Insurgency is the New 'State'

An Assessment of Rebel-Based Governments in Africa and the State-Centered Perspective on International Politics

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Abstract

Numerous post-conflict states in contemporary Africa are run by individuals who derive their origins from rebellion. Some take over or even improve existing state structures when seizing power, whereas others contribute to the fragmentation of the state. By comparing four insurgent movements that have managed to wrest state power; the NRA, the EPLF, the NPFL, and the USC, this study finds that societies with a history of statehood seem to foster state-consolidating groupings whereas state-subverting dittos arise in societies with a more personalized system of rule. While this is not to say that certain countries are 'doomed to anarchy', it points to the importance of political culture and highlights the difficulty to impose centralized institutions on societies where the appropriate prerequisites do not exist.

The above findings are fused with 'failed states' theories and it is argued that the contemporary response to state failure–state-building–might not be suitable in all countries across the globe. The prevailing state-centered perspective on politics has to be abandoned; instead of focusing solely on 'state', more attention ought to be given to 'insurgency' in order to assess the possibility to establish alternative polities more closely based in the structures and values of indigenous societies.

Keywords: Africa, failed states, insurgency, political culture, state-building

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations

ADFL	Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire
EFL	Eritrean Liberation Front
EPFL	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
EPRDF	Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front
ERA	Eritrean Relief Association
FAN	Forces Armés du Nord
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NRA	National Resistance Army
Renamo	Mozambican National Resistance
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
UNITA	National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola
USC	United Somali Congress

1 Introduction

After more than 20 years of civil war in Sudan, a comprehensive peace agreement between the government in Khartoum and the main rebel group SPLA, was signed on January 9, 2005. The southern part of Sudan was granted self-determination and a power-sharing administration consisting of members from the former government of Sudan, as well as SPLA representatives, was set up in Khartoum in July 2005. While the case of Sudan might protrude due to the prolongation of the conflict, the phenomenon of former rebels governing the post-conflict state is in no way exceptional on the African continent. Given the fact that the future of many African states lies in the hands of individuals who derive their origins from guerrilla movements, the importance of 'insurgency' as a topic of investigation seems evident. Nevertheless, movements that have challenged and brought down the post-colonial state have, until only recently, received far less attention than the states and regimes that have persisted. This thesis thus seeks to contribute to this new and still relatively unexplored field of research.

1.1 Purpose of Study

Indeed, insurgent movements have wrested state power from post-colonial regimes in several countries across the African continent. Some of these groupings, such as e.g. the NRA in Uganda, the EPRDF in Ethiopia, and the EPLF in Eritrea, have been able to take over and operate existing state structures, or to create new states. Others, such as e.g. the NPLF in Liberia, the RUF in Sierra Leone, and the USC in Somalia, have quite contrary contributed to the fragmentation of the state themselves (Clapham 1998: 8). The main purpose of this study is to explore and explain differences between *state-consolidating* and *state-subverting* insurgent movement.

The fact that, as previously stated, numerous African countries are run by people who own their newly acquired power to rebellion makes a study on insurgent groups relevant; it will give us a deeper understanding of politics in contemporary Africa and consequently enhance our ability to fully grasp the construction of peace and stability in many war torn African states. However, there is yet another dimension to such an investigation. Since the late 1980s, description of many Third World states, particularly African, as 'weak', 'quasi', 'failed' or 'collapsed' has become commonplace within the academic literature. Originally understood as an internal issue, one that could be isolated and kept distant, state failure is now commonly assumed to constitute a threat to international peace and security through its association to widespread violence,

international criminal organizations, local militias and terrorists (Rotberg 2002, Yannis 2002: 819). Consequently, appreciating its nature and responding to its dynamics has become one of the most urgent policy questions of our time. The traditional failed states literature is based on the prevailing state-centered perspective on politics and alternative forms of governance have been denounced as unfortunate consequences of state failure. Thus, while there is an extensive literature dealing with the *phenomenon* of failed states as such, there are far less analyses of the *movements* that are central to such processes. Hence, by attracting attention to differences between state-consolidating and state-subverting rebel groups, this thesis strives to add a different perspective to the ongoing debate on state failure.

The overarching question this study seeks to answer is thus: *What factors determine the ability and willingness of insurgents to consolidate statehood?* That is, *why do some movements uphold or even advance the post-colonial state, whereas others have an injurious effect on the international state system?* However, by relating the analysis of state-consolidating and state-subverting insurgent movements to the discussion on failed or failing states, it further aims to shed a light on the following perplexity: *How should the international community respond to the issue of state failure?*

1.2   Theories

As noted in the previous section, this paper draws on, and seeks to add to, the academic debate on state failure. Two main interpretations of the phenomenon has been identified, here referred to as the 'traditional' and the 'historical' school of thought (see chapter 2.2.). Most scholars concerned with state failure seek to understand and explain it in order to consider how to strengthen the states poised on the brink of collapse, as well as how to restore the functionality of those who have already failed. The response to state failure is further dependent on the conception of the underlying causes thereto. While both 'traditional' and 'historical' scholars emphasize the period of decolonialization when seeking explanations as to why certain states fail, they disagree in their takings on what went wrong in this process. Consequently, they reach different conclusions regarding how the international community ought to deal with the phenomenon. It is against this ongoing debate that the empirical findings in this study will be contrasted.

1.3   Limitations of Study

The study of insurgency is a vast spanning field. It is impossible to include all relevant areas of the topic within the scope of this study and some limitations

must therefore be brought to light. As previously stated, this thesis seeks to provide explanations to differences in outcome between movements, and its main focus is consequently not the detailing of their respective traits of character *per se*. A number of scholars have, however, devoted considerable energy to this matter; particularly to the issue of state-subverting groupings (see e.g. Hills 1997, Reno 1998, Jackson 2003, Jackson forthcoming). While the characteristics of the different movements by necessity will be highlighted in the empirical chapter, it will be done in a more generalizing manner and is not in any way comparable to the in-debt analyses presented by these authors.

Further, many scholars concerned with insurgency aim to explain why it occurs (see e.g. Collier and Hoeffler 2000, and for a somewhat different approach Tull and Mehler 2005). However, for the purpose of this study, the underlying causes to the phenomenon are not imperative and will consequently not be analyzed in any debt.

In the context of rising of insurgencies, one should further note that the movements with which this thesis is concerned are solely those who have succeeded in wresting state power. Numerous insurgent movements across the African continent challenge the power of the state, but fail to actually achieve it. For example, the NRA under the leadership of Museveni fought the government in Uganda for several years and finally seized power in 1986, thereby qualifying for this investigation. However, since the coming into power of Museveni, several new rebel groups have emerged in northern Uganda; Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) being the most prominent. While the LRA has waged war against the Museveni government till this day, it has failed to actually extort the power of the state (cf. Behrend 1998). Though certainly raising interesting questions regarding the features necessary for insurgency to be 'successful', movements such as the LRA are beyond the scope of this study.

Finally, this paper will not take account of movements that have fought a colonial power or a white minority rule, such as for example the National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (UNITA) and the Mozambican National Resistance (Renamo). While these movements definitely share similarities with the groupings with which this paper is concerned, they raise rather different issues and are for that reason excluded from the analysis.

1.4   Method and Material

1.4.1   Comparative Method

Given the fact that relatively little research has yet been conducted on African insurgencies, this study does not take off from an existing theory but is based on empirical observations. By comparing four African countries that have emerged from post-colonial civil wars, and in which insurgent movements have been responsible for the establishment of a new system of governance, the aim is to trace down some factors that appear to be of importance when differentiating

between state-consolidating and state-subverting rebellions. Esaiasson et al (2004: 123f) point out that there is a trade-off between precision and general applicability in comparative politics. However, small n comparison, the method consequently employed in this study, offers possibilities for a more solid analysis than quantitative, statistical methods and at the same time increases the opportunities for generalizations beyond those proffered by single case studies (Landman 2000: 23).

