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Franchised States and the Bureaucracy of Peace

Niels Nagelhus Schia

Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies

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NUPI
Oslo, Norway

Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies
ISBN 978-3-319-65568-0 ISBN 978-3-319-65569-7 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65569-7

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017952090

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Springer International Publishing AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Preface

By studying peacebuilding as a global institutionalization process—focusing on how connections and disconnections are made and reproduced between different social systems, as well as between policy and practice—this book describes contradictory aspects of peacebuilding.

Exploring processes relating to UN peacebuilding in Liberia made it possible to study how current global peacebuilding processes challenge established notions of the state, causing new kinds of state formations, franchised states, which also make it necessary to revisit questions concerning sovereignty. A *studying-through approach* enabled me to trace aspects and activities across several hierarchical levels and geographical sites (New York, Oslo, Liberia) during fieldwork. Exploring how activities aimed at creating national ownership produced emergent properties and contradictory processes, I show empirically how state capacities were (re)produced, while national ownership in the state apparatus was undermined.

Chapter 1 presents the main conceptual framework, defining *franchised states* and *ownershipping* as central concepts. In Chap. 2, I underpin *ownershipping* as an analytical concept, using relevant trajectories within anthropological theory. Chapter 3 focuses on operationalizing *ownershipping* as an analytical perspective. Here I outline the methodological framework, methods, and research design and provide an empirical snapshot from the multiple sites studied. In Chap. 4, I describe and analyze the historical context and trajectory of Liberia, focusing on state formation and global connections and arguing the importance of a historically oriented anthropology for comprehending aspects of power and particularities

in Liberia today. Chapter 5 turns to the internal dynamics of the executive decision-making body of the UN, the Security Council: the overarching framework for peacekeeping/peacebuilding. I show how Security Council decisions, resolutions, and mandates are the results of a consensus-making process aimed primarily at maintaining an efficient Council and only secondarily at actual needs on the ground. This gap produces bureaucratic mechanisms particular to the peacebuilding process. In Chaps. 6, 7, and 9, I use data collected during fieldwork in Liberia to show how peacebuilding, as mandated by the Security Council, unfolds on the ground and how various topics are systematically connected or disconnected. Chapter 8 is centered on the DPKO HQ. Here I focus on policy-making and taxonomies in the making in the UN bureaucracy, showing how peacebuilding activities are given formal language and come into formal bureaucratic existence. The concluding chapter makes clear the implications of applying *ownershipping* as an analytical perspective to global peacebuilding processes. The various activities presented in the previous chapters helped turn Liberia into an object of governing. This produced paradoxical processes, whereby the UN, in seeking to build the state in Liberia, also *became* the state. Finally, I draw implications from these findings related to anthropological perspectives on the state and conceptions of sovereignty.

Acknowledgments

Many people have contributed invaluable insights and input to this book. I am very grateful to staff in the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations Policy and Best Practices Services for providing me with the opportunity not only to experience but also to be a part of the real world of day-to-day international diplomacy and bureaucracy and the challenges in the field as experienced in the UN. Their hospitality gave me unique chances for experiencing a range of encounters that have provided valuable and crucial data.

Liberians in Monrovia and elsewhere have been exceptionally welcoming and generous. Furthermore, Scott Fellows, UN officers and officials in UNMIL, and NGO officers working in Liberia have been extremely helpful. I would also like to thank officials in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, especially the Norwegian delegation in New York for showing interest and being enthusiastic about my project as well as offering inputs, comments, and access to their everyday work related to UN peacebuilding.

I am especially grateful to Professor Halvard Vike from the Institute of Social Anthropology at the University of Oslo and to Professor Iver B. Neumann at Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI/LSE). I would also like to express my gratitude to Anette Nyqvist, Knut Nustad, and Professor Thomas Hylland Eriksen.

There are many others who have been essential for the finalization of this book. Colleagues at NUPI have not only been great company, they have also provided opportunities to collaborate on methodological, theoretical, and thematic issues. A more relevant and better academic

environment could hardly have been found anywhere else. I am especially indebted to Benjamin de Carvalho, Cedric de Coning, John Karlsrud, Jon Harald Sande Lie, Julie Wilhelmsen, Kari Osland, Kristin Haugevik, Morten Bøås, Ole Jacob Sending, Pernille Rieker, Randi Solhjell, Stein Sundstøl Eriksen, Ståle Ulriksen, Susan Høivik, and Ulf Sverdrup. I am also grateful for the scholarships and grants I received from the Fulbright Foundation and the Norwegian Research Council.

My gratitude also goes to my family and friends, in particular to my parents, who have always inspired and encouraged me. I am truly grateful to Mom, Inger, and Olav for laughter, babysitting, and never-ending support. And finally, I want to say thank you for all the love, joy, and faith from my wonderful wife Karoline and our children Frida and Erik. This book is dedicated to you.

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About the Author

Niels Nagelhus Schia is Senior Research Fellow at NUPI, Oslo, Norway, and holds a PhD in Social Anthropology from the University of Oslo. He is a Fulbright scholar and a former fellow of the NSSR, New York. Dr. Schia's research in the field of international organizations, and the UN, particularly focuses on global connections to more localized and national contexts.

Vignette: "Ownership *of What*?"

In 2010 I was in Monrovia, Liberia, doing fieldwork on peacekeeping/peacebuilding. The fieldwork started off with a visit to the office of a Liberian deputy minister who, I hoped, could offer interesting views on ownership—but I was promptly met with the question: "ownership of what?" "Hmmm …. policy processes," I replied after a few seconds. "Aha!" was the answer; sorry, the minister would not be available. After numerous phone calls, I realized that examining what Liberian authorities meant by "ownership" and the extent of involvement of the international community in Liberian policy processes would simply not be feasible. Those I spoke with either had no interest in the project or were not willing to talk about a potentially controversial subject—or perhaps the way the question was asked left no room for their own interpretations or understandings. I decided to change the strategy to tracing connections and the making of disconnections in peacebuilding processes.

Because it is the UN Security Council (UNSC) that adopts the mandates and the overarching framework for peacekeeping/peacebuilding, I decided to return to this arena which I knew from previous fieldwork. Then I had learned that the consensus focus in the Council is strong and that this affects its decision-making processes and formal output (Schia 2013). Even then I had become interested in how the Council, through this dynamic, was able to make decisions in line with needs and concerns in the field. In Liberia I had explored various activities, practices, and projects that indicated a gap between the decisions of the UNSC and the political and historical context on the ground.

In the UN Security Council, diplomats representing 15 countries come together to discuss and adopt broad mandates and resolutions. The complexity that cannot be dealt with in this arena gets passed down the hierarchy to be

managed by officials and bureaucrats and peacekeeping/peacebuilding officers in the field. Because these mandates and resolutions are the results of compromises, consensus focus, and big politics, they have to be negotiated, interpreted, and adapted to the situations in the field: an asymmetry between the implementation level and the decision-making level. This asymmetry in turn makes it necessary for bureaucrats and officials at UN headquarters to keep trying to catch up with activities on the ground, to create ownership and interpret situations in the field in relation to UNSC mandates.

Seeking to trace connections, and the making of disconnections, within this peacekeeping/peacebuilding field, I arrived at the UN's peacekeeping policy-making section in New York in 2009/2010. The main job of the officials here was to provide language on the field activities, with policy, handbooks, guidelines, and bureaucratic taxonomies as operational support for the field, but also reports for the UN member-states and their delegations in New York. At this section I could link into peacekeeping/peacebuilding processes at a level where the focus was on connecting the field with the executive decisions, mandates, and resolutions and vice versa. I could observe how peacekeeping intentions moved around in the peacebuilding system. Traveling back and forth between Liberia, Oslo, and New York, I came to view peacebuilding as a global process involving activities and practices that constituted a transnational institutionalization process and a global will to govern. Actors representing different and often contradictory systems as well as different political and historical contexts at various geographical places—all were creating common communicative platforms, forming this process at different levels through the making of connections and disconnections.

List of Acronyms

C34	Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations of the UN
CA	Civil Affairs
CAOs	Civil Affairs Officers
CIC	Center on International Cooperation
COP	Community of Practice
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DFS	Department of Field Support
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
DPET	Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training
DPKO	Department for Peacekeeping Operations
DSRSG	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General
E10	The ten elected member-states of the UN's Security Council
ECOMOG	ECOWAS observer force, the Military Observer Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GEMAP	Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International Nongovernmental Organization
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NUPI	Norwegian Institute of International Affairs
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OGA	Office of the Gender Advisor
P3	Permanent three in the UN's Security Council (UK, USA, and France)

P5	The five permanent member-states of the UN's Security Council
PBPS	Policy and Best Practices Services
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
QIP	Quick Impact Projects
SCR	Security Council Report
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SRSG	UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General
UBF	United Brothers of Friendship
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNOL	UN Peacebuilding Support Office in Liberia
UNOMIL	UN Observer Mission in Liberia
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WACPS	Women and Children Protection Sections

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CHAPTER 1

Franchised States and Ownershipping

Work on the role and functioning of peacebuilding has tended to focus on sovereignty as a monolithic entity, something that states either have or do not have. The role of external factors like the UN is typically seen as being either to bolster such sovereignty, or to undermine it. Adopting an anthropological studying-through approach to the UN's peacebuilding activities in Liberia, I will show how UN peacebuilding activities turned Liberia into an object of governing, whereby the UN, in seeking to build the state, also became the state. The sovereign state of Liberia here emerges as a franchise, not a self-contained entity. Two implications follow: First, that, to maintain an international system based on sovereign states, international peacebuilding turns post-conflict countries into clients of the international community. Second, that sovereignty becomes unbundled, no longer exclusively associated with the state, and is organized in and through specific practices of governing, with state actors as one among many kinds of actors. These findings move beyond other studies of peacebuilding by narrowing in on the unbundling of sovereignty, adding to our insights on the changing forms of sovereignty by showing the specific ways in which it is packaged and enacted, often by actors who are acting in the name of the international.

The first chapter lays the foundations for the main themes of the book, defining key concepts such as *franchised states* and *ownershipping*, and setting out the main elements in the analytical framework. I specify what can

N.N. Schia, *Franchised States and the Bureaucracy of Peace*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65569-7_1

and cannot be grasped through current approaches, and opt for an analytical strategy that allows me to make as few assumptions as possible about the organization and functioning of state sovereignty. By "studying through"—a well-established anthropological strategy—I identify the various layers of the organization of sovereignty for many conflict-ridden states in the global South, using Liberia as a case. Key layers of this organization are (i) the UN Security Council (UNSC), (ii) peacebuilding bureaucracy and policy-making in DPKO in New York, and (iii) the implementation level and peacebuilding process in Liberia. This strategy enables us to see peacebuilding as a method of distributing concepts and ideas about states and state capacities, linking organizational practices in New York with those in Liberia, and thereby capturing the sites where sovereignty is variously enacted, negotiated, and put to work. The perspective on *franchised states* allows us to see that while sovereign states are generally perceived as being constitutive of the international system, that system is also constitutive of (some) states, insofar as it—as exemplified by the UN—organizes, manages, and enacts statehood, often in paradoxical and contradictory ways. Approaching the international system and state sovereignty in this way—*backwards*, as it were—makes it possible to detect, describe, and interpret taken-for-granted assumptions about sovereignty.

