tied to the strength of ‘black magic’, which during the conflict in the 1990s was used as a defense against bullets. One informant in Peyima explained: “The Kamajors, how they got the power from the descendants of the warriors before, they left some medicine, some black magic that stayed for quite a long time and they used it on people to wash them. We have some laws that guide you. You should follow a female. You should not rape. You should not eat some types of food. If you do that, you’ve spoilt the medicine, the black magic. But if you keep to the rules, you will be protected from gun, knife, whatever instrument. You’ll be protected from that” (Taylor Kondeh, interview, February 2009).

⁷⁰ Relatively little is known about the early history of Sierra Leone. According to Opala (1996) its early history can best be understood in terms of waves of in-migration. Before the Portuguese ‘discovered’ Sierra Leone in 1462, the indigenous people on the coast of Sierra Leone already had important trade links with the inland people, and through them with the peoples of early empires of the Western Sudan, Ghana and Mali (Buah 1986).

stability in order to minimize the risk of disorder that could bring unpleasant enquiries from the Colonial Office back in London.

Minimal efforts were made to establish bureaucratic practices outside Freetown and the Western Area. The colonists did not attempt to build a democratic political culture or a central political entity through the expropriation of alternative deliberative assemblies.⁷¹ It was colonialism-on-the-cheap and in this regard, Sierra Leone was not an exception to British practices elsewhere in Africa. Between 1896 and 1921, Sierra Leone's population of 1.2 million people was governed by only five District Commissioners and one circuit court (Kilson 1966:25).⁷² Throughout the 19th century, paramount chiefs in rural Sierra Leone were managed by colonial officers; British administration was primarily confined to Freetown and its environs, known as the Colony, which governed rural Sierra Leone, known as the Protectorate (Sesay 1995:166; Hirsch 2001:23).⁷³

The development of indirect rule by the colonists was an attempt to identify and fixate interlocutors between colonial administrators and the population in the hinterland, in part to facilitate tax collection (Fanthorpe 1998:116; van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal 1996:42). The process led to the emergence of semi-autonomous administrative units, chieftaincies, which became and have remained the historic focus of the struggle for political control over Sierra Leone's countryside (Tangri 1978; Allen 1968; see van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal 1996:42).

⁷¹ Since, as Reno notes (1995:30), "the colony's reputation as the "Whiteman's Grave" did not enhance its attraction to able colonial officers," Sierra Leone became a training ground for young civil servants. The risk of dying, and being "the dumping-ground for freed slaves," the "Land of Freedom" (Hayward and Dumbuya 1985:63), were the two best known characteristics of Sierra Leone in the early 20th century (Anwyl 1916:36; Hirsch 2001:23).

⁷² According to Kilson (1966:24), in the 1920s, for example, the average British colony in Africa used one administrator to every three used in a French colony. In 1926, Nigeria had one British administrator for every 100,000 persons in the Northern Province and one for every 70,000 in the Southern Province.

⁷³ In August 1895 an Order-in-Council was issued in Britain, authorizing the Colony to make laws for the territory around it, extending out to the agreed-upon boundary, which corresponds closely to that of present-day Sierra Leone. On 3 August 1896, a Proclamation was issued in the Colony declaring that territory to be a British 'Protectorate'. The Colony remained a distinct political entity and the Protectorate was governed from it. Most of the Chiefs whose territories the Protectorate subsumed did not enter into it voluntarily. Many had signed treaties of friendship with Britain, but these were expressed as between sovereign powers contracting with each other, i.e., chiefs were not subordinate to colonialists. Only a handful of Chiefs had signed treaties of cession and in remote areas no treaties had been obtained at all. Strictly speaking, a protectorate does not exist unless the people in it have agreed be protected. The Sierra Leone Protectorate was more in the nature of a unilateral acquisition of territory by Britain (Fyfe 1962:541).

6.2.1 The chiefdom and the consolidation of hybridity

Even with their light administrative presence in Sierra Leone's hinterland, the British were instrumental in making the chieftaincy a lifetime and inheritable position. They assisted in suppressing local rivals to incumbent chiefs, reduced the option of seceding from a chiefdom and prohibited withholding payments or compulsory labor from a chief. While Anwyl (1916:37) noted in the early 20th century that "the office of the paramount chief seems to be of recent origin," their emergence is not explained by reference to colonial bureaucratic practices alone. They are also considered the product of "the wealthy status" of the person who became the chief, "a man who was rich enough to stop the contentions of opponents by gifts" (ibid.).

There is little doubt, however, that chiefs consolidated their authority with British aid and through colonial bureaucratic means. However, they were not simply incorporated as an extension of colonial regimes, as is suggested by some authors, including Mamdani (1996) and Mbembe (2001). First, the metamorphosis of warriors into chiefs strengthened the role of chiefs by expanding the register of sources of authority that could be drawn upon. Indeed, as Keen (2005:10) notes of Sierra Leone in the 1930s, "Development programs were a threat to chiefs if they offered new choices and new sources of loans and patronage." Chiefs made considerable efforts to capture such programs, and largely "undermined the capacity of Native Administrations to undertake modern social services for the local populace" (Kilson 1966:26). Establishment and recognition of the institution of the chief occurred in a manner that denied colonial rulers direct control over them; in turn, colonial rulers were never willing to pursue alternatives to the authority of chiefs, for instance by expanding the colonial administration.

The hybridity of paramount and lesser chiefs thus stems from the assembling of different sources of authority. On the one hand, as Trotha (1995) argues, diversity that marked political orders across Africa was transformed and subsumed into a unifying administrative structure set up by the colonial rulers as part of state formation in the long-term. On the other hand, chiefs also drew authority first, from their autochthon status, and second, from their role as intermediaries against alien rulers, including colonial and post-colonial

imposition.⁷⁴ These different forms of authority assembled different logics, sets of knowledges, practices and forms of power to form hybrid orders that were embedded into the foundation of the political entity of Sierra Leone.

The institutions of paramount and lesser chiefs fundamentally shaped how colonial administrators could exercise and extend British authority. The administrative and financial advantages that indirect rule afforded the colonial administration were offset, however, by the rather large claims that chiefs were permitted to make upon local resources. These claims were instituted at the foundation of the Sierra Leone Protectorate and were carried forward under the 1937 Native Administration Scheme established in the 1930s in the colony's first concerted attempt at local government reform (Fanthorpe 2001:380).

The main objective of the Scheme was to devolve the considerable economic and juridical powers formerly invested in paramount chiefs to a local assembly called the Tribal Authority (later called Chieftom Council) directly represented and funded by local taxpayers. Yet, while the chiefs strongly criticized the scheme when it was introduced, little was done in practice to prevent paramount and lesser chiefs from continuing to collect payments for political and juridical services and appropriating tax revenue for private use.

When separation of the Protectorate from the Colony was announced in 1898, British colonial authorities had granted chiefs a variety of financial incentives to participate in the administration of their subjects, including permission to accrue personal fees and fines from Native Courts. The approach of the Native Administration Scheme thus became an inherently contradictory one of seeking to fit administration through chiefs to new state-sanctioned tasks, but without causing any significant diminution of chiefly authority (Kilson 1966:26-27). This approach is indicative of the entire colonial and post-colonial era, in which successive governments have continued to recognize the authority and central role of chiefdoms.⁷⁵ Indeed, attempts to closely supervise the administration of chieftaincy

⁷⁴ This double role of chiefs is suggested by many, including Reno (1995:38), who notes that "chiefs became agents of colonial rule while exercising a parallel authority."

⁷⁵ To date, while all adult citizens are entitled to vote in parliamentary elections, many rural people remain unknown to the state except as chiefdom taxpayers and their dependants. Accordingly, government officials must rely upon the chiefdom Councils to supply them with the information necessary to compile the electoral register. Parliamentary candidates are obliged to ally with local political factions in order to win votes.

waned in the late 1940s, which in turn contributed to and solidified their position of power.⁷⁶

6.3 Post-colonial Sierra Leone

As was common in many British colonies in Africa, the transition in 1961 of Sierra Leone from a colony to an independent state was effectively an elite affair led by Sir Milton Margai of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), the party that won the first general elections held in 1962 (Barrows 1976:98; Sesay 1995:167). The new Sierra Leonean rulers could have chosen the approach of post-colonial governments in other African countries, where traditional leaders were considered to be “repressive collaborators of the colonial masters” (Kyed and Buur 2007:1). This would have constituted an important break, at least symbolically, from the principles of indirect rule that were part and parcel of the emergence, preservation, and perceived corruption of the chiefdom.

However, the newly independent state did not attempt to curtail the legal powers of chiefs in local governance. On the contrary, administration assembled in a way that increased the hybrid nature of the chiefs’ authority. They became part of political party formation processes, while simultaneously remaining the primary gatekeepers to external pressures on the locality over which they ruled. Indeed, in the first decade after independence, national politicians often found it necessary to involve themselves in factional rivalries at the chiefdom level in order to obtain electoral support.

As the SLPP assumed power in post-colonial Sierra Leone, the party emerged as a mix of “chiefs and educated protectorate Africans”; the former played a crucial role in strengthening the party in the 1962 general elections (Hayward and Dumbuya 1985:64). Given the initial lack of independent organizational party structures, political parties relied on chieftaincies to solidify their power base throughout the country (Minikin 1973:130). Party policy in general sought to increase the power and wealth of chiefs, while seeking to

⁷⁶ The consequence of this was that leading chiefdom officers were in a position to pursue their own private or sectional goals rather than the broader public interest. However, insurrections in the countryside immediately after World War II and into the 1950s as well as the conflict of the 1990s were not about eliminating the existing establishment or the wholesale change of the structure of chiefdom authority (Hardin 1993:76).

subordinate them nationally. This simultaneous – and contradictory – approach of subordination and fortification accounts to a large extent for the continued localism of politics in Sierra Leone (Allen 1968:306).

Irrespective of which political party has held power at the center, a majority of party politicians who were elected to the new state's central legislature were members of chiefly families. By 1967, when the All Peoples' Congress (APC) came to power, the party was confronted with a relatively autonomous local political network of chiefs in the Kono District where 75% of the district's parliamentarians claimed chiefly lineages (Reno 1995:80). Siaka Stevens, the APC leader and President from 1968-1985, concluded that if interests of the state that fuelled his authority were not to bend before challenges from strong chiefly interests, he had to either banish or co-opt the chiefs in a drive to assert his position as a pre-eminent political force. He pursued the latter strategy by deepening patrimonial networks, which, rather than strengthening state power, consolidated the hybrid order and corroborated the role of paramount and lesser chiefs.

The state of Sierra Leone did not materialize along the lines of a western universalist state, i.e., through a long-term and violent process of political expropriation of deliberative assemblies that already existed (see Merkl 1977:464; Clapham 2000:6-7). On the contrary, the 'deliberative assemblies that already existed', i.e., the warriors-turned-chiefs, personified the foundational hybridification of the state, including within the justice and security field.⁷⁷ A state formation process developed in Sierra Leone that created assemblages of connections, interdependencies and mutual influences between colonial and post-colonial government agents who were tangled up with local leaders, neither of whom drew exclusively on one language of authority.

There is no clear line of separation between chiefs and government institutions in the political structure of the post-colonial state of Sierra Leone. They are mutually constitutive and interdependent. Fanthorpe (1998:116) argues that paramount chiefs continue to have the somewhat "paradoxical role" of being "state agents commissioned to exercise 'traditional' authority." I would argue, however, that paramount and lesser chiefs continue

⁷⁷ For instance, of the parliamentarians from the chiefdoms since independence, almost two-thirds of them have been connected either directly or indirectly to 'ruling' houses of chiefly families.

to articulate a hybrid order, and that the state is but one source – and outcome – of that order.

6.4 Chiefs of the present and their articulation in ‘languages of stateness’

Sierra Leone’s 149 chiefdoms, each of which is subdivided into a number of sections, are established in a series of documents, including the Local Government Act (GOSL 2004a) and the Chieftaincy Act (GOSL 2009). The 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone ratifies the official position of paramount chiefs by stating that “the institution of the Chieftaincy, as established by customary law and usage” and “its non-abolition by law” are to be “guaranteed and preserved” (The Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991:72(1)). By law, the government thus has an obligation to restore the ‘traditional role’ of paramount chiefs, including their administrative and customary judicial responsibilities. With reference to the colonial era, this is done on the basis of the Ruling Houses that existed at independence in 1961. (One to three Ruling Houses exist in each chiefdom; paramount chiefs can only be drawn these families).⁷⁸

That chiefs in Sierra Leone continue to be articulated in ‘languages of stateness’ and that they are partly the expression of a state effect, to borrow a term from Mitchell (2006 [1999]), is thus undeniable. In this regard, boundaries are drawn between state and society, which makes the former appear as an “inert ‘structure’” (ibid.) that somehow stands apart from individuals (including chiefs), precedes them, contains them and give a framework to their lives and authority. It is in this way that the authority of chiefs continues to be based around their symbolic representations in state legislation, which projects the impression

⁷⁸ The concept of a ‘ruling house’, specifically related to northern Sierra Leone, passed into professional ethnography as a result of the work of the colonial administrator and Africanist scholar E. F. Sayers. It was Sayers who discovered that the principles of Manding claniship are general to this area (Sayers 1927; McCulloch 1950: 54-65; Parsons 1964:125-9; Jackson 1974). Only Ruling Houses established prior to 1961 can formally run for chiefdom elections, but during my fieldwork rumors were rife that the paramount chiefs in both Sandor and Nimikoro had come to power through political manipulation by Kabbah’s government. In Sandor specifically, there were continuous violent clashes over the issue.

that they are produced and given authority by, rather than being co-constitutive of the state.⁷⁹

Indeed, the chiefdom constitutes the basic unit of local government, and paramount chiefs sit on District and Town Councils across the country. The 2004 Local Government Act stipulates that the paramount chiefs have a ‘traditional function’, for instance, in preventing offences in their area; prohibiting illegal gambling; making and enforcing by-laws, and so forth (GOSL 2004a:28).⁸⁰ At the core of their state-sanctioned power lies their legal mandate to hold the land in trust for the people of the chiefdom (*ibid.*), which in a place such as Peyima means that they hold almost exclusive powers over the distribution of the most important source of income generation. Nationally, paramount chiefs are members of parliament and advisers through the National Council of Paramount Chiefs.

In principle, the Minister of Internal Affairs has the legal authority to recommend the suspension of chiefs. However, a ministry official once told me, and this may be considered of general validity, the Minister does not have “much by way of a structural thing that will link him to the chiefs. Except if he decides to visit some place; but there is nothing there really [by way of representing him]. There is no requirement for the chief to communicate with him. Now, there is no real requirement for the chief to communicate with anybody” (interview, ministry official, 29 November 2008). This indicates the obvious point that there is a basic disconnect between state legislation and state practices.

⁷⁹ Indeed, the 2009 Chieftaincy Act attempted to institutionalize the status quo of chiefly power, and even more recently the paramount chiefs’ role as the highest political authority in rural areas has been reconfirmed by the government (by amending the 2004 Local Government Act).

⁸⁰ According to the Local Government Act (GOSL 2004a:90), a bye-law may “not [be] inconsistent with the Constitution or this Act [i.e., Local Government Act] or any other enactment for the purpose of any function conferred on it by or under this Act or any other enactment.” In Peyima, however, and Kamara Chiefdom, it was within the remit of the paramount and lesser chiefs to develop bye-laws prohibiting ‘abusive language’, ‘fighting’, ‘trespassing’, ‘stealing’, ‘passing through the town with a fishing net’, ‘passing through the town with palm kernel on the head’, ‘women quarrelling in public’, ‘interference of non-members into secret society activities’, and so forth (these different bye-laws are taken from the 90 questionnaires that were completed in Kamara Chiefdom, Nimikoro Chiefdom and Nimiya Chiefdom). Bye-laws can differ from village to village. Bye-law violations are decided by the chief of Peyima, and can lead the accused being fined as the following example suggests. I witnessed the hearing of the case by the town chief in Peyima, Gborie. A man had been in a fight with his wife, and told her that he had initiated her mother in the secret society. This was considered a severe crime, and the ‘Mammy Queen’, the women’s leader, had taken the matter to Gborie. The man had tried to pay off the women with Le20,000, but they did not accept the offer – they wanted him to be severely punished, both in monetary and material terms. Indeed, Gborie allowed the women to decide what the fine should be, and he was forced to pay Le50,000, the highest that a local court can demand, a goat, a bag of rice and 5 gallons of oil. The accused grudgingly accepted.

The next section of the chapter provides insight into how authority is sourced in local space to co-constitute a hybrid order, and why it would seem inevitable that state-building reproduces this order. It is the simultaneity of languages that the chief is articulate in that fortifies this order. In the following, I provide insight into how hybridity is sourced locally in Peyima. While making a split between state and society may have an analytically clarifying effect, it inevitably obscures our understanding of how hybrid authority is articulated.

Understanding the dynamics of how a large-scale political entity such as Sierra Leone developed and was recognized internationally as a sovereign state in 1961 is fundamental to how the production of hybridity has occurred in Sierra Leone, but so is the way in which authority is produced, reproduced and manifested in localities across Sierra Leone. This is not to imply that the analysis now enters an untouched ‘anthropological place’ (Augé 1995), but to bring out in the analysis some of the local sources of authority that enter into making the foundational hybrid order, and to de-emphasize the productivity of the state in this regard.

6.5 Hybridity and origin

Fanthorpe (2001:372) uses the concept of “extreme localization” to denote criteria of identity and belonging in rural areas of Sierra Leone (see also Allen 1968:306). This concept helps explain the implications of how authority is currently distributed in communities such as Peyima in the Kono District of northeastern Sierra Leone. The crucial role of chiefs in Sierra Leone has at times been explained by ‘lack of state’ (see Sesay 1995; see Chaves and Robinson 2011), rather than by the types of capital that these hybrid organizational formations can draw upon to make order. Among those who do not interpret ‘localization’ as ‘lack of state’ *per se* are Hardin (1993) and Fanthorpe (2001; 2005).⁸¹ In her study of Kainkordu, a small town in Kono District, Hardin (1993) makes an important articulation of what ‘localization’ implies. She demonstrates how identity relies on ritual

⁸¹ Even Fanthorpe (2001:282) does argue, while emphasizing the notion of “extreme localization,” that the reason why chiefdom administration reform had not been undertaken “reflects the fundamental weakness of the Sierra Leonean state.”

actions that “locate individuals in particular spaces by giving them rights, as well as obligations, to others who share those spaces” (ibid.:93).

6.5.1 Owning the authority in Peyima

In a town such as Peyima, articulations of localization express important distinctions, for example, between ‘natives’ and ‘strangers’ of a locality.⁸² The distinction made between these two categories of people allows a local community to make boundaries, draw on sources of authority that have a local origin, undergo and undertake the same rites of passage in the same locale and defend whatever stake is at stake in the locality. In fact, application of these localizations defines and defends the very existence of a locality as a habitable space against challenges from external impositions, be they from ‘the state’ (system) or other tribes. A stranger, an allochthon, will, according to natives of Peyima, merely seek personal gain, because he is not tied to the locale by being a son of the soil; he will exhaust the locale of its riches and then leave.

The locality of Peyima demonstrates how authority is mobilized to enforce a particular order in the justice and security field, and how, more specifically, the articulation of authority occurs in individual localities. At a very basic level, originating from one particular location, being a ‘son of the soil’ rather than a ‘stranger’, generates immediate authority in Peyima. Those who can render probable that they descend directly from individuals who established the town as a habitable space are considered to have a proportionally greater interest in its survival, channeling earnings from diamond finds, for instance, towards upholding it.

A stark example from the war contrasts RUF fighters who captured Peyima in the late 1990s with *donsos*, the local CDF (see Ferme and Hoffman 2004:75; Hoffman 2007:647). “The level of destruction done to this town, the way I saw the town cannot be compared to anywhere,” Ibrahim ‘Kalilu’ Kamara, a close ally of Peyima’s Chief Gborie told me. “It

⁸² In theory, the bureaucratic apparatus has long existed for the registration of births and deaths, the issue of marriage and initiation licenses, and so forth. The vast majority of rural Sierra Leoneans, however, continue to rely on chiefs to authorize and guarantee ‘native’ identities that confer rights to land, legal protection and political representation.

was a ghost town, everything completely destroyed.” As strangers, the RUF were standing against the CDF, the ‘sons of the soil’:

The town mining [of the RUF] according to the CDF who were believed to be the sons of the soil, they said: “This is our land. We can’t sit and watch a stranger destroying our land in the town. So what we will do is we have to stop them. If the government cannot stop them then we have to forcefully stop them. That was their aim. And then secondly, our brothers, our grandfathers, our fathers, our siblings; they own the authority here. So we should start collecting now that we have disarmed, now that they are encouraging people to go back to their various homes; we should take care of our own affairs by collecting our own dues and then seeing what we can make out of that for development. And then the issue of the caretaker chiefs;⁸³ since our brothers are coming they should take over again. So the RUF was very furious with that (Kalilu, interview, March 2009).

Kamara’s statement describes in a literal sense how ‘strangers’ are perceived in Sierra Leone: By definition, they are considered to “neither understand nor respect local precedents” and to “represent a threat to the right and properties of all” (Fanthorpe 2001:383).

A successful claim to ‘own the authority’ is not a fixed status, but must be reproduced continuously. In a different way than in the case of paramount chiefs – whose names are recorded in the government gazette – the fact of being a ‘son of the soil’ in Peyima, and articulating a forceful reference to this claim is open to manipulation.⁸⁴ It is a status that is constantly challenged and invoked in symbolic and physical struggles, and is thus deeply

⁸³ ‘Caretaker chiefs’, to which I return later in this chapter, is the terminology used to describe how the RUF replaced town authorities with their own leaders, ‘chiefs’, a replication of the chiefly system that had existed before RUF take-over.

⁸⁴ A person who aspires to become a chief must be a member of a Ruling House, a secret society initiate, and declare his intent to run for elections. Subsequently, a council of elders will, as a way of endorsing the candidate, tell the story of how that particular individual fits into the Ruling House. As I wrote in my notebook during observations at the Nimikoro section chief elections, “this is really where a person is made or broken; there are stories of how certain individuals have been denied the right to run for election because of the way that the ‘defence’ is made.” The process is oral, and while no chief of any rank is secure in his appointment until their name appears in the government gazette (Fanthorpe et al. 2011:56), it is the hybrid source of his authority that makes it foundational. Rather than violent processes of political expropriation, state formation in Sierra Leone was thus the result of a loose but decisive integration of different systems of authority.

political with respect to who occupies what positions vis-à-vis other contenders at any one given time. It is a position that cannot be fixed, it cannot be fetishized through written text, and thus appear with the quality of being both detached from its producers and from any specific addressees (Connerton 1989:7; Herzfeld 1992:118). Being a 'son of the soil' is not represented in bald, de-contextualized, legal prose.

As an authoritative language of autochthony it is being struggled over, including the economic forms of capital and livelihood that the claim can be translated into such as land for mining and farming. Numerous cases occurred during my fieldwork in Peyima that animated the hierarchy between 'sons of the soil' and 'strangers'. For example, when Kofi, a Ghanaian national who had lived in Peyima for the past 40 years, made a significant diamond find in his pit in Peyima, the land, which he had inherited the right to use, was taken away from him and given to Makumba, one of Peyima's elders, who held a central position of authority in the township.⁸⁵

6.5.2 Challenging the chief and the origin of Peyima

Not only 'strangers', but the authority of figures at the very center of localized expressions of power could be challenged through authoritative languages of origin, family history and belonging in Peyima. The case of the current town chief, Gborie, was no exception, as he was regarded by the Tankos – the other chiefly family in town – as having had illegitimately taken over the position. Pa Kongue, the head of the Tankos, claimed that Gborie had come to power "only by politics," by external interference and by the mobilization of his family's networks of patronage.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Meillassoux (1960) has outlined the power of elders based on work among the Gouro in central Cote d'Ivoire, centering on three factors: their knowledge of social processes, their control of marriageable women (i.e., power over the means of reproduction rather than power over the means of production), and on economic principles (i.e., young people who work for the elders).

⁸⁶ Ferme's (2001:106) discussion of how patronage works with respect to Mende social practices is relevant in the case of Kono as well: "The crucial point, then, was that everyone must be accounted for by someone else – that everyone must be linked in a relationship of patronage or clientship." The person who stands for someone else is responsible for overseeing his or her behavior within a community and providing for his or her basic needs. In other words, for acting as a patron. In return, the patron can expect the performance of favors, a share of any wealth that the dependent or client might accumulate, and a level of respect, support, and privilege.

Through external pressure from the APC in 1985, Gborie took over leadership of the town at a young age. Gborie was now supportive of the SLPP, not the APC, but once installed as a chief, very few measures could be taken against him. It seemed that there was nothing that the Tankos could do. Gborie was a close ally of Kamara Chiefdom's Paramount Chief Melvin Ngekia, whom he had supported when he ran to become the paramount chief in Kamara Chiefdom a few years earlier. Through this relationship Gborie had become the Mining Chairman, a lucrative position within the state system that signs off on all mining licenses in the chiefdom. In other words, the Tankos had to wait until Gborie either died or stepped down, and then "replace him with the correct person that is entitled," as Pa Kongue put it.

The basis for challenging Gborie was historical. It was not articulated in a symbolic language of the state, i.e., a legal document stamped by the government for approval. Gborie had not been elected. If anything, party politics and 'the state' had corrupted the patrilineal line of descent, as Pa Kongue explained. 'The state' was closely linked into these events, because it had delineated the chiefdom geographically, i.e., the physical space that was being fought over, and 'owned' the title of Mining Chairman that had been given to Gborie. But Pa Kongue demarcated the symbolic boundaries between state and locality, and explained that his rightful claim to power was based on being able to make the case persuasively that the Tankos, rather than the Gbories, had founded the town. He told the following piece of local history of Peyima, set in an unspecified time and yet pointing to a specific set of events in the distant past when Peyima was founded:

People lived here long before, and there was a war between them. Warriors were fighting to capture land by then, and drove the people that first lived here away. After the warriors drove those people, people started to come back to resettle. The entire area was bushy. The first settlers to come into Peyima settled in Tombodu, a village about four miles from here. There was no road for them to come here. They followed the river, Peyi, where they got the name from, Peyima. They were three persons: Kombo, Soema and Pardomba. When they came, they met a place where formerly people were settled; just a round house was there, but it was destroyed. They had all gone. They had a youth with them who was called Chief Jimmy, and

said: “Well, now we are going to initiate that of our son, that youth named Jimmy, we are going to initiate him here now for us to settle.” They had one female behind them called Daiya who was there when they brushed the area to get out the dirt and throw it away, and they decided to stay there. Some of their friends and relatives followed to come and know the new area, and settled there as well. The first man that came was called Bebinyi, then followed by Kamakwami – he came also. They were only three family houses here; three dwelling houses. There were three sets of families.