The investigation takes on a combination of Mill's 'Method of Difference' and his 'Method of Agreement'. The method of difference requires the presence of at least two cases in which there is a clear variation in outcome (dependent variable). It further states that the cases ought to be alike in all relevant ways that might be meaningful to the results (independent variables), but with a few exceptions. The differences in the independent variables thus supposedly explain the difference in the dependent variable. Contrariwise, the method of agreement requires two or more cases where the same instance occurs but where there are few other similarities. The similarities in the independent variables that indeed exist explain the similar outcome according to this approach (Denk 2002: 56ff, Fox 2000: 29). Mill's methods are often criticized for the potential problem of spurious independent variables (see e.g. Lieberson 1992). However, by combining the two approaches; comparing two state-consolidating and two state-subverting movements to each other in line with the method of agreement, and further comparing the two state-consolidating insurgent groupings to their state-subverting counterparts in conformity with the method of difference, this study somewhat tests its own hypotheses, thereby hoping to enhance the reliability in the results. Landman (2000: 47) suggests in this context that "[o]nly by comparing across the presence and absence of outcomes can the importance of explanatory variables be determined".

Having said that a combination of Mill's two methods enhances the reliability in the results, it should be emphasized that strong inductive theories are constructed through a continuous journey between the empirical and the theoretical (Esaiasson et al 2004: 123). It is therefore worth reiterating that the purpose of this thesis solely is to present some possible explanations, open to further testing, as to why certain insurgent movements maintain the international state system whereas others have an injurious effect on the same.

1.4.2 Case Selection

The cases chosen for the comparison have, to the extent possible, been selected in line with Mill's two methods, in order to indeed increase the ability to control for factors that are similar and different, respectively, across the investigation objects of the study (cf. Landman 2000: 40f). The empirical analysis will be based on the NRA in Uganda, the EPLF in Eritrea, the NPFL in Liberia, and the USC in Somalia. These movements all arose as an expression of dissatisfaction with the post-colonial state, and they all managed to ultimately wrest state power. The NRA resorted to insurgent warfare in early 1981 and installed a new government

in Uganda five years later (Ngoga 1998: 91ff). The EPLF was created in the early 1970s from two dissident factions of a rival movement, and succeeded in securing *de facto* independence for Eritrea in 1991 (Pool 1998: 19ff). The NPFL began an uprising against the government in late 1989, President Doe was assassinated in 1990 and Taylor, leader of the NPFL, was finally elected president of Liberia in 1997 (Ellis 1998: 155ff). Finally, members from the Hawiye clan set up the USC in the late 1980s and assumed state power in early 1991, after having overthrown Siad Barre in close cooperation with two rivaling movements (Compagnon 1998).

However, these movements differ in the dependent variable. The NRA and the EPLF are used as examples of state-consolidating insurgent movements; both organizations perpetuated the international state system. They nevertheless varied significantly in their ways of so doing and consequently differed from each other in many respects. The NRA promoted the return of the state to the center of social and political organization in Uganda. Ngoga (1998: 106) argues that the NRA recreated "a national political community in what had become, under Obote and Amin, a thoroughly privatized state". The EPLF, on the other hand, did not contribute to the restructuring of the Ethiopian state, of which it argued it had never been a part until the UN made them so in 1952, but instead established an entirely new polity (Ottaway 1999: 17).

Contrariwise, the NPFL and the USC are used to exemplify state-subverting rebel groups; both movements had an injurious effect on the existing state structures in the countries where they operated. As will be discussed further in the following, many scholars suggest that protracted conflict, which characterized the situation in both countries, is a rational economic activity. The NPFL and the USC were thus selected for the analysis partly since Liberia's and Somalia's economic resource bases are rather different; whereas Liberia is richly endowed with mineral resources and forests, Somalia's economy is dependent on the export of two primary products–livestock and bananas (Bongartz 1991, Gershoni 1997).

1.4.3 Material

The analysis is based on conventional, secondary academic sources. There are, however, a couple of exceptionalities regarding research focused on insurgent movements worth mentioning. The first has already been brought to light and concerns the magnitude of sources available. As noted in the introductory part of this chapter, rebel groups have not until quite recently gained the interest of conflict researchers. While the ideological power of state-centered concepts is part of the reason thereto, physical insecurity and problems of accessibility have further presented obvious challenges to such investigations. Additionally, Hagmann (2005: 527) points out in the case of Somalia, but the same reasoning ought to be applicable to most war torn societies, that the war prevented, or delayed, "the emergence of a young generation of Somali scholars who could have produced alternative interpretations of the Somali state and nation". However, despite these intricacies, the newly aroused interest in non-state actors in conflict has resulted in material sufficient enough to carry through the ensuing

comparison. Further, while the organizational structure of the movements is part of the focus of this study, it also analyzes the structural features of the environments in which these movements functioned, and accounts thereof are plentiful.

The second regards the trustworthiness of the material available. Great secrecy often surrounds insurgent movements. In analyzing the EPLF, Pool (2001: 60) asserts that insights in the organization can be gained "from assorted eye-witness reports, from […] rare internal document, and from gossip and anecdote from fighters". Further, many individuals providing information refuse to be named as sources. Consequently, Pool argues that "some analysis, and the evidential sources for it, has to be taken on trust" (ibid. 61). In conducting the literature study that have resulted in the paper in hand, I have thus had trust.

1.5   Structure of Paper

The remainder of this paper is divided into three parts. The first part (chapter 2), provides a theoretical framework for the ensuing analysis of state-consolidating and state-subverting insurgent movements. Chapter 2.1. defines and discusses fundamental concepts; 'insurgency', as well as 'state consolidation' and 'state subversion'. Chapter 2.2. presents an overview of the respective arguments brought forward by traditional and historical state failure theorists. Chapter 2.3, finally, outlines some variables, introduced by pioneering scholars, possibly differing between state-consolidating and state-subverting movements, through which explanations to the varying outcomes might be found.

The second part (chapter 3) constitutes the empirical analysis. Based on a comparison of the NRA, the EPLF, the NPFL, and the USC, it seeks to assess the validity of each of the previous mentioned variables in differentiating between movements. Variations between state-consolidating and state-subverting creations are thereby *explored*, in line with the overarching purpose of this study.

The third part (chapter 4) attempts to provide answers to the questions posed in chapter 1.1. Chapter 4.1. contains a further analysis of the empirical findings, and consequently seeks to *explain* established differences between movements. By way of conclusion, chapter 4.2. fuses the empirical findings with failed states theories; reflects over the contemporary response to state failure and speculates about alternative approaches.

2 Theoretical Framework

The overall objective of this chapter is to outline a framework for the analysis of state-consolidating and state-subverting insurgencies. The first part defines and discusses the concepts central to the study, with a view to elucidate the underpinnings of the upcoming analysis. The second part presents an assessment of theories on state failure, which is vital since the empirical findings will be fused with this debate in the concluding chapter. The third part finally outlines some of the possible explanatory variables involved when differentiating between state-consolidating and state-subverting movements, and attempts to clarify the logic behind them.

2.1 Definitions

2.1.1 Insurgency

Various terms, such as e.g. 'guerrilla', 'militia', 'warlord', 'rebel' and 'insurgent', are used in the literature when alluding to the movements, or participants thereof, which are the focus of this study. However, these expressions are not entirely interchangeable and the following section seeks to clarify their respective signification. The term 'guerrilla' is according to Clapham (1998: 1) the most commonly used when referring to armed movements that challenges the power of the state. This denotation alludes to their warfare techniques; they operate with small, mobile, and flexible combat groups and they base their tactics on intelligence, ambush, deception, sabotage and espionage. Guerrillas further have a political goal with their struggle; guerrilla warfare is traditionally understood as the "recourse of indigenous groups in opposition to occupation or oppression" (Beckett 1999: xi). Indeed, many of the movements with which this thesis is concerned originated in classic guerrilla manner as small armed bands in rural areas striving for some kind of liberation.

'Militia' is an expression generally used to describe movements that operate within states with ineffectual central governments. While they vary extensively in terms of how they organize, operate and conduct themselves, members are not infrequently forced to join and the rationale for membership is regularly access to money, resources and security rather than necessarily political conviction (Shultz 2004: 17). The leaders of a militia are often referred to as 'warlords'. Hills describes warlords as "local strongmen able to control an area and exploit its resources and people while […] keeping a weak authority at bay". Their motives range from "the advancement of clan, tribe, or ethnic goals to political ambition,

localized power, and personal wealth" (Hills 1997: 40). The concept 'warlord' (and militia alike) has acquired more negative associations than the others, and is according to Jackson (2003: 131) often "synonymous with anarchy, violence and a breakdown of civilized values".