In the empirical chapters of this book, I move along with actors working with global peacebuilding processes, to capture intentions that travel, and further to explore what happens when they change sites and reappear in new contexts. This has meant studying empirically how organizational aims and goals become transformed and contextualized by peacebuilding actors to fit with local settings. Further, I investigate how articulations of peacebuilding at the top level of the UN organization differ from those on the ground, and explore the friction between these levels by studying social processes and individual actions. In this exploration, I began by focusing on how UN and other international actors emphasized creating "national ownership" to the peacebuilding process in Liberia. That led me to ask how people involved in the peacebuilding process in Liberia created bureaucratic and institutional links, how they produced taxonomies and shared communicative platforms.

As I empirically traced policies through these systems, it increasingly looked as if the UN bureaucracy became intertwined with the Liberian bureaucracy. In trying to build the state in Liberia, the UN paradoxically also *became* the state, so peacebuilding activities aimed at building the state, and creating national ownership, also seemed to undermine Liberian

national ownership of the state. That is an observation also made by several scholars concerned with development assistance, peacebuilding, and statebuilding. My point here is that we must move beyond this observation. Empirical studies of such global processes can explore how sovereignty gets organized and performed. That requires a combination of diachronic and synchronic approaches—or a historically oriented anthropology, combined with tracing how state institutions become entangled with and transformed through their relations with external forces, ambitions, and processes. I analyze these processes of connections and disconnections through anthropological perspectives on organizations and sovereignty, which in turn reveal sovereignty as not exclusively associated with state actors—thereby revealing Liberia as *a franchised state*.

Through this study, I trace how the bureaucratic logic in the UN shapes its actions in a specific way. When the UN deploys a peacebuilding operation to a post-conflict country like Liberia, an interface is created between the UN organization and the Liberian state. This interface consists, on the one hand, of the UN, with its organizational way of seeing and sorting the world by making bureaucratic taxonomies that enable UN actors to perform and implement organizational tasks on the ground; and, on the other hand, the Liberian government, with the particularities of Liberia as a sovereign country whose state institutions and customary structures have been shaped by their specific historical trajectory. For Liberia to be recognized by the international community as a state and to maintain the legitimacy of the UN's presence in the country, it is imperative for both the Liberian state and the UN to create national Liberian ownership to the peacebuilding processes. Tracing these processes empirically revealed how an emphasis on creating national ownership entailed paradoxical effects and emergent properties specific to the Liberian political and historical context. This, in turn, made it necessary to draw on an understanding of sovereignty as a modus operandi or as a governmentalized template (Bartelson 2014, p. 88) through which political processes like peacebuilding are organized. In this way sovereignty is understood as a symbolic form "that has conditioned the ways in which we habitually talk about, reflect upon and organize the political world" (ibid., p. 8). The focus on national ownership, it seemed, help to reproduce Liberia's state capacities and status as a sovereign country. However, it also appeared that creating ownership to peacebuilding processes was something the UN bureaucrats and officials did in order to turn Liberia into a governable object in line with the UN's bureaucratic taxonomies. This might undermine the

Liberian state apparatus—but would it mean that Liberia's status as a sovereign country became undermined? The *studying-through approach* enabled me to follow up on this question by exploring contradictory aspects and emergent properties of peacebuilding and furthermore to avoid a claustrophobic notion of sovereignty. Thus, the book deals with the following key questions: What is peacebuilding? What political significance does it have? To what extent does it contribute to organizing people within systems of power and authority?

To investigate these questions further, I turned to theories and literature that enabled me to explore institutions, organizations, and bureaucracies, and how institutions influence the thinking of individuals, and how individuals come to share categories of thoughts (Douglas 1986). This evoked anthropological perspectives on organizations and sovereignty, in which the Liberian state emerged as a *franchised state*.

This theoretical point of departure made it possible to analyze how actors connected with the peacebuilding process in Liberia were engaged in activities aimed at creating national ownership through rebuilding state capacities, while simultaneously producing other unintentional and sometimes contradictory effects. Activities of UN officials and people working for other international organizations involved with the peacebuilding process in countries like Liberia tended to turn processes pertaining to the state in post-conflict countries into recognizable social spaces familiar to actors in the international apparatus. In this way, actions concerned with establishing a national ownership to peacebuilding processes invoked social spaces where contradictory processes unfolded simultaneously. The emphasis on creating national ownership provided legitimacy to the UN and the international peacebuilding operation, thereby reproducing activities pertaining to ideas of sovereignty. However, it also gave rise to a clientelistic relationship between the Liberian state on the one hand, and the UN and other international peacebuilding actors on the other. With the help of perspectives provided by Mary Douglas (1986), it proved possible to analyze this as an institutionalization process. Creating national ownership required building capacity in established national institutions. In this capacity-building process, the UN and national elites would tend to find each other by working together, establishing a shared communicative platform or categories of thoughts.

Institutions are built up over time and are products of their historical trajectories (see, for instance, Berger and Luckmann 1979). A historically oriented approach to social institutions and institutionalizations is needed

for understanding aspects of power, so as to avoid a structural-functionalistic view of political and social institutions (see, for instance, Meeker 1980). With this in mind, I include a historical perspective on the making of Liberian state institutions. This in turn made it relevant to ask whether the UN, in its efforts at building the state in Liberia, paradoxically also became the state and contributed to (re)producing Liberia as a *franchised state*. Anthropological perspectives on organization and sovereignty have proven particularly well equipped for analyzing this question.

The present chapter presents the direction and frameworks for this book. After explaining the basis and background, I continue with a section defining ownership as practitioners used it; next, I introduce ownership-ping as an analytical perspective for explaining complexities in peacebuilding processes.

Tracing Connections and Traveling Intentions

The empirical chapters in this book move back and forth between villages in rural Liberia (where global policies shape, influence, and have direct and indirect impacts on statebuilding processes in Liberia), via a perspective on the historical trajectory of Liberia as a nation-state, to negotiations, diplomacy, and backstage decision-making processes in the UN Security Council in New York. I explore more centralized sites in Monrovia where I traced global policy processes and the making of connections and disconnections in Liberian ministries, as well as a policy-producing section in the UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations in New York where I was involved in producing normative frameworks, principles, policies, and guidelines for the field in Liberia. Through my anthropological fieldwork, I have also been to several other sites not specifically mentioned here. Thus, the ethnography presented has undergone a selective process where I have chosen to focus on elements that contribute in weaving together a coherent argument based on empirical findings at important sites of peacebuilding, and connecting this phenomenon as a global institutionalization process.

Anthropologists have studied the interconnectedness between local and national levels and between formal and informal state structures in Liberia (e.g., d'Azevedo 1962, 1969; Murphy and Blesoe 1987; Moran 2006; Richards 2005; Tonkin 2002). The present book adds a layer of complexity—the international layer—by describing how the UN and others produce state effects in Liberia. This made it necessary for me, as an

anthropologist, to choose *the long road* of long-term, multi-sited fieldwork, traveling between Liberia, New York, and Oslo to trace connections, or selective social relations, across time and space. On the other hand, these findings would be of little value unless combined with a description of the historical trajectory of Liberia. Drawing on the history of Liberia, I see today's international engagement as the continuation of a long tradition of supporting elite interests in the country.

The fieldwork was conducted between 2007 and 2016. The book is organized with each chapter focusing on one *place*, so that each chapter can contribute a specific perspective to the larger argument about franchised states and how global processes like peacebuilding challenge our conception of states, causing new kinds of state formations and making it necessary to revisit questions of sovereignty. Through participant observation and "studying-through" fieldwork, I examine three sites of the peacebuilding process as it pertains to Liberia.

The highest hierarchical place or site is *the executive level* of the UN's responsibility for international peace and security. This site is presented in Chap. 5 on the UN Security Council (UNSC), the arena for international politics and big decisions. UNSC decisions have effects across the world, from big capitals to small villages in isolated rural areas, but these decisions are also affected by internal patterns of action grounded in big politics. The Council produces far-reaching and extensive policy, Security Council Resolutions—but has an inward focus. The content of these resolutions and statements arrived at through negotiations and compromises could be understood as representing the overarching organizational intentions of the United Nations. These intentions travel through HQ bureaucracy in New York, where they are transformed into practical guidelines and policies for officials deployed to peacekeeping missions. In Liberia, these guidelines and policies get interpreted and negotiated, producing actions and effects aimed at building and consolidating a successful and long-term peace. It proved necessary to understand the dynamics of the decision-making process in the Council to trace how this process pertains to the production and reproduction of a set of state capacities.

The next site, or *place*, in the hierarchical organization is discussed in Chap. 7, which focuses on policy production at the headquarters of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operation (DPKO) in New York. The findings in this chapter are based on participant observation of a policy-producing section of the DPKO where I was working in 2009/2010. This

chapter discusses the purpose of policy and the UN from a headquarters perspective. I participated in activities, meetings, and conversations; in the production of guidelines, policies, and operational support to the field—but also in the production of documents intended to defend and provide legitimacy to peacebuilding actions vis-à-vis UN member-states in New York.

The third site, or *place*, is the implementation level, presented in Chaps. 5, 6, and 8. These chapters are based on field trips to Liberia between 2007 and 2016. They show how the UN and other international actors were engaged with the (re)production of state capacities in Liberia, and how this activity produced connections and disconnections.

The theoretical approach is the subject of Chap. 2; here let me simply note that I focus on anthropological perspectives on organization and sovereignty. This book explores a global system of intentions—involving people who operate in accordance with certain intentions and goals, which in turn, have been shaped by the context in which they were operationalized. The anthropological perspectives on organization and sovereignty serve to explain Liberia as a *franchised state*.