Later people began to come bit by bit. So, when people settled, they discovered an area about three miles from here, called Mwendima. There lived the greatest warrior of this entire area. He was responsible for the whole area, like a district officer. Mwendima was a mountainous area, lying right at the top of the hill. So the warrior lived there and the people took the boys there. They carry them there to initiate them by the warrior. The person that was governing here, they elected the person to govern Peyima, while the greatest warrior was living in Mwendima. His name was Kumbu (Pa Kongue, interview, February 2009).

Thus did Pa Kongue explain to me who had founded Peyima, and who could legitimately count himself among its leaders. Evidently, the Gborie family was not among them. In turn, when we spoke about the point in time when the town was established, Gborie argued, not surprisingly, that he was the rightful town leader.

When Gborie’s position is analyzed within the context of authority, however, it becomes evident that the basis of his power was drawn from numerous sources simultaneously. He embodied authority that emanated from the physical space of Peyima, from political pressure to assume the position of town chief and from his position as Mining Chairman, a position within the state system to which he had been appointed by the paramount chief. His position did indeed seem unassailable. And yet, he and his family were being challenged, in words, if not in practice by the Tankos and others who did not stand to profit from relations of patronage to the Gbories. They were waiting until such a time when they could reclaim a formal position of authority in the township. That time had not yet come.

6.6 Ritualizing localization

Legitimate claims to being a chief are derived from the oral history of Peyima's foundation, and the ability to manipulate it. The only way to lay claim on a chiefly position or another position of community representation and authority is by successfully rendering a probable ancestral link to the founders of the town. A lot is at stake, specifically claims to the most important sources of income generation: land.

'Localization' is, in turn, confirmed by the repetition of a number of ritual processes and procedures for clearing and enclosing the locality. Bodies, domestic artifacts, rooms, houses, settlements and mining areas are purged of potentially harmful spirits and devils, while their socially useful forces are exposed, subordinated and contained. This was evident in the mining pits encircling Peyima. A bamboo stick with a piece of white cloth tied at the end was planted in the piles of gravel next to the pits from which the gravel had been dug. The piles of gravel had been covered with oil palm leaves. Two white chickens were living by the pit. Numerous, hardly noticeable signs suggested that sacrifices had been made to the spirits of the land to ensure that diamonds would be found and that they would not be stolen by witches taking animal forms from the piles of gravel that had not yet been washed and siphoned for diamonds.

It is part of the belief system among people in Peyima that the spirits of ancestors and devils zealously guard their land and that they demand attention and sacrifice from their descendants. They have the power to both give and take, so sacrifices, *Kwaebonda*, which means to 'pour liberation for your forefathers', must be made. Peyima's prosperity depends on these ritual acts of offering, and the signs of the need to do so are everywhere, in inexplicable events or tragic accidents, such as a decrease in diamond finds or a sudden death.

6.6.1 The death of a boy, the lack of diamonds and ‘the dark world’

One day during my fieldwork in Peyima, an epileptic boy had a seizure while he was crossing a narrow path through the swamp to reach his father’s farm. He fell into the water and drowned. Nobody saw the accident, but the scene was quite dramatic as the news of his death spread across town. Everyone was drawn to the place, women yelling and screaming, shocked and in mourning for the boy and his family, running back and forth between the edge of the town and where the boy had been found in the swamp.

It was the second child in two months who had drowned. The devil had taken him and lured him down to the river and into the water. “We cannot see him,” one of the spectators noted about the devil, “but he looks like you and me and is hungry for small children.” Suddenly a whirlwind, quite small, but strong, appears through the banana trees, stirring up plastic bags, leaves, dirt. The devil, which had taken the child, went through the place, attracted by the women yelling and crying. That night a massive thunderstorm breaks out. A few days later, a woman has a seizure, while doing laundry by the river. She collapses and dies in the water.

While these events and accidents may seem coincidental to an outsider, the people of Peyima did not recognize coincidence; moreover, they connect such events to other occurrences. Diamonds are scarce, and investors that inject cash and prosperity into the town from outside are not forthcoming. The town’s ancestors are punishing their descendants for not paying appropriate attention, and offerings must be made. A woman dreams that a rope must be tied from one end of the town to the other. No reason for why this must be done is provided, other than to please the ancestors. A small hut is built down by the water where the epileptic boy died. Rice is boiled and fowl are killed, blood is dripped, food is prepared and the spirits of the ancestors are invoked. Some of the food is left in the hut by the water for the ancestors; the rest is eaten by those who conduct the ritual.

The deaths, the lack of diamonds. Dangers and harmful forces are ubiquitous, as one miner explained to me, and authority stems from relations to these forces and holding them in check. The miner had told me a couple of days earlier that he wanted to tell me about the reality of life in Peyima and other villages across Sierra Leone. One night he came to my

house and gave me four neatly written pages with a number of narratives, one of them titled: 'The Dark World in the Villages and Towns'. It describes the direct impact of the otherworldly on people's lives, and the potential harm that these powers could trigger, often referred to as 'black magic':

The dark world consists of evil spirits, good spirits and wizards. The wizard in the village is dangerous and evil, children die rapidly, and even miners suffer a lot. Whenever miners extract gravel in the mining, some evil elements that do not like your prosperity play a great role in destroying you through their fetish power, washing your gravel at night and taking your diamonds to the dark world. Then you become zero after a lot of expenditure. Even business people, whenever your business starts to rise, some of your neighbors become annoyed, they don't want you to prosper more than they do. They will start fetish practices in your shop or business. They will come with a big note of money to purchase articles in your shop and then ask for change. When given the change they take it to the dark world and you will see a rapid fall in your business until you collapse.

Whenever the land has been polluted with bad malpractices and dubious acts like starvation, a witch doctor is invited in the town or village to come and show the reasons why children are dying and production of diamonds has become less.

The witch doctor is a powerful resigned wizard who knows the secret of the society. Whenever the witch doctor starts to play, you will see some people you don't expect coming in the Court Barry in front of the community and confess their evil deeds, how many children they have killed, diamonds stolen, and shops destroyed. They are so blessed and lucky that no court or law will convict them. When a witch doctor destroys you only the lord will fight for you. Some of them, when they are at the point of death, confess about their evil deeds (miner, notes, April 2009).

The nature of authority articulated by referring to the powers of ancestors and devils and their respective powers to give and take life and prosperity has generated numerous rituals in Peyima. Authority emanates directly from such processes of inclusion and exclusion and

is part and parcel of the patronage networks that define a particular person's social position and authority. These networks define links in and relations to the locality, and thus the right to govern it; they have a say in how resources are distributed as well as how order is made.

Peyima, within the broader sphere of Kamara Chiefdom, remains the primary social matrix for those people who live in it. Thus, it becomes a clearing in both literal and metaphorical sense of the term – it is a space authorized and made fit for the proper 'foundation' of society (see Fanthorpe 2001:375). The patrilineal descendants of the putative founders of the village claim prerogatives with respect to land use, decision-making and political representation. Family relations, town history and ownership of property are not recorded; because each of them generates authority to claim land and access to resources, they are constantly being interpreted and struggled over.

These struggles are integrated with the ordering effects of enforcing security and justice in the locality, because doing so requires the authority that emanates from being an autochthon. They are, however, micro-struggles, which are rarely taken into account by state-building experts, and international donors who seek to re-compose the justice and security field. State building does not eliminate the hybrid order that governs Peyima. On the contrary, the hybrid order expressed in Peyima inevitably shapes the components of police reform, for example, that are translated into the township. In turn, this order constitutes dynamics that are not well understood by advisers coming from abroad, who speak and operate in languages of stateness and from the point of view of policy discourse. I return to these reflections in the next chapter.

6.7 Foundational hybridity

Scholars who study Sierra Leone commonly accept that the position of paramount chiefs is the definitive figure of authority outside Freetown and the Western Area (Fanthorpe 1998; Richards 1996; Reno 1995; Peters 2006; Jackson 2007). This is the consequence of a legacy of colonial indirect rule that is "particularly strong in Sierra Leone," according to Fanthorpe (2005:28). The involvement of chiefs and their relatives in governing Sierra

Leone since independence in 1961 means that they have continued to be closely involved in almost all aspects of everyday governance in rural areas of the country (Minikin 1973:130; Wyse 1977; Wylie 1969; Fanthorpe 2006:28).

Hybridity denotes the fact that authority always already emanates simultaneously from multiple sources, including sacred and other customary powers, kinship and secret society membership, as well as from an operative decision-making center of government, bureaucracy and legislation. The 'liberal state' and 'tradition' do not exist independent of one another in a dichotomous, at times antagonistic relationship. It is the simultaneity and mutuality of this relationship and the fact that they cannot be divided into two (or more) pure forms, which constitutes the foundational hybrid order.

Therefore, paramount and lesser chiefs in Kamara Chiefdom, for instance, cannot simply be characterized as institutions that assert authority because they are formally recognized in legislation and decrees. The assertion of authority is inevitably inter-twined with notions of locally-embedded autochthony. In the long term, assemblages fuelled by numerous sources of authority drew in a variety of actors that took historically specific forms of a hybrid order.

While it is important to acknowledge hybridity and the non-existence of a straightforward state-society split, it is also the case that the government of Sierra Leone continues to be supportive of the central position of the chieftaincy. (Donor agencies have been more critical of what they consider to be an oppressive institution (Fanthorpe 2006:28)⁸⁷). In order to govern rural Sierra Leone, both colonial and post-colonial governments have been dependent upon and integral to the paramount chiefs. Therefore, 'the state' did not create the chiefs, and the chiefs did not create 'the state'. They were and are mutually constitutive of one another, shaped by and shaping each other's acts of authority. They are co-constitutive, even if we tend to separate them analytically.

⁸⁷ One of the reasons for this is, as Fanthorpe (2006:30) argues, that relief agencies operating in the closing stages of the war encountered a host of local grievances against chiefs and local elders that had not featured in international understandings of the conflict up to that point. Fanthorpe mentions as foremost among those grievances the chiefs' control of local judicial systems, their regularly handing down fines that were grossly incommensurate with the offences committed and that they were in the habit of compelling their subjects to work for them without payment.

‘Politics’ and ‘tradition’ are thus inextricably linked, even though much effort is made, including by the chiefs themselves, to draw a boundary between the two. At chiefdom section elections, held in Nimikoro Chiefdom in Kono District in late 2008, the paramount chief noted that ‘party politics is just for five years, chief is for life’. This distinction was made to substantiate a separation between authority in the chiefdom and Freetown, between languages of public authority and stateness. The former was being accentuated, but could of course never be articulated independent of the latter, as the history of hybrid formation in Sierra Leone indicates.

Before concluding this chapter, I provide an overview of the role and position of chiefs during and after the war. Perhaps inevitably, the hybrid power that paramount and lesser chiefs wield as central figures of authority in rural Sierra Leone played an important part in creating the animosities that led to war in the first place. And yet, precisely because of the foundational hybrid order that lies at the basis of authority in Sierra Leone, paramount and lesser chiefs re-established themselves after the conflict in positions similar to those that they held before the RUF invasion. Indeed, during the war the RUF established their own system of so-called ‘caretaker chiefs.’

6.8 Chiefs and conflict

Analyses that emerged in the early 2000s – buttressed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission established in the aftermath of the war and reflected in numerous academic works – centered on the role of ‘custom’ and its function as an instrument of oppression (Sawyer 2008:389; Fanthorpe and Maconachie 2010:253). “Customary rule, in varying degrees, was simply a dictatorship of rural gerontocrats,” Sesay and Hughes (2005:55) state, “forced labour, arbitrary fines, banishments, and discrimination against women and young people were part of everyday life” (see also Sawyer 2008:389; Richards 2005:577-578).⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Fanthorpe (2001) takes his point of departure from Mamdani’s (1996) concept of the post-colonial split between citizens and subjects and suggests that young Sierra Leoneans before the war fit neither of these two categories. The fact that they experienced both political and moral exclusion started before the conflict, when the ‘extreme localization of criteria of identity and belonging’ was confronted with the native administration

Richards (2005:580) explores how the war was bound up with abuses associated with rural custom. Peters (2006:71), who conducted extensive fieldwork among former combatants, concludes that “traditional gerontocratic and patriarchal principles were despised.” In their line of argument, the motivation of the RUF was grievance rather than greed.⁸⁹ “Chieftaincy, ‘customary’ courts and traditional bride service” bore down unfairly upon impoverished youth who could not control the fruits of their own labor because of chiefly levies and arbitrary fines (Richards 2005:580). Richards remarks that the civil war is thus best understood as an ongoing rural ‘class’ conflict, a revolt of former slaves and subordinate classes against customary authority.⁹⁰

Targeted by the RUF as figures of authority emanating from their customary position and ties to the state, the formal chieftom administration collapsed during the war. As Jimmy Sahr, an elder of Peyima put it:

The chief [Gborie] went away. He went inside the bush, because he was prominent, and if they know that you are a prominent somebody, like us, we had money that hour, I was having a car, you see, I was having a very comfortable house, so when they see you that way, they will chase you in the bush for money. They will demand money from you, or when they hear that you were a miner, mining diamond, they will request diamond from you. If you don’t give them diamond, they will either amputate you or kill you or tell you that you are a follower of

of the British, resulting in exclusionary tendencies through which people were denied ‘*de facto* citizenship’. According to Peters’ (2006:37) reading of Fanthorpe, British administration thus changed the functional “logic of clearing,” that is, the process of slow incorporation of new settlers through marriage and community contribution.

⁸⁹ Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler (2005), for instance, have argued that internal conflicts should not be understood in terms of grievance, but rather as brought about by greed. They suggest that the relationship between natural resources and conflict is best viewed in terms of the benefits that resources provide to rebel fighters. In some early versions, “greed” is meant literally and refers to rapacity, profiteering, and self-enrichment on the part of rebel groups (Collier 2000). The later and more influential version of the greed argument is that what counts is not rebel motivations (grievance) but feasibility or opportunity (Collier and Hoeffler 2005:629), insofar that insurgent movements can only emerge and be sustained when resources are available to finance them.

⁹⁰ Although the Atlantic slave trade ceased to exist from the middle of the 19th century, slavery did not end. At first people were sold as ‘emigrants’ to work on the plantations of the Americans now deprived of slaves (Jones 1983:86). In addition, domestic slavery continued to be widespread until as late as 1928 (Peters 2006:35). According to Peters (2006:38), the categories of free people and slaves were then substituted by the categories of natives and strangers.

Kabbah's government, so you have to go and report to Kabbah, let Kabbah come and take care of you (Jimmy Sahr, interview, March 2009).

Grievances against the chiefs that were brought to the attention of aid agencies might appear to suggest that chieftaincy had been in terminal decline before the conflict started in the early 1990s. However, in Peyima and across Kono District, many continue to find chiefs preferable to elected politicians and bureaucrats because they think that chiefs defend the customary property regime that is constitutive of the authority that they hold.

6.8.1 'Caretaker chiefs' and return of the old guard

The Kono District was a stronghold of the RUF from 1996 to 2001 (Peters 2006:55). From the beginning of the war, most paramount and lesser chiefs were either killed or fled in exile to Guinea and Freetown. The RUF replaced the chiefdom authorities with their own leaders, so-called 'caretaker chiefs', thus replicating the governance system of paramount and lesser chiefs.⁹¹ "Everybody that was in authority," Benjamin Kamara told me, "had to run away. Otherwise they [the RUF] will see you as an element of the old regime that destroyed the land."

Benjamin, now a resident of Koidu, was originally from Kailahun District; he came to Kono District in 2001 in the immediate aftermath of the conflict to work for the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR). 'Caretaker chiefs', he explained, had often been fighters themselves:

They will say: 'Okay, you are the town chief', for example, but the town chief is a fighter. You know, so there was no time for him to sit down and then decide cases. They will just say: 'Okay, you are a strong man, you are the town chief here as from today because you are a very strong man'. But then you are a fighter, so you have no time to appoint your council of elders. When cases come to these caretaker chiefs, they will just listen a few minutes and then they say you are wrong or you

⁹¹ In terms of tax collection, for instance, because of their long hold on Kono District, the RUF had collected taxes from diamond trade and from market dues. This was also the main source of revenue for the local authorities before the war.

are right, you are to be killed or you are to... so it was like that, jungle justice, yeah, kangaroo courts (Benjamin Kamara, interview, March 2009).

To the RUF, pre-war chiefs had come to symbolize a land-owning elite that, as the central government in the countryside, was considered corrupt and unaccountable and therefore a legitimate target.⁹² In Peyima, a ‘caretaker chief’ was selected among the villagers who did not flee the township; while Peyima’s ‘caretaker chief’ was not a fighter himself, he came under RUF command. Chosen because of his knowledge of the area around the town, and therefore where diamond deposits might be found, he was beaten half to death, and then given the choice between being killed and taking the caretaker position. He chose the latter.

When the war ended, the Government of Sierra Leone, with support from the UK, recreated the administrative system of paramount chiefs through the 2000-2002 Chiefdom Governance Reform Programme (Albrecht 2005:16). This re-constituting of the paramount chiefs system has by some academics been considered a recreation of the conditions that led to war in the first place, allowing a rural elite to recapture a position from which to use local resources and tax for personal enrichment (Jackson 2007; Sawyer 2008). Nevertheless, consultations carried out by the NGO Conciliation Resources (CR) just prior to the official end of the conflict reported that “chiefs have a vital role to play in restoring stability; there is no other institution capable of replacing them at this stage in the Sierra Leone polity” (cited in Fanthorpe 2006:31)). A “breakdown in traditional order” had admittedly occurred, according to President Kabbah (2003), but the Government of Sierra Leone pledged to restore dignity to the chiefdoms of the country.

Benjamin explained the rationale of why this was the case. In a discussion about the current importance of paramount and lesser chiefs and why they had been able to recapture

⁹² These animosities are historically grounded. Threatened by a revolt of the chiefs in 1898, the Colony sought to appease them by implementing an unpaid labor mechanism, providing them with a right to demand community labor. Such rights, argues Richards, continue to be exploited today, which explains why so many of the RUF recruits were from these rural farming areas. Enabled further by colonial indirect rule, “this froze in place the practices and privileges of the nineteenth century forest warrior chiefs, including large-scale polygamy and control over indentured labourers and domestic slaves” (Richards 2005:582; see also Richards, Khadija and Vincent 2004).

a position of power after the war, he talked about ‘tradition’, a source of authority that is different from, and therefore cannot be reduced to, references to the state:

Because no matter how you look at things, people have to preserve tradition. They will tell you: ‘we have had these structures for decades’. They will tell you: ‘these are our ancestors’. The ancestral lineage is there. They will tell you: ‘these are our protectors’. They will tell you: ‘these are our advocates’. The structures should remain in place, but they have to be reformed. In a way what should go to the central government – that’s the police – in terms of cases should be reported immediately instead of being kept in the community. They should not impose on the people, because in some areas the people are so afraid of especially the paramount chiefs that anything they say, whether wrong or right, is final. And people still hold this opinion: whatever the chief says, you can bring your suggestion, he can listen to your views and comments and everything. But if he says anything, that’s the gospel truth, and that’s the final judgment (Benjamin Kamara, interview, March 2009).

The foundational hybrid order of which paramount and lesser chiefs are the product and which they continue to reproduce makes them an indispensable and undeniable figure of authority in the Sierra Leone countryside. In turn, as the next chapter suggests with respect to police reform, the chieftdom institution is one which external actors have found very difficult to deal with, precisely because of the sources from which the chiefs draw their authority.

6.9 Conclusion

Sierra Leone’s paramount and lesser chiefs are central figures in Sesay’s (1995:166) argument that “Sierra Leone offers a classic example of a country with a ‘strong society’ and ‘weak state’.” The role of chiefs was “frozen in place,” Richards (2005:582) argues, through policies of indirect rule, and because “a strong state” with “rigid bureaucratic lines of command” did not emerge before or after independence in 1961. Indeed, as this chapter

suggests, emergence of a 'strong state' was never the intention behind colonial and post-colonial policies and practices.

However, as this chapter also shows, viewing Sierra Leone through the lens of 'strong society' vs. 'weak state' amounts to a reductionist reading of how the authority to make order has been expressed in Sierra Leone. It does not accurately reflect the process of state formation through indirect rule and the authority that chiefs thus have come to hold in Sierra Leone. 'War' and 'hybridification' became mutually reinforcing processes during the conflict of the 1990s. This, however, does not mean that the latter is a function of the former or that the elimination of hybrid organizational forms through criminalization led to a field of power that could be articulated squarely in 'languages of stateness'. Hybridity lies at the very foundation of how Sierra Leone emerged as the political entity that by 1961 was "forced to behave (externally) as if it was a Weberian (territorial) state," as Peters (2006:44) puts it.

Rather than constituting a centrally governed state, throughout the colonial and post-colonial eras Sierra Leone was a multi-centered system of governance in which power assemblages clustered around and were expressed through figures of paramount and lesser chiefs. The colonial policy of indirect rule is central to this narrative. It led to the emergence of chieftaincies as semi-autonomous administrative units, which became and have remained a historic focus of struggles over authority in rural Sierra Leone.

At the same time it is evident that paramount and lesser chiefs remain a paradox of hybridity. They draw significant authority to act from symbolic languages of stateness such as legislation, and have played a central role in how the state system emerged (and collapsed) in Sierra Leone. At the same time, however, they are important protagonists of what Fanthorpe (2001:372) refers to as "extreme localism," and thus the articulation of authoritative languages and practices that establish categorical distinctions between 'natives' and 'strangers' of a locality, for instance. The foundational hybrid order is constituted by an ability to draw on both these sources of authority. It is the ability to draw on state legislation, local history, to undergo and undertake the same rituals in the same locale, and thereby defend and reproduce a particular organization of what making order

means from extra-local challenges, be they from ‘the state’, other tribes – or SSR programs.

The next chapter tracks a decade of police reform that began as part of SSR in the late 1990s. It demonstrates that rather than leading to the marginalization or elimination of hybrid organizational forms, police reform has reproduced foundational hybridity. Cast in languages that identify institutions belonging to the state as effective and legitimate, international protagonists of police reform recognized the central role of paramount and lesser chiefs. They failed, however, to see the resilience and productivity of the chiefs in translating and fitting these reforms to the hybrid authority that they represent.

7 The reproduction and consolidation of hybridity through police reform

7.1 Introduction

At the heart of international support to building legitimacy and effectiveness of the Sierra Leone state in the late 1990s was the “intention to introduce effective visible policing” and “for the police to resume primacy in maintaining law and order” (CPDTF September 1999). In the context of war, introducing effective visible policing meant the articulation of symbolic languages of stateness by building police stations, writing codes of conduct and training and equipping officers. This was a political project that entailed re-composing the justice and security field and the distribution of authority was within it. The SLP – representing the system and idea of the state – was to monopolize the enforcement of order and establish “state legitimacy” (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:29).

However, as this chapter argues, police reform as state-building reproduces rather than overturns the hybrid order. Indeed, the position of paramount and lesser chiefs in rural Sierra Leone was ratified by police reform. Given the authority that flows from the chiefs’ central position in articulating a hybrid order, they have had a key role in the appropriation, interpretation, translation and at times, rejection of SSR assemblages that were introduced to transform the justice and security field from one articulated in hybridity to one articulated in stateness.

Police reform was cast in languages biased towards the state and modified, but never fundamentally altered the hybrid. This argument is explored by comparing a number of the assemblages that SSR as police reform constitutes and articulates through languages of stateness to how order is conceptualized and enforced in Motema Division of Eastern Kono and Peyima.

First, the chapter outlines the key elements of police reform and its different phases since the late 1990s. The first phase began during open conflict in the late 1990s and constituted a rigid and narrow articulation of state-building. In the second phase, chiefs entered the reform discourse, but emphasis remained overwhelmingly on coordination among institutions of the state system in Freetown. The third phase of reform began in 2012 and was centered for the first time on what is referred to as ‘non-state justice and security

actors', but without acknowledging a hybrid order. Also in the future, it is concluded, will the hybrid order that paramount and lesser chiefs articulate be mis-recognized in attempts to reorder the justice and security field.

Second, the chapter explores a particular element of the police reform effort in the context of Motema Division (and Peyima), namely Local Policing Partnership Boards (hereafter referred to as 'LPPBs' or 'Partnership Boards'). Because LPPBs are an SLP (rather than an international) response to the hybrid order in the justice and security field, they cannot be reduced to expressions of neo-liberal principles that "extend market discipline, competition, and commodification throughout all sectors of society" (Brenner and Theodore 2002:3).⁹³ Rather than offsetting the distribution of authority in the justice and security field, the introduction of Partnership Boards consolidated the position of chiefs, who became the main interlocutors in establishing them.

7.2 A decade of state-building through police reform

The UK, with the agreement of Sierra Leone President Kabbah, supported the establishment of a police force within the internationally defined borders of the country that could monopolize instruments of violence and assert territorial sovereignty of the state. Re-composition of the justice and security field was intended to compartmentalize the armed forces, and project vertical encompassment through police presence throughout Sierra Leone. Kabbah's objective was to make the SLP the primary security force of the country in order to drive state building forward. This was an objective that UK state-building experts arriving in Sierra Leone during the 1990s and 2000s could understand, appreciate and support.

⁹³ It has been said that the recent Blair government in the UK emphasized new responsibilities among "recipient communities" as a condition for receiving "welfare and state benefits" (Raco 2003:78). This was not, of course, a de-selection of the "will to govern" (Rose 2006:155), but rather the form of "new mechanisms, relations and practices of centralized control" (Raco *ibid.*). Raco (*ibid.*), who takes a Foucauldian approach to how subjects are created, brings out "new 'community-based'" policing strategies, which constitute attempts to mobilize subjects in their own governance. This is not dissimilar to the notion of 'empowerment' of communities, he argues, that cuts across a range of policy areas and often takes the form of new mechanisms, relations and practices of centralized control.

7.2.1 Phase I: ‘Blue sky thinking’ – re-articulating the justice and security field

Building a police force during the later years of the war in the 1990s was supported primarily by the UK-funded Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Project (CCSSP). How re-organization of the justice and security field in Sierra Leone was envisioned and pursued cannot be analyzed separately from how investments were channeled by the CCSSP into equipment, infrastructure, logistics and human capacity to establish a particular type of police force. As a political entity, Sierra Leone might have been characterized by foundational hybridity. However, the assembling of words, actors and things into what became known as police reform during the 2000s was intricately linked to the effects of externally supported and -driven programming.

The CCSSP constituted the ‘heyday’ of police reform in Sierra Leone. From 2000 to mid-2005, investments of approximately £27 million were made in equipment, training and advisors with the sole purpose of establishing a police organization that could enforce ‘internal security’ and replace the perceived chaos of war and military coups with the rule of law (Ball et al. 2007).⁹⁴ New vehicles, uniforms and radios procured by the UK became essential props in the articulation of symbolic languages of stateness, thus laying the foundation to project state authority yet again (Albrecht 2010:33; Krogstad 2012b: 171).