While all followers of the movements under investigation in this paper cannot necessarily be described as 'guerrillas' or 'militias'', the term 'insurgents' provides a more general definition. Insurgency is, according to Shultz, a "protracted political and military set of activities with the goal of partially or completely gaining control over the territory of a country". It involves the use of irregular military forces, ranging from guerrilla operations to terrorism, as well as illegal political organization (Shultz 2004: 11). Finally, 'rebels' is a broad term referring to participants of movements who, by force, oppose an established government or a ruling authority and is in this context regularly used as a synonym to 'insurgents' (cf. Clapham 1998, Reno 1998).

In this paper, the terms 'insurgents' and 'rebels' will be used for the most part, due to their more general applicability. In attempting to explore and explain differences between state-consolidating and state-subverting movements, the movements in question are thus those who fit into these more inclusive descriptions. Nevertheless, the other expressions will occasionally be employed when appropriate according to above 'definitions'.

2.1.2 State Consolidation and State Subversion

Two other concepts in need of clarification are 'state consolidation' and 'state subversion'. This section presents a brief overview of the universalization of the state format through the process of decolonialization, thereby illuminating the logic behind the 'failed states' argument. The expressions 'state consolidation' and 'state subversion' draw on the prevailing state-centered perspective on politics and are consequently conceptualized in this context.

The classical European state, which is the model for all modern states, is defined by Weber as a territorial entity ruled by an authority that has monopoly over the legitimate means of violence. That entity is further recognized both by members of the polity, and the larger international community; it possesses domestic as well as international legitimacy (Gros 1996: 456). In this context, Jackson and Rosberg differentiate between 'juridical' and 'empirical' statehood. Juridical statehood is comparable to international legitimacy; the polity is entitled to self-government and enjoys the right of non-intervention. Empirical statehood is related to domestic legitimacy and implies "an independent political structure of sufficient authority to govern a defined territory and its population" (Jackson and Rosberg 1986: 1).

Thus, while juridical statehood is a right, empirical statehood is an obligation. During the development of the modern state system, sovereignty (juridical statehood) was based and dependent on provable capability (empirical statehood). Jackson and Rosberg (1986: 3) argue that in the traditional European state, "statehood is determined by territorial power, sovereignty is a manifestation of

that power, and international recognition is an effect and not the foundation of statehood". However, during the process of decolonialization, when the number of states expanded from about 50 to nearly 200, the situation was the complete opposite. The colonial territories were *given* sovereignty, without having to prove capable of governing themselves as independent states. The General Assembly Resolution from 1960, *The Declaration of the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and People*, proclaims that the purpose was to bring a "speedy and unconditional" end to colonialism "in all its forms and manifestations". In this context, the "[i]nadequacy of political, economic, social, or educational preparedness should never serve as a pretext for delaying independence" (UN Document A/4684, 1960). Further, since empirical statehood was not a prerequisite for juridical statehood during decolonialization, and the states consequently did not have to prove capable of self-government, the right of self-determination was imposed on entities that did not constitute 'nations' in the conventional definition of the term. Sovereignty was given to the territorially defined colonial people; "the 'self' in self-determination referred to all the peoples within the *traditional territorial boundaries* of the colony" (Holsti 1996: 75, emphasis added).

In short, the former colonies were, upon independence, granted juridical statehood and they accordingly gained *international* legitimacy from the United Nations. However, the 'imposition of statehood' during the process of decolonialization resulted in certain hardship for these newly established polities. Several post-colonial states failed to develop empirical statehood; i.e. to put an extensive indigenous structure of national authority in place. Following this, they failed to achieve *domestic* legitimacy, which, according to the above definition, is another necessary condition for successful statehood in the Weberian model (Shultz 2004: 5).[1]

The incapability of certain states to perform the functions required from them in order to possess domestic legitimacy is the basis for the 'failed states' argument. This argument has been developed in a vast body of literature since the late 1980s, when conditions on the international arena changed and the phenomenon was brought to light. Failure to carry out essential state obligations has resulted in the labeling of these entities as 'weak' (Migdal 1988), 'quasi' (Jackson 1990), 'failed' (Helman and Ratner 1992-3, Gros 1996), or even 'collapsed' (Zartman 1995).

Drawing on the above discussion, the concept 'state consolidation', as used in this study, could consequently be associated with non-failed or successful statehood; it indicates that states are capable of performing the duties required to achieve international as well as domestic legitimacy. State-consolidating insurgent movements thus *maintain the modern state system*, whether it is by preserving or even improving existing state structures when they seize power, or, as in the case

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[1] A note on the cases selected for this study is here in order, since Liberia was never colonized by a European power. The Liberian population nevertheless had rights assigned to them by "a group of people of foreign origin who […] allotted to themselves a superior status" (Ellis 1999: 181). Thus, like the other countries with which this thesis is concerned, Liberia's modern statehood is juridical in origin, and the Liberian state consequently faces challenges similar to those confronting several other former colonies on the African continent.

of Eritrea, by creating new states.[2] 'State subversion' could in turn be compared to weak or even collapsed statehood; it implies that states fail to deliver on core responsibilities and therefore are deprived of the ensuing legitimacy. Hence, state-subverting insurgencies *have an injurious effect on the international system* as we have known it for the last century.

2.2 Theoretical Perspectives–the Traditional vs. the Historical Approach to 'State Failure'

As mentioned in the introductory part of this paper, analyzing insurgent movements will not only enhance our understanding of politics in contemporary Africa, but will add a different perspective to the discussion on state failure. It was previously stated that two different schools of thought are discernable within the failed states literature and they will eventually be evaluated against the empirical findings. Their respective arguments are therefore briefly accounted for below.

2.2.1 Comprehension of the Phenomenon of State Failure

The 'failed states' argument described above was developed by a group of scholars henceforth referred to as 'traditional'. It was previously noted that the logic behind the argument is the inability of certain post-colonial entities to perform core state duties; i.e. to achieve empirical statehood. Thus, while no conformist definition of the phenomenon really exists, the traditional scholars seemingly all share a similar understanding of the state on which their analyses are based. In other words, each of the descriptions of a 'failed state' mentioned in chapter 2.1.2, rests on a predetermined notion of what constitutes a non-failed, strong or successful state; i.e. what the failed state is failing to be. Hill (2005: 148) notes that, according to this school of thought, "the Western states represent the normative, universal standard of success and it is the inability of certain African states to replicate the political, economic, social and cultural conditions within Western states that has […] resulted in their failure". Indeed, the labeling of many Third World states, and particularly African, as 'weak', 'quasi', 'failed', or 'collapsed' is perfectly logical when the Weberian state is considered the ideal form of governance. The traditional scholars thus presuppose the universal applicability of the Western state format.

Drawing on the reasoning in chapter 2.1.2, one can further conclude that the imposition of statehood in large parts of Africa during decolonialization helps explain the phenomenon of state failure on the continent. Following from their

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[2] Some scholars argue that the Eritrean victory represents a fragmentation of the global order since it disrupts the international state system as it was created during the process of decolonialization (see e.g. Yohannis 1993). However, to maintain the 'modern state system' does in this study not imply to uphold the '*post-colonial* state system', but to preserve an international order where the state is considered the only legitimate form of governance.

undoubted notion of the 'superiority' of the Weberian state, traditional scholars argue that the mistake made during decolonialization was that sovereignty was granted to entities that either did not make up nations, or were not yet prepared for self-government (cf. Jackson above, Zartman 1995, Rotberg 2004). While the traditional school of thought appreciates that state failure reflects somewhat unfortunate impositions of statehood, it consequently does not question the model as such.

'Failed states' is a generally accepted concept, indicating the penetrative power of the traditional scholars' interpretation of the phenomenon. However, more recent analysts, referred to as 'historical' in the following, have begun to question the traditional conception (e.g. Clapham 2002, Herbst 2000, Bilgin and Morton 2002, Reno 2000, Hill 2005, Jackson 2003, Jackson forthcoming). They claim that the notion of the 'superiority' of the Weberian state, which the traditional scholars base their argument on, is an expression of ethnocentrism that is not backed up by history. Up until the end of the 19th century, the globe was divided between areas that were governed by states, and areas that were not, and Clapham argues that many of the favourable preconditions for state formation were, and are, lacking in the areas where several states today are at the brink of collapse. States are expensive to maintain and many African countries lack the dense and wealthy population that such an organization requires (Clapham 2002: 777). In conformity therewith, Herbst (2000: 11) states that "the fundamental problem facing state-builders in Africa [...] has been to project authority over inhospitable territories that contain relatively low densities of people". Besides, state-building, according to Clapham, comes at a social cost; it is dependent on a population that is prepared to be regulated. Many African people lack historical experiences of large-scale organization; mechanisms such as kinship and spiritual beliefs have instead been crucial for the provision of security and social control in large parts of the continent (Clapham 2002: 779).