Franchised States

International relations (IR) theory has traditionally regarded sovereignty and sovereign states as the main building blocks of the international community. Theories here have generally converged on the idea that "the sovereign state is a self-contained entity and that the international system is a self-regulating one" (Bartelson 2014, p. 5). Drawing on the findings from my anthropological fieldwork, I focus on how sovereignty is organized and performed through institutionalization. This process involves a vast range of actors: states, bureaucracies, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, national organizations, local organizations, customary structures, foundations, fellowships, and so on, and is articulated in bureaucratic taxonomies and classifications. This view finds support also in recent IR theory:

> While sovereign states remain the main building blocks of the international system, the state has become something more akin to a franchise than a self-contained entity. And though the international system remains in place, it has become more epiphenomenal in relation to the strategies that keep this system in good working order. (Bartelson 2014, p. 5)

In this book, I explore empirically how international peacebuilding turns post-conflict countries into franchised states of the international community as an effect, or emergent property, of the international system. As I observed the myriads of international actors in central Monrovia, this impression only grew stronger. Chapter 6 describes how international consultants—the Scott Fellows in Liberian ministries—played a substantial role in the making of national strategies and policies. And in Chap. 8, I show how peacebuilders sought to incorporate local perceptions into the peacebuilding process. Taken together, these chapters present activities that make connections and disconnections in the peacebuilding process. The gap between the overarching aims, as incorporated in UNSC peacebuilding mandates, and realities on the ground resulted in a multitude of *catching-up* activities. These activities are taxonomical and produced specific effects and emergent properties of peacebuilding. For Liberia, with a population of only some 4 million, the impact of what became the biggest peacekeeping mission to date, with 15,000 peacekeepers deployed in 2003, was considerable.[1] The diversity of other international actors, international organizations, NGOs, and countries present in Monrovia and throughout the country adds to this impression. Many of the actors involved in the peacebuilding process in Liberia were working on tasks aimed at getting the country, or the state, up to the standards expected of a sovereign nation. These are standards inherent in, and are constituted by, international politics and the making of UNSC resolutions.

All these factors made Liberia a particularly interesting country for exploring practices pertaining to sovereignty. When diplomats at the UN Security Council in New York made decisions concerning the peacebuilding process in Liberia, when bureaucrats at UN headquarters gave "institutional language" to activities by drafting, for instance, the report of the annual meeting between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the UN member-states (C34), or guidelines for Civil Affairs officials in the field, or when Scott Fellows brokered at the interface between the international actors and Liberian national ministries, they were all involved in practices producing state effects and (re)producing state capacities, and were thus involved in constituting Liberia as a sovereign country. And yet, at the same time, they were undermining the object of the peacebuilding process by becoming part of the state.

A leading contemporary scholar of sovereignty, Jens Bartelson, has highlighted how sovereignty has been used as a template organizing political activity. He sees sovereignty not as something equivalent to "supreme

domestic authority" (2014, p. 84), but rather as a set of rights and legal status ascribed and contingent upon a state's responsible exercise, and how this concurs with "the norms and values of an imagined international community" (2014, p. 1). Bartelson goes on to show how sovereignty has been outsourced and become a template for governmentalization as a matter of restoring state capacities and sovereignty in states where authority structures have been severely weakened. These processes depend on assistance from the outside, which implies that: "the governmentalization of sovereignty is a way to maintain international order, as well as conversely. Thus, the continuity and viability of the international system depend on an array of maintenance functions carried out by a variety of non-state actors." (2014, p. 86). My study of the peacebuilding process in Liberia, tracing connections and disconnections across national borders, also became an argument for the need to understand sovereignty as not solely associated with the state, but as a template for practices of governing involving various actors—international organizations, NGOs, and donors, in addition to state actors. *Franchised states* builds on and further develops Bartelson's theoretical points about sovereignty through empirical exploration anchored in anthropological fieldwork.

Ownership

The term "ownership" as it pertains to peacebuilding processes requires clarification. After a brief historical introduction, I explain how the concept of ownership has been incorporated into the fields of development, peacebuilding, and statebuilding.

The connections between ownership, the state, and concepts of sovereignty have long historical traditions. Drawing on Hobbes, Montesquieu and Sieyes, scholars have described how conceptions of state sovereignty have connected with ideas about ownership and representation (see Holland 2010). All three operate with an *inside* and an *outside* of the state—which, for Hobbes, was determined by ownership. These historical concepts about sovereignty, ownership, and outside represent ideas about the international arena, and are reflected in the ways ownership is used today by the UN and by institutions in the field of development, peacebuilding, and statebuilding. In this book, I focus on how emphasis on creating national ownership to the peacebuilding process in Liberia has produced activities and effects that contribute to (re)producing sovereignty, while also turning the state into a franchise.

In peacekeeping and development work, the term *local ownership* emerged in the report of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) in 1996. This document highlighted the importance of locally owned development strategies, defining local people in their relation to donors. "Ownership" built further on an idea that had been circulating within the development industry for some time: that aid would become more effective if the recipients could control how it was being used. This view has since been followed by the World Bank, the OECD, the UNDP, and many NGOs. Local ownership was among the principles of the 2005 Paris Declaration of aid effectiveness, later followed up in Accra (2008) and in Busan (2011).

In the UN Capstone Doctrine document that sets the course for future UN peacekeeping operations, *national* and *local ownership* is presented as "critical to the successful implementation of a peace process" (UN DPKO/DFS 2008b, b, p. 39). The idea is that a UN-designed plan or policy can be successfully implemented only if the recipient country and its people can be involved in formulating and/or adapting the plans that have been made for them. The role of local and national ownership in maintaining the legitimacy of the operation is also highlighted:

> Effective approaches to national and local ownership not only reinforce the perceived legitimacy of the operation and support mandate implementation, they also help to ensure the sustainability of any national capacity once the peacekeeping operation has been withdrawn. (UN DPKO/DFS 2008b, b, p. 39)

The document further notes that a precondition for national and local ownership is a good understanding of the national context: "This includes understanding of the political context, as well as the wider socio-economic context" (ibid.). Thus, the UN DPKO sees local ownership as critical for the successful *implementation*, *legitimacy*, and *sustainability* of a peace processes. Two opposing views on peacebuilding and ownership can be identified today: (i) that peacebuilding is an activity where the international community increasingly seeks to equip post-conflict countries with "ownership" of their own country's politics, and (ii) that the only thing post-conflict countries gain through peacebuilding is ownership of an existing or given rationality of governing. In this book, I discuss these two views; instead of taking sides, I draw on my anthropological fieldwork and

anthropological explanations, focusing on institutional and taxonomical connections and disconnections as aspects of a *franchised state*.

The concept of ownership has remained vague. It is used to refer to various things, with an apparent tension between theory and practice. As used in the 2005 Paris Declaration, the term can refer to control over decisions, development policies, strategies, and coordination of development actions (de Renzio et al. 2008). But it can also refer to commitment to a set of policies irrespective of the process and actors behind the making of these policies, where the central point is the local government's commitment to policy *as if it is their own*. However, important aspects of power, decision-making and the production of categories get lost in this perspective: what is needed is anthropological exploration and analysis grounded in an anthropology of organizations and sovereignty. Heyman (1995) has noted the importance of putting power back into the anthropology of bureaucracy. This calls for well-founded insight into how taxonomies are made, and the particularities of various bureaucracies and organizations, as well as how bureaucracies shape political processes (Heyman 2004, p. 488). And that in turn requires tracing processes back and forth between the levels of hierarchies. With *franchised states*, this meant a studying-through project where I traced UN peacebuilding processes between Liberia and New York.

Fieldwork for this book began with a bottom-up study that involved traveling to Liberia in 2007. During this fieldwork, I got the strong impression that policy was being made elsewhere, perhaps in New York. But then, when I came to New York, this impression was turned upside down. That made me start thinking about what "national policy" refers to, what kind of phenomenon it is, what it means in the various processes in the bureaucracy. And did it mean to "have ownership" of something—was it commitment to the process, to the policy? Was it control over the decisions, the process, and the strategies? Or was it both these aspects? That led to my decision to pursue the making of policies and to trace bureaucratic connections.

I became curious as to how ownership was used and interpreted differently at various levels, and wanted to understand how the meaning of ownership traveled. I started to pay attention to what people meant when they talked about ownership and how they could create ownership of something. How were the various people who were involved with peacebuilding at the places I visited engaged in creating national ownership to international peacebuilding processes?

Ownershipping and Franchised States

The emic use of the term "ownership" offered a good point of departure for exploring sovereignty as a template and thereby Liberia as a franchised state. I started to focus more on how people created links as well as disconnections, taxonomies, and shared communicative platforms in their efforts to get other actors elsewhere to take responsibility for other parts of the same process. From the development buzzword "ownership," I have coined the term *ownershipping* as an analytical tool for grasping this activity. I draw on *ownershipping* to further establish *franchised states* as a concept and an analytical framework (Fig. 1.1).

Ownershipping as an analytical concept is further explored in Chap. 2. Here let me simply present the key content and understanding I have put into this concept. I use it to capture bureaucratic or taxonomical activities and practices relating to how actors representing various systems establish common platforms and an institutional language. The *shipping* aspect points to how concepts travel and new entities come to own them.

This makes it possible to capture the making of bureaucratic taxonomies, the making of commitment to policies, the creation of responsibility for processes and how various subjectivities in this process became connected and disconnected through the peacebuilding process in Liberia. *Ownershipping* serves to explicate how various meanings of words and

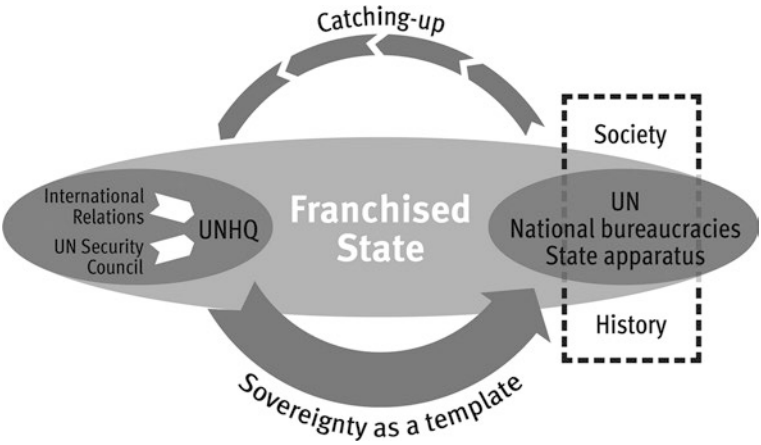

Fig. 1.1 Model of franchised states

practices were *shipped* up and down, back and forth within the global hierarchy through various individual efforts to connect and make sense. It provides a good point of entry for understanding variations in how people see the world and make connections and disconnections. Douglas has made a similar observation:

> Individuals, as they pick and choose among the analogies from nature those they will give credence to, are also picking and choosing at the same time their allies and opponents and the pattern of their future relations. Constituting their version of nature, they are monitoring the constitution of their society. In short, they are constructing a machine for thinking and decision-making on their own behalf. (Douglas 1986, p. 63)

In my fieldwork, I saw how efforts at creating national ownership took the form of *pick and choose* activities and as a *catching-up* phenomenon between actors, systems, and elements pertaining to the peacebuilding process in Liberia. I use the term *catching up* as a specific characteristic of bureaucratic entrepreneurship and as a mechanism of bureaucratization. Bureaucracies work through classification, and *catching up* refers to how bureaucracies define certain phenomena as important even before a bureaucratic language has been developed to describe them. The classification occurs afterwards, to create cognitive stability and a communicative sense and domain. *Catching up* describes how bureaucracies work, *ownershipping* offers a good tool for exploring such phenomena analytically. In my empirical studies of peacebuilding processes relating to Liberia, the way this phenomenon was linked with the actors' emphasis on national ownership served to establish connections, while excluding other potential connections.