Given the extent to which the Sierra Leone state was considered a failure in the late 1990s, police advisers believed that they were working from a clean slate after the war, and that if the state did not fill the ‘power vacuum’ created by the war, criminal groups and warring factions would (Jackson and Albrecht 2011:52-53; CPDTP July 1998; December 1999). Adrian Horn, who became manager of the CCSSP, believed that “a complete re-structuring of the police service in Sierra Leone,” and by extension how order was made, was not only necessary, but also possible (Horn quoted in Albrecht and Jackson 2009:32). “I had the luxury of free thinking,” Horn recalls, “my previous involvements in developing change were usually constrained by systems and procedures, which only allowed tinkering and not ‘blue sky’ thinking. This was different” (notes, Adrian Horn, 2008).

⁹⁴ As I have argued elsewhere, the CCSSP will be remembered for a heavy focus on technical and operational support, including procurement of equipment and provision of training, and for overhauling the SLP organization (Albrecht 2010:33).

True to the reductionist state-building project of SSR, attempts were made through the CCSSP to attribute action to a small number of centrally governed institutions that were mandated by legislation produced by the state system in order to enforce its laws. Apart from re-composing the security and justice field by working upon construction of the SLP, Keith Biddle, a retired UK police officer, was appointed by Kabbah to become Inspector-General of Police (IGP) in 1999 (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:33). This was in itself remarkable. Not since W. G. Syer headed the police force during the final years of colonial rule and handed over command to L. W. Leigh in 1963, had a non-Sierra Leonean been the executive head of the SLP (see Krogstad 2012b:131-136). Indeed, the appointment made some decision-makers in London uncomfortable. Clare Short had been “totally against” UK involvement in the appointment, Biddle told me, but Kabbah, with whom he had built a close relationship since arriving the year before, had insisted (Keith Biddle, interview, June 2009).⁹⁵

While they would not characterize their work as such, Biddle and Horn were involved with recreating the justice and security field as inter-connected assemblages of things, persons and words consisting of money, people, epistemological outlooks on the world, slogans, charters and technical knowledge of law enforcement. They did not intend to re-build the patrimonially networked governed space of pre-war Sierra Leone – that had in effect been an ineffective and illegitimate state. What they had in mind was a centrally governed state organized according to western universalist principles of statehood. As part and parcel of this process, the aim was also to marginalize or eliminate strong, often criminalized alternatives and ignore or absorb those that appeared weak, which could be papered over in program documents by simply not giving them a role in the reform process.

During my long conversations with Biddle that began in 2007, it was clear from the way he spoke about his role in Sierra Leone that he believed it to be about protecting the remnants of the state, and that Kabbah who led those remnants was of a similar persuasion.

⁹⁵ The appointment of a British national to the position of Chief of Defence Staff was considered in 2000 during the British intervention in Sierra Leone. However, the idea was rejected as being too contentious (David Richards, interview, 2008; Keith Biddle, interview, June 2009).

“He,” Biddle said, referring to Kabbah, “expected the police to be the primary force to maintain law and order and deal with problems inside the country” (Keith Biddle, interview, June 2009). In other words, Kabbah had ‘won’ a monopoly over the state idea and what was left of the state system from the likes of Norman, Sankoh and Koroma, children of the hybrid order. Biddle, a product of the western universalist state model, was dyslexic in any other languages than those of stateness. He knew of no alternatives, and by default became Kabbah’s truest and most trusted servant. “What was very heartening,” Biddle said “was that the president had a very clear view of where he was going.” Both men were articulate in the languages of stateness; while Kabbah was establishing a power base through state-building and saw the establishment of a police force as essential to this endeavor, Biddle was supportive of the President’s objective (Keith Biddle, interview, June 2009).

From the late 1990s and onwards, assemblages were taking shape that reflected the productive effects of SSR as police reform. Horn and Biddle had arrived in Sierra Leone in 1997 to initiate project appraisal activities (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:29). Together, they wrote the new policing charter that was delivered to and signed off by Kabbah. “I did the first draft,” Biddle explained, which was circulated amongst senior SLP officers and subsequently refined. “That police charter was presented to Kabbah by Adrian and myself,” and made publicly available in August 1998. The new slogan of the SLP became ‘A Force for Good’, which Biddle took from his time in Kent where police department stationery was produced that had “The Kent Police are a force for good” printed at the bottom. “So, Kabbah took up this and I christened the police in charge as a ‘force for good’ and he used that. That was the basis that we then gave to everybody and said: ‘that is the type of police force you’ve got to create’” (Keith Biddle, interview, June 2009).

In line with the re-birth of the SLP as a ‘force for good’, its new doctrine was conceptualized as Local Needs Policing (LNP). Related to notions of community policing, it was defined as: “Policing that meets the expectations and need of the local community and reflects national standards and objectives” (Adrian Horn quoted in Albrecht and Jackson 2009:32; CPDTF November 1998). While ‘the community’ was treated as a black box – i.e., the relations of power that it is constituted by were not unpacked – it became the

center around which the police developed further. Financed by the CCSSP, dozens of Sierra Leonean superintendents attended training in the UK at the International Commanders' Programme. At the training, most superintendents wrote papers titled 'Key issues in Community Policing – Sierra Leone'. In these papers, variations on the theme of community policing are articulated (see Moore 1992; Thatcher 2001), deduced from the "history of policing in England and Wales." Based on the basic formula of "police officers and private citizens working together to solve community problems" (Mannah 2001; not published), LNP emerged as a key principle in SLP community programs across Sierra Leone (see Krogstad 2012b:159-165; CCSSP Report June 2001).

The first years of police reform began during open conflict. Therefore, before 2002, police reform took place predominantly in Freetown and emphasized strategic issues, in part because of a genuine need to do so, and in part because it was not possible to move outside the capital. In particular, emphasis was placed on building capacity among the senior levels of the SLP, including training at the Police College at Bramshill in the UK. The emphasis on Freetown at the time was also precipitated by the security situation, particularly the high number of internally-displaced people occupying any large building available, including former railway train sheds and derelict factory buildings in the east end of Freetown (Albrecht 2009:29-41).

After the war ended, it became possible to move SLP operations outside Freetown and move from a theoretical, strategic approach to a more practical one. It was during this period that deployment across the country began, which would not have been possible without a massive investment in a vehicle fleet and nationwide communication systems, investments undertaken by the UK (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:86-97; CCSSP 2000, December 2001). By 2004, one assessment noted, "the SLP has improved its responsiveness and its visibility. A major factor in achieving this situation has been the communications, vehicles and infrastructure support provided through the CSSP" (CSSP 2004).

In these efforts, the traditional role of chiefs, who presided over justice and security issues outside Freetown, was considered marginal, and in any case was not well-understood by external actors coming in. However, as the second part of this chapter demonstrates, they

came to play a central role in reform efforts in rural areas of the country and thus in the making of order in Sierra Leone's localities. Before exploring these dynamics in some detail, however, the chapter looks at the shapes that police reform took after the CCSSP was concluded.

7.2.2 Phase II: Approaching the justice and security field holistically

In 2005, the CCSSP was taken over by another program cycle with different priorities. Biddle had left Sierra Leone in 2003, and a Sierra Leonean, Brima Acha Kamara, had been appointed to the position of Inspector-General of Police (Albrecht and Jackson 2009:91-92). The Justice Sector Development Program (JSDP) that replaced the CCSSP reflected a turn to what was referred to in international policy discourse as a more 'holistic' approach to SSR, and included attempts to encompass rather than marginalize hybrid organizational formations. It was a process, however, that continued to be cast in languages of stateness (JSDP December 2005).

Rather than targeting one organization within, such as the SLP, and addressing its effectiveness as an enforcing agency, the justice and security field and its governability was to be worked upon now as an inter-connected whole of organizational formations. The JSDP constituted a fundamental break with previous efforts, in the sense that chiefs, as well as bureaucratic oversight, for instance, were now factored into re-composition of the justice and security field. A 'holistic' approach meant that the primary focus now was on establishing an inter-linked state system, something that Horn and Biddle under the aegis of CCSSP had worked against by focusing exclusively on the SLP (Albrecht 2010:69).

Until 2005, investments of approximately £27 million had been made in equipment, training and advisors with the sole purpose of establishing a police force of 9,500 officers that could manifest articulations of stateness across the territory of Sierra Leone and replace the perceived chaos and anarchy of war with one centrally-governed organization (White 2010:77). In this next phase, approximately £25 million were to be distributed among the actors considered to make up the justice and security field as a whole, which encompassed, *inter alia*, the judiciary, prisons and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Only

£3-4 million was to be spent on the police (Albrecht 2010:69+70). In practical terms, this turn of events had dramatic consequences for the position of the SLP in the course that programing took.

With the demise of the CCSSP and the onset of the JSDP, the SLP had lost Biddle as a clearly identifiable and decisive international leader. However, the SLP continued to be financially dependent on contributions from international donors. As one key advisor to the JSDP noted, this was somewhat of a double blow to the SLP: “Withdrawal of international funding inevitably leads to short-term paralysis and degradation of service with a real danger of attrition to the *status quo ante*” (Howlett-Bolton 2008:8).

7.2.2.1 Application of holistic principles to the justice and security field

Under the holistic approach to the justice and security sector, priority reform areas were expanded beyond any one organization in particular (Howlett-Bolton 2010:101). As expressed in Output to Purpose Review, a technical assessment produced by UK-based experts in 2007, areas to be reformed included out-of-date and inaccessible laws and procedures such as the indexing of customary law, prison overcrowding, delays in courts, absence of juvenile justice provision and the lack of support mechanisms to meet the “needs of the poor, vulnerable and marginalized to access justice and the lack of connection between community needs and police operations” (Bredemear et al. 2007:9-10). The holistic commitment became a key component of the institutions governed by civilians that would manage and make order inside the borders of the country (see Albrecht and Jackson 2009:133).

The focus on the SLP as an institution was eclipsed by DFID’s emerging reluctance to support programming considered too oriented towards security and ‘the state’ rather than ‘the people’ and to be dominating issues relating to the broader justice sector, the judiciary in particular. JSDP thus marked DFID’s return to its perceived ‘core business’: bettering conditions for the poor (Bredemear et al. 2007:9-10). This shift was supported consistently

by the JSDP in both Freetown and Moyamba District, which became the only ‘pilot district’ of the JSDP outside the Western Area where Freetown is located.⁹⁶

The JSDP placed a heavy emphasis on what can best be described as governance-related activities, i.e., the organization and inter-linking of state institutions. This was the practical recognition of the link between development, quality of governance and security (Call 2008:1493; Egnell and Haldén 2009:30). A Justice Sector Reform Strategy and Investment Plan for 2008-2010 (JSRS-IP), launched in February 2008, was regarded by the donor community in particular as an important contribution to Freetown-based reform efforts across the justice sector. A Justice Sector Co-ordination Office, established in July 2007 and located next to the Attorney General and Solicitor General’s offices within the Ministry of Justice, was considered pivotal to establishing an inter-linked and coordinated state system (Bredemear and Lewis 2008; Biesheuvel et al. 2009).

The productive effects of JSDP in Kono District and Peyima specifically are difficult to ascertain. Program efforts were concentrated in Freetown and Moyamba District, and the CCSSP, unlike JSDP, pursued police reform as state-building during a period that centered on attempts to consolidate the SLP’s monopoly over the making of order within Sierra Leone’s borders. This is indicative of processes of institution-building that are concentrated in a capital.

The holistic approach of the JSDP was the indication of a more comprehensive, and, on paper, a more intrusive variety of SSR as state-building that encompassed the justice and security field as a whole and focused on how it was to be governed. However, due to the breadth of activities under the JSDP, establishment of a networked state system in Freetown rather than in Sierra Leone as a whole became the default priority. In 2008-2009

⁹⁶ Moyamba District was chosen as the district outside Freetown in which the JSDP would ‘pilot’ its holistic approach. Practically, it was chosen because it had a number of statutory justice institutions, including a prison, four police stations and five police posts, encompassing 14 chiefdoms and a population of 260,000 people. The district was also chosen because of its easy accessibility to Freetown. The original JSDP program document suggested that the JSDP would branch off into other districts. This, however, did not occur, which in all probability was due to the overwhelming ambition of encompassing the justice and security field in its entirety. By 2009, a review referred to Moyamba in the context of JSDP as “a district test-bed for new projects and ideas” (Biesheuvel et al. 2009). The general focus of the JSDP in Moyamba has been on community access to courts and, more generally, institutions such as Partnership Boards. A so-called ‘circuit court,’ holding sessions across Moyamba, was established in an attempt to overcome the inaccessibility of many parts of the district (Bredemear et al. 2007).

in Kono District, officers complained that uniforms were not being replaced, and that they were operating with fewer vehicles. While elements of early police reform were still visible, the ability of the SLP to project authority through these kinds of props was diminishing. In sum, one review conducted by the UK government noted in 2011, “an effective police force is not affordable within Sierra Leone’s domestic budget” (Horn et al. 2011).

7.2.2.2 Approaching chiefs in ‘languages of stateness’

Rather than working with the hybrid order that they constitute, police reform under the auspices of JSDP categorized chiefs as part of the state system. It was, however, not taken into account that the sources of authority that chiefs draw on are both locally embedded and of the state. This led to mis-recognition of how authority is produced in Sierra Leone, which ultimately led to the fact that police reform contributed to rather than eradicated the hybrid order.

In late 2005, a National Policy Framework for the Justice Sector in Sierra Leone was presented within the JSDP framework. It was framed as a “holistic sector-wide” approach to support the “development of an effective, efficient, impartial and accountable justice sector capable of meeting the needs of all the people of Sierra Leone” (JSDP December 2005:2).

This document is long on formulations that emphasize the importance of ‘Customary/Traditional Laws and Practices’, for example, the development of policies on the judicial role of traditional leaders, implementation of initiatives that promote constitutional principles and human rights and enhanced accountability of traditional leaders to the public. Likewise, the Justice Sector Reform Strategy and Investment Plan, launched in February 2008, has as one of six targets to “improve public satisfaction levels with Local Courts, Paramount and Local Chiefs” (GOSL December 2007:V).

“Each system will have its own advantages and disadvantages and both need support,” one JSDP advisor noted, “even if the state system will inevitably require a greater share of financial resources” (Howlett-Bolton 2008:8). To some degree, this statement was more

theoretical than practical as working with the paramount and lesser chiefs never was a central objective of the JSDP (see Krogstad 2012b: 220). In Peyima specifically – and Kamara Chiefdom more generally – it was the paramount and lesser chiefs, rather than a government-appointed Court Chairman, who oversaw Local Court proceedings.

The Local Courts were operated according to a hybrid order, and yet, JSDP documentation suggests that they were part of the state system, which implies that they are managed by that system. A 2007 assessment says, “local courts constitute the lowest level of the formal system” (Bredemear et al. 2007). However, while they are under the oversight of, they are not managed by the Ministry of Local Government, which in practice remains too weak to play a meaningful role in this capacity. According to a civil servant in the Ministry of Local Government, the Ministry also lacks the political will to actively regulate the local courts, primarily because it is accepted that they fall under the authority of paramount and lesser chiefs.

Articulating this kind of distance is common. Brima Acha Kamara, Inspector-General of Police until 2011, suggested in an interview: “our own role is quite different from the chiefdoms, because we are accountable to the law” (interview, Brima Acha Kamara 2009). Inherent to Acha Kamara’s statement is the perception of a split between police (state) and chiefs (society) - one is not hierarchically above the other, and that they belong to and oversee two different systems of order. (As I turn to shortly, this is a distinction that dissolves when practice of how the SLP and chiefs interact is observed.)

As noted above, substantive work had been undertaken in Freetown around the institutions that external advisers naturally gravitated towards as constituting the state. Inevitably, as the focus moved to the chiefdom level, as in Moyamba District, attempts by the JSDP to influence institutions controlled by the chiefs encountered the issue of distribution of power at the local level, and thus the composition of the justice and security field. Working with the chiefs became a deeply political endeavour where issues of power, resources and rights were at stake and where authority was being competed over (see Albrecht and Kyed 2011:5).

During the implementation phase of JSDP, there was no attempt to fundamentally alter the Local Court system. Rather, focus centered on how to confine chiefs to their legally-defined role, primarily through training in the arbitration of cases, a role that was intended for the effective and legitimate state, to recall Goldstone's (2008:285-286) typology. However, actors belonging to the state system enter into a complex relationship with chiefs, where one cannot be said to stand hierarchically above the other. The two sets of institutions become integral to one another and their authority becomes mutually constitutive, not exclusive. It is not evident, as Baker (2008:158) suggests, that there is conscious intent behind state actions, that 'it', regardless of how "disunified" or "contradictory" it might be, "seeks domination over all other organizations within the national territory and is intent on establishing binding rules regarding the other organizations' activities."

It is, however, a default position of donor-driven programming to work with and operate on organizational formations that may be articulated in languages of stateness. Donors and individual advisors avoid engaging with *de facto* hybrid orders, because they are convinced that state institutions are the rightful holders of a monopoly over the making of order (see Albrecht and Kyed 2011). This is seen reflected in assessments of the JSDP carried out in 2007, 2008 and 2009, where remarkably little space, if any, is devoted to chiefs and the order they make (Bredemear et al. 2007; Bredemear and Lewis 2008; Biesheuvel et al. 2009).

The function and rationale of how chiefs operate, particularly in their political role, is not well understood by international actors. They believe that the institutions of the chief will wither away as state institutions are built. While some international actors may accept the importance of including chiefs in justice programs, the donors and the consultants they hire have yet to design programs that do not default towards the state-building rationale (see also Albrecht and Buur 2009).

7.2.2 Phase III: Embracing the hybrid order?

As the JSDP was winding down in 2010, DFID in Sierra Leone proposed a ‘new intervention’ called *Improved Access to Security and Justice Programme in Sierra Leone* (IASJP) and intended to run for a three-year period (2012- 2015). IASJP would constitute the third phase of reform.

At the time of this writing, the project design process for IASJP has taken place; roll out is about to begin. The terms of reference for this process suggest that the ‘delivery of improved access to security and justice’ is “at both the centre of our ongoing state-building and human development interventions” (UK Government 2009). They also suggest that a key threat to building sustainable peace in Sierra Leone is “a lack of individual or community legal redress or rights” (ibid). The program is expected to support the JSDP, which is described as “operating in several districts” (ibid.; see Albrecht 2012:249-250).

The language of this document has relevance to the focus of this thesis: it recognizes that ‘non-state’ security and justice providers are as vital as ‘state’ providers. However, it is not evident who the non-state providers are, how they operate and what sources of authority they draw upon. It simply refers to ‘informal’ and ‘traditional’ security and justice providers, which presumably can mean civil society groups and chiefs.

The interim project design published in early 2010 indicates that IASJP will interact with “non-state justice and security actors,” “community mediation projects” and “legal aid endeavours” (Libra Advisory Group 2010a). While chiefs are referred to in connection with ‘GOSL MDAs’ (Government of Sierra Leone Ministries, Departments and Agencies), the category of non-state actors includes driver’s unions, market associations and so forth. In the final program document, chiefly institutions have a central and more explicit role. The “Chieftdom Administration and the local courts,” while mentioned in connection with ‘justice sector MDAs [Ministries, Departments and Agencies]’, are not categorized as either state or non-state but merely considered to be part of the broader field of justice and security (albeit not within the framework of thinking of a hybrid order) (Libra Advisory Group 2010b:10). The immediate question is whether this is a first step towards the acknowledgment of working with a hybrid order in the justice and security field that avoids

the construction of programs around pre-defined conceptual distinctions between state and society.

While this question cannot be answered at this point in time, it seems unlikely that programs will be developed that take a hybrid order into account, because policy language to do so simply does not exist. (Indeed, the notion of a ‘non-state’ constitutes a label rather than an explanation). It is therefore inevitable that a hybrid order is reproduced, precisely because it is not taken into account, and precisely because it is assumed that a state will emerge that, if worked upon in the right way, will be built to monopolise the making of order. In this framework, the issue is not whether state-building is possible, but how to do it correctly.

I have explored above some of the elements that went into re-composing the justice and security field through police reform, emphasizing the languages in which these efforts have been projected, centering predominantly on establishing a centrally-governed political entity. Specifically, I have explored how chiefs have been excluded from, considered marginal to, and part of continuous re-iterations of external support to re-composing the justice and security field. However, where they derive their authority to act has been a mute point throughout the past decade of police and justice programming. Thus, the foundational hybrid order that they are constitutive of is not taken into account, and yet it is this order that police reform is translated into, both shaping and shaped by.

The next section of this chapter explores how chiefs have been central actors with respect to shaping how the justice and security field has been re-composed through police reform. While the aim of police reform may have been to reinforce the articulation of stateness, it has rather, in a double pull, reproduced and consolidated chiefly powers to make order.

7.3 Integrating languages of stateness and languages of public authority

From the early 2000s, when Biddle and Horn were still the international leaders of police reform, a key component of how to re-compose the articulation of authority in the justice and security field occurred with the establishment of Partnership Boards by the police. These boards were set up, one review of the SLP produced in February 2011 notes, “to

enable the local communities to have a say and be involved in finding solutions to local problems, and to act as an interface between the SLP and the local community” (Horn et al. 2011:36).⁹⁷ It is in this capacity that Partnership Boards have become one of the concrete vehicles for hybrid reproduction outside Freetown.

LNP, the ‘mantra’, if you will, for SLP community programs such as Partnership Boards, was meant to reflect that where it did operate, policing was no longer a regime-preserving instrument (Krogstad 2012b:161). As noted in an essay on community policing that SLP superintendent Amadu Mannah wrote in 2001 for a course in the UK before the war ended: “There are communities in some parts of the country where the national police have not established their presence” (Mannah 2001; unpublished paper).

What the concepts of ‘local needs’ and ‘community’ encompass, and the order that they articulate, was never explored or made explicit, either by the international experts or, for that matter, in police headquarters in Freetown. The concepts are more often than not treated as a black box, as a depoliticized – unproblematic – administrative unit comprising a certain amount of people. Therefore little attention was paid to the foundational hybrid order that police reform was shaping as well as being shaped by. The underlying rationale of police reform, particularly prior to 2005, was that strengthening the SLP would automatically marginalize, dominate and encompass alternative makers of order, notably chiefs, and dictate rather than being dictated to by these actors (Albrecht 2010:9).

And yet, at the very top of the formal security sector sat Kellie Conteh, the National Security Coordinator from 2001 to 2011. Conteh was from the countryside in the north and was raised under the rule of chiefs. He disagreed with the assumption that the national police should, or indeed could, dominate the enforcement of order. During an interview I conducted with him 2008, Conteh discussed the issue of how to approach Sierra Leone’s chiefs with a good deal of fervor:

I think they [international actors] should help to strengthen chieftaincies in the sense that our people, whether you like it or not, for now seem to respect that

⁹⁷ I was the co-author, together with Adrian Horn and Martin Gordon, of this report, which included fieldwork conducted in January-February 2011.

traditional setting. No amount of education from, you know, human rights organisations, international organisations on this sort of thing would work right now. They would listen, yes, but as soon as you leave, they go back to their tradition. They [the general population] simply respect the chief. I think we should not undermine the authority of the chiefs by trying to introduce several layers of governance within the chiefdoms. At the end of the day it would only hurt government, because we would not have the capacity to do it properly, we simply don't. Let's not make ourselves look stupid on this matter. Let's go back to basics. This is how our people live. They live in these villages and in the village there's a town chief, they have a youth leader, a women's leader – these are structures that are there, and they all respect the chief. Even if you want to put lawyers and judges at chiefdom level, do you have the roads for these people to be travelling to court? You want the farmers to leave their farms to come to court? No, that is not going to happen, so leave it with them, empower the chiefs if you want to regulate it, yes, we can do that, I'm sure the chiefs are open to that. This is not just about security – it's the whole system we're looking at which goes far beyond the security sector. It's looking at transforming an entire culture, an entire society so that they would do things that will fit in security the country in order as to provide an enabling environment for development to take place (Kellie Conteh, interview, August 2008).

As the quote suggests, Conteh not only dismissed attempts to fundamentally re-compose the justice and security field, he also indicated that it would be impossible to do so. Working with the chiefs was and would in the foreseeable future be a question of negotiation, not imposition. Conteh acknowledged the authority of chiefs across rural Sierra Leone, and thus a hybrid order, without using the term, of course, and without describing in detail the structure of this order. Partnership Boards became the SLP's articulated attempt to try and deal with this long-established order.

7.3.1 Local Policing Partnership Boards: a vehicle for hybrid reproduction

From the outset of police reform, which was initiated during open conflict, it was inevitable that it would be guided by a hybrid order. Since this order was not created but merely accentuated by conflict, it seemed inevitable that it would also give shape to how police reform was articulated locally, including through the Partnership Boards.

Brima Acha Kamara, who replaced Biddle as Inspector-General of Police in 2003, described the police's scope to enforce order in the late 1990s as policing by consensus: "There were other forces, warring factions, RUF combatants, CDF, competition about who should really be in charge of internal security. We were not able to flex our muscle, and we were ultimately doing *policing by consensus*" (interview, Brima Acha Kamara 2009; *italics added*). Koroma was describing the mutual reinforcement of hybridity and war. However, in his assertion also lay the rationale of policing in the years to come, and inadvertently the basis for the role that the Partnership Boards would play in peacetime – the expression of policing by consensus.

The reorganization of the justice and security field that was part of ending the conflict entailed the marginalization or elimination of these 'other forces' and 'warring factions.' Policing by consensus, to use Acha Kamara's wording, was not simply the consequence of war and a breakdown of the state system, but rather the result of a deep-seated hybrid order that transcended the years of conflict. Logically, the re-establishment of the 'state system' was therefore unlikely to make the principle of policing by consensus obsolete.

Partnership Boards became a concrete vehicle for appropriating and translating the SLP's new ethos of LNP that emerged in the late 1990s. They were focused on 'the community' as the space in which the interface and amalgamation of different approaches to ordering would take place, stemming from practices in communities, states and global institutions. While the SLP used a language of benevolence and inclusion to explain the rationale of the Partnership Boards, their emergence was also articulated as a pragmatic response to the notion that the "numerical strength of the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) in coverage is smaller compared to the fast growing population for the entire nation." The statement is taken from the *Proposed Guidelines and Codes of Conduct for Operations of the Local Policing Partnership Boards of Sierra Leone 2005* (SLP 2005) that express the common perception

that Partnership Boards could compensate for the lack of resources within the SLP. People were to police themselves.⁹⁸

These guidelines, given to me by Mustapha Kambeh, Local Unit Commander in Motema Division covering Eastern Kono (and Kamara Chiefdom), provide insight into the foundational hybrid order that Partnership Boards would support. As a “community based structure” and a “non-partisan, inter-religious, social integration development group” the Partnership Boards were established “to create a peaceful and healthy police/community co-existence at all levels, with the ultimate goal to fight and reduce crime to an appreciable level and contribute to the socio-economic and political development of Sierra Leone” (SLP 2005). What this particular statement expresses is the extrapolation of certain representatives of the community, and their movement into an apparently neutral and de-politicized space, where the hierarchy that centers on paramount and lesser chiefs and the figures of authority that they represent are muted. Nothing is stated about the chiefs’ role in appointing – and managing – the individuals who are to sit on the Partnership Boards.