Just as the description of many Third World states as 'failed' is the logical conclusion for scholars who believe in the universal applicability of the Weberian state, a different description of the polities in question follows when that universality is rejected. If the Weberian state is not necessarily the optimal type of governance, deviations from that model are not automatically 'failures'. Bilgin and Morton (2002: 75) suggest that "rather than focusing on 'failed states', increased attention should be given to the 'failed universalization' of the 'imported state' within the post-colonial world". Following this, historical scholars argue that state failure does not emanate from artificial borders or prematurely given self-determination creating polities that were unprepared to assume state responsibilities, but from the undoubted notion of the superiority of the Weberian state. The mistake made during decolonialization was consequently not to impose juridical statehood on entities incapable of self-government, but to universalize the Western state format. The establishment of Weberian states, while successful in certain areas, does not work everywhere (cf. Herbst 2000, Clapham 2002, Bilgin and Morton 2002).

2.2.2 Recommendations for State Failure Prevention and Reversal

The suggested solution to state failure is naturally dependent on the apprehension of the phenomenon, as well as the conception of the underlying causes thereto. Given the leading idea of the superiority of the Weberian state format among traditional scholars, their ensuing solution to state failure is state-building. Zartman (1995: 267) states that the undoubted point of departure for the management of state failure is that "the state needs to be restored and its sovereignty needs to be reinstated". This position has been even further cemented since state failure, as mentioned in the introductory part of this paper, is not only thought of as endangering the lives and livelihood of the citizens of the state, but as destabilizing world order. Rotberg (2002) asserts that national governments have become "the building blocks of order" and it is therefore in everybody's interest to strengthen or even rebuild these entities to "limit the cancerous spread of anarchy beyond their borders and throughout the world". Most traditional failed states analysts are not only in agreement over the necessity of the restoration of state structures, but they further portray Western governments and international organizations as the forces best suited to perform such a task. Zartman (1995: 269) notes the "need of external assistance" in the process of reconstruction and Rotberg (2002) even suggests "full control" over the practice by a regional or international organization. Elaborating on that idea, and taking it to its extreme, Helman and Ratner (1992-3) argue that Western aid has met with scant success in failing states, and suggest a more systematic and intrusive approach in the shape of a conservatorship where the state delegates certain governmental functions to the United Nations.

The view of state failure as principally resulting from an unfeasible imposition of statehood is in turn reinforced by the solutions proffered by historical scholars. Instead of rebuilding prevailing state structures to maintain the contemporary global order, failing states should be left to fail according to this school of thought. Herbst (2004) argues that the nation-state has turned out inappropriate as political organization in various regions of the globe, and there is no point in resurrecting what previously has not worked. Upon questioning the universality of the state by emphasizing the specific prerequisites to its 'success' rather than extolling the formula as such, historical scholars call attention to alternative forms of governance. They argue that entities that are not granted the status of states may still display attributes that have usually been associated with sovereign statehood. Further, movements such as those with which this thesis is concerned often "mirrors pre-colonial patterns of proto-states and African politics" (Jackson forthcoming). Warlordism, for example, is not unknown to African political culture; rather, it has been a significant part of the historical political experience on the continent. Instead of being based on territories, the basis of African pre-colonial polities consisted of resources and particularly people; local strongmen provided security in exchange for loyalty by their followers (Jackson forthcoming). Herbst (2004: 311) thus argues that the overarching goal when dealing with state failure should be to "increase the congruence between the way that power is actually exercised and the design of the units". Consequently,

building on the insight that so called warlords, however unacceptable on conventional terms, are the real power in many areas, historical analysts argue that the main challenge facing the international community at the beginning of the 21st century is not how to rebuild failing state structures, but how to secure a working coexistence between areas of statehood and areas of less settled forms of governance (Clapham 2004: 78ff).

The prevailing approach to state failure is clearly based on the traditional school of thought. Foreign governments and international organizations alike strive to reconstruct failing states within their old borders across the globe. Failed states are expected to rise again, and as replicas of the Western model (Ottaway 2002: 1001f). While this study, by utilizing concepts such as 'state consolidation' and 'state subversion', accommodates to the traditional view of the state as the primary legitimate entity on the international arena, there is reason to return to this discussion further on.

2.3 State-Consolidating and State-Subverting Insurgencies–Explanatory Variables

Theory-building investigations based solely on one or a few cases run the risk of being data-fitted and as such not applicable for any general conclusions. However, basing the investigation on some kind of preliminary idea of where to look for explanations implies that such pitfalls are evaded and consequently enhances the reliability in the results (Esaiasson et al 2004: 123f). Clapham (1998: 8ff) provides such a 'preliminary idea' in arguing that variations between insurgencies can be explored through three broad categories of explanatory variables; the *internal structure of the movement*; its *relationship with its host society*; and *its relationship with the international system*. This section outlines the factors in each of the three categories and briefly explains the logic behind them, in order to give the reader an opportunity to form an opinion on their reasonableness.

In substantiating the importance of the internal structure of the movement, Clapham asserts that a number of well organized movements have proved successful to take over and operate existing state structures, whereas less organized dittos in some cases have contributed to state failure. Movements characterized by organizational effectiveness will according to this logic make for state consolidation. Critical variables for 'organizational effectiveness' are in turn *leadership, political awareness and organization*, and *military structure*. In reference to leadership, it is argued that an educated leader is a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for a solid organization, and the organization is further not to be based solely on the leadership of a single individual if state consolidation is to be obtained. Concerning political awareness and organization it is emphasized that the movement ought to be bound together by common principles and strive towards a common goal, and to be organized in such a way as to facilitate the achievement of its aspirations. Following this, it is important to give

prominence to issues such as ideology, institutional order, and political education. Finally, in regards to the military structure, it is suggested that well organized movements show a relatively high level of discipline by its forces. Not only political education, but military training and coordination is thus of importance for the making of a state-consolidating insurgency.

The national setting might possibly also influence the outcome of insurgency, and the second major category through which variations between movements may be investigated consequently concerns the movement's relationship with its host society. This category includes factors ranging from *political culture*, to the effect of the movement on '*national coherence*', and its *relationship with the population*. Political culture has been a growing and recognized concept for several decades (for theorizing see e.g. Almond and Verba 1965, Pye and Verba 1965, Ingelhart 1988, Eckstein 1988, Diamond 1994). The difficulty to operationalize cultural conditions makes ascribing a political culture a delicate matter. Clapham nevertheless argues that since most insurgent movements are formed in the field, they are not immune to local structures and values; the constitution of the society influences the kind of creation that arises since insurgent movements have to fit themselves into their social settings. Consequently, the political culture cannot be disregarded when analyzing insurgencies, and societies with traditions of statehood are naturally considered to make for state consolidation. Further, as regards national coherence, it is argued that movements that are dependent on mobilizing local-level support often have to articulate concepts of identity that bind together its supporters. Concepts uniting the entire population naturally favor existing state structures whereas concepts enhancing divisions within the society have an injurious effect on the state. Finally, concerning the related issue of the movement's relationship with the civilians, it is suggested that having the support of the broader population facilitates the managing of the state after the ousting of the incumbent regime, and consequently improve the prospects for state consolidation.

Not only the national, but also the international, context might affect insurgency. Factors with some explanatory weight in this category include access to, and form of, *external support* of the movement, as well as *international trade and humanitarian assistance*. Regarding external support it is argued that insurgent movements naturally need financial resources to sustain their struggles, and the most concrete way external powers can affect insurgency is thus by drawing up conditions for their assistance. However, the international community can further affect the war, and consequently influence the struggle by for example rendering support to incumbent regimes, or getting involved in the conflict. The general international perception of rebellion is therefore of importance. Insurgent movements can additionally derive their much needed financial resources from international trade and humanitarian assistance. The economic aspects of war have been given a lot of attention in the academic literature since the 1990s. The 'political economy of war' theory suggests that conflict is a rational economic activity since "violent appropriation of resources, the control of production and trade, 'taxation', as well as the supply of security services all represent various sources of finance for actors of violence" (Bakonyi and Stuvoy 2005: 360, for

further theorizing see e.g. Collier and Hoeffler 2000, Berdal and Malone 2000, Reno 1998, Keen 1998). Such activities do not only offer funding for various armed groups, but add to personal enrichment and consequently constitute an incentive for the prolongation of conflict. Following this, large supplies of natural resources are considered to be more of a curse than a blessing for many Third World countries (see e.g. Auty 2001). Hence, access to both trade revenues and famine relief can lengthen the conflict and in consequence decrease the possibilities for state consolidation. In this context, Reno further asserts that just as external support of the movement is dependent on the prevailing international climate, so is access to trade revenues and humanitarian assistance. He argues that "[t]he globalization of new economic partners and opportunities [following the end of the Cold War] appears to be increasing the attractiveness to rulers of a reliance on commercial exploitation as a quick way to solve problems of political authority" (Reno 1998: 219).