This use of *ownershipping* as an analytical concept refers to an organizational, bureaucratic, and institutional phenomenon which created a social space where Liberian and international actors could work together, trying to create national ownership to the international peacebuilding strategies for Liberia. As this national ownership primarily involved commitment to policy and legitimacy to peacebuilding actions, it resulted in a reproduction of Liberia's status as a sovereign country—but it also contributed to turning the country into a *franchised state*. *Ownershipping* is thus an essential concept for understanding states as franchised and capturing sovereignty as a template for peacebuilding activities and processes. Using this concept analytically together with anthropological studying-through

fieldwork made it possible to trace how important ideas, categories, social spaces, policies, and taxonomies were produced and implemented.

By combining this with a perspective on Liberia's historical trajectory, I could explore aspects of power and sovereignty related to how the peacebuilding process in Liberia has connected with national elite interests and reproduced old patrimonial and clientelistic relations—thereby consolidating Liberia as a franchised state

It is necessary to study sovereignty not as an attribute, but as an idea or a template that can be grasped through anthropological exploration of practices pertaining to states and state apparatuses. Ownershipping is an analytical perspective that can make it possible to grasp constituent practices and how they relate to ideas of sovereignty, to study notions of sovereignty and how sovereignty pertains to institutionalization processes, to study how institutions are epiphenomena of practices. Ownershipping is also a perspective that makes it possible to grasp how practices and thinking are dependent upon terms, concepts, and institutions. This takes my anthropological exploration of peacebuilding beyond how practices related to sovereignty undermine certain forms of state practices. Ownershipping serves to explicate how sovereignty is organized and performed through such practices, and thus leads to an understanding of the Liberian state as a franchised state where sovereignty is not exclusively associated with state actors. Further, I hold that we should focus on sovereignty less as something defined by having ownership, and more as a template which can be studied empirically by focusing on practices in global institutionalization processes—like peacebuilding in Liberia.

Peacebuilding and Anthropology

Why should we seek to understand peacebuilding through anthropological perspectives on organizations and sovereignty? One answer is that peacebuilding is an organized activity. It is transnational in scope. It is a human construction which in turn shapes and influences people's lives across borders—sometimes through state apparatuses, sometimes bypassing state apparatuses. It is performed through organizations and it penetrates various forms of sovereign claims. In this way peacebuilding is about how larger systems and processes influence local ways of life.

Another answer is that by applying these anthropological perspectives it becomes possible to analyze peacebuilding without applying a state-centric form of exploration. We can explore how peacebuilding is an organized

activity geared towards creating and implementing taxonomies; we can trace how and where these taxonomies are being produced, and explore how they impact, regulate, and change local ways of life. Together, the two anthropological perspectives enable us to understand and trace how peacebuilding has effects beyond the intended and formalized ones.

Anthropological perspectives on organization concern what peacebuilding actors do as part of an organization; the perspectives on sovereignty are more concerned with how peacebuilding affects social forms as a template for activities. But, as we shall see, these two perspectives are interconnected. Understanding peacebuilding through these perspectives might involve many paths. Questions that could be explored include: How do aspects of power and globalization as they pertain to peacebuilding processes contribute to organize and orchestrate ways of life? How do state actors and state-like actors mobilize resources from external and international relations? What happens when different systems and organizations meet? And how are state authorities, transnational authorities, and traditional authorities interconnected through peacebuilding? I do not propose an anthropology of peacebuilding—I merely indicate various trajectories that perspectives on peacebuilding could take.

This book focuses on UN peacebuilding and the civilian dimension of UN peacebuilding, which means activity concerning statebuilding. During the Cold War, the UN Security Council was repeatedly jammed by the veto powers. Since then, however, statebuilding has become a global, multibillion-dollar industry involving large numbers of people and resources across the globe. It has evolved from the traditional concept of peacekeeping usually associated with the "Blue Helmets." The first UN peacekeeping mission was established in 1948. Since then, 69 UN missions have been deployed to unstable countries and regions around the world. In total, these missions have involved hundreds of thousands of military personnel and tens of thousands of UN police and other civilian officials. Here it is worth noting that 57 of the total of 71 UN missions were deployed after 1988. Between 1989 and 1994, the UN authorized 20 new operations, and the number of peacekeepers grew from 11,000 to 75,000 per year. Recent decades have witnessed a remarkable growth in international peacebuilding.

The number of actors working on peacebuilding across the world varies from time to time, but in March 2017, there were in total more than 113 000 people from 124 countries, deployed to 16 UN operations. The budget from July 2016 to end June 2017 was USD 7.8 billion. In addition

come all the people working for NGOs, states, think tanks, and other international organizations, whose activities often come very close to what could be seen as "statebuilding." Peacebuilding has become a globe-spanning activity involving substantial amounts of money and resources. In, for instance, Liberia and Afghanistan, the resources invested by external actors have even exceeded the country's gross domestic product (Berdal and Zaum 2013, p. 2).

With the end of the Cold War, the Security Council suddenly found itself able to authorize peacekeeping operations based on the established framework: "the floodgates opened and the peacekeeping directorate of the UN Secretariat became a very busy place" (Fukuyama 2014, p. 314). Peacekeeping could evolve into peacebuilding and statebuilding because the importance of institutions for sustainable peace and for the maintenance of international law and order was recognized. Anthropological analyses of the state rarely include processes pertaining to such international involvement in states, which is possible through the lens of *ownershipping*, although they are important when trying to understand it.

The study of peacebuilding has gained increasing momentum within the social sciences, and political science in particular. However, the academic approach to peacebuilding has been, at least partially, obscured by a lack of theoretical pluralism on the one hand and, on the other, by the difficulties of getting access to the day-to-day activities of those working in this field. Much of this literature concentrates on explaining why peacebuilding doesn't work, with less on how these processes and initiatives impact on local ways of life. Some analysts explain the failures of peacebuilding projects in terms of the focus on project design or lack of resources. Others describe failures of statebuilding projects by noting how international peacebuilding operations tend to employ standardized approaches and statebuilding methods. Scholars have also questioned the practices of peacebuilding in relation to the prevailing global norms and the global order they claim peacebuilding serves.

These views on peacebuilding are more concerned with explaining the failures of peacebuilding, with less attention to the specific political, cultural, or historical context of the nation-state in question. These views do not seem to problematize concepts of state, sovereignty, and organizations in the same way as anthropological perspectives are able to do.

Nevertheless, we may note a trend in studies of peacebuilding perhaps inspired by anthropological perspectives. Some scholars seem to have

found inspiration in anthropology and perhaps in a romanticized understanding of "ethnography" and "ethnographic authority." In the literature on peacebuilding, this has resulted in "the local turn," focusing on the significance of incorporating local knowledge and local agency, to improve peacebuilding engagement and make peacebuilding more effective. Nevertheless, this literature has tended to view peacebuilding as an art of social engineering, and has focused on improving its effectiveness and evaluating its activities accordingly. Inspired by the anthropologist's perspective "from below," some of these scholars have conducted semi-anthropological fieldwork, even long-term participant observation. But while the approach and method leading to the local turn in the peacebuilding literature have been inspired by anthropology, the bottom-up approach that is being advocated nevertheless remains elusive. One reason may be that anthropological theory does not seem to have gained the same momentum as the empirical anthropological approach, together with the fact that most of the local-turn literature is not based on anthropological long-term fieldwork.

As a result, notions of state, organization, social institution, and sovereignty tend to be taken for granted. Anthropological theory perspectives offer opportunities to problematize these aspects, providing alternative perspectives on peacebuilding by exploring effects in diverse topographies of social forms—but also by tracing how taxonomies and categories are produced, where they come from, how they are implemented, and their emergent properties.

Peacebuilding and Global Hopping

In his *Global Shadows* (2006), Ferguson discusses "Africa" in an explicitly "non- or supra-ethnographic way." In a series of essays, he moves more freely across analytic and scalar levels than is usual in traditional anthropology. He focuses on how "structural adjustments" have resulted in a "new sort of governance" and how "swarms of 'nongovernmental organizations […] have arisen, taking advantage of the shift in donor policies that moved funding for projects away from mistrusted state bureaucracies and into what were understood as more 'direct' or 'grassroot' channels of implementation" (Ferguson 2006, p. 38). Globalization, he argues, should be understood more as "*global hopping*" than as "*flow*," as it connects and fills contiguous spaces by "hopping" and connecting points in a transnational grid or network, while excluding the space between the points (2006,

pp. 47–48). This represents a challenge to our understanding of globalization: "the view from Africa challenges us to develop new, more situated understandings of emerging global patterns, understandings that attend more adequately not only to exciting new inter-connections, but also to the material inequalities and spatial and scalar disjunctures that such interconnections both depend on and, in some ways, help produce" (2006, p. 49). Ferguson approaches these issues through a supra-ethnographic angle, arguing that global integration coexists with global exclusion (2006, p. 41). I have employed a studying-through approach combined with multi-sited long-term anthropological fieldwork, tracing connections and disconnections similar to those Ferguson is interested in from his bird's-eye view.

In a country hosting a UN peacekeeping mission, communities are changed because of the global connections made. The people variously involved in peacebuilding processes come from a wide range of backgrounds, and are very likely to see and experience things in many different ways. When the peacebuilding process brings them together to find solutions to problems of various kinds, encounters between the systems they represent also occur. Such encounters can be described as social *interfaces*: "a critical point of intersection between different lifeworlds, social fields or levels of social organization, where social discontinuities based upon discrepancies in values, interests, knowledges and power, are most likely to be located" (Long 2001, p. 243). Such interfaces emerge because of discontinuities in peacebuilding processes. In my fieldwork, this became apparent several times at all empirical levels. The interfaces often consisted of multifaceted social encounters between people representing different systems or parts of systems—for instance, the UNSC, UN HQ in New York, the UN in Liberia, the government of Liberia, local state apparatuses, NGOs, consultants, civil society in Liberia, and traditional structures in Liberia. These social interfaces created situations where it became necessary to seek common ground.