Kambeh, who had been involved in developing the Partnership Board concept when he was posted at police headquarters in Freetown in the mid-2000s, recognized their importance and had worked hard to set them up in the seven chiefdoms that Motema Division covered. Partnership Boards, he said, are:

Critical in assisting the police to curb and mediate in conflict within the areas [of the police division]. They [Partnership Board members] know that [they have that role] because they’re part and parcel of the community and they [the police] listen to them [the Partnership Board] and will understand the situation very well. So that is helping us police our area. So what the Partnership Board is now doing is helping us [do] early warning, [they are an] early response mechanism to conflict, because of the resources given, and the economic trend in the country, and the whole world. The resources are inadequate if you allow conflict to erupt and grow within your

⁹⁸ Community policing could as such be cast as a neo-liberal propulsion to diagnose, prescribe and cure the fragile state, viewing “community” as an entity possessing the power to increasingly self-govern (see Herbert 2008:851). However, it could also be regarded as the technical response to a hybrid order and a realization of the limitations of the state system rather than of the need to put limits on the state, as Kellie Conteh was quoted as indicating above.

areas of responsibility. The sooner we observe that conflict is about to erupt, we are able to move quickly to curb it in a timely way; it assists us in our resource use (Mustapha Kambeh, interview, March 2009).

While drawing on the principles of LNP introduced by Biddle and Horn, Brima Acha Kamara, who had studied in the UK in 2002-2003 and observed community-policing programs on a trip to Northern Ireland, introduced Partnership Boards to the SLP. Indeed, Horn and Biddle had been uncomfortable with engaging the 'local community', and the chiefs in particular. While the needs of the community were to be heard by the SLP, the intention behind LNP was not to reproduce a hybrid order of chiefs and police that while shaped by both, would be managed by the former. It was precisely to establish the imagery of vertical encompassment, a police force as separate from and yet encompassing and integrated with 'the community,' that was intended. Indeed, Biddle expected that the role of chief would diminish in importance and disappear as a relic of the past once the state-building process had gathered momentum, and marginalized or toppled other makers of order (Keith Biddle, interview June 2009).⁹⁹

Simply ignoring the chiefs would not automatically lead to their marginalization. On the contrary, their position – and the foundational hybrid order that defines their power – was consolidated through the collaborative approach that defines the Partnership Boards. As they were established in Motema Division, and Kamara Chiefdom specifically, where Peyima is located, they did not constitute a fundamental re-organization of the security and justice field. Instead, these organizational formations fortified and consolidated an already existing relationship between the SLP and the chiefs. Kambeh urgently understood that the authority to act within the justice and security field depended on entertaining close relations with the chiefs:

⁹⁹ One example relates to how the Chieftain Police was handled by Biddle. Discussions of integrating the Chieftain Police into the SLP would have constituted the invigoration of languages of stateness, a reordering of the justice and security field that would have granted greater authority, on paper if not in practice, to the SLP. However, only after 2005, as the second phase of justice reform was being designed, was the Chieftain Police considered an actor that should be involved in police reform efforts, and only in a limited geographical area, namely Moyamba. Biddle himself noted about the decision not to engage: "The practical aspects, due to the inept management of the Chieftain Police by the Ministry of Local Government and the chiefs and district officers, proved to be too problematic" (Keith Biddle, interview, June 2009; see also Krogstad 2012:220).

Well, for me to work effectively, you must be in cordial relationship with your traditional leaders in the area you find yourself, because if there is an amicable relationship, I mean, between the LUC and the paramount chiefs and their section chiefs, town chief, et cetera, et cetera, it will go a long way to ease policing problems in that area. Because then there will be a common understanding among the chiefs and the police. They will understand the problems of the police and find ways and means how to harmonize their relationship and make sure that things work effectively to make their areas secure. We have to preserve the peace and public tranquillity and make sure that the fear of crimes is reduced to the nearest minimum within the area and make sure that people go about their normal activities without hindrance. So to achieve all these things, you must be in good relations with the paramount chief (Mustapha Kambeh, interview, March 2009).

The SLP with the chiefs, as articulated through the Partnership Boards, constitute a central assemblage within the justice and security field. The SLP know their position, and that their room for manoeuvring is driven both by capacity and legitimacy vis-à-vis chiefs, who above all draw authority to act from their status as autochthons of the area over which they rule. The perception among Sierra Leonean police officers is that there is a shortage of personnel and equipment within the force, which adds to the importance of entertaining good relations with the ‘local community’. Actors within the state system in Kono are unaware of what happens in many parts of the District, notably in the border regions to Guinea and Liberia, and the SLP is dependent on ‘the community’ to provide them with that information. ‘The community’, however, is not constituted by neutrally-distributed interest groups, but by a field of power that centers on paramount and lesser chiefs.

7.3.2 The role of Partnership Boards in order making

What I wish to illustrate in the following section is how material and discursive aspects of the Partnership Board are configured in Motema Division within which Peyima is located. Partnership Boards, as construed above, are shaped by numerous, inter-related words, actors and things that come together, emanating from international policy discourse on community policing (LNP), the distribution of material and financial resources within the

police and the articulation of authority within the justice and security field. Paramount and lesser chiefs play a vital role in shaping how Partnership Boards operate, but at the same time they have also been presented as an important push by the SLP towards “increased collaboration between SLP and civilians” by NGOs that work with them (Hanson-Alp 2008:14; Albrecht and Jackson 2009:189-197).

The Board’s purpose is to liaise with the police to promote safety and security through consultations and joint operations. A divisional board is set up, headed by a Chairman, a Vice Chairman, Treasurer, a representative of the youth and women and two traditional chiefs. Five delegates from each section in the chieftdom are put forward for election, selected for their “reputable character” and only if they are “dedicated to the course of security and community development” (SLP 2005). A certificate awarded by the LUC marks their appointment; they meet once every month (Mustapha Kambeh, interview March 2009; SLP 2005).

Police officers in Motema division, for example, understand the need for more collaboration between the police and citizens. In a questionnaire that I gave to a few intelligence service officers (formally the Special Branch), one response was phrased somewhat idealistically:

We cooperate with the local communities by taking policing on to their doorstep through the formation of Local Police Partnership Boards (LPPB) through the length and breadth of the country. We hold consultative meetings with them in which their basic security needs are identified. We also sensitize and empower them, encourage them to solve some of their own problems at local level [...]. With the formation of the LPPB under the new changed management, the local communities are no longer afraid of the SLP as it was before and during the war.

Thus, while the SLP generally like to present ‘Local Needs Policing’ as the articulation of a changed attitude, the police rely heavily on Partnership Board members to access towns and villages across the chieftdoms. The so-called ‘central executive board’ of the Partnership Board, which meets at Motema division headquarters on a monthly basis, was ‘statified’ ritually by having the elections overseen by the National Election Commission.

The candidates for election, however, were selected by the chiefs, and were often chiefs themselves (for example, the Chairman was a town chief in Nimikoro chiefdom).¹⁰⁰

It is also the case that only central executive members at police divisional level are elected. In the case of Kamara Chiefdom, members at section and village level are appointed by the chiefs and elders as in Peyima, where town chief Gborie personally appointed the Partnership Board member. During my fieldwork, this person was first a central member of the group of elders and was then replaced with a close ally of Gborie. Only if the Partnership Board and the Chief in Peyima deem an issue sufficiently important will it be brought to the Partnership Board Chairman of the chiefdom and/or the nearest police post or station. Furthermore, the SLP expects the chiefs to deal with matters within their own jurisdiction. Murder, sudden deaths, severe beatings (referred to as ‘blood crimes’) substantial theft and sexual abuse of children were considered to be ‘above’ the town, and to require police involvement.

The case of the epileptic boy who drowned presented in Chapter 6 was one such case that was considered partly ‘above’ the town, and Kalilu, qua his position as the Partnership Board member in Peyima, came to play a central role in its resolution. Within the broader cosmology of Peyima, the boy’s death was construed as a case of the devil having taken his life. It was, however, also considered unusual because of the age of the deceased (he was only seven) and therefore warranted that the incident be reported to the police. Ibrahim, known as Kalilu, ‘the faithful’, who referred to himself as a Public Relations Officer of the Partnership Board in Peyima and was a ‘trusted somebody’ of Chief Gborie, came to the scene.¹⁰¹ Looking stern, like the police officer whose role he assumed, he told people that nobody should touch the body until the SLP had come to look into the matter.

¹⁰⁰ Anything to do with enforcing order within a chiefdom commonly involved the paramount chief. For example, the non-governmental organization National Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD) set up a paralegal program while I did my fieldwork in Kono District. The candidates that NMJD interviewed were all, however, selected by the paramount chiefs in the chiefdoms where the program was being established (Tankoro, Nimiyama and Nimikoro).

¹⁰¹ In the *Proposed Guidelines and Codes of Conduct for Operations of the Local Policing Partnership Boards of Sierra Leone 2005*, the public relations officer has various functions, among them being “the liaison between the board’s community and police personnel” and “work with all areas of the police to reduce pressure, thereby reserve police time, energy and resources.” In other words, a Public Relations Officer could be considered to function as a police officer where the SLP was not immediately present.

Kalilu jotted down the course of events and went to the police post in Tombodu, both to report and to invite the SLP to come to Peyima. Kalilu explained:

So when reaching there, they take statement from me, then we made radio communication to the head of the police station, the one in Motema. They asked me some questions about the deceased, whether there is any foul play, I deny; there's no foul play there. To prove it, they gave me one police, a sergeant, and we came together and we observed the corpse that there is no foul play (Kalilu, interview, February 2009).

Invitation of the police to the town is always done reluctantly, because the police will demand a 'report in fee' and expect to receive 'transport money' to go back and forth from Tombodu. Their arrival is therefore followed by some negotiation, which inadvertently involves an act of boundary-making. "I explain to them," Kalilu told me as the police came to investigate the matter of the boy, "this is a community policing that I am doing, I'm not receiving any payment from the government so you are here to do your job. We are there to represent you, and if there is a case we will pay your transport to come and go, but [apart from that] we don't have money to give you" (Kalilu, interview, February 2009). This simultaneous act of distancing and rapprochement between the Partnership Board member and the SLP, of boundary-making, constituted a tacit agreement.

If the agreement that Kalilu made with the police was not abided by, however, if 'transport money' was not paid, instruments of the state would come more forcefully into play, at least this is what Kalilu anticipated: "If you won't give them transport money, they won't satisfy, some of the police will apprehend you, they will move with land rovers, take the corpse to the police station to see the doctor pathologist to check whether there is a foul play. They do all of this because they need money" (Kalilu, interview, February 2009). Thus, one of the stakes at stake in the justice and security field was financial gain; in this case, Kalilu was not an exception to this rule of engagement. He might have told the police that he was not formally paid for his efforts, but he did nonetheless receive money from the family of the deceased to deal with the police on their behalf. It was also evident that notwithstanding the exchange of money, the articulation of authority through state involvement was pivotal in dealing appropriately with the matter.

If the body had simply been taken out of the swamp and buried, the police could have reached a conclusion that ‘foul play’ had occurred, regardless of the fact that no technical evidence was available. What was occurring, however, was the negotiation of authority, not an investigation *per se*. It was the symbolic quality of reporting that mattered, not a search for the ‘objective truth’ about the boy’s death (and in any case the SLP in Tombodu has no vehicle, nor is a ‘pathologist’ available).

The police arrived a couple of hours after the boy had drowned. The situation had calmed down, and the boy’s family was queried about what had happened. The parents were scolded for not looking better after their child, transport money was exchanged, and the police officer said that he would report back to Tombodu and Motema to verify that the child had died in an accident – not by ‘foul play’. The boy was buried on the afternoon of his death, according to Muslim tradition, and with only men present. He was not spoken of again.

As the embodiment of the Partnership Board, Kalilu represented the reproduction and consolidation of an already existing hybrid order, but he also negotiated police actions in Peyima. He inter-linked events in Peyima with the SLP and coalesced differently articulated sources of authority of both stateness and public authority. As the Public Relations Officer of the Partnership Board, he referred to the inspector of police as his boss. At the same time, he had been appointed to this position by Peyima’s town chief. Before the war, Kalilu explained, the SLP would not have come, and even if their presence did not make a big difference in technical terms of investigating the death of the epileptic boy, symbolically, the presence of the SLP certainly did. In the next example, the role that Kalilu came to play further demonstrates how the Partnership Board does not challenge, but supports the powers of the chief, and thus consolidates a hybrid order.

7.3.3 A case of theft and the reproductive effect of the Partnership Board

The case explored in this section involved 1,000,000 Leones (approximately US\$300) that was stolen from me, a case that was subsequently dealt with by Chief Gborie and the Partnership Board, never reaching the police post in Tombodu or divisional headquarters in

Motema. On one level, it shows how the ethnographer becomes part of and influences the processes that he studies. On another level, it provides insight into the negotiated nature of establishing order in Peyima, with the Partnership Board assembling languages of both stateness and public authority. Summoning the SLP became a threat put forward by the town leadership, perhaps very real and emphasizing the severity of the situation. However, it was not acted upon. Thus, even though Kalilu was involved in his capacity as a Partnership Board member, the matter was dealt with 'inside themselves', i.e., in Peyima.

It was a hot dry day in January 2009. I was going to Peyima for the first time since my visit in December the year before. The case of the stolen money had developed into a matter for the town chief to deal with. I had initially tried to tone it down; saying that the money was not really that important to me, but since I was not the only person implicated, it was not a decision that I could make on my own. I went to Jimmy Sahr's house, where I stayed during my visits to the town, coming from Koidu that morning. No one was around, it was midday and since we had entered the driest and hottest season of the year, most of the town's male population had gone to look for diamonds in the river and the mining pits dotting the surroundings of the town.

The case had begun back in December 2008, during the first half of my fieldwork, when I promised Jimmy Sahr to help him refurbish his house. When I returned to Denmark for Christmas, I sent him 1,000,000 Leones through Western Union. Jimmy Sahr rarely went to Koidu, the District headquarters town, so Fasalie, an assistant of mine, went to the bank to get the money. Fasalie had subsequently handed the money over to Isaac, the first person I had met from Peyima, who had at one time been Peyima's Partnership Board member and was politically active in whichever party was in control of the Government. A lot of people were suddenly involved in this money transfer.

The problem was not only that the money was missing. The case had been further complicated because Isaac had told Jimmy Sahr and Gborie that I had sent the money for small-scale mining, which, if true, could have put me in an awkward, if not dangerous, position within the town. White men do not mine without a proper license to do so and as investors they are the only source of substantial income in an area where cash is in short supply. In addition, there are certain procedures that need to be abided by, such as making

sure to discuss opportunities with paramount and lesser chiefs, both to get formal and informal permission. To continue my fieldwork, I would need to explain to Chief Gborie why I had sent the money in the first place and to clarify that I had not come to mine and therefore had not brought money to do so.

Jimmy Sahr came to his house where I was sitting and waiting and we walked to the opposite side of the town, next to the river where Gborie's compound was located. We were seated in his Court Barry, where he usually held public meetings, surrounded by several elders who were always around whenever the town chief was in Peyima. (The chief had a house in the outskirts of Koidu, the headquarter town of Kono District, where he spent most nights with his other and much younger wife.) Isaac, the last person known to have handled the money, was there as well, looking extremely nervous. I could not help thinking that this meeting was a scam to make me believe that matters were being taken care of. If it was, they were all putting on a credible act. It is normal to wait for important people, chiefs in particular, which we did. Gborie came out, said hello, only to return to his house.

After an hour or so of waiting in silence, I was called into Gborie's house alone. He took me through one door into a room next to the bedroom and went from there into his bedroom and back into the room that we had entered through the front door. He said that somebody had smashed his locks and that he had to walk into his bedroom like that. It made very little sense, except of course, to tell me that he that needed money, 56,000 Leones or approximately US\$20, to repair the locks. I was sat down in the front room in a big, green Chinese sofa. He said he was the chief, meaning if I had something to say or give, I should do so now. I said I was a student, meaning I had nothing to hide or give. I stressed that I had not sent money for mining. If that had been the purpose of my trip, I would have come straight to him, particularly since, apart from being the town chief, he was also Mining Chairman of Kamara Chiefdom, signing off on all licenses in the chiefdom.

Isaac and Jimmy Sahr were then asked to come into the room, and were seated on each side of me, facing Gborie. At this stage, Kalilu entered the house as the Public Relations Officer of the Partnership Board to hear what the final say in the case would be and to take

orders from Gborie. Jimmy Sahr was furious, demanding that the money be found. Isaac, becoming more and more timid, tried to defend himself, appeared surprised, even hurt, that Jimmy Sahr had taken the case to the town authorities. Jimmy Sahr was wondering out loud if Isaac did not want the house to be refurbished because it was not his property. Gborie intervened in the argument, telling Isaac to apologize to Jimmy Sahr. Suddenly we were interrupted by a group of men who appeared to be Asian, who had come to discuss the matter of washing gravel with the town chief. The meeting with Gborie was over, there were other more pressing matters to deal with, and Kalilu now took over.

We went back to the small Court Barry next to the chief's house. A public apology had to be given. Isaac needed to admit his wrongdoing in front of the authorities of the town elders, which he did. Kalilu explained the case in Kono and Isaac apologized to both Jimmy Sahr and me for what he had done. Kalilu then went on to say that 'Mr. Peter' had decided to let the case go, that the case was closed and that the police would not be involved. Thus, my case had been resolved 'within themselves', but it had also become the talk of the town and Isaac had been publicly humiliated. It appeared that this was punishment enough. The money was never returned; it had already been 'chopped'.

In this case, the Partnership Board member in Peyima, Kalilu personified a particular articulation of the hybrid order that police reform has reproduced. He assembled languages of stateness and public authority by assuming the authority conferred upon him by the SLP, but it was a hybrid order that could not be exploited or articulated without chiefly assent. The case had been overseen and decided by Chief Gborie and Kalilu, who embodied the hybrid order of Public Relations Officer and one of the town authorities in Peyima through the trust vested in him by the town chief. However, while the SLP may thus have manifested 'languages of stateness' in Peyima, the expression of LNP through Partnership Boards was shaped to fit, rather than disrupt, the chiefly hierarchy.

In the end, Kalilu did not involve the police in Tombodu, although he could have; indeed, his relationship to the SLP was ambivalent. While he told me that in his capacity as a member of the Partnership Board he worked for the police, he also said that he had rejected their offer of a uniform. He told me: "They are not paying me, so why are they asking me

to take a uniform? I'm not interested." Hybridity breed's contradiction, one that Kalilu would have to deal with – and he did, in his own way.

According to the aforementioned proposed guidelines for the Partnership Board, one of its key roles is to establish “a strong bond of friendship, trust, respect and cooperation between the police and the community” (SLP 2005). ‘The community’ implied in this authoritative symbolic language of stateness – and articulated explicitly by individual police officers – are paramount and lesser chiefs. This is the vertical rather than horizontal concept of ‘community’ that state authorities, including the SLP, work with, which is not recognized in the concept of ‘community policing’ that has guided internationally-led police reform. “We need to respect their culture,” a police officer in Tombodu noted. This was a kind of symbolic boundary established between languages of stateness and of public authority that broke down when dissected analytically, because of the foundational hybrid order that structures the locality of Peyima.

7.4 Conclusion

Since the late 1990s, police reform programing in Sierra Leone has been designed in a way that reproduced rather than overturned the foundational hybrid order. This, however, militated against attempts to re-articulate the justice and security field in languages of stateness. The intention behind police reform was to establish and consolidate a state-society split that would situate the former as sitting above and at the same time containing, localities across the territorially-defined state space of Sierra Leone. In the first phase of reform, which began in the late 1990s during a period of open conflict, attempts were made to eliminate or marginalize hybrid orders, including paramount and lesser chiefs. In the second phase, from the mid-2000s and onwards, a so-called holistic approach was pursued, which sought to incorporate all actors in the justice and security field into one inter-linked state system.

At the time of this writing, a new program has been designed that indicates a potentially significant conceptual shift in how paramount and lesser chiefs are articulated and incorporated into the process of re-composing the justice and security field. Rather than

seeking to cast chiefs as state or non-state, respectively – or as constitutive of a hybrid order – it appears programs now being designed are backing away from this dichotomous impasse. Precisely how this approach will evolve and how it will be translated into localities such as Peyima is not yet clear. However, with its ‘community focus’, but without explicitly seeking to alter local power structures, the new cycle of justice and security field re-composition is likely to corroborate the position of the chief and further support the reproduction of a foundational hybrid order.

This effect of police reform is illustrated by the emergence of Partnership Boards and the role that chiefs have had in translating these assemblages into the localities of Sierra Leone, in this case, in Peyima. Kalilu, the Public Relations Officer of the Partnership Board in Peyima, came to represent the reproduction and consolidation of a hybrid order. He inter-linked events in Peyima with the SLP, and represents the differently articulated sources of authority of both stateness and public authority. However, while Kalilu referred to the inspector of police as his boss during my conversations with him, his appointment to the Partnership Board was dependent upon his good relations with the town chief. While this position may have “increased collaboration between SLP and civilians,” as noted by Hanson-Alp (2008:14), it did not challenge the power of the chief. In fact, the Partnership Board not only supports the position of the chief, it consolidates a hybrid order.

8 Integral hybridity – the Poro effect in the justice and security field

8.1 Introduction

SSR failed in Sierra Leone because international actors did not recognize the country's hybrid order of authority and how it is produced and reproduced. This failure is linked to the predilection of much policy and academic literature to identify states as failed according to what they are not, i.e., effective and legitimate, rather than by what they are. Thus, SSR discourse separates state and society conceptually and guides programs to establish a clear line between state security agencies and other authoritative figures and institutions that give shape to the justice and security field.

This chapter discusses one such institution, the Poro, a male secret society located on the Guinea Coast, and its position in the foundational hybrid order that governs the justice and security field in Sierra Leone.¹⁰² Membership in the Poro determines who can lay claim to resources, particularly land, and has implications for how order is made. Hence, the chapter describes the consequences of being excluded from decision-making as a non-Poro member in Peyima. This struggle is based on authoritative articulations of autochthony that center on claims of tribal identity, and the ability to point to a 'home land' or a 'home village' (symbolic acts of boundary-making).

The chapter begins by outlining the history of the Poro, which emerged as a localized bulwark against and was therefore shaped by external interference (migration waves, colonial and post-colonial powers). The Poro inherently ties the individual to the locale in which he was born and initiated. In Peyima today, only Konos are allowed initiation, and only Poro members can engage firmly in land tenure decisions, for instance, and claim rights based on being a 'son of the soil', an autochthon, as opposed to strangers, allochthons.

¹⁰² As an institution, the secret society has the quality of being a 'total social phenomenon' (Durkheim 1915; Evans-Pritchard 1940, 1956); its significance is therefore not restricted to the field of security and justice (see Bellman 1984). The term delineates institutions in which the economic, political and ideational dimensions of social life are simultaneously salient. In Peyima specifically, and Western Africa in general, all boys must and can in principle, if not always in practice, be initiated into the Poro society to become adult men in the locale in which they were born. "Bush schools" are established to teach initiates about farming, herb techniques, hunting and rules of the culture and, in particular, structures of authority (see Fulton 1972:1222).

The chapter also discusses an instance where the boundary between the 'Poro bush' and the town was breached, and where and how the SLP enters the secret society bush. This example demonstrates how symbolic boundaries are constantly being mobilized and demolished, excluding some from and including others in seeking redress, but always in favor of a Poro member. The Poro is not articulated in the discourse of SSR and as a consequence is not considered relevant by international practitioners as to how the justice and security field is ordered. Yet, its structuring effect of delineating son of the soil and stranger status, for instance, constitutes it as part of the hybrid order.

Authority to enforce order is the hybrid outcome of exercising power by a variety of local institutional forms, drawing authority to do so from within and beyond the chiefdom. A dominant focus on the role and function of the state leads to a disregard of the fundamental micro-struggles that are part and parcel of what making order in Sierra Leone, including *Peyima*, means. This point harks back to and emphasizes that the instruments available through SSR makes it counter-intuitive to think beyond the logic of a state bureaucratic framework, and to see other institutional forms as little more than less developed alternatives. Thinking hybridly, however, helps us understand more comprehensively how assemblages take shape in the justice and security field, and how the Poro is significant on par with legislation in producing authority, and thereby in making order.

8.2 Creating a space for secrecy and a vehicle for foundational hybridity: the Poro

In the areas of the Guinea Coast (Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea), the Poro initiates almost every boy into its membership, passing on spiritual secrets and powers of witchcraft (la Fontaine 1986). (Girls are initiated into their own secret society, the *Sande*.) Its primary purpose is to regulate sexual identity, religious, judicial and educational matters and to mediate relations with the spirit world (CORI 2009). The Poro is based on the ideology that its leaders maintain control over the dangerous volatile nature spirits that their ancestors subdued upon arrival in a particular locality, beliefs that are used to support the power of the dominant group (Bledsoe 1984:456).

In its initiation rites, the Poro society provides a certain amount of social knowledge and instruction. Physically entering the bush, and undergoing the ritual of initiation is recognized as an important educational mechanism in Peyima. The objective is to turn immature boys into fully-fledged members of the adult community. The spirit swallows the boy when he enters the bush, and tribal marks are cut into his back, signifying the spirit's teeth. At the end of initiation, he is delivered by the spirit and reborn. Obedience to the rules of the Poro and, by implication, to the social regulations of the community outside the bush, is stressed as the individual enters into the bush.

No person can hope to occupy political office in the chiefdom without being a member of Poro.¹⁰³ Hence, while drawing on local sources of authority, the Poro underpins the administrative unit of the chiefdom outlined by state law and propped up by the autochthon status of the chief (see also Bledsoe 1984:456; Jackson 2007:105). These local and extra-local articulations of authority are an important expression of foundational hybridity; a loose but decisive historical integrative process of different systems of social and political relations to which I now turn.¹⁰⁴

8.2.1 The Poro: a mechanism of defense against and interaction with the extra-local world

In his book *West African Secret Societies* from 1929, Butt-Thompson (1929:15) explains: "In the history of anything Pagan, there must always be hesitation in using dates. Suffice it then to say that when [between the 11th and the 13th century¹⁰⁵] the Muhammedan invasion of the West Coast took place, the Pagan societies were well-established." Butt-Thompson continues:

¹⁰³ The paramount chief is the head of the secret society to the world outside the Poro bush. While he draws significant symbolic capital from this position outside the bush, he is not afforded the same position inside the bush. While he may sit with the group of advising elders who are considered elders both in the Poro bush and in the township, Peyima Chief Gborie can be (and has been) challenged when the Poro convened in the bush. (Indeed, it has been noted that an important function of the Poro has been to hold chiefs accountable).