By comparing the NRA, the EPLF, the NPFL, and the USC, the next chapter will seek to assess the validity of each of the variables listed above in differentiating between state-consolidating and state-subverting movements.

3 Empirical Analysis

This chapter details the features of the NRA, the EPLF, the NPFL, and the USC, as well as of the situations in which they functioned. In line with the explanatory variables outlined in the previous chapter, it is divided into three parts. The first part scrutinizes the internal structures of the different movements. The second part examines the insurgent movements' relationship with their host societies, and the third part finally explores the international politics of the different groupings. The following comparison thus seeks to delve into, and determine the accuracy of, some of the factors that pioneering scholars point to as significant when differentiating between state-consolidating and state-subverting insurgent groups.

3.1 Internal Structure of the Movement

3.1.1 Leadership

It was previously argued that an educated leader is a necessary condition for organizational effectiveness and nothing in this investigation contradicts that claim. All of the movements with which this thesis is concerned were run by an 'educated' group of people. Museveni, leader of the NRA, Taylor, leader of the NPFL, and Aideed, one of the top individuals in the USC, had all studied abroad and had held governmental offices in the previous regimes in their respective countries. Afework and Nur, two key individuals in the leadership of the EPLF, had been trained in China and had experiences from a preceding secessionist movement (Ngoga 1998: 92, Klay Kieh 2004: 68, Ellis 1998: 160, Pool 1998: 28). However, it was further suggested that an educated leader was not a sufficient condition for a well organized movement, and, as will be shown in the following, the ensuing analysis supports that claim as well.

Further, in regards to leadership, it was argued that the organization ought not to stand or fall with its founders if state consolidation was to be obtained. There seem to be reason to believe that there is ground for that proposition as well. Ngoga asserts that while the leadership of Museveni undoubtedly has been of great importance for the movement, the NRA came to the conclusion early in its struggle that it was not enough to rely on the leadership of a single individual. Accordingly, an extensive and well structured administration was established, turning the NRA into "one of the most coherently organized and effective insurgencies in Africa" (Ngoga 1998: 101). The EPLF, in turn, integrated two main dissident factions from a rivaling separatist movement, the ELF, and its leadership was elected from the fighters of these factions (Pool 1998: 24). Thus,

the EPLF was not the creation of a single individual, but rather an expression of popular dissatisfaction. Of vital importance was consequently not *who* led the movement but, which will be illustrated in the following, *how* it was led (Connell 2001: 346). The situation was, however, quite the opposite in the two state-subverting movements. When Taylor early in the struggle appreciated that his leadership was being contested, he organized the murder of several of his rivals (Ellis 1998: 159). Accordingly, the importance of Taylor for the NPFL was immense; the sole purpose of the movement was personal rather than popular. The leader was thus not just running the organization in wartime Liberia; the leader *was* the organization. Similarly, the 'political organization' was not separated from its core individuals in Somalia. Bongartz (1991 : 28) points out that "[s]omali identification with one political group or another is perpetuated by traditional societal patterns and individuals are born into a fixed system of family and clan affiliation". Just as Taylor *was* the organization in Liberia, so was the clan in wartime Somalia.

3.1.2 Political Awareness and Organization

It was further suggested that giving prominence to issues such as ideology, organization, and political education, would make for a state-consolidating movement, whereas a grouping paying little attention to such matters would be state subverting. Indeed, the analysis presents evidence in line with these assumptions too. Both the NRA and the EPLF were movements that emphasized the importance of a solid organization. These groupings took on governmental characteristics in areas where they held control; extensive political institutions were set up in their respective base camps (Ngoga 1998: 97f, Pool 2001: 83ff). In addition, both movements established village councils responsible for village management, even though the leading individuals kept control over the matters central to the fighting of the war (Kasfir 2005: 263ff, Pool 1998: 30, Pool 2001: 105ff). The organizational structure of the NRA and the EPLF were thus characterized by 'democratic centralism' (Pool 2001: 83, Ngoga 1998: 96).

Further, both the NRA and the EPLF had extensive political programs, with clearly stated goals for their struggles, along which lines their respective followers were educated. Political education was consequently a central element in the activities of both state-consolidating movements. Baker (2004: 333ff) argues that political education was emphasized in NRA with the purpose to organize people to fight their own war. Pool (1998: 20) states, in the case of Eritrea, that the political education that all EPLF members underwent during their compulsory six months training period "socialized fighters […] into the organization, and moulded their consciousness of society and history". As such, it was fundamental in the creation of a notion of 'nationhood' that, as will be returned to below, is considered imperative to the EPLF's success.

The situation was completely different in the two state-subverting movements; as previously noted, these organizations were centered around individuals. The NPFL, as the other warring factions in Liberia, was characterized by a system of

patronage. Taylor's military victories during the beginning of the war had made him in control of a large area and hundreds of thousands of people. By personally controlling commercial matters, he was provided with resources which he consequently used to control local social networks (Ellis 1998: 161). Economic resources thus implied political power in wartime Liberia. In Somalia, the different insurgent groups were, as previously noted, largely clan- or kinship based. Compagnon (1998: 80) consequently argues that the USC has never been a real organization, but constituted a "loose coalition of Hawiye clans, whose contribution to the liberation war took different forms, and was certainly unequal from one segment to another".

Neither of the two state-subverting movements were thus held together by ideological conviction; the struggles were personal rather than popular. Several authors note that while the NPFL and other warring factions in Liberia used the legitimate grievances of the Liberian people as a pretext for prosecuting the war, in reality they participated in the war in order to acquire personal power as well as wealth (Klay Kieh 2004: 67, Gershoni 1997: 61). Similar to the situation in Liberia, the clan elders in Somalia saw the overthrow of the Barre regime as "a chance and a need to leap to the spoils of victory for themselves, rather than an opportunity to overcome the Siad Barre legacy" (Compagnon 1998: 89). Needless to say, the NRFL and the USC followers did not benefit from any extensive political education.

3.1.3 Military Structure

Organizational effectiveness was not only suggested to be required in the political sphere for a movement to be state-consolidating, but also in the military counterpart. The comparison reveals ample support for such a proposal as well; differences in political organization between movements reappear in their military equivalents. Both the NRA and the EPLF had relatively well organized military structures; along with their political codes these movements had military correspondents, and the previous mentioned political training was accompanied by a military ditto (Pool 2001: 74f, Ngoga 1998: 99). Following from their strict military organizations, the NRA's and the EPLF's forces were fairly disciplined. Kasfir (2005: 283ff) notes that the NRA's military code of conduct provided clear guidelines for the execution of the struggle and concomitantly listed the penalties for violations of the same. In the EPLF, regular sessions of criticism and self-criticism were held to enforce obedience, and hard labor followed from continued infringements (Pool 1998: 32).

In stark contrast to the NRA and the EPLF experiences, the NPFL and the USC provided limited military training to their recruits and exercised only scant control over their forces. Compagnon argues that the organization of the forces into a relatively disconnected federation of clan-militias in Somalia made regulation of their activities on a central level hard to obtain. The young militia men consequently had almost a "free licence to loot, rape and kill" (Compagnon 1998: 79). Similarly, Ellis (1998: 155) notes that in Liberia weapons were handed

out to the part of the population who opposed the government of Samuel Doe, and the NPFL soon had "thousands of armed but untrained civilians along its core of trained soldiers" (Ellis 1998: 155). The movement was thus "more a network of armed dissidents than a political party or a guerrilla army" (Ellis 1999: 74). It is consequently hardly surprising that some of the most appalling atrocities are associated with these movements.