I encountered several ongoing processes where problems, challenges, or obstacles between differing sets of social fields were triggered by the changes accelerated by the peacebuilding process. In some cases, these discontinuities were linked by *translation*, *negotiation*, and *transformation* (see Chaps. 6 and 8). In other cases, discontinuities like disagreements, or systems, were ignored, and policy was simply implemented (see Chap. 5). Giorgio Agamben (2005) offers an approach to sovereignty focused on politics, negotiation, contestation, and crisis handling, and argues for an

empirical as opposed to a legal approach. From this perspective, sovereignty can best be comprehended by studying practice as embedded within a bigger project. Focusing on historical trajectories pertaining to the Liberian state (see Chap. 4), I explain how similar connections and disconnections are being made in Liberia, but with characteristics distinct to Liberia, shaped through history and through global connections.

This book is an attempt to speak in an ethnographic way about broader questions concerning international peacebuilding and its role in our world. Using the various chapters as a way of organizing my multi-sited fieldwork makes it possible to move across geographical spaces, scale, and analytic levels, to follow up on empirical clues and findings more freely than with the usual accounts of international organizations, institutionalization and global enterprises. From fieldwork observations, I turn to some more general and abstract questions. Where Ferguson used a collection of essays to try out certain ways of thinking about objects (2006), I present ethnographically driven chapters from different aspects as well as different geographical sites of peacebuilding.

All the chapters converge around peacebuilding as an institutionalization process in the world, ultimately leading to the discussion of state formation as a global phenomenon. The focus is not as much on the technical necessities of peacebuilding, as on peacebuilding as a category through which social fields and worlds are shaped and structured, and franchised states are constituted. And, as we shall see, this category is socially and historically constructed, imbued with power according to which people shape and (re)shape their lives.

Notes

1. In 2007, UNMIL was overtaken by MONUC (United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) as the biggest peacekeeping mission: MONUC increased the number of its uniformed personnel to 22,016 (see Security Council Resolution 1856).

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CHAPTER 2

Understanding Peacebuilding Through Anthropological Perspectives on Organizations and Sovereignty

Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical underpinnings necessary to establish ownershipping as an analytical perspective for exploring Liberia as a franchised state. It draws on several subcategories of anthropological theory, shedding light on important aspects and findings presented in the empirical chapters on how activities aimed at creating national ownership in peacebuilding processes relate to concepts of *sovereignty*.

Using a cross-cutting empirical focus that draws on several theory traditions in anthropology, this book traces the effects of ideas about sovereignty through various social systems and geographical locations. In order to construct the theoretical foundations for the argument about franchised states, it was natural to turn to anthropological theory, with a studying-through approach to theory as well. This chapter juxtaposes the lines of selected subcategories of anthropological theory and explains my choices of theory. In conducting participant observation and fieldwork within an organization, I have drawn on anthropological perspectives on organizations in exploring and analyzing the findings. However, since I have traced the activities and policies of one organization through various bureaucratic levels to implementation levels and then back again, my work could also be said to fall within the anthropology of policy and the anthropology of bureaucracy. These traditions have supplied important theory insights, but not sufficiently exhaustive for analysis of the empirical

N.N. Schia, *Franchised States and the Bureaucracy of Peace*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65569-7_2

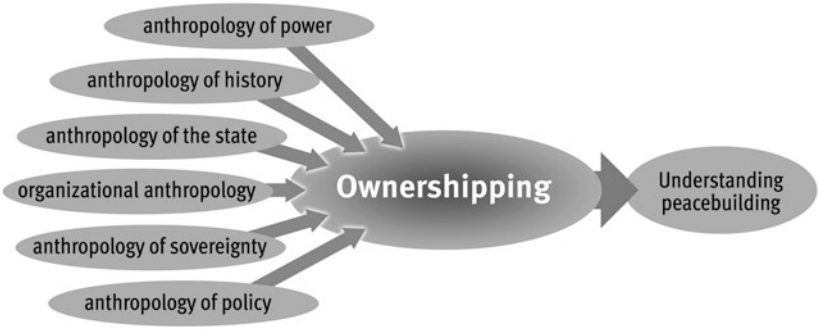

Fig. 2.1 Understanding peacebuilding through ownershipping

findings. In exploring the effects of an international organization's efforts at restoring a war-torn country, I have also entered an empirical field concerned with topics studied in development anthropology. And, since peacebuilding in a post-conflict country is in many ways an activity directed at restoring the institutions, apparatus, and infrastructure of the state, and because a UN peacebuilding operation cannot be deployed without the consent of the country in question, my empirical work also draws on the anthropology of the state (Fig. 2.1).

This chapter discusses the implications of these anthropological perspectives as they relate to ownershipping and thus how ownershipping serves to explicate Liberia as a franchised state. I argue that sovereignty as a template affects bureaucratic and institutional processes in peacebuilding that can be seen as leading to franchised states. Seeking to provide peacebuilding processes with legitimacy and efficiency, the UN has emphasized the importance of creating national ownership. In Liberia, this has led to a range of activities that serve to link the Liberian state with the UN in a relation of mutual dependency. In this way, the UN shifts from being an epiphenomenon to a condition of possibility.

Anthropology and the Unbundling of Sovereignty

In the classic understanding of sovereignty, the sovereign power has absolute and unrestrained power. Anthropological perspectives on sovereignty differ from those of political science mainly in that political science has tended to have a rather formalistic focus on state and sovereignty alike,

whereas anthropological perspectives focus more on how sovereignty is performed in practice, how sovereignty is configured, and how sovereignty is practiced in everyday life. Whereas political scientists have tended to be more concerned with de jure sovereignty and legal rights, anthropologists are more concerned with de facto sovereignty, how it is performed in practice.

In addition to the works of Thomas Hobbes, those of Emile Durkheim, Michel Foucault, and Giorgio Agamben stand out as the most influential on current anthropological perspectives on sovereignty. Here let me briefly mention some key points.

Hobbes was inspired by thinkers such as Jean Bodin, who saw sovereignty as the absolute power vested in the commonwealth. Hobbes is often credited with defining sovereignty with a focus on the imagined social contract between the ruler and the people. Following Hobbes and Bodin, political scientists have tended to view sovereignty as absolute power within a given territory. This understanding presupposes entities and boundaries, and connects sovereignty with territory, the state, and thus also an imagined international community of other sovereign entities. Many political science studies of peacebuilding employ this understanding of sovereignty.

There is a substantial literature on sovereignty, ranging from Hobbes and the absolutist state (2010[1651]), via Weber (1978) to Foucault's concept of governmentality (1991a). The Westphalian concept of sovereignty links authority, population, and territories in specific ways and builds on the idea that the world can be divided into fixed territorial units with boundaries. Robert Jackson has noted two types of sovereignty—negative and positive (1991). *Negative sovereignty* refers to how states are equal participants in the international system, are recognized as states by other states, and have exclusive authority within their own territory. *Positive sovereignty* refers to how states are able to control and govern their territory. According to Jackson, states that lack positive sovereignty but maintain their negative sovereignty are *quasi-states*. For Jackson, post-conflict Liberia could probably serve as an empirical example of a quasi-state. However, others have argued that describing states as quasi-states reflects an ethnocentric worldview that limits the perception of such states to unsuccessful copies of the Western state (Eriksen 2011, p. 234; Hansen and Stepputat 2001, p. 6). In *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (1999), Stephen D. Krasner criticizes the traditional understanding of sovereignty based on territory, autonomy, recognition, and control, and argues that

states have never been as "sovereign" as described in the traditional literature. He lists four ways that the term "sovereignty" has been used in the literature. The first one is the domestic aspect of sovereignty that focuses on authority within the state, "the degree of control exercised by public entities and the organization of authority within territorial boundaries" (Krasner 1995, p. 118). The second component deals with the ability to regulate "the flow of goods, persons, and ideas across territorial boundaries" (ibid.). The third component concerns "the right of certain actors to enter into international agreements […] Sovereign states can make treaties" (ibid., p. 119). The fourth component is the "Westphalian" model, which Krasner describes as "an institutional arrangement for organizing political life that is based on territoriality and autonomy. States exist in specific territories. Within these territories, domestic political authorities are the only arbiters of legitimate behavior" (ibid.). Because the components of sovereignty are constantly being compromised, there is no such thing as sovereignty: indeed, it is misleading to understand states as "independent rational actors" because that ignores situations where rulers are not able to make autonomous choices. There are many international principles that rulers must, or choose to, abide by, including "human rights, minority rights, democracy, communism, and fiscal responsibility. Therefore there has never been some golden age of the Westphalian state," Krasner concludes (ibid., p. 115).

Steve Smith, who sees sovereignty as a constitutive concept, has criticized Krasner's argument. Globalization has had fundamental effects on world politics, he contends: "these effects impact on governance to such an extent that they result in the construction of new constitutive rules and norms" (Smith 2001, p. 212). Diffuse patterns of governance involving a range of actors and the blurring of boundaries are major features of the world today. This alters "both the identity of states, and constrain[s] their behavior, thereby affecting their sovereignty in terms of at least three (Westphalian, domestic and interdependence) of Krasner's four senses of the term" (ibid.). In this situation, "states have to adapt so as to be able to develop strategies capable of dealing with the pressures of governance in a globalized world" (ibid., p. 216). However, Smith stresses, the fact that sovereignty is constantly being compromised does not mean that it is weakening or disappearing, but that the content of sovereignty is dynamic and changeable. Sovereignty as a concept is thus being tested from several angles, and recent global processes pose challenges to the understanding of territory and international recognition as the main attributes of sover-

eignty. As Krasner notes, we need new institutions and the creation of shared sovereignty for collapsed and failing states (2004).

Albeit using various entry points, anthropologists contend the necessity of studying concepts of sovereignty empirically. Instead of focusing on the external attributes, Hansen and Stepputat propose shifting the focus "towards issues of internal constitution of sovereign power within states through the exercise of violence over bodies and populations" (2005, p. 2).

In the twentieth century, many anthropologists also took up questions concerning sovereignty through studies of the colonial world and how the concept of sovereignty was biased toward the European experience. Here anthropologists found, as Hansen and Stepputat put it, "a twilight zone of multiple, indeterminate configurations of power and authority" (2006, p. 8). Anthropological perspectives came to challenge the conventional understanding of sovereignty linked with territorial nation-states by locating and exploring the dynamics of nonstate and traditional forms of sovereignty (see also Hansen and Stepputat 2001, 2005).

In their edited volume *African Political Systems* from 1940, Meyer Fortes and Evans Pritchard mention several kinds of overlapping registers of sovereignty. They describe sovereign power as fragmented and distributed among many informal local authorities and groups rarely including more than a hundred people. This view does not reserve sovereignty as a property of the state alone but describes systems of competing forms of sovereignty. If applied to current peacebuilding activities, this could result in criticizing peacebuilding for being grounded in a Western understanding of the state—and, indeed, that has been a main argument in the critique of liberal peacebuilding. But that also implies a reification of peacebuilding, seeing it as based on an a priori ideology and thus not necessary to trace. Here anthropological perspectives on organizations can prove useful, for instance, for tracing how taxonomies are produced and how organizational intentions may travel and change.