¹⁰⁴ Supportive of this integrative process has been the persistent failure of successive Sierra Leone governments to complete what Fanthorpe (1998:117) refers to as "modern measures of citizenship (i.e., the registration of births and deaths, written deeds and title to land) to the rural population."

¹⁰⁵ Butt-Thompson is not specific about what he means by the 'Muhammedan invasion'. However, Muslims started to arrive in West Africa during the 11th century, and Islam was adopted by regional rulers during the following decades where Muslim states began to emerge (Spice Digest, Spring 2009).

They [secret societies] were instituted to enforce and maintain tribal tradition, customs and beliefs that were in danger of changing or becoming obsolete. The organisers were the champions of *the old against the new*, as some of their descendants still are.... They were clever enough to know that prohibition alone was not sufficient foundation for any organisation desiring longevity, and, therefore, made their societies the repositories of the folklore, myths and history and the conceptions of art and culture and learning and wisdom the tribes possessed (ibid.:16; italics added).

Evidently, it makes little sense to make a clear-cut distinction between the ‘old’ and the ‘new’. Apart from setting up a dichotomy that reifies the Poro, it skews the fact that while secret societies have a long history in Sierra Leone, we are dealing with a dynamic institution that changes over time (See Bellman 1984:18). Nonetheless, the Poro continues to be used as an instrument in the struggle over who has access to sources of authority that may be translated into rights to land, a claim to political office and financial gain. The secret society is not an invented tradition in Hobsbawm’s sense, but it is manipulated to seek political influence.¹⁰⁶

In this regard it makes sense to see the “tenacity of the [secret] society,” as Bellman (1984:17) puts it, “as evidence for its general ability to adapt to different social environments and political situations.” This is what makes the secret society a component of the foundational hybrid order that shapes the expression of authority, and thus, inevitably, the actors that today appropriate and translate SSR components into practice in the dynamic space that justice and security assemblages constitute.

Bledsoe (1984:456) suggests that no one knows the actual mode of origin of the Poro; she argues, with Butt-Thompson, that they grew out of political upheaval and migration in the Guinea Coast region. The Poro provided idioms of affiliation for diverse splinter groups of ‘strangers’ to attach themselves to powerful landowner patrons. As today, these newcomers were regarded ambivalently, as potential allies, but also as potential subjugators of

¹⁰⁶ Hobsbawm’s (1983:1f.) concept of the ‘invented tradition’ is “taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past.”

established authority. The landowners attempted to secure the allegiance of stranger families by drawing them under the influence and patronage of the local ancestral spirits.

Written and oral sources on nineteenth-century Sierra Leone describe a land of numerous physical spaces containing networks of fortified settlements and their satellite villages. These observations are important to understand the political context in which the Poro emerged as a localized expression of defense, and its continued relevance. The larger settlements often competed with one another to attract traders. Yet they would also co-operate in rituals, political-juridical affairs and mutual defense. As noted by Butt-Thompson above, within these administrative arrangements, outsiders played a crucial role in consolidating and shaping the nature of authority, including the defensive measures that the Poro articulates.

The Upper Guinea Coast was the site of an early intersection of trans-Saharan and trans-Atlantic systems, which generated intense interaction within a large and ethno-linguistically diverse population (Fanthorpe 2001:374; see Bledsoe 1984:456; Fulton 1972:1218). Slave trade, for instance, had begun by the eighth century, first with early kingdoms of the western Sudan and later with Europe and the New World. Slave trade with European powers began in the mid-fifteenth century and filled a gap left when the Sudanic empires in the interior disintegrated around the same time. “As this change occurred,” Hardin (1993:45) notes, “people’s attention shifted westward toward the coast and toward the economic and political possibilities of the European slave trade.”

Migrations continued to mark the history of this region in the modern era. In Kono, diamond mining which began in the 1930s, spurred not only major migrations from across Sierra Leone and West Africa into the area, but also an influx of overseas companies (see Keen 2005:12; Reno 1995). Peyima’s inhabitants are wholly dependent on diamond mining for income generation, and both non-Kono tribes from across Sierra Leone and ‘investors’ from abroad are part and parcel of what defines the locality’s social make-up and history.

External actors are part of the story of the early beginnings of Peyima, a period that was marked by conflict and subsequent building of relations with the “white men coming,” as

Pa Kongue explained to me, to mine the land and Bafi river around the town. As one of Peyima's elders, Pa Kongue is also the *de facto* town historian. His story describes how mining began in Peyima and the coming of 'strangers' as exploiters:

By then, the white people were prospecting. They were finding out what diamonds is, so they dig a hole. When they see the diamond, they don't take it with their hand, but with something like a plier. They tell the people that when you touch the diamond it will shock you. The people get afraid and so they cannot steal. So the white man told the black people. They say when you touch the diamond with your naked hand you will die from the shock. When the black man meet the diamond lying down, you only take a stick and put it besides the diamond. You cannot touch it because you get afraid. The diamond is the devil's tool and it will shock you if you touch it with your naked hand. So when the Burma war came in 1944, the white man took some black men to go and fight, and they discovered diamonds in India. The people that went to India to fight the Burma war saw how they mined diamonds in India. They told the black people: 'Oh, that thing that the white man told, it's a lot of money yes.' They explain the secret to their brother that that diamond that they don't allow you to touch is money. So the black started to steal the diamond bit by bit and carried it out. They carried it to the Lebanese people to sell it and became aware that diamonds had a lot of money. When the white people knew, they started to drive the black people not to dig the diamonds (Pa Kongue, interview, February 2009).

Localized competition among settlements, the 'Muhammedan invasion' as Butt-Thompson noted, between the 11th-13th century, the slave trade, and the initiation of diamond mining in the 1930s all came to fundamentally shape the region's social make-up. The Poro has throughout the modern history of West Africa acted as a localized bulwark against these – and other – external pressures, not in isolation from, but intermingled with and shaped by them. In this regard, the secret society has had and continues to have a significantly stabilizing – not a freezing effect – on how order is made in rural Sierra Leone.

Drawing on histories of autochthony and adjusting to current social dynamics, the secret society continuously reproduces hybrid relations of power by establishing lines of

demarcation between Poro members and non-members. Power in this context is not external to how and where it works, i.e., imposed, nor is it the manifest confrontation between the dominant and the dominated (see Bell 1992:200). The option of acting differently, of rejecting initiation is always present and at times occurs, but this type of resistance has fundamental consequences for the authority that is available to lay claims on material resources.

8.2.2 Producing authority in concrete physical space

Within the politically-decentralized milieu in which the Poro emerged, constructing 'community' became an exercise in maintaining and continuously demarcating boundaries. One of the mechanisms to delineate belonging to a community involved undergoing rites of passage, including initiation into the Poro. The defensive element to the Poro against 'the stranger,' the danger he embodies, and the Poro's stabilizing function became evident in the society's organization.

Little (1951:244) distinguishes "between the Poro as a society or general institution, and a "poro," which is a gathering of Poro members called together for a specific object." Using the term in the first sense denotes an association that lacks centralization, but that comprises a number of segments, each containing society members normally resident in one village with an ancillary 'Poro bush'. Little (see also Fulton 1972:1224) refers to these as 'lodges', and notes that they are independent so far as administrative activities are concerned. The relative independence of a 'lodge' serves to harness local articulations of authority, and is a substantial articulation of authority by the group of autochthons, defined by being the first to occupy a locale.

To a 'stranger', the superior status of being a 'son of the soil' and his position to make orders was and continues to be non-negotiable. Being a Poro member substantiates the boundary between members and non-members. Jimmy Sahr, a Kono elder in Peyima, confirmed this. As someone who could rightfully claim to become the next Section Chief, he was adamant about what being a 'son of the soil', an autochthon, meant, and also

stressed the importance of secret society membership. “Why?” he asked as we were discussing the importance of Poro membership:

It gives you a small right of origin, yeah, it give you more rights. Like for instance, if you’re not associated with the secret society, you can’t be a chief. Also, if, for instance, I’m told there is any problem within the secret society about a piece of land, you can’t be able to decide if you’re not associated with them, you are not able to decide that matter (Jimmy Sahr, interview, March 2009).

There is a close link between autochthony, political advancement, social status, rights to land and justice in the Poro (see Bledsoe 1984:457). Claims of Poro membership, combined with ancestral association, are transformed into land tenure decisions and claims to justice within the bush. If a person is not initiated in the locale where the claim is made, if he cannot draw symbolic capital from that particular locality, for all intents and purposes, his case will be weak.

The method by which the Poro establishes authority is reflected in Hardin’s (1993:93) exploration of identity and authority, which is established along ‘spatial lines’ rather than ‘in the temporal plane’. Hardin explains how the individual becomes tied concretely to a particular physical space through initiation practices by locating:

Individuals in particular spaces by giving them rights, as well as obligations, to others who share those spaces. Where someone is born, where they join Sande or Poro, where their ancestors are buried, and where they themselves will be buried, work to limit the claims to identity and the rights and statuses available through the descent and kinship system (ibid.).

It is this emphasis on belonging in a concrete physical space (rather than to ‘the nation’ in the abstract), and on being a ‘son of the soil’ in a literal, localized sense of the term, which is confirmed through Poro membership. This is what makes the secret society an obvious mechanism for inclusion and exclusion in Peyima. I now turn to a more detailed discussion of what the status as a stranger entails, as the stranger himself is a vital figure in and of the hybrid order.

8.3 The stranger and the secret

At the heart of secret society membership lies the notion of belonging to as well as being a stranger in a place. Autochthony literally implies an origin “of the soil itself,” as Geschiere and Jackson (2006:6) note, meaning “a direct claim to territory.” The two authors suggest that the language around autochthony and fierce struggles over belonging are ‘resurgent’ as a consequence of recent political liberalization in Africa and ‘intensifying globalization’, more generally. Lentz (2007:45) argues, however, that the distinction between ‘sons of the soil’ and ‘strangers’ that permeates autochthon/allochthon discourse also has practical implications in areas where capitalist enterprise has played an indirect or no role.

Discourse on autochthony is not of a purely colonial origin, but emanates from transformed pre-colonial configurations of first-comers and late-comers (*ibid.*). Secret societies in Sierra Leone, for instance, have long been a local source of authority and as such, have been central to reproducing local hierarchies of power. As a total social phenomenon (see note 1), the Poro is thus part of the societal order in Peyima, and is central to any individual who seeks authority in the community (see Richards et al. 2004:8).

Endowing some and not others with the secrets of the Poro is an instrument in the struggle over decision-making in Peyima, as it is an important marker of inclusion and exclusion. The concept of ‘stranger’ signifies a lack of symbolic capital. It indicates that a person originates in a different soil and connotes “non-belonging, alienness, foreignness, non-authenticity, a distinct distance from the soil and a lack of legitimate claim to it, the absence of an intimate relationship with the land” (Jackson 2007:99).

By extension, the Poro society is constructed around the understanding that its leaders maintain control over the dangerous, volatile nature spirits that their ancestors subdued upon their arrival (Bledsoe 1984:457). The stranger is a potential threat to the group, and is therefore a member of the community while remaining detached (Simmel 1971; Wood 1934). It is this belief that supports the power of the dominant group, the autochthons, the Konos.

‘Knowing the secret’ was vital in Peyima not for what it was, for the content it guards, but for the authority and rights to participate in social life that initiation brought with it (see Simmel 1950; Bellman 1984:17). In recent years, reference to belonging had become particularly pertinent because of a perception among the leadership in town that the number of ‘sons of the soil’, i.e., Konos, was diminishing vis-à-vis ‘strangers’. Korankos, Temnes, Mendes, Limbas and other tribal groups were living in enclaves across town and either mining or farming, each led by a tribal head. Gborie, Jimmy Sahr and other town elders therefore considered the political situation in Peyima volatile. A recent decision among Kono District’s 14 paramount chiefs to narrow the circle of people who could demand membership to only Konos was indicative of the pressure that the ‘sons of the soil’ were under.

8.3.1 The Temnes and the ubiquitous threat of the Poro

During my fieldwork, the Temnes – around 500 individuals – clashed with the Konos over how much community labor they, the Temnes, were obliged to perform. (All tribes are expected to do some work for the community.) Since the APC, a northern-aligned party, came to power in 2007, the Temnes, a northern tribe, had become bolder in the eyes of the Konos, who generally supported the SLPP, now the opposition party.¹⁰⁷ In this regard, the Temnes drew on forms of political authority emanating from national level politics and created a space of opposition against Peyima’s leadership. However, these articulations of authority could not overrule those emanating from the authority drawn from being a Kono, and the Temnes were punished by having land that they were farming taken away from them. Nonetheless, it appeared evident at least to the Konos that the status of Temnes as supporters of the APC meant that they had a source of authority to draw upon which had not been available to them before 2007.

While numerous languages connoting stateness and public authority were drawn upon as this conflict between the Temnes and Konos unfolded, the issue was addressed as a matter internal to the physical space of Peyima. The innate power of symbols of administrative

¹⁰⁷ The general reason that I was given by elders in Peyima was that the APC under Siaka Stevens had exploited and destroyed Kono, with little benefit to the population of the district.

and hierarchical rationalities that provide seemingly ordered links with the political and regulatory apparatus of a central bureaucratic state were absent. The police, with its symbols and paraphernalia of stateness, was not, and never became involved in the dispute. In other words, struggles over the consolidation of boundaries between the SLP and the paramount chiefs are not the only stake at stake in the justice and security field. These efforts of boundary-making within Peyima are of equal importance in order to differentiate that has access to which rights and resources. The threat of calling the Poro society and the authority that came from being a member played an important part in this.

Sayoh, a Koranko, explained the almost doxic rationale of this to me. He himself was considered a stranger in the township. Even though he had been living in Peyima on and off since 1978 and was raising a family there, he was a Koranko born elsewhere. Like many others, he was ‘waiting for his luck’ – for that big diamond find – which would allow him to leave the township and move to Freetown as a *bomba*, a person with money and prestige. One afternoon, we were talking about the options available to the Temnes and the fact that even if they constituted the biggest tribe in Peyima, they could never claim the same rights to the land as the Konos. Sayoh said:

That won’t happen, the Konos won’t allow it, they won’t allow the Temnes. We have something we call bylaws. No matter how your population is greater than the population of the indigenous, the government and the laws in the country, in the state, won’t allow that. Imposed laws – not laws that are written or accepted in the community – they will kick against them. But laws that have been accepted since time immemorial, they can’t kick against them. Like saying: ‘you people are strangers, you people are this, you people are that, don’t enter into our bushes.’ We [strangers] do accept them [the Konos] because we are here to find money; we need their diamonds. So whatever things they bring to us we do accept some, you understand? *If we refuse, they will enter into their secret bush, and come up with their society and each and every one [of the strangers and all women] will enter into the house.* It’s part of our tradition. However, even if we have five Konos here and all the inhabitants of Peyima are different tribes from different places, this

would not make a difference. The Konos are the owners of this area, because they have a secret society (Sayoh Jalloh, interview, March 2009; emphasis added).

As Sayoh describes, the threat of activating the secret society against strangers is ubiquitous. This is the ritual enactment of boundary-making, an act and articulation of authority that does not lend itself to languages of stateness in any simple way, but authoritatively separates the inside and outside of the decision-making hierarchy in Peyima. Evidently, it was not the secret itself that was the stake at stake, but rather, the authority that flowed from engaging in Poro society activities.

Whenever the Konos ‘came up with their society’, it meant that the devil, *Bili*, had emerged, the whole township would go silent, and all non-initiates would go inside their houses and lock their doors. This might, on one level, have been the quite straightforward communication and enactment of traditional values. More importantly, however, it constituted, to follow Bell (1992), the production and negotiation of power relations, enacting dominance and manhood (non-initiates are locked up in the houses with the women). The ritual confinement of non-initiates happens when central Poro members die, and towards the end of the initiation period during the dry season in December and January. The *Pomansu*, who leads the initiation, will consult the paramount chief, conveying the message that the rite of passage is coming to an end and that a sacrifice will be made, after which *Bili* will come out and dance the rest of the day and night.

In the context of SSR in modern-day Sierra Leone, the Poro constitutes one of the registers that gives further shape to police reform and contributes to a consolidation of the hybrid order. The Poro symbolically marks off different levels of authority, not between state institutions and chiefly authorities, but between ‘sons of the soil’ and ‘strangers’, an ongoing and historic dichotomy in rural Sierra Leone. It is the ability of Konos in Peyima to establish symbolic boundaries between these two categories of actors that make the Poro crucial in establishing who has access to which types of resources. The enactment of these boundaries is key to producing the ‘stranger’. As the next section shows, however, boundary-making also becomes an instrument in the establishment of a hierarchy between secret society members themselves.

8.4 Boundary-making, violence and land disputes

The inclusion-exclusion/member and non-member aspect of the Poro secret society and its counterparts in other tribal groups has a direct effect on how acts of violence and land disputes – justice and security - are addressed in rural Sierra Leone.¹⁰⁸ However, Bellman (1984:139) rightly notes that there is “more to the expression of membership than simply a dichotomy between those who have knowledge and those who do not.” What is relevant in the context of this dissertation is how the distinction between those who know and those who do not know produces effects in the justice and security field, and sets up boundaries between ‘sons of the soil’ and ‘strangers’. The following case involving Taylor Kondeh, a young man living in Peyima who had recently been initiated into the Poro, illustrates that being privy to the secrets of the Poro is not necessarily sufficient to claim decision-making power.

8.4.1 Taylor Kondeh’s search for authority

Taylor Kondeh, who was in his early 30s at the time, was one of my key informants during my fieldwork. He was not a ‘son of the soil’, at least not fully. He was born and raised in Peyima, and therefore could not generate sufficient symbolic capital to lay claim to land and authority in another locale. His mother was a Kono and the first cousin of town chief Gborie. His father, however, was a Mandingo, which put Taylor on the margins of the chiefly hierarchy, struggling to claim authority in the township. He was forced to find innovative ways to make his voice heard in Peyima.

Prior to the 2007 general elections in Sierra Leone, it had become evident to him that he would not be able to establish himself in Peyima as someone with a central role in local decision-making. He therefore made the rather radical decision (to some) to support the APC, which had been in opposition for a decade but ended up winning elections in 2007. Taylor’s rationale was that supporting the opposition, if they won, would open up a source

¹⁰⁸ The Poro society is found in many of Sierra Leone’s tribal groups. See Little (1949:1999); Parrinder (1962:95-96); Parson (1964:149-56); Dorjahn (1982:35-62). For various stories and myths about the origin of Poro, see Parrinder (1967:96-103).

of authority that could eventually be converted into financial gain to support his family and provide him with a platform from which he could make his voice heard in Peyima. When I was in Peyima in 2008-2009, Taylor's strategy had not succeeded; he was still struggling to make ends meet, farming instead of mining, and zealously pursuing a political career. Taylor: "You know, our party here has become the winning party. So we are expecting jobs, developmental issues that are coming on should lie in our hand, we should be considered greatly. But up to now, you see, the chief is moving around with the SLPP guys" (Taylor Kondeh, interview, March 2009).

8.4.2 The Poro society and the Kondeh's loss of land

After he affiliated with the APC, Taylor Kondeh and his family were involved in a boundary issue that was eventually handled in the Poro bush. Taylor's story describes not only the struggle and competition over access to land, but how legitimate authority to settle conflicts was assembling in the town (see Lund 2008:10).

In Peyima, explicit symbols of the state and its language and props such as contracts and deeds are not referred to and as a consequence do not figure in local decisions over land distribution. Land is not exchanged by written contract, but is consolidated verbally in front of witnesses. Therefore, proof of the right to mine or farm a piece of land has to be reproduced continuously and challenges to the claim are perennial. Effectively, this leaves room for both double-dealing and interpretation of rightful ownership.

Moreover, land is taken and given according to allegiance to the town chief with the authority he derives from articulating the hybrid order, including from local government law that stipulates that Chiefs hold "land in trust for the people of the Chiefdoms" (Local Government Act, 28.(d)). Thus, following Juul and Lund (2002:4-5) in their discussions of land disputes in Africa, what comes into play is the ability of chiefs to negotiate and manipulate land claims and their freedom to deploy a raft of tactics and strategies in order to solidify this claim, including their autochthon status and political party affiliation. Inevitably, it was Peyima's powerful and influential town elders who benefited from the ambiguity of land entitlements.

During my fieldwork, Chief Gborie took the land that the Kondehs had been farming since the early 1990s away from them. The family's argument that they had been using the land for almost two decades did not constitute a sufficient public claim of ownership. Normally, eviction could not have happened unless the Kondehs had committed some serious crime or without suitable compensation with alternative land. In turn, it was not a viable option to approach extra-local institutions such as the local government District Council, the police or political parties to back up Taylor's family's counter-claim (see Juul and Lund 2002:18). This, in short, would lead to further social exclusion in Peyima, and it was in any case not within the mandate of the SLP or other institutions of the state to overrule decisions made by the chief (in particular with respect to land issues).

Taylor's family was subjected to a strategy of exclusion through the Poro society, led by the town leadership. "So when the case reaches to a point where you say," Taylor explained:

Now this case is not going to be decided in town, they are going to decide it in a different world. If the issue is between two members, they know how to decide it. Okay, if they know that really, you are right, you have the right on a particular issue, they will foul you by calling the secret society members out (Taylor Kondeh, interview, April 2009).

A bylaw of the Poro stipulates that when the members are out in the town, non-initiates are not allowed to leave their houses, "and you lock yourself inside," Taylor continued, "while people [secret society members] stay outside and decide the matter, when it is over, they will tell you: 'I'm sorry, we are sorry, this place is no more yours'" (ibid.).

Gborie's decision about the land farmed by the Kondeh family was not made in contrast to the state, as is often the case with respect to twilight institutions (see Lund 2006:687). Rather, in a double pull, the decision was made both within the state, because chiefs have been a part of the state formation processes since the colonial era of 'indirect rule', and beyond it (see Mokuwa et al. 2011:343; Jackson 2005:53).

Both chiefly authority and the Poro are part and parcel of the continuously reproduced foundational hybrid order that is maintained in rural Sierra Leone. This process, however,

is detached from forces that could be cast as ‘national’ or ‘statutory’ in the sense that we understand these terms today, i.e., as a centrally-governed political entity. The handling of justice and land allocation through Poro involvement does not take place in competition with state authorities, but fully replaces or, perhaps more accurately, fully complements state functions (see Kyed and Buur 2007:2). In the process, Taylor was cut off from seeking alternative means of redress and had to accept that the family’s land had been lost.

At the same time, however, the symbolic power of the chief derived from being an autochthon is embedded in his descent from those who first arrived in the particular locality of Peyima (see Bledsoe 1984:457). Drawing explicitly on local forms of capital, and implicitly on national ones, the articulation of references to the Poro society thus produced effects in the field of justice and security. These effects at once excluded state intervention and made it irrelevant, but at the same time drew on long-term state formation processes, which ended up having real effects for the Kondeh family’s ability to make a living.

Town Chief Gborie further undermined Taylor’s status. In his capacity as the land-owner and hegemonic figure in Peyima, he told Taylor:

‘Even someone who has property and land here for 50 years, I’m the only one that have the right to take it from the person’. He said that before going to the swamp [to oversee his farming]. But through our hard work we tried to extend the land, the swamp then. And the swamp was not even large at the time (Taylor Kondeh, interview, March 2008).

The rationale was nonetheless fairly simple, as Gborie himself explained:

Okay, for an example Peter, you want to grow rice in this swamp, and Jimmy Sahr allows you to do it, but it does not belong to you. Jimmy Sahr allows you to make the swamp here; you have been developing this swamp for five, ten, fifteen years. Then Jimmy Sahr says my friend, I want to work my land (Gborie, interview, March 2009).

Gborie's rationale was that Taylor's family had no argument, and even if Taylor maintained differently, it was his word against Gborie's, and thus an argument that Taylor could never win.

8.4.3 Articulating the Poro society as boundary-making

By involving the Poro, the resolution of Taylor Kondoh's case was transferred into a parallel space within the justice and security field where public confrontation, discussions and action were somewhat muted due to the hierarchy that exists in the bush. Drawing authority from the realm of the secret society where the decision to take Taylor's land was made, the chief held a position of power that Taylor could never match. Taylor's inferior position within the social space of Peyima meant that his affiliation with the ruling party was of little use to him.¹⁰⁹

Justice – how it is articulated and by whom – produced and reproduced power relations manifested in unequal access to land. At the heart of the Kondoh's case lay the fact that the enforcement of order is a field where power was contested, authority was re-configured and constituted, and where different actor interests were at stake over power, resources and 'clients'. These struggles took place on the symbolic boundary between Poro bush and township, rather than between inside and outside the chieftdom; and between inside and outside the specific locality of Peyima.

As the next section shows, the problem was not that initiates who were not full Konos were revealing the secret, a point often made by Konos in Peyima. The problem was the authority that being an initiate might bring, i.e., creating a space for individuals to

¹⁰⁹ On the contrary, Taylor's involvement with the APC accentuated his position of inferiority. This was particularly the case in Peyima, where the majority of the Konos supported the SLPP. Indeed, while his strategy to affiliate with the APC had initially been launched to draw in authority to help support himself and his family, this strategy had backfired. He suspected that the land had been lost because of his political activities. Taylor's case constituted a micro-struggle in the countryside and was of little interest to the paramount chief, a close ally of Chief Gborie, let alone the Local Unit Commander of the SLP. There was little ambiguity with regard to the state in the way Gborie handled the case. He neither appropriated state functions nor 'state talk'. Rather, he pursued his own agenda by virtue of his position of power as the town chief derived from his command of a hybrid order of authority. Taylor knew that if he took the matter to the paramount chief or the police, he would be told that there was nothing they could do.

challenge the leadership of the town. Even if the challenge was in vain, as in the case of Taylor, it was nonetheless being articulated as a possibility.

8.5 Non-Kono members of the Poro society

Poro initiation lies at the heart of becoming a man and of male political advancement and social status in Peyima. Referring to eastern Sierra Leone, Fanthorpe (2001:373) notes that in “this cultural milieu, constructing ‘community’ is an exercise in crossing boundaries, in undergoing the same rites of passage in the same locale. That process does not exclude newcomers, but requires them to make social connections that establish a local identity.” In the mid-2000s, paramount chiefs across Kono district decided to deny allochthons the right to be initiated into the Poro. This decision indicates that the identity of ‘stranger’ had become a greater threat to the indigenes in Peyima, due to increasing numbers of ‘strangers’ and perceived challenges to the Kono leadership.