3.1.4 Concluding Remarks

The comparison above consequently supports Clapham's claims that issues of leadership, ideology, and political as well as military organization differentiates between state-consolidating and state-subverting movements. Indeed, well organized movements with internal structures relatively independent from the top leader, which are held together by ideological conviction, seem to make for state consolidation. On the other hand, organizations revolving around patrons or clan, whose motives are 'personal' rather than popular, plausibly lay the ground for state subversion. Differences in the internal structure of the movements might thus possibly explain differences in outcome of the struggles.

3.2 Relationship with Host Society

3.2.1 Political Culture

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Clapham argues that the constitution of the society naturally influences the kind of insurgency that arises and cultural conditions might thus have some bearing in explaining differences between movements. Indeed, it is striking to note that the various political traditions within the movements, which were made evident in the previous section and which plausibly offers some explanation to the differences in outcome between insurgencies, seem to be historically rooted in all of the four countries under investigation. Both the NRA and the EPLF, who are state-consolidating movements and who, according to the discussion above, were the most disciplined and well-organized of the four insurgencies, arose in societies with long established traditions of statehood. The kingdoms in the southern part of what later came to constitute Uganda, where the NRA eventually arose, had developed impressive bureaucratic state systems well before the arrival of the British. Karugire (1980: 22) even argues that the machinery of administrative control in the Buganda kingdom inspired the British to the extent that "much of its features were made the model by which to govern the whole of Uganda protectorate". Highland Eritrea, home ground to the EPLF, also has a long tradition of large-scale organization. While highland villages were independent and self-regulating social and economic entities, they were component parts of imperial bureaucratic

states (Pool 2001: 13). Pool (1998: 34) consequently asserts that the area has a history of "administrative systems, paying tax and tribute and levies of fighters".

Given the fact that these regions already enjoyed a system of centralized rule, colonialization, while naturally influencing these polities in a number of way, did not substantially impact general political procedures. Pool (2001: 12ff) points out that the arrival of the Italians in the late 19th century had a limited influence on the social structures in highland Eritrea. Mamdani (1984: 9) similarly argues, in the case of Uganda, that in the southern kingdoms, where an institutionalized authority had developed, the British kept the previous rulers as their colonial agents.

Neither Liberia nor Somalia, which fostered state-subverting movements who, as demonstrated above, have been far more fragmented and undisciplined, enjoy the same political tradition. In contrast to the Ugandan and Eritrean experiences, these countries have no history of statehood. Ellis (1999: 31) notes that "notions of kinship and common ancestry serve as the main glue for communities without strong centralized political institutions"; clusters of lineage groups thus formed so-called stateless societies in the areas today inscribed on the map as Somalia and Liberia. Bakonyi and Stuvoy (2005: 364) argue that leadership in pre-colonial Somalia was determined by clan consensus and leaders were chosen on the basis of age and influence inside the clan. In the case of Liberia, Ellis (1998: 170) asserts that political power was exercised by family heads or patriarchs, to whom people attached themselves often because of their special access to economic resources. Further, as a result of the close relationship between the accumulation of wealth and political power there was "considerable scope for political entrepreneurs, usually young men successful in war, to rise from obscurity to positions of influence" (ibid.).

The imposition of the state on these societies did neither put an end to the patron-client system of politics in Liberia, nor to the importance of kinship loyalties in providing for security in Somalia. After having founded the Republic of Liberia in 1847, the Americo-Liberians, descendants of the freed US slaves who were settled in the area in the early nineteenth century, worked alongside local chiefs. In exchange for recognition of Monrovia's sovereignty, these chiefs were confirmed as local rulers with powers far exceeding those they had previously enjoyed. An extensive system of patronage was thereby instituted during the Americo-Liberian leadership, in an attempt to conciliate and attach the larger population to the state (Ellis 1999: 196ff). Doornbos and Markakis (1994: 13) argue that, just as the Liberian system of patronage consequently was developed during the leadership of the settler state, the clannishness in Somalia "matured in the bosom of the modern state". Somalia's dependence on the global market, following from colonialization, resulted in economic hardship for its population, and, forced to compete for their survival, people sought support on the basis of generalized kinship. However, the norms and institutions that had previously regulated intra- and inter-clan relations no longer existed and it was this situation that gave rise to modern clannishness; that is, 'the pursuit of kinship interests without restraint and at the expense of everything else' (Samatar in Doornbos and Markakis 1994: 13f).

Indeed, while the political traditions in Uganda, Eritrea, Somalia and Liberia have not been immune to the imperialist intrusion and the integration into the global economy, there is certain congruence between the political procedures employed by the NRA, the EPLF, the USC and the NPFL, and the historical political traditions in the respective societies.

3.2.2 National Coherence

Another hypothesis to be tested is that movements enhancing divisions within the society have an injurious effect on the state, whereas movements that unite the population plausibly strengthen state structures. Again, nothing in this study contradicts such a claim. The struggle of both the NRA, and particularly the EPLF, had a unifying effect on the respective populations. Ottaway (1999: 29) argues that internal divisions had caused and reinforced conflict in Uganda throughout the history of the state. However, the NRA's political program emphasized that its struggle was a 'national' struggle; it was largely a response to the country's corrupt and undemocratic post-colonial system of governance (Baker 2004: 334). Kasfir (2005: 281) asserts that while certain groupings in Uganda found the NRA's insistence on 'non-sectarianism' hard to deal with, their discontent with the oppressive government that the NRA fought implied that many of them nevertheless supported the movement. Eritrea was also a highly fragmented society and societal breaches are pointed to as the reason as to why the country had failed to gain independence in the past (Pool 1998: 20f). Having learnt from previous failures, the EPLF thus organized its struggle around a unifying concept of nationhood and launched social and economic programs aimed at breaking down ethnic, linguistic and religious barriers in Eritrea. Preaching national unity was a deliberate instrument of nation building and is indeed often suggested to have been crucial to the success of the movement (Pool 2001: 36ff, Clapham 1998: 13).

If the struggles in Eritrea and Uganda can be said to have had a unifying effect on the population, the outcome of the wars in Liberia and Somalia was the opposite. As previously noted, insurgents in Liberia and Somalia were motivated by loot rather than ideological belief. Klay Kieh argues, in the case of Liberia, that warlords arose, believing they could acquire some weapons, take and hold territory, expropriate its resources and consequently become political actors. The emergence of more warring parties consequently divided the population if not along ethnical lines, then along factional dittos (Klay Kieh 2004: 60ff). Similarly, since insurgency was mainly a quest for personal (or clan) wealth, rivalry between clans or subclans intensified in Somalia during the course of the war. Zartman (2005: 87f) argues, for example, that since the state had become the principal means for clan enrichment, the selection of Mahdi, from the Abgal subclan, as president was contested by Aideed, of the Habr Gidir subclan, and consequently resulted in the division of the USC.

3.2.3 Relationship with the Population

Finally, it was assumed that having the support of the civilian population might possibly improve the prospect for state consolidation after the ousting of the incumbent regime, and vice versa. The four cases analyzed here seem to support that suggestion as well. Both the EPLF and the NRA put great emphasis into winning the popular support of civilians. Inspired by Renamo's struggle in Mozambique, Museveni believed in a transformation of Uganda through armed struggle based on gaining sympathies from peasants. Indeed, Ugandan peasants supplied the guerrilla with food and recruits when the movement entered the countryside (Kasfir 2005: 275ff). The EPLF's devotion to popular struggle was similarly expressed in its National Democratic Program, which stated that a socialist society was to be created by EPLF leading the class struggle of "workers, peasants, revolutionary intellectuals and other oppressed masses" (Pool 2001: 88). Pool further argues that in order to constantly expand the movement and attract new recruits the EPLF performed extensive propaganda activities and provided health care for pastoralists and peasants (ibid. 80f).

The NPFL and the USC, on the other hand, showed little interest in convincing civilians to support them in any way. Contrary to the conception of the EPLF and the NRA that popular support was instrumental for the struggle, the warring factions in Liberia and Somalia exploited the civilian population. As an example thereof, Ellis (1999: 115) notes that Liberian fighters painted their names on people's houses, believing that when the war was over they could return and "reclaim the property as a prize of war". In the case of Somalia, Bakonyi and Stuvoy argue that, particularly following the ousting of Barre and the total collapse of the Somali state, different clan militias occupied the lands of the unarmed and military less experienced parts of the population. The competition for the land was accompanied by "mass-executions, rape and the deployment of slave labour" (Bakonyi and Stuvoy 2005: 367).