Some decades after *African Political Systems* was published, Michel Foucault (1980) argued that one had to "cut the king's head off" to understand the decentralized, multiple, and complex power of the state. According to Foucault, the state is not a central, monolithic entity but manifests itself throughout society. This approach represented an attempt at replacing the analysis of sovereignty with *governmentality*. Attention shifted from the forms of power at their central locations to a concern with webs of power relations extending beyond the rules and the organization of these. Foucault argued that these webs of power permeated the very

constitutions of bodies: a phenomenon he termed "biopolitics." However, as Foucault takes the Western model of the state as the model for analysis, his analysis does not necessarily capture more authoritarian states, or *state-like* activities—such as customary structures and secret societies, which in many African countries, including Liberia, assume responsibility for many functions normally associated with the state apparatus in the West. These perspectives are also important for understanding aspects of peacebuilding activities.

Foucault stopped short of fully connecting the juridico-institutional and the biopolitical models of power. Giorgio Agamben (1998) developed a link and his starting point is inspired by the German jurist, Carl Schmitt, who declared: the "sovereign is he who decides on the exception" (1985, p. 5). According to Agamben, analysis of the techniques of the self cannot be separated from the political techniques. And that is where sovereignty reemerges.

Many anthropologists have picked up on Agamben. The key point here is that sovereignty as an ontological ground of power is abandoned. As Hansen and Stepputat explain, it is understood as a "tentative and always emergent form of authority grounded in violence that is performed and designed to generate loyalty, fear, and legitimacy" (2006, p. 3). Applying such a perspective to peacebuilding entails anthropological fieldwork aimed at empirically identifying social processes of inclusion and exclusion. Through this perspective, I hold, we can understand how peacebuilders and UN officials make new connections and disconnections through various projects and actions, as facilitators of claims to sovereignty.

Although Agamben defines the bottom line of sovereignty, he does not say anything about how this is played out in real life. Anthropologists can approach the questions raised by Agamben from a more empirical approach, highlighting social relations within ways of life existing under conditions of sovereignty. Some of these anthropological approaches even have their own labels—like *informal sovereignties*, *imperial sovereignty*, *wild sovereignty*, *nested* and *outsourced sovereignty*, *multiple sovereignties*, *graduated sovereignty*, *unbundling sovereignty*, *chaotic forms of sovereignty*, and *selective sovereignties*, each with its own distinctive way of pursuing an understanding of sovereignty. I am particularly interested in following up on the pathways represented by *imperial sovereignty*, *informal sovereignty*, *wild sovereignty*, *unbundling sovereignty*, and *graduated sovereignty*.

Bjørn Enge Bertelsen (2009) describes how legal reforms in Mozambique have exposed a complex legal and political landscape ranging from traditional healers and police to government bureaucrats. Drawing on Comaroff and Comaroff's *Law and Disorder in the Postcolony* (2006), Bertelsen argues for the increasing relevance of an anthropology that can transcend the focus on state-centrism by turning to legal pluralism. Through empirical examples from Mozambique, he shows the need to incorporate cosmological, traditional, and historically sedimented authority structures, and concludes that it is better to talk about multiple sovereignties than heterogeneous states. Bertelsen uses this approach to explain how concepts and practices of popular justice were redefined and served to reorganize the spaces and domains of state order during the riots in 2008.

Bertelsen's multiple sovereignties resemble Bruce Kapferer's (2004, 2005) description of "wild" forms of sovereignties, focused on the uncontrollable aspects of different sovereign forms. Wild forms of sovereignty, and also the "chaotic" forms of sovereignty used by for instance Jakob Rigi (2009), refer to political situations where there are competing forms of sovereignty or where there is rivalry over claims to sovereign. Drawing on Agamben's perspective on sovereignty, Caroline Humphrey (2007) has described how transport entrepreneurs in the post-Soviet Siberian city of Ulan-Ude formed spontaneous and ad hoc structures of power that could be recognized as sovereign (2007). She refers to these as localized forms of sovereignty, nested within higher sovereignties—thereby demonstrating how anthropological perspectives are able to capture new and different aspects of sovereignty.

In their edited volume, Lars Buur and Helene Maria Kyed (2007) explore how traditional authority gets incorporated into the state in several African countries through state and donor policies, and how this process of retraditionalization produces connections and disconnections among various different actors. In particular, they note how this process entails risks for traditional leaders and their downward accountability and legitimacy.

Mats Utas (2009) employs another perspective on similar processes by applying *imperial sovereignty* as a starting point for analyzing violence in Liberia. He draws on Hardt and Negri's (2001) version of empire, where political and social control is maintained by allowing and creating disorder and chaos in the fringe zones. This is somewhat similar to anthropological perspectives on bureaucracies and how they produce taxonomies, as held

by, for instance, Josiah Heyman (1995), only on a different scale. Heyman is concerned with how bureaucracies and organizations employ techniques of power and how official goals often mystify or obscure the real application of organized power. This, he goes on to say, can be explored by studying the interplay between bureaucratic work and societal constitution, how social orders bind differentiated wholes together.

Utas describes the contested sovereignty of the Liberian state during the civil war in the 1990s. He sees local forms of violence as means of control and claims that Liberia has never been in a sovereign position in the Hobbesian sense: its sovereignty has always been contested by various other sovereign bodies—states, nations, communities, self-appointed big men and leaders. Utas describes how international actors and shady business activities have fueled local Liberian warlords (2009, p. 282) and uses this approach to analyze the current peacebuilding process in Liberia. He describes how the UN and other international actors are taking over state and civil society functions (e.g., schools, hospitals, and prisons).

Bernhard Helander takes a similar path when questioning whether Somalia, which is segmented by clanship, really needs a state. Restoring the state is a priority for international agencies and, as he says, it reflects "the modern world's love affair with the concept of the sovereign state" (2005, p. 17). To return to the initial question, these anthropological perspectives can explore how the UN and the international system have a built-in bias toward working with state-like mechanisms, constituting franchised states—but, unless properly balanced, this may strengthen violent gatekeepers at the expense of civil society.

Another anthropological perspective on sovereignty is "graduated sovereignty," used by Ahiwa Ong (2000) and post-development theory to show flexible management of sovereignty. This perspective highlights how states move from being administrators of a national entity to regulators of diverse spaces and populations that link with global markets. This approach views sovereignty as a dispersed system, or in Ong's words, as a model of "galactic governance" contextualized to the different mechanisms of global capitalism in different locations and sites in the world (2000, p. 96).

The sociologist Saskia Sassen, often mentioned by anthropologists, also highlights how transnational processes have reshaped previous assumptions on the relationship between nation-states, sovereignty and territoriality (1999). Because these processes have altered this relationship and reorganized political power and regulatory mechanisms, sovereignty can no longer be viewed solely as something belonging to the modern state.

Rather, sovereignty is disentangled from the nation-state and connected to supranational and NGOs. To reflect this situation, Sassen suggests, we should speak of the "unbundling of sovereignty." The fact that some of the regulatory mechanisms formerly managed by states are now handled by international actors does not render the nation-state irrelevant. Rather, we should study how they are interconnected, entangled, and franchised. That fits well with anthropological perspectives on organizations, particularly in studying how global processes such as peacebuilding are actively engaged in reorganizing political power and regulatory mechanisms. This perspective calls for a studying-through approach and appears particularly interesting when compared with peacebuilding as a global enterprise, which brings us to the next topic: anthropological perspectives on organizations.

Anthropological Perspectives on Organizations: Outsourcing State Responsibilities

What most characterizes organizational anthropology is perhaps that it is not one single, unambiguous track within the field of anthropology: there are several trajectories. These are concerned with the understanding of social forms and how they emerge from societal life, but also with how these forms affect and impact back on human action. Thus, they are concerned with social phenomena that lie at the heart of anthropology. Moreover, anthropological perspectives on organizations are inspired by and shared with other disciplines, such as political science, sociology, and organizational theory.

After outlining some trajectories, I describe how anthropological perspectives on organizations have shifted from focusing on the *inside* of organizations to greater interest in, for instance, connections and friction, or how organizations are connected and entangled in other spheres of social life, investigating the effects of organizations at interfaces between other social systems and life. Then, drawing on the work of Bronislaw Malinowski (1984[1922]) as well as Mary Douglas (1986), I note the importance of combining institutionalization theory with anthropological perspectives on organization. This is a point also made by others, like Garsten and Nyqvist (2013a, b), who call for anthropological studies of how local ways of life are interlinked with larger systems and organizations, and how such organizations shape the world. This also makes it pertinent to combine anthropological perspectives on organizations and sovereignty.

Although this perspective overlaps with several others, "organization" in anthropology has traditionally referred to something different from, for instance, institution, bureaucracy, and the state. But as we shall see, also these are part of organizational anthropology.

Classic anthropological studies of organizations include Warner and Mayo's study of Western Electric's Hawthorn Plant in the late 1920s and early 1930s. They were intrigued by how the informal organization differed from the formal. In 1994, Susan Wright followed up on this perspective in an edited volume that examined how anthropology could explore internal cultures in organizations. Together with Cris Shore, she has also explored how organizations exist in a constant state of *organizing* and how this process revolves around the concept of policy (1997, p. 5). One implication of this is that anthropology can trace and describe who is empowered by a changing organizational culture. A more recent example of anthropological studies of international organizations is found in Birgit Muller's (2013) edited volume on politics and policymaking in multilateral organizations, exploring how people working in the UN produce consistent and harmonized representations. The various chapters investigate "how international organizations actually do shape the world in often unexpected and unpredictable ways, sometimes following agendas that are hardly made explicit" (ibid., p. 2). Muller argues that "the gloss of harmony" hides the politics and global governance and overrides local governance. In their edited volume, *Palaces of Hope* (2017), Ronald Niezen and Maria Sapignoli gather key anthropological contributions to global organizations, exploring international organizations and how they are confronted by the structures of international power. *Palaces of Hope* further demonstrates how international organizations are institutions loosely connected through common organizational networks.

A perspective on internal aspects of organizations offers insights on the distinctiveness of different organizations and how organizational taxonomies are produced. The political scientist Michael Barnett (1999) provides an interesting work on UN peacebuilding from a similar perspective, showing how organizational discourses influence organizational decisions. He describes, from participant observation, how he as a consultant in the US delegation to the UN became part of an organizational culture where the UNSC did not want to call the massacre in Rwanda in 1994 "genocide," because that would demand action from the UN.