Jimmy Sahr, a particularly vociferous proponent of the rights of the autochthons, explained:

Before, we did initiate the different types of ethnic groups like the Mandingo, the Karaka, the Fullah when they violate the law [when they entered the Poro bush as non-initiates, for instance]. But later we found out that when you initiate them, they will go and interpret our secret society, expose our secret outside. So we decided not to do it any longer. We saw them violate the law so that they could be initiated, coming in large numbers (Jimmy Sahr, interview, February 2008).

Taylor Kondeh had become a Poro member before the bylaw of excluding allochthons came into force. Acknowledging the importance of the institution, he noted: “I didn’t have the right to become a town chief, but as long as I’ve become a society member, it’s one of the identities that will authorize you to become a leader in Kono District as a Kono man.” Combined with joining the APC, Poro membership was an important component of his attempt to bolster his authority in the town. It had always been a general rule that ‘sons of the soil’, autochthons, had a birth-given right to become members. However, among

autochthon and allochthon initiates alike, access to the inner circle of the Poro society was only for a select few individuals who could claim descent from the founders of the town.

Because of his mixed tribal heritage, Taylor had struggled to become a member. Although he had now succeeded, it had made little difference to him, “because they marginalize me,” he noted, “that my father is a Mandingo. I told them you are a liar; you have lied. Why do you allow me to enter that forest? The day I entered there you told me that I have got the right to become even a paramount chief of this land, and now you are trying to move me out? It is not easy.”

Taylor’s motivation to become a Poro member was not dissimilar to that of many others. On one occasion, Kalilu noted about Taylor: “Kondeh is not a Kono, he’s there because of ambition. He wants power, that’s why he’s going to the secret society.” Becoming politically active was one way to build authority in Peyima (as was involvement in the Partnership Board). Seeking secret society membership was another way, but now, any authority Taylor expected to gain from being a Poro member was being denied.

Until this point, I have analyzed the Poro as an institution constitutive of foundational hybridity. It is inherently part of state formation processes, but was presented to me by informants in Peyima as separate from the state system, and as having an ordering effect on locally-embedded micro-struggles. This makes it evident that the making of such order, to which the Poro contributes, is not recognized if one focuses solely on the state and the assemblages of actors, things and discourse that constitute it. Moreover, the particular shape of the state in Sierra Leone, i.e., the foundational hybrid order upon which it rests, is ignored.

The next section looks at a case where two young Poro members forcefully attempted to initiate a non-Kono. Because forced initiation was in violation of a bylaw passed by the paramount chief, the SLP and the Partnership Board were simultaneously involved. As the case unfolded, the inseparability and intermingling of languages of stateness and public authority became evident, and the foundational hybrid order was yet again confirmed. The example shows how the case shaped an assemblage constituted by chiefs, the Partnership Board, police officers and Poro members.

8.6 Interfacing with the police

A number of informants explained to me that the Poro society is a parallel world with its own cabinet. Chief Gborie, Jimmy Sahr, Isaac and Pa Kongue were members and thus part of the highest order of decision-making within and outside the Poro bush. Taylor, by contrast, was at the margins of decision-making – in the Poro bush and in the township. Among initiates there was a clear conception of an alternative public in the Poro bush, in which confrontations, discussions and action could take place in concert, not among the township, however, and not even among Poro initiates as a whole. It is thus not an alternative public in the sense described by Ekeh (1975) or Mamdani (1996) that is divided between an urban power that speaks the language of civil rights, and a civil power that claims to protect customary rights.

The public in the Poro bush is not only established in opposition to state imposition, but, in the case of Peyima, also to other tribal groups who claim authority in the township by drawing on extra-local political affiliation with the ruling party, the APC. On one level, the public of the Poro bush becomes a boundary-making exercise to separate autochthons and allochthons in the locale, and to exclude the latter group, which included either non-initiates or marginal members. Emphasizing the centrality of Poro membership, combined with the ascription of importance to where initiation took place, was a way of consolidating the power of the Konos in Peyima.

On another level, however, it is also problematic to separate the public of the Poro society from that of the township or even the state itself. In the process of reproducing authority, the boundary between state and non-state becomes blurred, and the Poro becomes an analytically-privileged space within the justice and security field where the fragility of this distinction and how it is both created and dismantled, may be investigated. I have already described how the chiefs in Sierra Leone draw their authority from two legal codes, one emanating from the state and the other from locally-embedded discourses of autochthony, i.e., a hybrid order of languages of stateness and public authority. Labeling figures of

authority state or non-state is equally problematic when we turn to events of crimes and violence committed in the name of the Poro.

Peyima's acting security officer, Ibrahim 'Kalilu' Kamara explained why the SLP as an institution of the state had no role to play in the Poro, while the individual police officers in their autochthon capacity did. This distinction demonstrates at the individual level that making a clear-cut distinction between stateness and public authority skews the simultaneity that hybridity is characterized by.

Like Taylor, Kalilu was of mixed heritage, his father a Mandingo and his mother a Kono. Also, like Taylor, he had recently been initiated in order to pursue a position of authority in the township, namely that of Youth Chairman for Kamara Chiefdom. He had not been successful in his endeavor, but because he was a close ally of Chief Gborie, he had replaced Isaac as the acting security officer. The reason why the SLP could never play a role in Poro matters, Kalilu explained, is that:

We've got the Mendes, the Temnes, and the Konos. They are all secret societal people. So when you tell them, any one of the police officers, you tell them something against the society, not Kono alone, but also in the north and the south, they will tell you: 'My friend, an issue for the society is arranged in the society bush. It's not our concern.' Except if the matter is being brought to town, then it will be their concern, but if it's in the bush, it's not theirs (Kalilu, interview, 2009).

Two points follow from Kalilu's statement. On the one hand, the Poro bush becomes an arena within the space of justice and security where its rules have implications across the justice and security field. And yet boundaries are discursively created that deny a role for the SLP in the Poro bush, not as individual members, but in their capacity as police officers. On the other hand, the statement also indicates the dissolution of any clear distinction between 'state' and 'non-state' categories; indeed, this is an instance of complete overlap between the two in the individual who dissolves the boundary between being a police officer and Poro member.

Crossing the physical boundary of the Poro bush and bringing a matter 'to town', as Kalilu put it, becomes vital in the practical re-establishment of these categories, and thereby of

boundaries between the state and the non-state. At the same time, the Poro society's quality of existing in parallel to the external world vanishes, and the symbolic power that it possessed diminishes in the sense that the SLP in its capacity of being a state authority comes to play a role within it.

The following case provides an example of where the physical and symbolic boundary between the bush and the town was transgressed. The productivity of SSR emerged yet again, and the SLP as well as the Partnership Boards became vital actors of authority amid the plurality of institutions creating order in the field of justice and security in the township. Confrontations within the Poro bush among members who had undergone ritual initiation were considered legitimate acts and subjected to rules and regulations set in the secret society.

Crossing the boundary, i.e., acting violently against non-members in the name of the Poro society or forced initiation inevitably involved not only the chiefly hierarchy, but also animated the state system. When this line, which is formalized in bylaws, was crossed, the categories of state and non-state were reproduced, allowing ordering through acts of policing to take place. It is important note, relative to the argument in this chapter, that when the acts of violence in the name of the Poro society and forced initiation took place, the victims did not turn away from the state and the institutions representing it, but turned towards it for redress.

8.6.1 Reproducing and crossing boundaries between town and bush, chiefdom and state

This case took place in January 2009 and involved three young men in Tombodu: Osman Suma, Junior Bangura and Tamba Kellie. (Tombodu is the headquarter town in Kamara Chiefdom and is about six miles from Peyima.) Osman was 18 years old and a Susu by tribe. Junior and Tamba were around the same age, both Kono, and attending their last year of Alimadiga Muslim Secondary School in Tombodu.

One evening, Junior and Tamba, who were Poro members, saw Osman, a non-member, lying on the veranda of his house, which was located on the dirt road leading to the secret

society bush. Walking home from ‘traditional dance’, as soon as they saw Osman, they demanded that as a non-Poro member he should follow the bylaw and go into his house so he could not see secret society activities.

They started to call him *bikamine*, which means a Kono man who is not yet initiated. “Don’t say that,” Osman told them, “if I am or not, doesn’t matter, just leave me as you see me. I am a Sierra Leonean and that’s not my tradition.” The young men got into an argument and used ‘abusive language’. Junior and Tamba began to beat Osman with a stick, took out razor blades and emulated ritual acts of initiation by making cuts on Osman’s back along his spine from the neck to the waistline – symbolizing teeth marks from the devil. As is normally the case during initiation in the Poro bush, a lot of blood was spilled.

A Mr. Foyah, who was passing by, tried unsuccessfully to separate the men, but Osman was able to free himself from Junior and Tamba and managed to find his way to the police post in Tombodu. Meanwhile, Mr. Foyah had gone to Yusuf Mansaray, the Partnership Board chairman of the chiefdom. Yusuf was a Mandingo by tribe, “my grandfather came to this place,” he noted one day when we sat in his compound discussing the case. Despite having grown up in Tombodu and his work as a businessman:

Some people are not happy with me being the Partnership Board Chairman, because I am not part of their custom, I am not a member [of the society]. But the paramount chief said that he wants people who are active to be members, those who want to serve the community and do the work. The local Partnership Board is not part of the tribe. As long as the person is active and ready to serve the chiefdom he is supposed to be a member (Yusuf Mansaray, interview, March 2009).

When Yusuf arrived at the scene of crime, Junior and Tamba had left, and Yusuf went straight to the police post. He met Osman and took him to the Government Hospital for treatment, where he was treated for three weeks. The SLP and Yusuf subsequently went in search for the two young men, who were nowhere to be found. The next day, however, Yusuf was told that the two boys were hiding in the Poro bush. Because he was not a Poro member, Yusuf was unable to act on this information (thereby reproducing the boundary

between the town and the Poro bush). He took the information to the police officer in charge of Kamara Chiefdom, who was a Poro member. The officer went to the bush, arrested Tamba and Junior and brought them to the police station for questioning. They were then sent to Motema for incarceration.

As Partnership Board chairman, Yusuf helped Osman and his family take the matter to the police. The case was considered a ‘blood crime’, and the Sumas, Osman’s family, wanted to “refer the matter to [the Magistrate] Court,” Yusuf noted, “because the [Paramount] Chief has made it a [by] law that they should not force anybody who is not a Kono to be part of the tradition; they make it a law” (ibid.). In doing so, a boundary was produced by Yusuf between the bush and the town, but also inside and outside the chiefdom, since the matter was confined to neither Tombodu nor Kamara. By extension, this led to the consolidation of a role to be played by the SLP vis-à-vis the secret society. As Yusuf continued to be involved in the case, he continued to reproduce the dichotomy between the state and non-state, inside and outside the chiefdom. Once this dichotomy was substantiated, contradictions started to emerge in his actions.

As he pursued the case with state institutions, the Konos, including the paramount chief, pushed Yusuf, who is a Mandingo, to mediate between the families of Osman, Tamba and Junior in Tombodu. Yusuf considered whether an agreement could be reached between the parties and whether “apologies could be made” as Yusuf put it, in order to withdraw the case from Motema, and avoid a trial and its inevitable costs (ibid.).

By this point, a number of boundaries had been affected by this case. The boundary between the Poro bush and the town had been crossed, and a dislocation had taken place within the justice and security field, which allowed SLP involvement. However, in parallel to this process of boundary-transgression, by bringing the families of the defendant and the accused together in Tombodu, Yusuf also reproduced yet another boundary that existed between inside and outside the chiefdom. The case had already been handed over to the police, but in the capacity of Partnership Board Chairman, Yusuf sought to withdraw the case from the SLP in Motema.

With Tamba and Junior's parents, and without the knowledge of Osman and his family, the decision was made to withdraw the case from Motema. "We arranged for some amount [of money] to be sent to Motema station to bail the boys and asked them to stay in Koidu town," Yusuf told me, "because if they see them here in Tombodu without the consent of the people that take them to the police there will be trouble" (ibid.).

As the case unfolded, the boundary between the Poro bush and the township had been reproduced. At the same time, as the SLP and other state institutions came into play, another boundary was reproduced, namely the one demarcating 'inside' and 'outside' the social and physical space of the chiefdom. Public authority became the amalgamated result of the exercise of power by a variety of local institutions (Lund 2006:686), including Partnership Board Chairman Yusuf, Paramount Chief Ngekia and police officers in Tombodu and Motema.

As a figure of authority, Yusuf moved back and forth across boundaries within the security and justice field and reproduced physical domains of inside and outside that enabled the police to engage in the case. He embodied the Partnership Board, a local organization simultaneously deriving its authority from affiliation with both the SLP and the paramount chief. In this capacity, by his involvement in the case of violence committed by Tamba and Junior against Osman, he came to play a crucial role in the production of boundaries. These boundaries were drawn between physical and symbolic spaces within the justice and security field, allowing the police officer to act in his dual capacity of Poro member and state representative (police), for instance. In resolving the matter, however, practices affiliated with autochthony came to dominate.

8.6.2 The practice of dissolving the state-society split

The SLP were without a doubt paid off to release the accused, but there was more at stake, namely the fact that the case involved two Konos, i.e., autochthons, and revolved around the Poro society. On one level, the case was important because it suggests that even when violence is committed – blood crimes – the case may end up with the police, but it might as well be withdrawn and settled 'within' rather than 'outside' the chiefdom or by combining

those two spaces. More importantly, however, the case emphasized the reverse of what Kalilu considered impossible: that the SLP could play a role in society matters. Indeed, the case was instigated by Osman, a non-initiate, and a police officer, a Poro initiate, who arrested Tamba and Junior. Thus, the boundary between the township and the bush was crossed and the police officer was able to act precisely because he was fluent in both languages of public authority and stateness, i.e., as a Poro member and a police officer.

Following from this, it became difficult, if not impossible to ascribe exercised authority to the 'state' as a coherent institution. The nature of the case and the actions of Yusuf, who zigzagged back and forth across physical and symbolic boundaries, disrupted and joined otherwise separate categories and in the process animated a variety of actors, including the institution of the Poro society, the chief and the police. Authority in this case became the amalgamated exercise of power that flowed from a variety of locally-embedded and extra-local institutions.

Following Lund (2006:686), it is "unrewarding to attempt an analytical distinction between state and civil society," or the state and the non-state. But, Lund continues, "although analytically inert, the distinction between state and civil society has a lot going for it in the discursive and political organization of society on a grand and small scale alike" (ibid.). I would argue, however, that the case explored above suggests that even in discourse and political organization, the distinction between state and non-state must be questioned, given that the actors involved drew on the variety of sources of authority that they did. Certainly, there did not appear to be an "imposition of external institutions, conjugated with the *idea* of a state" to paraphrase Lund (ibid.). Yusuf, for instance, did not act against the SLP, but engaged police officers in Tombodu and Motema, drew them into the case, and then pushed them away by seeking to resolve the case in Tombodu and by 'bailing out' Tamba and Junior. The hybrid order was indeed reproduced through involvement of the Partnership Board member (one of the organizational forms shaped in part by the SSR process).

The way that this case was handled ought to have implications for how SSR is formulated and programmed, but as the next, and final section of the chapter shows, this has not been the case. Indeed, the world of policy-making and parts of academia have treated the

constitutive effects of the Poro in the justice and security field fairly superficially. Yet, only by engaging these kinds of organization will it be more fully understood what forms of authority are being produced and how. In any case, it can safely be assumed that the political entity envisioned in international policy-making will not emerge through SSR as state-building.

8.7 An academic and policy blind spot in the justice and security field

Since the late 1990s, there has been a dearth of information about and discussion of institutions such as secret societies under the rubric of SSR in Sierra Leone. There has been little effort to consider how such secret societies co-establish a particular order in the justice and security field. In recent academic literature, the Poro is often mentioned as part and parcel of an ‘informal justice sphere’. Sawyer (2008:393) vaguely refers to them as an ‘auxiliary mechanism’ among several that regulate “certain aspects of moral conduct and certain geographical spaces” (ibid.). Jackson (2007:105) notes that “critical governance issues” are “decided by the secret societies rather than in the chiefdom councils.” However, in the case of both Sawyer and Jackson, an analysis of the kinds of ordering effects that the Poro society has on how justice and security are enforced is not addressed in any detail.

There are various reasons for this. Little wrote about *The Role of the Secret Society in Cultural Specialization* in 1949, but generally speaking, his observations still holds true today, namely that “Poro and other society secrets” remain “guarded very jealously” (Little 1949:211). This implies that “discussion of society matters and Poro ones in particular, even when superficial, with a non-member and especially a European, is regarded as a serious offence...” (ibid.). Even if there were mechanisms within the state-building framework to discuss, translate and engage matters relating to institutions such as secret societies, limited will to do so on the part of Poro members remains an important impediment.

Furthermore, as Jackson (2006:105) comments, explorations of secret societies are “a closed door” to most researchers, even if “their influence is a constant in Sierra Leonean politics” (see also Fulton 1972:1222). Policy-makers and academics alike are therefore

restricted with respect to the information they can obtain about secret societies, which is evident in the lack of recent substantive empirical studies of how they operate, including within the justice and security field (see Højbjerg 2007:21).¹¹⁰ A plethora of ethnographic studies does exist, however, focusing on Liberia and the borderlands between Sierra Leone and Guinea (see Bellman 1984; Fulton 1972; Gibbs 1962; Siegmann 1980).

That secret societies fall outside the purview of SSR programming is compounded by the fact that project designs by international agencies are ‘technically expressed’ and ‘politically shaped’, to paraphrase Mosse (2005:15). Program designers do not make the effort to incorporate knowledge of ordering practices such as those of secret societies into programs, because they can not be articulated in languages of stateness. The lack of information about a secret society such as the Poro is not only due to its inaccessibility to outsiders. It is also due to the fact that the Poro as a fundamental component of the justice and security field in rural Sierra Leone is disregarded in SSR programming.

The SSR process of re-establishing the SLP that began in the late 1990s appeared to many observers to be based on the assumption that colonial regimes had in fact left behind the framework of a Weberian rational bureaucracy that sought, albeit unsuccessfully, to perform routine public administration that could be built upon. Furthermore, a ‘trickle-down effect’ was assumed in the process of state-building in Sierra Leone (Albrecht 2010:9), which disregarded processes of appropriation and translation that would occur as the discourse of SSR programming was turned into practice. Yet, as this and previous chapters have indicated, one cannot make this blanket assumption due to the distribution of power in the justice and security field, of which the Poro society is a structuring effect.

¹¹⁰ Højbjerg (2007:21) has explored ‘so-called secret societies’ in Loma of Guinea, and argues that research on the political aspects of local religion has privileged the main male and female initiatory institutions Poro and Sande. However, it is generally unclear in many of these studies what actually characterizes the presumed connection between what is essentially a religious institution and the local political culture in many Upper Guinea forest and coastal societies. “This lack of analytical insight,” Højbjerg (ibid.) notes, “is due in part to the absence of first hand documentation concerning the processes of Poro politics, including the role and motivation of specific decision-makers, the commitment to rule-governed action by the majority of common Poro members, etc.”

8.8 Conclusion

SSR as state-building articulates processes of concentration and differentiation/separation that are guided by the imagery of a reified state that stands above, and at the same time encompasses, controls and regulates society. This was the process of ‘statification’ that the UK supported during SSR: The incorporation of languages of stateness into and re-configuration of the justice and security field. As this chapter has shown, languages of public authority that assemble and are reproduced through Poro activities might not be captured by the state-building discourse. This, however, makes them no less constitutive of order in the justice and security field. Indeed, to understand the productive effects of SSR as state-building is to take into account institutions such as the Poro society.

The notion of belonging substantiates secret society membership. Claims of Poro membership, combined with ancestral association, profoundly influence land tenure decisions and claims for justice, both within and outside the secret society bush. The persistent articulation of ‘languages of stateness’ in the state-building discourse – and in academia and policy – amounts to a disregard for the fundamental micro-struggles that such claims constitute. ‘Thinking hybridly’ helps us reach a more comprehensive understanding of how assemblages take shape in the justice and security field, and deepens our understanding of the various sources that authority always already emanates from.

Foundational hybridity is immanent. The Poro bush was spoken of above as a parallel world with its own cabinet – a space in the justice and security field where the SLP had no formal role to play. The reason for this is not simply that the SLP was and still is considered to be part of the state system, but that most police officers themselves are secret society members and therefore would not interfere as police officers in Poro matters. The Poro bush is an arena within the space of justice and security where rules are set that have implications across the field as a whole. And yet boundaries are produced that both allow and deny the SLP as a state system to play a role in the Poro bush.

9 Hybridity enacted: a case of diamond theft in Kamara Chiefdom

9.1 Introduction

Ferguson (2006 [1994]:284) notes about international development programs that “plans constructed within a conceptual apparatus do have effects, but in the process of producing these effects, they generally “fail” to transform the world in their own image.” It is one thing to understand and accept in the abstract that the western universalist state cannot be established in Sierra Leone through state-building. It is something different to appreciate how the principles of SSR have been translated into a locality such as Kamara Chiefdom, and accordingly, to understand how and by whom the field of justice and security has been and is organized.

To understand these processes of translation, this chapter analyzes one case of diamond theft that began as a matter between two miners, moved to the verandah of Melvin Ngekia, Kamara Chiefdom’s paramount chief, and eventually ended up at Motema police headquarters with Mustapha Kambeh, the SLP Local Unit Commander. It shows how an assemblage took shape and evolved, and provides insight into the many sources of authority that went into dealing with, if not necessarily solving the case. SSR and police reform have been productive in re-composing the organization of the justice and security field. Its productivity, however, lies in reproducing and adding new elements to, rather than eradicating the foundational hybrid order that governs the countryside of Sierra Leone.

Although tensions exist between them, positing languages of stateness in opposition to languages of public authority sets up yet another “ideal constitutive separation” (Buur 2006:741) between ‘the state’ on the one hand, and ‘society’ on the other. Instead, I argue that the justice and security field should be approached analytically as a terrain of struggle, a field of distributed authority in which a range of actors assemble to enforce a hybrid order. Authority to do so inevitably draws simultaneously on both languages of stateness and public authority. By using the concept of field, the possibility of establishing a dichotomous relationship between these languages is decreased, as differences are set to play across symbolically-constructed boundaries (Hardt and Negri 2000:142).

If the state-building objective had been realized, it would have had both an essentializing and homogenizing effect. Yet, since hybridity is foundational and produces a strong basis of heterogeneity, establishing a centrally-governed political entity was always already an unlikely outcome. This is not a novel observation; it has been proposed by a number of authors (see Rotberg 2004; Ghani and Lockhart 2008; Call 2008:1499; Andersen 2010:29).

Therefore, the important question is not whether state-building is possible or not, but what this process of seeking to reshape war-torn societies, and in my case, re-composing the justice and security field, looks like in practice. In the same vein, it is not about whether state-building *per se* works or not; even if it reproduced an already existing hybrid order, it has nonetheless altered how order is established in the justice and security field. The question is what alterations state-building produced and how the classificatory schemes of the individuals who appropriate and translate SSR assemblages shape the justice and security field in the process.

This chapter explores the productivity of SSR and the types of authoritative languages expressed in the justice and security field. The case of diamond theft under scrutiny identifies the mix of authorities that come into play when a crime occurs, and how hierarchies of authority are shaped and reshaped, subverted and re-established by the types of authority that actors can invoke to resolve a criminal case.

Individuals with a stake in the justice and security field sought to improve their own position in order to resolve the case by emphasizing the authority that was available to them, for example, by referring to their Partnership Board affiliation, by exposing symbols of statehood or by tacitly enacting their position within the chiefly hierarchy. Thus, a variety of actors were involved, including individual villagers, political party members, chiefs, Partnership Board members and police officers, providing insight into the hybrid order that continues to manifest itself in a rural mining area such as Peyima in Kamara Chiefdom.

9.2 Unfolding a case of diamond theft

I first heard the details of the case of diamond theft from Isaac, himself an articulation of the hybrid order under discussion, and whom we met in an earlier chapter of this thesis. The case took place when Isaac was still Peyima's Partnership Board member in late 2008. He was one of the only 'intellectuals' in Peyima, which means that he can read and write, a rare skill in an area where literacy is considered far less important than mining and the pursuit of 'quick money'. Isaac's authority had not been shaped by chiefly descent, although he had grown up in the family of the Tankos, which held claims to the position of town chief of Peyima. Isaac was concerned about how to maintain authority in the chiefdom. He not only explicitly noted this himself; he embodied it. His face expressed angst, he was extremely thin, and seemed to be verging on self-consumption.

Isaac attended, but had not graduated from, Bo Government Secondary School, commonly known as Bo School, one of the biggest and most prominent secondary schools in Sierra Leone. Furthermore, as Peyima's Partnership Board member, he entertained close links with the Local Unit Commander, Mustapha Kambah in Motema, a relationship he was careful to nurture by frequent meetings and exchanges of information. Finally, Isaac was also politically active within 'the party of the day', the APC, the party in power in Freetown. Hence, Isaac was constantly renegotiating his authority; not only did he have to defend it, as is the case regarding chiefs, he had to continuously produce and reproduce it.

Through his different activities, Isaac was able to establish and sustain a position among Peyima's leaders, specifically, and the chiefdom more generally, from where he could authoritatively claim a role to play, both in the social and physical space of Kamara, including the chiefly hierarchy and the security and justice field. Indeed, his ability to claim affiliation with the SLP through Partnership Board membership became a significant source of authority and enabled him to play a part in resolving the case of diamond theft. It was from this position of authority that Isaac explained the case to me.

9.2.1 Two miners, a stone and statifying the case

A villager from Peyima found a stone in one of the many diamond pits that perforate Kamara Chiefdom. The miner's name was Abraham. He was not sure whether it was a diamond, but it looked like a *chap-chap*, a rough diamond. The way that you can tell whether you have made an interesting find is if the stone has 'corners'. Some parts of this particular *chap-chap* looked 'shiny' and the color was 'candle-like'. Abraham took the stone to his friend, Fasalie, who was down the road in Nemesedu, to ask his opinion.

Nemesedu was also the home of the person under whose license the stone had been found (a license holder buys or is given the right by the Chief to mine at a given site). The license holder in this particular case was an old, blind man with candle-colored eyes – like rough diamonds. He had not always been blind, but suffered from 'river blindness' caused by a worm that breeds in fast-flowing rivers – a common condition for many 'difers' who find diamonds in the riverbed of Bafi.