3.2.4 Concluding Remarks

It will be seen from the foregoing that the issues relating to the insurgent movement's relationship with its host society, like the internal structure of the movement, plausibly distinguish between state-consolidating and state-subverting insurgencies in line with the suggestions made in chapter 2.3. Movements that have a positive effect on 'national coherence' and that further have established a close relationship with the larger part of the population, seem to, quite logically, have an easier time managing the state after the ousting of the incumbent regime. Conversely, movements that enhance splits within the society, and exploit the civilians in general and those belonging to opposing fractions in particular, potentially contribute to the destruction of the state structures. Further, and perhaps more noticeable, the political traditions that were discussed in the preceding chapter seem to be historically rooted in all four countries. Cultural conditions might accordingly explain why certain movements are organized in

such a way as to support strong centralized political institutions, whereas others have an inimical effect on the same.

3.3 Relationship with International System

3.3.1 External Support

In return for providing an insurgent movement with resources, it was suggested that the external 'sponsor' might influence, or even guide, the rebellion and consequently have an impact on the outcome of the struggle. However, nothing in this study confirms such a claim. Neither the NRA, the EPLF, nor the USC depended heavily on an international benefactor, and were consequently not 'steered' by anyone. Both of the state-consolidating movements were almost exclusively financed by domestic support and no external backers were needed to provide funding for their respective struggles (Kasfir 2005: 263ff, Pool 1998: 26). In Somalia, the different insurgent movements were initially largely financed by merchants of the diaspora; Hawiye businessmen thus financed the USC struggle (Bakonyi and Stuvoy 2005: 366, Compagnon årtal: 75).

The NPFL, on the other hand, was relatively more reliant on external support. Klay Kieh argues that Taylor's connections with Khadaffi gave him access to "a foreign government which had the wherewithal to finance and arm an insurrection on a large scale". Further, the NPFL received support from other countries in the region, such as Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire (Klay Kieh 2004: 69). The contact with the international system thus proved of utterly importance for Taylor's NPFL. However, it does not seem like the NPFL was guided by its international backers, but rather like they were chosen because they shared, and supported, Taylor's opinions. Klay Kieh points out that Taylor was given money and training from Libya by assuring Khadaffi that by supporting his rebellion he would be helping to "eliminate an American client regime" (ibid.).

In reference to the possibility of the international community to influence insurgency in other ways, it is further worth noting that both of the state-consolidating movements, the NRA and the EPLF, fought regimes that enjoyed the full support of most outside states (Ngoga 1998: 95, Yohannes 1993: 4ff). The emphasis given to state sovereignty implied an international condemnation of these movements, who, nevertheless, succeeded in their endeavors.

3.3.2 Trade and Humanitarian Assistance

Financial resources could further be derived from external trade and humanitarian assistance. In line with 'political economy of war' theorists, Clapham argued that access to both trade revenues and famine relief can lengthen the conflict and consequently decrease the possibilities for state consolidation. The undertaken analysis presents some support for that argument. As noted in the previous

section, both of the state-consolidating insurgent movements financed their struggles by domestic assistance. Hence, income from external trade or humanitarian aid did not contribute in any substantial way to the NRA's and the EPLF's resource bases, and such revenues consequently did not constitute an incentive for continued fighting.

However, the situation was the complete opposite in the two state-subverting movements. Taylor financed his war primarily by exploiting the timber, rubber and mineral resources of the areas under his control. The natural resources were sold to European and American businesses at below-market prices (Outram 1997: 9, Gershoni 1997: 58f). Liberia's natural resources provided economic opportunities to all parties involved in the war, and, as noted in the previous section, encouraged the emergence of numerous new armed groupings. Further, Reno (1997: 9) points out that "enterprising strongmen […] formed their own 'grassroots' organizations to gain direct access to external aid". Ellis (1998: 157) thus argues that "war became a form of business and a way of life, rather than an instrument for furthering any coherent ideological or even ethnic interest".

While Somalia does not enjoy the same abundance of natural resources as Liberia, and consequently has not attracted the same sort of external interest, Bakonyi and Stuvoy argue that robbery and looting in the cities provided insurgents with goods, such as machines and copper, that they could export. Together with the informal trade with the narcotic Qat, these economic activites left the militias with considerable profit. In addition, occupying a certain territory provided the warlords with a possibility for 'taxation' of individuals, markets and relief workers (Compagnon 1998 : 86, Bakonyi and Stuvoy 2005: 367). Menkhaus (2003: 416) further argues that warlords "provoked famine to attract relief agencies and food aid that became a major source of revenue". Accordingly, many features of protracted conflict described in the literature of the 'political economy of war' matches patterns of war in Somalia as well as in Liberia.

3.3.3 Concluding Remarks

It was suggested in chapter 2.3 that external powers might influence the shaping of the insurgency. Neither the NRA, the EPLF, nor the USC benefited from any substantial external backing and the claim is thus solely based on the NPFL experience; however, the case of NPFL does not provide any evidence in support of the proposition that external backers might control and guide insurgent movements. Further, both the NRA and the EPLF succeeded in their struggles despite an *opposing* international community.

The comparison above nevertheless favors the 'political economy of war' theory. Access to income from external trade and famine relief was said to constitute an incentive for the prolongation of conflict, and in turn quite possibly to have an inimical effect on state structures. It is true that the two state-subverting movements under investigation derived a large portion of their income from such activities, whereas the two state-consolidating dittos, as shown in the previous part, rather profited from popular support.

4   Conclusion

Two main questions were posed in the introductory part of this paper: 1) *What factors determine the ability and willingness of insurgents to consolidate statehood? That is, why do some movements uphold or even advance the post-colonial state, whereas others have an injurious effect on the international state system? And 2) How should the international community respond to the issue of state failure?* This chapter seeks to provide answers to these questions; the first part elaborates on the findings from the empirical analysis and the second part then fuses these findings with theories on state failure.

4.1   Explaining Variations Between Insurgencies

The main purpose of this paper was, as stated in chapter 1.1, to explore and explain differences between state-consolidating and state-subverting insurgent movements. In assessing the validity of the claims presented in chapter 2.3, differences were indeed *explored* in the previous chapter. The empirical analysis points to several, plausibly crucial, dissimilarities between state-consolidating and state-subverting insurgencies. Most notably, state-consolidating movements are characterized by organizational effectiveness and further prosecute their struggles in close cooperation with the broader civilian population. However, this thesis further aims to *explain* those differences. *Why* are certain movements organized in such a way as to support strong centralized institutions? And *why* do they decide to associate with the population rather than exploiting the same? Clapham points out that all social explanations face the problem of determining the relative importance to allot to variables resulting from the deliberate and resolute behavior of individual persons, as opposed to variables derived from the structural characteristics of the situation in which they function. Regarding insurgent movements, the problem is no less evident. These movements arise in opposition to prevailing political structures, often on the initiative of one or a few individuals. As such, the leaders are free to determine both the formation of the organization, as well as its operational methods. At the same time, the movement depends on, or in any case benefits from, the support of its host society as well as that of the international community, which ultimately puts certain constraints on the freedom of action of the individual leaders (Clapham 1998: 9). The differences in outcome of varying movements may thus be conditional on the relative weight of these variables. Having studied not only the organizational features of the movements, but further the national as well as international settings in which they operated, allows us to elaborate on such 'relative weights' and the

empirical findings in the previous chapter do indeed point to certain structural constraints that coincide with state consolidation. It thus seems like state subversion is more likely when the top individuals enjoy a large portion of freedom, and conversely, state consolidation coincides with a relatively constrained insurgent leader. However, internal constraints seem to have greater weight than external dittos.

The impotence of the international community to influence insurgency was observed in the foregoing. The empirical findings suggest, quite contrary to the situation indicated in chapter 2.3. and now reiterated above, that the international community can do little to impact insurgent movements. The NPFL, the sole of the movements under investigation who benefited from any large-scale external backing, sought the support of regimes that shared Taylor's perception of the situation and consequently did not question his methods. Further, both the NRA, and particularly the EPLF, are noted for fighting, and defeating, regimes that enjoyed the wholehearted support of the international community. Indeed, the implications of these findings will be elaborated upon in the next part of the paper.