Understanding how these organizations work and their internal culture is a key aspect within this perspective on organizations. However, it does

not seek to explain organizations and how they produce effects and friction in interfaces with other social systems.

Douglas' perspective on how institutions influence individual thoughts and how individuals come to share categories of thought is very useful in combination with the perspective on organizations and institutions. According to Douglas, what to be explained is how humans, by picking and choosing, construct patterns and machines for thinking and decision-making on their own behalf (Douglas 1986, p. 63).

This perspective implies a shift from studying internal aspects of organizational systems to exploring how organizations produce effects in ways not evident in their entirety to those working within an organization. This is not unlike how Malinowski (1984[1922]) described the *Kula* system of exchange as a social organization. It is difficult, if indeed possible, he said, for people within a given organization to have a complete overview or knowledge of the totality of any of their social structures. People may know their motives, the purposes of individual actions, and the rules of the game—but understanding how these, in turn, shape collective institutions is a task for anthropologists, Malinowski maintained. In Douglas' view, this calls for an anthropological exploration of how organizations produce unintended consequences or emergent properties.

Thus, in studying organizations as institutions, the point is not to focus on the internal culture alone, but on how organizations make connections and disconnections—making the study of organizations the study of interfaces. Peacebuilding is a transnational organizational activity that can be studied in this way: its interfaces with various social institutions are many and the effects are interesting. This is particularly relevant for studying statebuilding aspects relating to peacebuilding processes, as many peacebuilding activities are geared toward making features of various different systems recognizable to the others. This produces emergent properties that impact on people's lives while it also shapes peacebuilding.

Douglas' combination of institutions and organization would also open up for studies of peacebuilding that could follow up Wolf's call for studies of how structural power enables certain kind of behavior while neglecting others, even making them impossible (1990). In his article "Power in Political Anthropology," John Gledhill (2009) offers a review of anthropological perspectives on power since the 1970s. He underlines how anthropology, by exploring the power behind claims to sovereignty, becomes engaged with fundamental global social problems, and notes

especially the global role of NGOs and state effects produced by nonstate organizations.

Another perspective sees bureaucracies as an administrative aspect of organizations; also here we find a long tradition of anthropological work, generally inspired by Max Weber. These studies gained momentum in the 1980s and the 1990s. Notable here was the debate between Heyman, Handelman, and Hertzfeld on power and bureaucracy, spurred by Heyman's "Putting Power in the Anthropology of Bureaucracy" (1995). Heyman showed how contradictions in US immigration policy produced bureaucratic side effects and emergent properties. Describing bureaucracies as dynamic, he explained them in a cultural, political, and historical context.

Studying the bureaucratic aspects of peacebuilding and the power to produce taxonomies might lead to critique of peacebuilding as a *postcolonial activity*. That, in turn, evokes discussions similar to Ong's perspective on graduated sovereignty; or might lead to a focus on a history of extraversion and how the recipients of peacebuilding become entangled in global processes, and exert resistance. Anthropological perspectives on bureaucracy see contradictory perspectives, emergent properties and conflicts are the main drivers in the evolution of bureaucracies. This is also a perspective employed by Nils Brunsson in his *The Organization of Hypocrisy* (2002), where he argues that organizational legitimacy is produced through conflicts rather than unity. In this way, his point is also quite similar to the views of Hardt and Negri (2001) on how the empire prospers by permitting local differences.

Another way of pursuing this perspective on peacebuilding could be to investigate peacebuilding as a transnational bureaucracy in the making. June Nash (2004) has studied what she calls "transnational civil society" by tracing how networks of associations have expanded the parameters of political engagements for marginal groups in Mexico and the Zapatista army of national liberation. Similarly, Ferguson and Gupta (2002), using empirical examples from India, note the outsourcing of responsibilities to nonstate transnational organizations, and how this has produced a system of transnational governmentality where distinctions between NGOs and states becomes less relevant in modern societies.

Anthropological perspectives on organization can provide fruitful ways of tracing how, through peacebuilding activities, some responsibilities traditionally associated with state apparatuses are outsourced to international

organizations, NGOs, and multinational corporations—producing franchised states.

Governmentality approaches tend to focus overly on practices that construct the state. anthropological perspectives on sovereignty and organization are useful for capturing diversity and competing social forms and power. Here it is relevant to note Wolf's call for studying structural power in order to explore what organizes and orchestrates claims to power in these other settings. In this way, production of taxonomies and categories becomes rewarding when studying peacebuilding. The combination of anthropological perspectives on sovereignty and organizations has much to offer here.

Anthropology of Power and the Shaping of State Formations

My approach has involved studying how *practices* become institutionalized and how they arise and change through interactions. By describing how actors at all levels have influenced the process, I show how power exists and is produced across levels and contexts. Power is understood here as something relational, as part of relationships—as opposed to the classical sociological monolithic understanding of the term. Berger and Luckmann (1979, pp. 70–71) have shown how "all human activity is subject to habitualization [and how this] provides the direction and the specialization of activity that is lacking in man's biological equipment." Further, they describe how habitualization constitutes a platform for human activity by providing accountability and stability to social life, which, in turn, "opens up a foreground for deliberation and innovation" (p. 71). Where shared habitualized actions form a reciprocal typification, institutionalization occurs. This implies that institutions are built up over time; and, since they are products of their specific history, knowing their historical trajectory is relevant for understanding them and aspects of power pertaining to institutions. Because institutions provide predefined ways of acting, they channel social activities in certain ways, while eliminating other theoretically possible ways. Social activities that become institutionalized are also put under social control (Berger and Luckmann 1979, p. 73). This, in turn, indicates that aspects of power—as implied in social relations, social processes, meaning and knowledge—help to constitute certain versions, while discrediting others.

For such institutions to work, these versions must be treated as unquestionable, even *sacred* (Durkheim 2001; Rappaport 1979). However, such unquestionable reifications are not carved in stone. They require continuous nourishment: institutions are constantly *in the making* (Berger and Luckmann 1979).

In my fieldwork, I saw how efforts at creating national ownership took the form of *pick and choose* activities and as a *catching-up* phenomenon involving various actors, systems, and elements of the peacebuilding process in Liberia. Taking the implications of Berger and Luckmann's view on institutions, I use the term *catching up* as a specific characteristic of bureaucratic entrepreneurship and as a mechanism of bureaucratization. Bureaucracies work through classification, and *catching up* refers to how bureaucracies define certain things as important even before a bureaucratic language has been developed to describe them. Classification occurs afterward, to create cognitive stability and a communicative sense and domain. *Catching up* describes how bureaucracies work; *ownershipping* provides a tool for exploring such bureaucratic processes analytically. In my empirical studies of peacebuilding processes relating to Liberia, the way these bureaucratic processes were linked with the actors' emphasis on national ownership revealed an asymmetry. This asymmetry involved sovereignty as a governmentalized *template* for peacebuilding activities and connected systems and processes while other potential connections were sorted out.

Anthropologists are increasingly studying complex societies. Or "if the focus is on a small-scale society, their interconnectedness with large-scale society and, ultimately, the global system is nearly always emphasized" (Hylland Eriksen 2010, pp. 201–202). Halvard Vike (2012) acknowledges the danger of various pitfalls in attempting to grasp complex social fields and large-scale patterns. Among the immediate challenges he notes are the degree of precision and the difficulties in achieving a satisfactory level of comparison. However, where something is lost, other things are often gained: as Vike points out, anthropology may prove to have a useful set of tools that can help generate new sets of academic questions to empirical fields such as variations of state formations (2012, p. 142).[1]

Building on fieldwork in Liberia, I analyze such modifying forces and patterns through *ownershipping*. As explained, the concept of *ownership-*

ping is employed to capture bureaucratic or taxonomical catching-up activities and practices relating to how actors establish shared common platforms and an institutional language with UN bureaucrats, officials and international organizations. The people working at UN HQ in New York appeared to be the hub of these catching-up practices.

In many ways, this connects with the approach of Eric Wolf (1990, p. 591), who has urged us to understand organization as process. In exploring "the flow of action," he focuses on "structural power" and on how power "organizes and orchestrates the settings themselves, and that specifies the distribution and direction of energy flows." Wolf draws on Foucault's concept of power as the ability "to govern" and structure fields of action (Wolf 1990, p. 586). Where Foucault's focus on power drew attention toward how consciousness could be governed, Wolf is more concerned with "power that structures the political economy" (p. 587). He is particularly interested in how structural power enables certain kinds of behavior while neglecting others, even making them impossible. This point is especially pertinent to the study of sovereignty as a template and to the making of connections and disconnections in institutionalization processes such as peacebuilding. Therefore, I include Wolf's fourth mode as one aspect of *ownershipping* as an analytical perspective.

Here we may note Wolf's statement: "[the] cultural assertion that the world is shaped in this way and not in some other way has to be repeated and enacted" in order to constitute its maintenance (1990, p. 593). Sensitivity to this aspect makes it necessary to include a perspective on *historical institutionalization*.

Historical Institutionalization and the Particularities of State Formations

Historically shaped social patterns, state structures, and bureaucracy meet current international peacebuilding initiatives and cause friction. These encounters can be described as interfaces involving different systems. Because this interface is shaped through historical and political contexts it must be understood through the specific historical trajectory and how this relates to the current political context. As a corollary, I employ ownershipping as an analytical concept for grasping the particularities of

the peacebuilding process in Liberia with a perspective on historical institutionalization.

Anthropology as an academic discipline has occasionally been the subject of discussions on the value of combining diachronic and synchronic studies. In particular, Fredrik Barth's (1959) critique of structural functionalism spurred such a debate. Barth described the political system of Swat (in North Pakistan) in different terms, arguing that calculated individual self-interests and decisions were central to the political experience as a balanced and synchronic system of authority there. Talal Asad (1972), Ahmed (1976), Dupree et al. (1977) and Michael Meeker (1980) have criticized Barth's analysis of political leadership and organization among the Swat Pathans for not including a diachronic perspective. Further, Barth's focus on calculated self-interest has been criticized as a product of a Western political perspective that captures only parts of the picture. Thus, according to Meeker, Barth had failed to "place the problem of force and coercion in a proper historical perspective" (1980, p. 685). In addition to a historically oriented anthropology, we also need to trace international connections. International organizations, I maintain, represent an important addition to this debate.