The fact that a mining license holder is part of the case is crucial – both to the analytical points of this dissertation, and to Abraham. Because a license is granted by an agency of the state, the license holder's authority is sourced from symbolic articulations of stateness. He projects the importance of the state in producing authority, and provides the legitimacy to report the case of theft to the chief in the first place, as well as to the SLP. In fact, without involving a license holder, there simply was no case for Abraham to claim that the stone had disappeared or been stolen, since officially it would then have been an illegitimate find (and confiscated by the paramount chief if it was found). There was little doubt that the case would reach both the paramount chief and SLP's Local Unit Commander if the stone was even suspected to be of any value.

As I spoke to more people involved in the case, it became evident that in fact the blind man might not have been the person under whose license the stone was found. Isaac mentioned that Abraham had been doing unlicensed mining in the forest between Peyima and Bondu. However, the fact that a license holder could be identified meant that Abraham could report the case, and the blind man had agreed to stand in. These strategies needed to be put in place to circumvent the formal rules of mining to ensure that the rules are abided by at

least symbolically (a man with a license is found), if not in practice (it was not under the blind man's license that the *chap-chap* was found).

Abass, a key informant, explained to me the process of bringing in a person to testify in a case of diamond theft who might have a license, but who was not necessarily the license holder under whose license the diamond was found. Because of the high cost and paperwork involved in obtaining a mining license, Abass had been mining without a license for several years in Kono District and had made some significant finds. As Abraham and many others in Kamara Chiefdom, Abass mined without a license on the outskirts of Peyima, and therefore could end up in a situation where he would need to find a person with a license to validate a find. Abass explained the key role of validating the license holder in these circumstances as follows:

Well, if my brother has a license now and his own license is correct, and I have worked on a place where the license is not correct, I will invite my brother to come with that of his own license just to see. I will use his license so that I will be able to sell peacefully. But if I say I will never involve my brother, I will go and sell it like that. If my guys [collaborators] try to prosecute in case we get a big find, I will pay them. So when I've given them their money, they will come back to reveal my bluffing, you know, follow people's wives, the chief's wives. And when the chief knows, he will think 'oh, these guys have got money, and it's a big sum of money, oh, he is a big brother', it's a big trouble. They will just take us to the police and ask us where we sold the diamonds. If we sold it to Peter, we have to go and point to Peter, if Peter has 'money in the fridge'. They will come to you: 'Yes, Peter', but if you too have a license to buy diamond then we are safe. But if we take it to a person who doesn't have a license, and we did not get this diamond from a licensed place, oooh, that is a big problem for both of us (Abass, interview, February 2009).

Only if a find is significant will the miners scramble to find a license in support of selling the stone (otherwise, it will end up in the informal diamond market behind the bus station in the center of Koidu). The blind man provided such an opportunity: "When they [the paramount chief and the Local Unit Commander] see the blind man," Isaac said, "they will be very sympathetic – 'Oh, look at this old blind man'. So the case will be taken very

serious.” Moreover, because he was blind, his role as a witness was limited – he held a license but could quite literally not claim to have played an active role in finding the stone or a stake in resolving the matter between Abraham and Fasalie.

9.2.2 Consolidating hybridification: involving the paramount chief

Before the scramble to find a license holder began, Fasalie had told Abraham that he would take the stone to Koidu where he would seek out one of the many licensed diamond dealers in the center of town. In other words, the license holder only became relevant because it had become a case of theft. A license holder is not required to sell a stone or have it valued. Thus, a diamond dealer can buy whichever stone he wishes from whoever offers it to him.

Fasalie told Abraham that he would try to find a person with a ‘detector machine’ that could verify whether the stone was a diamond. When Fasalie came back to Peyima, he said that he had taken the stone to Alasi Bally. A known Marrakesh diamond exporter, Bally had told Fasalie that, in fact, it was *not* a diamond. Fasalie then told Abraham that he had left the stone with his brother and returned to Peyima without any ‘attestation’. Because no paper work existed from Fasalie’s meeting with Bally, it never became clear what the value of the stone was, indeed, if it had any.

When Abraham asked if he could have his stone back, Fasalie then changed his story. He had not left it in Koidu, but in Tombodu, the headquarter town of Kamara Chiefdom and the base of the paramount chief. At this point, from Abraham’s perspective, the stone had “disappeared”: it had been stolen.

It was in Tombodu that Chief Gborie heard about the incident. He hurriedly called the man who had found the diamond as well as the ‘license holder’, the blind man from Nemesedu, who is normally known as the supporter of the miner.¹¹¹ The Chief arranged a meeting with the men in Bondu village, headquarter of the section in which Peyima is located.

¹¹¹ The ‘supporter’ is different from the ‘investor’. The supporter operates at the local level with a license to do alluvial mining in a specifically demarcated area. Investors, on the other hand, deal with capital-intensive mining, which is still alluvial, but with help from ‘caterpillars’ that cost US\$1000 to rent per day.

Chief Gborie did this with support from Isaac, who had been following the case closely and consciously in order to avoid involvement of the paramount chief. Both Chief Gborie and Isaac had an interest in solving the case as close to home as possible, because the higher the case climbed up the chiefly hierarchy, the less they would gain financially from resolving the case. No one was keener to do so than Isaac, because the kind of authority he could mobilize would be considerably diluted by engaging the paramount chief, and even more so if the police were involved. After all, he was merely Peyima's Partnership Board member.

Isaac's ability to 'withdraw' the case from the chiefly hierarchy, as he put it, was hindered by the disappearance of the stone and the fact that the explanation of the 'accused', Fasalie, was not consistent. He was perceived to be lying by a growing number of people in Peyima, who were becoming engaged in the case.

The suspicion that he had come into sudden money was fuelled when Fasalie began to display acts of 'conspicuous consumption', which is usually done by organizing big parties in and for the local community. "He even bought some sheep!" Isaac noted: "So the boy [Abraham] said, this is my money that you are using to buy these things. The time I was giving you this stone, there was nothing with you. We were all living an average life, but now I'm seeing you living a happy life." (Isaac, interview, December 2008).

Attempts to resolve the case locally led nowhere; as a last resort, it became a matter for the paramount chief to investigate and prosecute further. Isaac summed up his role in the case, and the implications of the case going to the paramount chief: "So we intervene, we try to interrogate them, investigate – so we find out that the matter is above us, and we took them to the paramount chief. There our own stage of investigation ends, because it's actually to the higher level." (Isaac, interview, December 2008).

It was evident that the authority that Isaac could draw upon, partly embedded in languages of stateness that had been introduced through police reform and partly by virtue of chiefly appointment to that position, was not sufficient to resolve the case.

9.2.3 Articulations of stateness in Kamara Chiefdom

It is important to emphasize that Kamara Chiefdom is *not* a non-state space ‘uncontaminated’ by languages of stateness. The presence of the license holder in the case invoked the office of the state-appointed Mining Chairman of Kamara Chiefdom, who approves all licenses to mine. And the Mining Chairman of Kamara Chiefdom is Chief Gborie. “Only he can approve the development fee and surface rent, only he can approve the company” Taylor noted, “so you cannot mine in Kamara without consulting Chief Gborie” (Taylor Kondeh, interview, January 2009).

However, the paramount chief appointed Gborie to the position of Mining Chairman for Kamara Chiefdom precisely because Gborie was Peyima’s Town Chief and because he had supported Ngekia when he had run for elections a few years earlier. Thus, Gborie embodied a hybrid order, because the base of his authority to take on this position emanated from his status of autochthon, secret society membership as well as from the power conferred upon him in state legislation. In fact, he was only able to take on the role of Mining Chairman because of the hybrid base of his authority, which in turn bolstered his position in the security and justice field. It was, however, not enough, and the case had now moved to the center of hybrid authority in Kamara Chiefdom, the paramount chief.

9.2.4 The paramount chief as gatekeeper- ritualizing chiefly power

When the case arrived on the doorstep of the paramount chief, it had reached the highest authority, what may be referred to as the ‘gatekeeper’ of Kamara Chiefdom. In his hybrid capacity, Paramount Chief Ngekia put on public display the power he held to decide whether the case should be resolved ‘within’ or ‘outside’ the chiefdom, whether the case should be handed over to the SLP or not. He was the formal center of decision-making in a conglomerated personification of politics and economy, justice and security in Kamara.

To solve the case, a meeting, or rather a ‘courtroom’ scenario, took place one Sunday morning on the verandah of the paramount chief’s house in Tombodu. By law, every chiefdom in Sierra Leone should have between one and four Local Courts, presided over by a Court Chairman, Court Clerk and a panel of elders known as members (see Local

Courts Act 1963). The Chiefdom Council nominates the Court Chairman for a three-year term with final approval from the Ministry of Local Government (Koroma 2007).

However, no Court Chairman was present at the hearing of Abraham and Jimmy's diamond theft case that Sunday morning. While he had been appointed, the Court Chairman himself told me that he could not dedicate any time to the job since he was not being paid. And so, Ngekia was the judge, he questioned the parties, made the ruling and decided next steps on what to do based on what Abraham and Fasalie had to say.

As the case unfolded that day, it became something of a secular ritual, a socio-cultural construct of the distribution of power within Kamara Chiefdom on public display (Moore and Myerhoff 1977). The ritual practice was not an 'instrument' of the Paramount Chief Ngekia, but was itself constitutive of the production and negotiation of power relations (Bell 1992:196). At this point the authority of the paramount chief was mobilized in a final attempt to resolve the case 'within' themselves in Kamara Chiefdom. Moore and Myerhoff (1977:4) argue that rituals, sacred or secular, endow "authority and legitimacy to the positions of particular persons, organizations, occasions, moral values, views of the world" and "structure the way people think about social life." As the *de facto* judge that day, the paramount chief ritualized his position in the chiefdom.

The courtroom scenario also demonstrated the boundary between within and outside the chiefdom, as the chief consolidated his own turf and that of the police. At the same time, the inseparability of the two figures of authority – chief and police – also became evident. The chief blurred his own base of foundational hybrid authority by separating 'within' and 'outside' the chiefdom, but it was a separation that collapsed when the practice of how the case was dealt with was scrutinized, particularly since the chief would stay involved, even if the case was handed over to the SLP.

That Sunday morning, the paramount chief was sitting in his pajamas at the far right of the verandah, rather inconspicuous, almost inappropriate in his appearance – to me, at least; no one else seemed to take notice. For a while now he had suffered from a heart condition; he came across that morning as heavily medicated, moving and speaking slowly and sometimes incoherently. His house is situated on a hillside overlooking Tombodu and is

encircled by old mango trees. The verandah itself is elevated two or three meters above the ground, which allows the chief to always look down on people standing in front of the house.

Many people criticized the Chief because he was not permanently based in Tombodu. He spent most of his time in Koidu – as did many other paramount chiefs in Kono District – and only visited his chiefdom occasionally mostly for business reasons. Effectively, the case between Abraham and Fasalie was considered relevant for ‘business reasons’, since the potential for monetary gain was present.

During the meeting – or *de facto* courtroom hearing – the ‘accused’ and the ‘defendant’ were seated to the left of the paramount chief on the verandah. Fasalie had arrived on his own, while Abraham had brought a support group. Isaac, Peyima’s Partnership Board member and at the time soon-to-be Deputy Chairman of the APC in Kamara Chiefdom, was present in support of Abraham. Present also were Peyima’s Youth Chairman and the APC Youth Chairman of the constituency who had worked with Isaac to resolve the matter before the case reached the paramount chief. (The significance of the presence of youth representatives at the hearing is worth emphasizing. They play a vital role in providing the physical aspects of security such as apprehension in most places outside district headquarter and chiefdom headquarter towns, and usually operate under the leadership of an elder. In fact, Partnership Board member Isaac referred to the youth in Peyima as ‘his boys’). The old blind man alleged to be the license holder was also present at the meeting, led to the hearing by one of his younger relatives.

The paramount chief opened the meeting by emphasizing that he would prefer the matter be settled “among themselves,” so they did not have to take it to the police. As I had observed on several other occasions, the involvement of the police was presented as a threat and a last resort, something to be ashamed of, indicating that the chiefdom authorities were unable to deal with their own matters in the chiefdom. This is an articulation of the language of relationality between the chiefdom governed by the paramount chief and outside authorities such as the SLP over whom his powers were incomplete, but as it turned out nonetheless substantial.

A simple separation between state and chiefdom is impossible to maintain analytically, even if that was the imagery that the paramount chief projected through the threat of involving the SLP. This is first and foremost the case because the figure of the paramount chief is integral to state formation in Sierra Leone. At one level, therefore, the threat of taking the matter to the police, “let the law take its course” as the paramount chief put it, resembled an interim, if not permanent, expulsion of Fasalie from the chiefdom into corners of the justice and security field over which the paramount chief represented himself as having little or no control.

Buur (2006:752) argues that socially- and politically-situated actors use discourses to support and justify actions that fit their own concerns; one should always be aware of the inherent reflection of power that is part of any articulation. The paramount chief might have produced a dichotomy in public discourse by instrumentalizing the distinction between ‘within’ and ‘outside’ Kamara Chiefdom, between the chiefdom and the SLP. As will be explored in greater depth below, however, the Local Unit Commander and the paramount chief remained closely interlocked even as the case and Fasalie were transferred to police headquarters at Motema.

However, political rhetoric and official representations of crime, authority and boundary-making have a symbolic weight and practical effectiveness with real consequences. Therefore, even if there is no clear cut differentiation between the chiefdom (paramount chief) and the state (police) in a hybrid order, the threat of letting “the law take its course” would only work if categorical boundaries were maintained, in words at least, if not in practice. Equally important, the paramount chief had to put on display for Abraham and the general population in the chiefdom that he had done what he could under the circumstances, both to maintain authority vis-à-vis the inhabitants of the chiefdom and to appease them.

9.2.5 Visualizing hybridity: from Kamara to Motema

At the hearing, the Chief asked Fasalie and Abraham to tell their versions of what had happened. Fasalie, who was not very talkative, maintained that the stone had not been a

diamond. Speaking in a whisper, his official story on the verandah was that he had gone to Koidu, and that he had thrown the stone away when he found out that it had no value. What mattered at the hearing was that he was unable to produce the stone and return it to its rightful owner, Abraham. Abraham said little, and looked puzzled, almost hurt. His case had already been made for him, a license holder had been found, and his story had been told and reiterated numerous times.

In sum, therefore, as the case reached the top tier of the chiefly hierarchy within Kamara, it appeared evident that resolution was not possible, it was one man's word against another's, and a decision had to be made as to whether the case was to leave the locality of the chiefdom. After some interrogation the paramount chief quietly, yet firmly urged Fasalie to 'speak the truth'. However, Ngekia decided that the hearing had not led to the desired outcome and asked one of his staff to go down to the police post in Tombodu, and find a police officer to bring back to the meeting.

By this time, it appeared that Fasalie was considered guilty by the paramount chief, and was on the brink of expulsion from the chiefdom. He then came under verbal attack from Abraham's group of followers, who asked where the stone was, why it had not been handed over to Abraham and why he had changed his story several times along the way – questions that had already been asked and answered unsatisfactorily.

In the middle of this verbal assault, the paramount chief's assistant returned, saying that there was no officer at the police post. It was Sunday, a slow day in Tombodu. He was therefore sent to 'Number 11', an industrial mining site on the dirt road to Koidu where a police post had been set up. The attacks on Fasalie quieted down, and we all sat there in silence, waiting for a while.

Fifteen minutes later, the Police Inspector turned up with Yusuf Mansaray, Kamara Chiefdom's Partnership Board Chairman. They were not invited to sit on the verandah; they stood in front of the house, dressed in civilian clothing and looking up at the paramount chief, awaiting his orders, hesitant. The atmosphere was not hostile, but there was some doubt about what would happen next and whether Fasalie would indeed be

handed over to the police. It was not for the Police Inspector or Yusuf to make that decision.

The physical separation on the paramount chief's verandah, i.e., where the villagers from Kamara Chiefdom sat, and where the state, represented by the police, stood in front of the house, was a symbolic separation of chiefdom and the state that the paramount chief was at pains to produce in discourse and that militated against his foundational hybrid status.

Moreover, the police officer did not arrive in a vehicle or wear a uniform, both of which are important symbols of statehood. This was equally true for the Chairman of the Partnership Board, who represented the crucial link between the police and the community. However, the fact that the police could be summoned and used by the paramount chief was a real threat to Fasalie, and in a double pull, supported the establishment of a clear discursive line of demarcation with practical consequences between the safety of the chiefdom and the uncertainty he might face at Motema police headquarters.

While the SLP may have been resurrected through SSR, police reform did not fundamentally alter hierarchical relations within the chiefdom. It did not establish vertical encompassment of a state that stands above while at the same time containing its localities. Rather, it re-shaped the way assemblages took shape within the justice and security field, connecting components of recent police reform, historically shaped articulations of authority, embedded in discourses of autochthony, secret society membership, and so forth. The police were neither invited to sit on the verandah, nor able to force Fasalie into custody: this was a decision for the paramount chief. However, the building of a police force after the war had come to an end had established a force that could be engaged in resolution of the case of diamond theft, something that had not been the case before the conflict.

The hearing on the verandah that Sunday morning projected an image of the state police that emphasized its spatial and conceptual dispersion, given the role of the chief in organizing and directing the SLP. By extension, it also provided insight into the challenge of the state's universal reach, which SSR as state-building has done little to change. Within the justice and security field, the SLP had regained a position, but it was a position that

could never be enacted independent of the general distribution of power in the justice and security field, and the position of the chief.

The paramount chief concluded the meeting and addressed the Police Inspector: “He [Fasalie] is very arrogant and he lies. He’s trying to take this chieftom for a ride, so let the law take its course. Invite the two parties to the station to make statements.” Eventually, the public display of interrogation and case resolution concluded by Fasalie leaving the safety of the verandah to be taken to Motema police headquarters. The Police Inspector never went up the stairs to make an arrest, but waited for Fasalie to come down, quietly, and took him away. Thus, Fasalie became the object of secular ritualization, to follow Bell’s (1992) actor-centered approach to ritual practice, which is enacted to perform and articulate social control and domination.

Quite literally, the paramount chief displayed his authority by structuring the movement of Fasalie from one location to another, a physical movement that also indicated that the case was being transferred from one set of actors to another within the justice and security field. Drawing on the authority of both his historical position and legal status, he enacted a boundary in discourse and practice between the chieftom and the police. In this respect, the paramount chief was not only seeking financial gain, which was his primary and most immediate reason for engaging in resolution of the case. He was also engaging in the production of his own turf, of his own authority, but thereby also, in a double pull, reproducing the authority of the SLP.

This display of relationality, i.e., the transfer of the case to the police and the movement from inside to outside the chieftom, did not demarcate a boundary in practice between chief and police. Rather, the handover was followed seamlessly by the paramount chief’s re-possession of the matter. While clear lines of demarcation were drawn in public between the chief and police, and inside and outside Kamara Chieftom, this distinction was not reflected in the practices that followed. Rather, it became evident that the two figures of authority, chief and police, could not act independent of one another. Indeed, they depended on each other’s positions in the justice and security field in order to project authority (if they were to ensure financial gain) and to confirm their positions of power by resolving the case.

9.2.6 Subjugation of the Partnership Board

Hybrid authorities engaged in this case, who drew on each other's ability to make order, were assembling in a simultaneous articulation of languages of stateness and public authority. It was this assembling of different types of authority and the strength of its articulation that led to resolution of the case in the end. A few days after the trial, I met with Isaac, who explained to me what had happened when Abraham, Fasalie and the rest of Kamara's villagers left the verandah, why Fasalie had not told the truth, and why the paramount chief had left the case with the SLP. Isaac had "interrogated," as he put it, those people in Koidu who had been mentioned at chiefdom level, the Marrakesh diamond dealer in particular, who told Isaac that he had returned the stone to Fasalie.

In his capacity as a member of the Partnership Board, Isaac had then sought to withdraw the case from the police and return it to be resolved within the chiefdom. From his perspective, it was essential that the chiefdom remain in the game of resolving the matter and that the case be moved back inside the chiefdom.

Isaac also considered withdrawing the case to be his responsibility: "The police partners now have to intervene," he explained, "if they can call all interested parties, the people can encourage them to speak the truth." That the accused had already been taken to the station to make a statement was not important: "That's just paperwork; it's my right to investigate and take a statement from the accused" (Isaac, interview, December 2009). But since the case had left the chiefdom to become an SLP issue in Motema, authorities from Bondu and Peyima had limited, if any, leverage.

By virtue of his Partnership Board membership, to follow Bourdieu (1989:20), Isaac was seeking a strategy of presentation of self that was designed to manipulate his self-image, and especially, the image of his own position in social space and in the security and justice field. Remember, Isaac was endlessly occupied with the task of negotiating and renegotiating his own identity, in order to compensate for his lack of chiefly descent, which would have endowed him with immediate symbolic capital, if not necessarily symbolic power (see Bourdieu 1989:21).

Furthermore, given how the SLP and the paramount chief cooperate, and despite the authority that was available to Isaac as a Partnership Board member, the type of authority he held did not reach Motema police headquarters. Since the authority Isaac articulated had been granted to him by the Chief, he could never challenge the authority of the paramount chief, a title of symbolic property that gives the latter a right to share in the profits of recognition. The same is true for the Local Unit Commander, Kambeh, who draws authority from his affiliation with a state system that had been re-articulated, in part, through a police reform process that endowed him with the symbols and status of statehood. If Isaac and other villagers in Bondu Section were to gain from a settlement, Isaac would have to use whatever *ad hoc* strategy he could devise to withdraw Fasalie from the hands of the police.

Isaac did not succeed, which was hardly surprising, given the ruling of the paramount chief. It was even suggested by some observers that Fasalie had already gone to the Chief to solve the case. Taylor Kondeh explained what this conversation probably had sounded like:

'Papa!', yeah, it's true, but I've already used the money, just have this *Kola* [gesture of giving an amount of money] for you to help me to finish with the matter. Father, please hold this Kola and save me from this problem. Really, it's true, I've sold it, so-so amount to so-so dealer. So that's, whenever someone stole a diamond, they try very hard to grab him before he stole the diamond [sic], because as soon as he sold the diamond, he get the money (Taylor Kondeh, interview, April 2009).

While not successful, Isaac's attempt to withdraw the case was nonetheless one of the productive aspects of police reform as SSR, in that it projected the SLP's return to Sierra Leone's countryside, the introduction of the LNP doctrine and establishment of Partnership Boards. Isaac's failure to withdraw the case did not, however, leave him overly jaded – it was simply an opportunity lost to make a few Leones, but others would come.

On a regular basis, Partnership Board members and traditional leaders negotiate the release of people arrested by or initially handed over to the police in cases of theft as well as domestic violence. Often the case dealing with a matter 'within themselves' revolves

around money and is based on the assumption that the criminal can not afford the financial burden of being arrested and getting into contact with figures of authority of the state system.¹¹² In this case of diamond theft, however, money was already in circulation and so was the interest of actors with substantial authority.

9.2.7 The rule of hybridity through the interlocking of authority

Parallel to Isaac's lack of success in withdrawing the case from the police and the dynamics in Kamara Chiefdom, the case had run its course in Motema and Koidu. Formal resolution in Tombodu had ended with Fasalie's 'invitation' to Motema, where he testified that what Abraham had given him was a simple stone, not a gem. This was the official report that went back to the paramount chief, who subsequently "demanded that Fasalie should be out of prison," Isaac noted (Isaac, interview, December 2008).

However, this did not constitute the end of interaction between the police and the paramount chief. Relations of power between these two figures are ubiquitous and are re-negotiated continuously. As Lund (2002:4) notes, and this was explicitly the case here, social situations of opposition, acts of subversion or compliance, of evasion or confirmation, and of transgression or inculcation are ways of negotiating a specific order. The paramount chief and the Local Unit Commander, figures of authority in the justice and security field, were competing for a resource to improve their livelihoods while at the same time consolidating their turf.

In practice, this worked out as a process of reciprocal transferences between the two figures of authority, continuously crossing boundaries between secrecy and public display and moving symbolically from one point within the justice and security field to another. Thus, while a formal transfer of the case to the SLP had taken place that morning on the paramount chief's verandah, the paramount chief had not disengaged (indeed, this was not possible under the terms of the hybrid order). Taylor explained:

¹¹² Not once during my time in Peyima – and Kamara Chiefdom – did a case end up in the Magistrate Court.

Even if the police interfered into the matter, the paramount chief has a right to go and tell the police that I have an interest in this matter; and they [the police] will look, pay respect to him and then hand over the matter to him. While maybe for me as the local man to see the LUC is not going to be easy. The paramount chief, maybe he will just be sitting at his home, then call: 'Hello: I get interest, I have interest in the matter. So please, I will be there at 10AM so I want to get a special talk with you. Then in fact I have a package for you [money]'. 'Okay, okay sir,' [the police replies], 'you will see the police'. The police encourage corruption in this country – not even this country, all over the world (Taylor Kondeh, interview, January 2009).

Taylor continued:

So the police have the problem, yeah. So the paramount chief is an authority, he has a right as a dignitary to even stay at his home and call the LUC, then the LUC will report to him. Let me tell you one thing about the Kono paramount chiefs. All the LUCs that are working in Kono District, they love Kono. Because when you come to Kono you make it up quick because criminal cases are so much higher in Kono. But if you come as LUC and you don't cooperate with them [the paramount chiefs], they will play another gun game; you will move out of the district. They transfer you another where [sic] (ibid.).

The diamond dealer had also played a role in this regard. According to Taylor, he would have told Fasalie to deny any knowledge of where the diamond had ended up, and that he, Fasalie, would be rewarded for his acquiescence, which indeed he probably had been, considering his sudden acts of conspicuous consumption. As the case unfolded, it became more and more evident that the diamond dealer sat at the top of the food chain, as it were – “because he has money,” Abass explained:

When somebody has a diamond, he will go to the [diamond] dealer. So in times of problems, if there is any problem, the dealer can settle the matter because he has money. He can settle the matter. Because of the way they are doing things; that is why all the dealers have a license. There are also agent licenses, who are running

under the dealers. Each dealer has three agent licenses. Agents cannot buy diamonds, but they can encourage someone to go to the diamond dealer. And even if you as an agent buy a diamond, you can put it under the name of the dealers. As soon as problems arrive, when they go to the police they will just mention the dealer's name so that the dealer will answer for the diamond – all receipts are given under their name. As soon as he gets the diamond, he'll book the diamond under the dealer's name. Then as soon as the agent books it, he contacts the dealers: 'I have some diamonds here.' But it is still a problem diamond. So the dealer just says: 'Come with it here, if there is any problem just put it under my receipt'. If the agent gets a problem diamond, as soon as the dealer takes over the matter, there will not be much problem,' because the government empower him. That's why they are paying a lot of money to get the license (Abass, interview, March 2009).