The comparison, as noted above, presents some support for the relevance of constraints imposed by the host society though. The NRA's and the EPLF's struggles were, as previously noted, executed with the furtherance of civilians. It seems safe to suggest that in order to receive such support, the movements had to be structured in such a way as to appeal to the broader population; the leaders of the NRA and the EPLF were thus unable to pursue their personal interests at the expense of the national well-being. Indeed, these were well organized movements held together by ideological conviction. Quite contrary, the two state-subverting insurgencies, the NPFL and the USC, derived a substantial part of their financial resources from international trade and humanitarian assistance. That income provided the two movements with a certain amount of 'freedom'; not having to 'sell' the struggle to the broader population implied that these insurgencies did not have to have neither a political program nor a proper organization. Instead of being motivated by ideological beliefs, the NPFL and the USC were thus fighting for 'personal enrichment'. Consequently, being dependent on the approval of the host society most likely put certain constraints on the decision-making of the individual leaders, and the existence of such constraints in turn concurred with state consolidation.

In this context, the 'political economy of war' theory seems to have some bearing; conflict can contribute to individual enrichment and there is thus incentive for continued fighting and the breakdown of state institutions. However, by offering an explanation to the phenomenon of state-subverting insurgent movements, the 'political economy of war' theory gives rise to questions concerning the existens of state-consolidating dittos. If conflict is a rational economic activity, why do some insurgent movements choose another approach? Indeed, why did the NRA and the EPLF decide to cooperate with the civilian population, instead of capitalizing on the same? As has been pointed out previously, some scholars point to the existance of natural resources as a potential reason. Natural resources are in this context said to be a 'curse', but Somalia is

not necessarily far more resource abundant than Uganda or even Eritrea. Reno suggested that the changes on the international arena brought about by the ending of the Cold War presented insurgent movements with new economic opportunities. The 'prevailing international climate' might thus constitute an explanation as to why the NRA and the EPLF chose the non-exploitative path; the same possibilities for exploitation did not exist during the course of their civil wars. While it is true that the NPFL's and the USC's struggles took part at a later stage when conditions on the international arena were shifting, the empirical evidences stress time and again that the sole purpose of the NRA's and the EPLF's rebellions was popular rather than personal. It thus seems unreasonable to think that the organizational structuring of the NRA and the EPLF was the 'second best' option, only resorted to since 'looting' was not 'possible'.

However, where internal constraints in the shape of 'being dependent on popular support' thus falls a little short, 'political culture' seems to be a factor with more explanatory weight. It should be noted that several authors caution against counting too much on 'historical connections'. Clapham (1998: 13) points out that "[i]t is all too easy to use supposedly entrenched cultural criteria to 'explain' what turn out to be no more than transient political phenomena". Ellis (1999: 291) further asserts that history is largely shaped by actions or inactions stemming from individual decisions; things that happen are rarely 'bound to happen'. This said, it is striking to note that the political procedures employed by the different movements, which, as was previously stated, plausibly offer some explanation to the differences in outcome between the various insurgencies, seem to be historically rooted in all of the four countries under investigation. Indeed, societies with a history of statehood seem to foster state-consolidating insurgent movements, whereas state-subverting dittos arise in societies with a history of a more personalized system of rule.

In conclusion, the importance of analyzing insurgency was pointed out in the introductory part of this paper; they represent the real power in many African societies whether them gaining control has had a positive effect on the state structures or not. Understanding insurgency is consequently crucial to understanding politics in contemporary Africa. The discussion above highlights the importance of political culture in the shaping of the movement; the ability or willingness of insurgents to consolidate statehood seem to be dependent on *whether such a system of governance has indeed penetrated the political life of a particular society*. Insurgency can thus readily be related to the problems of African statehood; it both follows from, and in some cases contribute to, the profound weaknesses in the structure of the state that in most cases result from colonialism. Following this, analyzing insurgency is important for yet another reason; insurgent movements provide "the clearest available indicators of the extent to which it may be possible to establish any alternative, *more closely based in the structures and values of indigenous societies*, to the political order which Africa has inherited" (Clapham 1998: 11, emphasis added). This will be elaborated upon in the following.

4.2 The Discussion on State Failure Prevention and Reversal Revisited

It was noted in chapter 1.3. that most scholars concerned with the issue of state failure seek to understand and explain it in order to consider how to strengthen the states poised on the brink of collapse, as well as how to restore the functionalities of those who have already failed. In focusing on the movements central to these processes, this thesis sought to add a different perspective to the ongoing debate on state failure. Thus, in light of the empirical findings presented in the foregoing, the first section comments on the contemporary response to failing states, and the second section then points to some future challenges facing the academia as well as the larger international community.

4.2.1 Evaluation of the Contemporary Approach

The contemporary response to state failure is, as noted in chapter 2.2.2, based on the traditional school of thought. It was shown in the foregoing that traditional scholars argue that 1) the approriate respons to state failure is state-building; state structures need to be restored *across the globe* in order to prevent the existence of international criminal organizations and terrorists threatening international peace and security, and 2) Western governments and international organizations are the forces best suited to perform such a task. However, nothing in this study supports any one of these claims. First, in advocating state-building, traditional analysts presuppose the universal applicability of the Western state format. The empirical findings presented above do not correspond to such a notion. In highlighting the importance of political culture they rather suggest that while there are some local structures and values that help sustain statist ideologies and organizations, there are others that do not.

Second, in suggesting that foreign governments and international organizations should administrate the rebuilding of failing state structures, traditional scholars assume that external powers can indeed affect the outcome of insurgency. Again, as has been reiterated on several occasions, the empirical analysis does not present any evidence in line therewith. This is not to say that the involvement of the international community in Liberia's and Somalia's civil wars would have been futile; international intervention could quite possibly have averted much human suffering in the respective countries. The reasoning simply seeks to stress the limitations in the ability of the international community to actually reconstruct states all over the world as replicas of the Western model.

In sum, the contemporary response to state failure does not only presuppose an ability of the international community to affect insurgency, a notion which the empirical findings in this paper *do not* favor, but it further disregards influences from the host society, which the conducted analysis indeed *does* support. Needless to say, association does not always connote causation and there is certainly reason

to examine the findings in this study further. However, given the recurrence of the same associative factors in relatively different countries, there might be more than simple coincidence at work. If there is, these findings point to the need for a different handeling of the phenomenon of state failure.

4.2.2 Future Challenges

While not being in accordance with the traditional school of thought, the empirical results seem to support the argument put forward by historical scholars. By emphasizing the specific prerequisites for the 'success' of the Weberian state rather than praising the formula as such, historical theorists stress that the design of political units ought to better correspond to the way power is actually exercised. In support thereof, Ellis (1999: 299) asserts that since "moral ideas are made in the imagination and circulated in society at large, they are not easily enforceable, particularly in countries like Liberia whose historical experience of the existence of a bureaucratic state which aspires to promulgate rational, written codes of law is superficial". Abraham (2002: 51) similarly argues, in regards to Somalia, that "Somali socio-political tradition […] is anomalous to an international system of governance based on state legitimacy and reciprocal action".

At the same time, many scholars point to the fact that 'warlordism' is far from sustainable. Bakonyi and Stuvoy argue that the strategies conducted by warlords indeed contribute to their enrichment but "have a tendency to exhaust the resource base". Following this, "[o]ther means of economic reproduction are necessary in order to establish an economic foundation that is conducive to the stabilization of the warlord" (Bakonyi and Stuvoy 2005: 374). In line therewith, Ellis (1999: 291) points out, in regards to Liberia, that it is crucial to "find a new means of bestowing legitimacy on those who hold power". While the imposition of large-scale bureaucratic institutions might not be the best way to manage the precarious situation that 'state failure' implies, there is certainly need for alteration and improvement of current conditions in so-called failing states.

In assessing the concept of political culture, Fox (2000: 13) notes that it has almost exclusively been associated with democracy, democratization and economic growth, whereas possible links between political culture and conflict or the resolution of conflict are almost never discussed. The fact that there appears to be certain congruence between the political procedures employed by the different insurgent movements and the historical political traditions in their respective societies, calls for the need of objects other than well-developed, institutionalized states to be the focus of political culture study. Consequently, instead of concentrating solely on 'state', and striving to restore centralized institutions when they fail, more attention ought to be given to 'insurgency', in an effort to assess the possibility to establish alternative polities, more closely based in the structures and values of indigenous societies.

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