According to Isaac, the diamond dealer had told Fasalie: "When the chief or the police come to you, whatever they say, deny, I'll fight the matter for you" (Isaac, interview, December 2008). The first thing the diamond dealer would have done after having spoken to Fasalie, according to Isaac, was to go straight to the Local Unit Commander and pay him off, and prepare him for the probability that the case might be coming his way. "That's why the boy acted the way he did, he cannot respect elders, chiefs. Whenever the Chief calls, he rejects" (ibid). Involvement of the SLP had become a strict necessity to resolve the case or at least to put it to rest, something that the paramount chief was not able to do in front of the villagers that Sunday morning on his verandah.

Monetary gain from the case was now restricted on more than one level. Isaac explained:

Normally, when you steal a diamond, if you are caught, then you will go and show where you sold the diamond. The price you sold it for will be revealed, but if the dealer has a license he will only pay 500,000 Leones, regardless of how much the diamond is worth. If they see any diamond, they can buy it (Abass, interview, March 2009).

And with a license to buy diamonds, regardless of how or where it was found, the dealer was in a position to simply state: "Yes, yeah, they sold it to me. I'm not here to buy gun or

buy their palm wine – I am here to buy diamonds, look at my license, I bought it and I have paid them.” In other words, Isaac continued:

The issue of diamond cases here, if you are having your diamond stolen, you have lost already, because the issue is money, money, money. It starts to cost money when it comes to Motema. If it arrives in Motema, the Diamond Chairman, the LUC, the magistrate – they all need money. They will call the paramount chief and he will be paid off. So there are 3 [sets of] percentages. One will go to the person in the village, two to handle the case. When you have money you have justice. If the paramount chief, the Local Unit Commander, the diamond dealer and the Chairman are all involved, who will you next go to? (Isaac, interview, December 2008).

So the case of diamond theft ends with a question that remains unanswered: “who will you go to next?” The case also ends with a sense of how the hybrid order works, and the impossibility of making a clear line of demarcation between state and chief, or the ‘weak state’ and ‘strong society’ in Sesay’s (1995:166) words. In the hybrid order, languages of both stateness and public authority are simultaneously at play. It may be that police reform as part of SSR has reshaped how order is made, but it has not fundamentally altered how, and by whom, authority is articulated in the justice and security field.

9.3 The security and justice assemblage and the reproduction of hybridity

As indicated earlier, the SLP specifically (and the security sector generally) was resurrected by SSR to “reclaim its rightful primacy in the maintenance of public tranquility and law enforcement” (CPDTF, July 1998). A review of the SLP produced in 2011 presented a more varied picture, acknowledging that “balanced support must be given to both local and national systems [of policing]” (Horn et al. 2011). The review continues, reflecting on the past ten years of police reform in Sierra Leone, “it is unclear whether the government has the will to take over the role of all security providers currently operating at the local level, be they LPPBs, Chiefdom Police or vigilante groups. Certainly, they do not have the financial means to do so” (ibid).

The review nevertheless maintains that these agencies must deliver their services “within national standards and guidelines, and in turn these must reflect international norms and standards, particularly in relation to Human Rights, corruption and equal opportunities” (ibid). This remains a fundamental oxymoron of police reform and broader SSR in Sierra Leone: on the one hand, acknowledging that it is ‘unclear whether the government has the will’, and on the other maintaining that security – and justice – should be provided within national and international norms and standards.

As this chapter demonstrates, it is only through the assembling of various forms of authority that the diamond theft case, and no doubt similar justice and security cases, could be resolved. The authority engaged in the diamond theft case was not lodged in one particular institution. Rather, it was produced in practices performed by a number of actors, drawing their authority to do so from sources both within and beyond Kamara Chiefdom.

The articulation of authority constitutes the ability to make symbolic boundaries, to draw on sources of authority that are derived in local physical space, to undergo and undertake the same rites of passage in the same locales and to defend the stake that is being fought over against external challenges from the state and other tribes. This is not to emphasize the failure of government institutions to maintain control. It is rather to say that a square usage of the concept of the state is misleading in terms of analyzing the assemblages of actors that exercise authority and compete over the jurisdiction to make order in the process.

Moreover, the assemblage is not well-analyzed as a zero-sum game (although Ray and van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal (1996:29) see the relationship between state and chief as such). By extension, the concept of twilight institutions proposed by Lund (2006) is not the best way to capture how actors act within the justice and security field in Peyima, Kamara Chiefdom and beyond. It makes greater sense to apply the concept of the security and justice assemblage to suggest that it is a particular constellation of actors – not one or the other – that creates order in the field and leads to resolution of criminal cases in a place such as Kamara Chiefdom.

As the case of diamond theft analyzed in this chapter moved from a conflict between two villagers to a case involving two figures of authority, it was clear that a stake in the stone came to depend directly upon the paramount chief and Local Unit Commander's ability to assemble and draw on each other's authority in a way where one did not exclude the other. One could not overrule the other in any equivocal sense, neither sought to do so, but they were dependent on one another to make a ruling.

Constituting the core of a security and justice assemblage, these two actors stood in a double-binding relationship of interdependence. The interesting question that the case raises is not who made the final ruling – neither did in isolation – but the fact that they were dependent on each other's articulations of authority to do so. Their combined enactment of the hybrid order was crucial.

SSR as state-building was productive in establishing the outcome of the case, technically, organizationally and in terms of symbolic representation of stateness. This is the case, even as SSR processes failed to transform the police into a force that was able to uphold a monopoly on legitimate physical and symbolic violence and to extend its authority evenly throughout the territory of Sierra Leone.

Indeed, the paramount chief would not be able to engage in boundary-making activities in public discourse between 'inside' and 'outside' the chiefdom today without the re-establishment of the SLP after the war. It was the ability to draw this boundary that allowed for the diamond theft case, or any case for that matter, to be resolved outside the chiefdom and, not incidentally, for financial gain to be pursued.

It is evident that while SSR as a set of processes and practices was initiated and sustained, these effects failed to fundamentally marginalize the paramount chief's central role in the field of justice and security. Failure here does not mean "doing nothing," as Ferguson (2006 [1994]:284) notes, "it means doing something else," a 'something else' that has its own logic – a logic of hybridity.

Within this logic, the police force that emerged did not reflect a justice and security field that could be articulated in languages of stateness. This fact evidently questions the concept of development as a "knowledge/power regime (a discourse) of political or

cultural domination” (Mosse 2005:13). SSR policies may have dominated the articulation of what the UK considered its role to be in Sierra Leone, but how SSR, and police reform in particular, was translated into practice in Peyima and Kamara Chiefdom was above all shaped by a hybrid order. In the diamond theft case just outlined, this order gravitates towards paramount and lesser chiefs, though this does not mean that they act in isolation from other actors of authority, notably the SLP.

9.4 Conclusion

In the context of Peyima and Kamara Chiefdom, there was nothing spectacular about the case of diamond theft: such cases occur regularly. But it became somewhat of a paradigmatic case with respect to diamond theft at the local level in Kamara Chiefdom. One villager stole a stone from another villager. The stone had subsequently disappeared, and different actors claiming a stake in the justice and security field entered the struggle to solve the crime. In the process, authority to act was drawn from sources emanating from recent state-building efforts as well as from longer-term state formation processes.

The stone itself was never found again. Indeed, it was never verified whether the stone existed at all or whether it was a diamond. These facts do not materially affect my argument about how SSR has reproduced a hybrid order; the facts suggest that the stake being fought over does not even need to exist, it need only be a potentiality. What did become evident was that the hybrid order articulated in the attempts to solve the matter could not in any unequivocal sense be found in the articulation of one particular order.

The case can be seen as a prism through which the order of foundational hybridity was articulated – the basis of the chief’s power. It also illustrates the fundamental reductionism that operating with the state vs. non-state dichotomy reflects. Even if they exist in discourse and are articulated, such dichotomies are not particularly appropriate mechanisms to by which to analyze the productive dimension of SSR or the general practices of enforcing order in Kamara Chiefdom.

This case also provides insight into the productivity of SSR through both the visibility of the police in the case and their involvement in resolving it. It also shows how the

translation and appropriation of SSR into the justice and security field reproduces a hybrid order that it may have become integral to, but has not fundamentally altered. As noted elsewhere, in Tombodu, the headquarter town in Kamara Chiefdom, the police explicitly stated how they worked for the paramount chief. The particular order established through foundational hybridity and the symbolic capital emanating from fluency in both languages of stateness and public authority gave the chief the authority to dictate order-making in the justice and security field. Forming part of and reproducing foundational hybridity, other actors articulating various languages of authority, including Partnership Board members and police officers, challenged the Chief's position with the forms of capital available to them. However, rather than subverting the powers of the chief and the order he makes, they shaped its reproduction and sharpened its contours.

10 Conclusion

From the late 1990s, attempts to make peace in Sierra Leone became synonymous with externally-led state-building efforts that focused explicitly on establishing security on behalf of the remnants of the state system (and idea). A civil war was fought against the RUF, the armed forces were overhauled, intelligence organizations and a police force were established by the central government of Sierra Leone with leadership and financial support from the UK. Security was seen by the international policy-makers who were involved as not only a prerequisite for the state to be rebuilt, but as its very foundation. External actors who came to Sierra Leone, as state-builders did not intend to re-establish the patrimonially networked political entity that had characterized Sierra Leone since its independence in 1961. Rather, the objective was to lay the foundation of a centrally-governed state structured according to western universalist principles of statehood.

State-building in Sierra Leone emerged through the 1990s and 2000s as a form of international intervention. SSR, shaped by the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the War on Terror, became one of its central components. Guided by a purist concept of what a centrally-governed political entity should look like, state-building came to reflect a neo-liberal propensity to diagnose, prescribe and cure what were considered to be weak and failed states. This was not a principled rejection of government. It reflected the belief that the failure of government to achieve its objectives should be overcome by inventing new strategies of government that would succeed.

SSR failed according to its own objectives in Sierra Leone. A primary reason for this failure lies in the concept of authority that state-building projects, and that much of the academic literature on the subject supports. This dissertation suggests that applying *hybridity*, to the concept of authority creates a theoretical foundation to state-building and SSR that neither privileges ‘the state’ nor its anti-thesis, ‘the non-state’, and the ability of either to make order. The dissertation demonstrates empirically how this is the case in Sierra Leone, more specifically in Peyima, a small town in Kamara Chiefdom, Kono District. It does so by exploring how actors such as paramount and lesser chiefs, who can not be categorized as strictly ‘state’ or ‘non-state’, have been and continue to be the

primary makers of order in rural areas of the country. In sum, neither war nor an international intervention has fundamentally changed this state of affairs.

Through the lens of state-building, re-building the failed state of Sierra Leone was to be approached by separating state and societal forces. The former were to be isolated and worked upon in a way that would allow them to stand above and at the same time contain and order localities across Sierra Leone. However, the attempt to establish such a centrally-governed state entailed a fundamental disregard of the foundational hybrid order that the Sierra Leone state is the product of and continuously reproduces.

10.1 Foundational hybridity

The dissertation argues that the colonial policy of indirect rule formed the basis of a foundational hybrid order. Indirect rule was the colonial state's attempt to identify and fixate interlocutors between colonial administrators and the population in the hinterland. In Sierra Leone, this approach led to the emergence of semi-autonomous administrative units, chieftaincies, which became and remain a historic focus of struggle for political control in the countryside. Hence, Sierra Leone developed into, and has remained, a multi-centered system of governance expressed through the figures of paramount and lesser chiefs.

Articulated in symbolic languages of stateness such as legislation, including the 1992 Constitution and the 2004 Local Government Act, Sierra Leone's chiefs are integral to the system and idea of the state, both of which are the partial product of chiefly authority. Simultaneously, however, they are important protagonists of what Fanthorpe (2001:372) refers to as "extreme localism," which is constituted by the articulation of authoritative languages around, *inter alia*, autochthon status and secret society membership. Autochthony and secret society membership establish categorical distinctions between 'natives' and 'strangers' of a locality. They are articulated and reproduced by the same rites of passage in the same locales and constitute a defense of particular ways of making order from extra-local challenges, be they from 'the state' (system), other tribes or SSR programs. In other words, they embody the hybrid order.

Membership and activities of the secret society, the Poro, are also central to the concept of extreme localism, as they are also constitutive of order in the justice and security field. In rural Sierra Leone, claims of Poro membership, combined with ancestral association, metamorphose into land tenure decisions and claims to justice, both within and outside the secret society bush. If a person is not initiated into the Poro in the locale where he seeks redress, if he cannot articulate the authority that comes with it, his appeals for justice in land tenure decisions is inevitably weak.

The persistent articulation of languages of stateness in the state-building discourse – in both policy and academia – disregards the fundamental micro-struggles that such claims for justice constitute and the sources of authority that enable them. Thinking hybridly helps us understand how assemblages take shape in the justice and security field. It sharpens our understanding of the multitude of different sources from which authority always already emanates. As a concept, hybridity clarifies that ‘the state’ and ‘society’ are not pure sources of authority; they are mutually constitutive and interdependent – and therefore inseparable.

10.2 Hybrid authority

The dissertation also discusses the theoretical implications of how authority is articulated. It implies a dissolution of dichotomies between categories of state and society and the real and ideal as separate domains. Instead, these categories of thinking are evoked simultaneously; it is this quality of simultaneity that characterizes hybridity.

The first step in conceptualizing hybridity begins with de-stabilizing ahistorical and apolitical conceptions of what the unitary state is. In turn, this supports the rejection of an ideal state form against which other political entities inevitably fail. Disaggregating the state in this manner implies considering the state as a multitude of discrete practices in the everyday life of ordinary people. As such, the state is constituted by a system of tangible institutions, combined with an idea of what it is and ought to be. From this perspective, political manifestations of the state are both illusory and a set of concrete institutions: they are on the one hand distant and impersonal and on the other hand localized and personified.

Simultaneously, however, this preoccupation with de-naturalizing the state may also constitute a somewhat state-centric approach. While de-naturalizing the state is done in an attempt to deconstruct the concept of the unitary state, it is still pre-occupied with exploring its disaggregated nature to a degree that leaves little space for developing further how other types of authority may be conceptualized. Following this line of argument, Hansen and Stepputat (2001:5) emphasize that the modern state is in a “continuous process of construction,” and that this process takes place through “globalized registers of governance and authority,” which they refer to as ‘languages of stateness’.

While Hansen and Stepputat’s approach is useful, I propose that an adjustment is necessary to conceptualize what the hybrid order is. I introduce the additional concept of ‘languages of public authority’ to reflect the variety of languages that individual actors use in order to act authoritatively. This is an analytical departure from notions of authority as inherently bound to ‘the state’ or ‘the stateness’ of particular actors. As such, the concept of hybridity takes into account in equal measure legal documents produced by state institutions, community policing discourse, secret society membership and autochthon status - all of which constitute authority simultaneously.

The hybrid order blends the two languages – stateness and public authority. As components of hybridity, these two languages do not lend themselves to empirical investigation in their pure form, *because they do not exist in a pure form*. They do not constitute separate entities; there is no distinction between state-based and liberal practices on the one hand, and local customs and everyday life on the other. They are articulated simultaneously, which reflects the fact that authority always already emanates from multiple sources, and they are co-constitutive.

Herein lies the fundamental principle of hybridity and the theoretical contribution of the dissertation: The simultaneity of how a multitude of sources of authority are articulated in the justice and security field makes it impossible to isolate ‘the state’ or ‘the stateness’ of an actor, in academia, in policy and in practice. In each case, isolating ‘stateness’ leads to a biased and inaccurate analytical take on the multiple sources of authority that justice and security actors such as paramount and lesser chiefs articulate. Therefore, exploring authority through the concept of hybridity not only has implications for how authority is

conceptualized theoretically. It also indicates what can be expected to follow from the practices of state-building, namely a reproduction of that order. It has been the aim of this dissertation to provide insight into why this has been the case, not only theoretically, but also empirically.

Hybridity is conceptualized as justice and security assemblages that are located within a justice and security field. Thinking in terms of assemblages brings unpredictability and dynamism to the process of making order. It points to the unexpected and sometimes unpredictable ways in which orders unfold. At the same time, 'objective structures' exist independent of the consciousness and will of agents that have a shaping effect on how people, things and discourse form assemblages. Thus, the concept of a field is useful in clarifying the resources that shape the assemblages, i.e., the different languages of authority that may be drawn upon at any one given time, shaping and being shaped by assemblages in their continuous process of construction and de-construction.

10.3 Hybridity reproduced

The rationale of a foundational hybrid order is expressed in the continuous process of integrating different articulations of authority. This dissertation has demonstrated that in the case of Sierra Leone, the hybrid order was reproduced rather than eradicated by the one-sided focus on establishing the western universalist state model in SSR. Internationally-led efforts to re-compose what was seen as a chaotic and anarchic security and justice field in Sierra Leone began with a military intervention to end the civil war. It continued with the arrests of war criminals and SSR programs to create a western universalist state-centric structure to manage justice and security.

These international protagonists of state-building believed that these different elements together would produce a pure justice and security field in which only languages of stateness would be articulated. They believed that over time, the authority of paramount and lesser chiefs in rural areas of the country would automatically be subjected to the state as the sole maker of order in the justice and security field.

However, SSR did not recognize the resilience and productivity of local security and justice actors and institutions that are integral to the foundational hybrid order. Furthermore, SSR failed to recognize the hybrid nature of all actors in the justice and security field and the fact that authority to act within the security and justice field emanates from numerous sources across physical and symbolic space.

This myopic view of state-building was evident symbolically and in practice from the very outset of international attempts to re-compose the justice and security field. To support the government of Sierra Leone in fighting the war against the RUF, the UK supported the establishment of what at the time was referred to as the 'Unholy Alliance'. This loose coalition of the warring factions that included former soldiers, traditional hunters and rebel fighters became the basis of the new army – and the new state – after the war. Thus, the basis of establishing and consolidating security in post-war Sierra Leone was founded upon an assemblage of force elements that drew on numerous sources of authority – it was hybrid.

Parallel to these efforts to contain and overhaul the army, police reform became the centerpiece of SSR from the late 1990s onwards. The intention behind police reform was to establish and consolidate the split between state and society that would situate the former as sitting above and containing localities across the territorially defined state space of Sierra Leone. In the first phase of police reform, begun during open conflict in the late 1990s, efforts were made to eliminate or marginalize paramount and lesser chiefs by establishing and consolidating a role for the SLP, first in Freetown, and in the countryside after the war ended in 2002.

In the second and third phases of police reform, from the mid-2000s onward, the approach to paramount and lesser chiefs was altered. Police reform now sought to incorporate all actors of the justice and security field into one inter-linked state system. Thus, while the reformers had become more sensitive to the central role of paramount and lesser chiefs as makers of order, police reform still operates with the long-term aim of establishing a centrally-governed state entity.

However, if a fundamental break does not occur with the hybrid order that lies at the very base of the Sierra Leone state, the position of chiefs is likely to be corroborated. Simply ignoring locally- embedded sources of authority such as autochthon status and secret society membership will not eliminate the order that they are co-constitutive of and replace it with one acceptable to outside observers. They will only reproduce that order.

The effects of police reform are well illustrated by analyzing the emergence of by establishing policing Partnership Boards, and the role that chiefs have had in translating these assemblages into the localities of Sierra Leone, including Peyima where I carried out my fieldwork. Established to act as liaisons between localities and the Sierra Leone Police, the Boards are the only permanent mark of police presence in Peyima. However, that they have come to represent the reproduction and consolidation of a hybrid order, interlinking events in Peyima with the SLP, and assembling the articulation of both stateness and public authority. In fact, Partnership Boards express the simplest of examples of hybridity: board members in Peyima may refer to the inspector of police as their boss, but their appointment is dependent on good relations with the town chief.

Failure to understand and engage the sources of authority that are not necessarily articulated in languages of stateness, including autochthony and secret society membership, leads to a misrecognition of how the justice and security field is composed. In turn, this amounts to misinterpreting how authority is distributed in Sierra Leone – and Peyima specifically. The hybrid order of Sierra Leone is by extension seen as the failure of the state to become ‘effective’ and ‘legitimate’, and if only its capacity is built to a sufficient degree, the order that other actors make will be subjected to vertical encompassment.

Due to the foundational hybrid order that exists in Sierra Leone, vertical encompassment is not a potential outcome. It cannot be assumed that paramount and lesser chiefs, often presented by international policy-makers as little more than relics of a colonial past, will wither away. By extension, it cannot be assumed that Sierra Leone – and any other internationally-recognized state space – is pre-destined to project the western universalist model of statehood.

We are better served theoretically and in policy-making by striving to understand the foundational hybrid order that structures the justice and security field and how assemblages take form within it. Doing so would have the added benefit of injecting a dose of realism into what can be expected from state-building as SSR.

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12 Abstract in English

Foundational hybridity and its reproduction – security sector reform in Sierra Leone

The thesis argues that security sector reform (SSR) has failed according to its own ambition of establishing a ‘centrally governed state’. A primary reason for this failure is found in the concept of authority that state-building projects and much of the academic work that underpins it.

Since the late 1990s, internationally supported efforts to make and consolidate peace in Sierra Leone have been synonymous with SSR. Support was given by the United Kingdom (UK) in particular to contain and ultimately overhaul the armed forces, which staged two coups in 1992 and 1997. Support was also provided to the central government to institute national security coordination and intelligence organizations, and to reestablish the Sierra Leone Police (SLP). The collapsed, but internationally recognized state was to be rebuilt, and security was seen as not only a prerequisite for this process to begin, but its very foundation.

The first question of the thesis revolves around why the western universalist state concept came to guide SSR in Sierra Leone, and why it was considered of such fundamental importance to stability internationally. The second question revolves around how to conceptualize authority when actors such as paramount and lesser chiefs that may neither be categorized as state nor non-state are the primary makers of order in rural areas of the country.

Speaking of the weakness or failure of a state is a way of describing what it is not, namely a centrally governed set of institutions that is able to make order within the territorial space that defines it. A focus on the state as an analytical concept does not, however, tell us much about how order is then made, and by whom it is made in Sierra Leone.

The thesis rethinks what authority is in a way that does not privilege ‘the state’ as an analytical category, a tendency that has dominated much policy and academic thinking. The thesis’ empirical basis of doing so is data relating to international policy-making processes, interviews among the key actors of Sierra Leone’s SSR process, and

ethnographic fieldwork in Peyima, a small diamond mining town in Kamara Chiefdom, Kono District.

In a view of authority tied to 'the state' lies the conceptualization of a political entity, a bordered power container, which stands above, is detached from, and at the same time encompasses, controls and regulates society. In UK support of Sierra Leone's state-building efforts, the practices of traditional leaders and their productive effects in the justice and security field, and enforcing order, were acknowledged. However, failure to respond adequately to their central role in governing Sierra Leone's countryside came in two ways, both of which are related to concepts of the western universalist state that continue to guide SSR.

The first failure was embedded in misrecognizing the resilience and productivity of local actors and institutions, and their authority to appropriate, interpret, translate and above all shape the elements of what was offered through SSR. The second failure came in not recognizing the hybrid nature of all actors in the justice and security field, based on the fact that they draw authority to act within the field from numerous sources across physical and symbolic space, in local and national domains. Hybridity is integral to state formation in Sierra Leone. It is foundational, and is historically grounded in the colonial era, articulating an infinite mixture of various forms of authority (from state legislation to status of autochthony and secret society membership). Inevitably, this order was reproduced by SSR, even if the aim of the international actors who supported this process of change had been to eradicate it.

13 Resumé på dansk

Fundamental hybriditet og dens reproduktion – sikkerhedssektorreform i Sierra Leone

I denne afhandling argumenteres det for at sikkerhedssektorreform har fejlet ifølge egne ambitioner om at etablere en 'centralt administreret stat'. En af de afgørende grunde hertil skal findes i det begreb om autoritet, der bruges i praksisser omkring stats-opbygning samt i store dele af den akademiske litteratur, der underbygger disse praksisser.

Siden de sene 1990'ere har internationale forsøg på at skabe og konsolidere fred i Sierra Leone været lig statsopbygning gennem sikkerhedssektorreform. Af internationale aktører var det først og fremmest England, der gav støtte til at pacificere hæren, der begik to statskup i henholdsvis 1992 og 1997. Støtte blev også givet til at etablere institutioner der kunne koordinere sikkerhedssektoren nationalt, en efterretningstjeneste og en politistyrke. Staten i Sierra Leone var kollapsede og skulle nu genopbygges. Sikkerhed blev ikke kun set som en forudsætning for denne proces, men som selve dens fundament.

I afhandlingens første problemstilling, undersøges det hvorfor det vestlige universelle statsbegreb kom til at spille så afgørende en rolle i forsøget på at skabe stabilitet i Sierra Leone. Den anden problemstilling drejer sig om hvordan man skal begrebsliggøre autoritet, når aktører som traditionelle ledere, der hverken kan kategoriseres som statslige eller ikke-statslige, spiller en så central rolle i forhold til at skabe orden i Sierra Leones landområder.

Fordi traditionelle ledere ikke kan kategoriseres som hverken stat eller ikke-stat, har denne afhandling til formål at problematisere hvad autoritet er på en måde, der ikke privilegerer 'staten' som en analytisk kategori. Denne tendens har domineret meget af den litteratur der eksempelvis er skrevet om skrøbelige stater. Det empiriske grundlag herfor er data, der relaterer sig til hvordan internationale politik-processer udfolder sig, interviews blandt en række af hovedaktørerne i Sierra Leones sikkerhedssektorreform-proces, samt etnografisk feltarbejde i Peyima, en lille diamantmineby i Kamara, et høvdingedømme i det østlige Sierra Leone.

I det begreb om autoritet der underbygger statsopbygning, ligger der en antagelse om en politisk enhed, 'en stat,' der står over og er løserevet fra, men samtidig omslutter, kontrollerer og regulerer 'et samfund.' I engelsk støtte til Sierra Leones statsopbygning lå en anerkendelse af traditionelle lederes helt centrale rolle i at skabe lokaliseret orden. Forsøg på at involvere traditionelle ledere i statsopbygning slog imidlertid fejl af to grunde.

Statsopbygning havde for det første ikke en tilstrækkelig forståelse for lokale aktører og institutioners rolle i forhold til at tilegne sig, fortolke og forme sikkerhedssektorreform. For det andet var der en utilstrækkelig forståelse af den hybriditet, der kendetegner alle aktører der har en ordensskabende funktion i et sted som Peyima, baseret på det forhold at de trækker på former for autoritet i både lokale og nationale domæner. Hybriditet er en integreret del af Sierra Leones statsdannelsesproces. Den er 'fundamental', opstod historisk set i kolonitiden og blander en række forskellige autoritetsformer (statslig lovgivning, autoktoni, medlemskab i 'hemmelige broderskaber'). Afhandlingen viser, hvorledes det var uundgåeligt at den hybride orden blev reproduceret gennem sikkerhedssektorreform, selvom det internationale mål var at skabe en stat, der stod både over og omslutter samfundet.



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