Others have also promoted combining diachronic and synchronic analysis or a historically oriented approach to understanding the state. Mahmood Mamdani (1996) draws on continuities between the colonial and the postcolonial state in exploring democratization in Africa, as do Comaroff and Comaroff (1991, 1997) in describing hybrid cultural forms and modernity in South Africa. Marshall Sahlins (2004) combines reflexive anthropology with critical history in explaining cultural order and historical contingency. Also central are the contributions of Charles Tilly (1984, 1995, 1998, 2004, 2005) and Stein Rokkan (1975, 1982, 1987) and Michael Mann (1993), with their focus on historical institutionalism in studying and explaining change and variation in European states comparatively. Gianfranco Poggi (1990), Apostolis Papakostas (2001), and Gøran Therborn (1978) highlight the importance of temporality and contingency as the key to understanding the organization of states. More recently, Fukuyama has followed an historical approach to state formation and institutionalization (2011, 2014). Iver B. Neumann (2011) draws on Durkheim's predictions of the increasing interface between state and society, with the accompanying need to study everyday practices in combination with historical trajectories. This means that anthropologists must

study the state, in order to maintain the position of the discipline in the study of everyday practices (2011, p. 80).

Fukuyama also highlights temporality and how states evolve toward liberal democracy, or, as he puts it, toward "getting to Denmark" (2011, p. 14). Here "Denmark" is not meant literally, but as a symbol of a prosperous, secure, and well-governed society with a low level of corruption. In *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992), Fukuyama claimed that, with the fall of communism and the rise of democracy, the train of history had reached its end station. This universalistic teleological view of world history implies that any country—regardless of its history, traditions and culture—is free to develop whatever model it wants, with "Denmark" as the top end of the evolution. Then, during the 1990s and the first decades of the new millennium, democracy experienced various setbacks, and critics of Fukuyama took this as evidence of limitations in his analysis. In his *The Origin of Political Order* (2011) and the follow-up volume *Political Order and Political Decay* (2014), Fukuyama offers a comprehensive response to his critics, describing the building blocks or trajectories toward liberal democracy taken by various states over the past 4000 years. With these contributions, he enters the tradition of the historically oriented approach to institutionalizations and state formation. Fukuyama maintains that transferring modern institutions to developing countries or other societies can succeed only as long as the transfer is anchored in these countries' own context as regards existing rules and the political forces supporting these rules. Applying a historical approach, he offers an empirically based alternative to theories of state formation, while retaining his teleological approach.

Whereas Fukuyama celebrates sociobiology or an evolutionary biology as an entry point for explaining the formation of political institutions, anthropologists have sought to progress beyond such teleological, normative, and Eurocentric approaches to state formation and institutionalization of political systems. States have too often been studied without the historical, conceptual, and political context. This lack of contextualization ignores important aspects of connections and disconnections in the historical trajectories of states. Krohn-Hansen and Nustad stress the need to place state formation within a conceptual framework, as that "enables us to grasp the world as historical global interconnectedness—as transformations of profound global structures" (2005, p. 7). They see temporality as an important aspect of explaining state formation and call for a historically oriented

anthropology (see also Chakrabarty 2000; Friedman and Friedman 2008, 2012; Vike 2012; Papakostas 2001).

Using a related argument, Krohn-Hansen and Nustad highlight the interconnectedness of political trajectories: "these connections have created widely differing results in different parts of the world. Accounts of the modern state were never historically justified" (2005, p. 7). Igor Kopytoff (1987a) has provided a substantial contribution to the ethnography of state formation in Africa. He rejects evolutionary theories and focuses on the particularities of state formation, and the historical trajectories of social institutions in Africa, arguing for a historically oriented approach:

> The African societies we know were all born not "in the beginning" but as part of a continuous and variegated process of interaction and social formation—a process that involved a local political ecology that included these forms as part of the conditions in which they were created and re-created. (1987b, p. 78)

Building further on these scholars, I argue that international organizations represent an important addition to these contributions. Although Krohn-Hansen and Nustad note the importance of including global and historical connections when studying the state, they do not mention international organizations. Such organizations have played an increasingly significant role in the world since the early twentieth century, when the predecessor to the United Nations, the League of Nations, began its advocacy for the rights and interests of colonized peoples. After World War II, the international legal framework expanded, and with the end of the Cold War the UNSC and the UN peacekeeping department became very busy indeed.

Analyzing peacebuilding through the lens of *ownershipping* also has implications for our conceptions of sovereignty, and how sovereignty is constituted and performed. Bartelson (2014) argues that we need a new understanding of sovereignty. In the academic discipline of IR, sovereignty has traditionally been understood as "a defining characteristic of the modern state and a constitutive principle of the international system, recent changes indicate that sovereignty has been turned into something granted, contingent upon its responsible exercise in accordance with the norms and values of an imagined international community" (Bartelson 2014, p. 1).

This version of sovereignty as contingent on a state's *performance* in the international community necessarily impacts the trajectories of states, which I pursue empirically by tracing connections and disconnections (synchronically and diachronically) in Liberia. In Chap. 4, I show how Liberia has throughout its existence been more of a franchise than a self-contained entity. Such characteristics or properties of states may perhaps not be anchored in a new or changed international system, as Bartelson argues (2014, p. 5), but might be traced further back in time. In Liberia, elite interests and the specific historical trajectory (examined in Chap. 4) constituted a historical dynamic that also shaped its institutions. This, in turn, has created conditions for current peacebuilding and statebuilding activities in the country. Thus, I follow up on Shore's call for studying elites "in their wider historical context; that is, as fluid and temporal entities whose powers and status rise and fall over time and in relation to broader economic and social changes" (Shore 2002, p. 12). Shore also holds that it is important to explore whether elites are "epiphenomena or by-products of processes determined elsewhere" (p. 12) Studying the reproduction and succession of elites requires attention to "kinship structures and networks as well as to the institutions for their selection and socialization which […] means a focus on schooling and the structures of elite education" (p. 13).

As I will argue, the reproduction of the elite in Liberia is closely linked to aspects pertaining to the reproduction of the nation's state capacities. This has always involved foreign countries and international organizations. The specific way this involvement has formed a relationship between the elite and international actors contributes to both reproducing the country's sovereignty and undermining national ownership of the state apparatus. Shore draws on Abner Cohen's 1981 study of elites in Sierra Leone to show the importance of exploring how, in order to build and maintain the support of subordinated groups, the elite "must convince the masses that its sectional interests represent the wider public or national interest […] it must seek to demonstrate its 'universalistic functions' of service to the public" (Shore 2002, p. 2).

The USA, and more recently UN peacebuilding operations accompanied by a myriad of international organizations, has proven useful for elite interests in Liberia. The presence of the international community in Liberia is credited to the government, and the government of Liberia is intertwined with elite interests. In Chap. 4, I focus on how the historical trajectory has created preconditions that favor elite interests. This approach

implies a perspective that includes historical contingency as well as how current action contributes to (re)shaping history. To understand how peacebuilding affects today's Liberia, we must include the existing social institutions these peacebuilding institutions are struggling to connect with or disconnect from.

Although not specifically interested in historical institutionalization, Douglas (1986) sees institutions as being built through the process of giving ideas and thoughts common ground by proving their legitimacy and involving ethical principles, thereby influencing the extent to which thinking is determined by institutions. This indicates the necessity of including a historically oriented approach. In my work, this made it possible to see how Liberian elite interests find common ground with the interests of those representing the international peacebuilding operation. The peacebuilding process nurtures the reproduction of elite interests as well as the interests of the international actors and the UN, as they gain from building on one another—thereby constituting Liberia as a franchised state (see Chaps. 4 and 6 on rule-of-law reforms and customary structures in Liberia).

Different kinds of institutions will allow for different kinds of thoughts. This process results in the reification of important aspects and goals for the institution. As we will see, the reification of peacebuilding makes it possible for individuals working for, or in connection with, the UN to act within this system; further, this process serves to connect certain interests while disconnecting other, more customary, structures. This argument draws on the work of Douglas: "the thing to be explained is how institutions ever start to stabilize. To become stable means settling into some recognizable shape" (1986, p. 111). This point is particularly relevant in studying statebuilding aspects concerning the peacebuilding process in Liberia. Many of the activities I describe in the empirical chapters are processes geared toward making aspects from various different systems recognizable to each other (see Chap. 7 in particular).

From an anthropological perspective, the study of institutions is relevant because, as noted by Herzfeld (1992, p. 68), "we try to gain access to the motives and achievements of those who do the reifying. Work on the outer forms of classification should not obscure their liability, but should illustrate this as an aspect of social practice." Explaining the *becoming* and the *emerging* of something is a typical post-structural activity. Instead of delving into the origins of how the UN started to stabilize in the immediate aftermath of World War II, however, I focus on the historical trajectory

and contingency of Liberia. That being said, my interest in the peacebuilding process in Liberia includes exploring how the UN, as an institution, is constantly *in the making*—not by measuring its outputs, failures, or successes, but by investigating the institutionalization aspects of the peacekeeping part of the world organization.

These institutional activities, I hold, are geared toward maintaining an international system based on certain ideas about sovereignty. In exploring sovereignty, I do not view the international system as something fixed but as something which must be constantly negotiated and maintained, or which is in a constant process of institutionalization. Peacebuilding in Liberia is one example of such activity. This point is central to concepts of sovereignty and how the UN peacebuilding department is involved also in bureaucratic activities that contribute to maintaining an international system based on sovereign states. Here I concur with Bartelson (2014, p. 5): the state is a franchise more than a self-contained entity.

Viewing the peacebuilding process in Liberia as it has unfolded in encounters between Liberia, the UN, and other actors made it possible to comprehend practices of sovereignty as it relates to the peacebuilding architecture. Thus, a historically oriented approach—combined with empirical studies of the administrative mechanisms of the state, the bureaucracy, and the making of policy—offers a useful entry point for studying practices relating to sovereignty. However, because our ideas about sovereignty are so closely connected with the state, a brief discussion and outline of the anthropology of the state is in order here.

Peacebuilding and Anthropology of the State

Because much of the literature about peacebuildings tends to portray the statebuilding aspect of peacebuilding through a perspective based on ideas about *liberal peace*, I begin this section with a brief account of liberal peace, describing some of the deficiencies and the implications of these ideas. I then turn to anthropological concepts of the state and how they can reveal hitherto less-studied aspects of peacebuilding.

Liberal Peace and Peacebuilding

When the UNSC is notified of a threat to international peace and security, its response (when politically possible) may be to deploy a peacekeeping mission to the country or region in question. In addition to the military

component of the peacekeeping mission, a civilian component intended to focus largely on the restoration of the state apparatus may be deployed. Practitioners see this as the "peacebuilding component" of peacekeeping. Since the early 1990s including such a component has become increasingly common in UN missions to post-conflict countries.

Scholars who focus on liberal peacebuilding tend to claim that, when engaging with statebuilding, international peacebuilding policies are based on an institutionalist view of the state (see Ghani and Lockhart 2008; Call 2008, p. 7). This has been developed from the more classical view of *liberal peace* highlighting relations between (not within) countries, and whether democracy prevents countries from going to war with other democratic countries (see Kant 2003; Doyle 1983; Spiro 1994). This idea, many claim, has been developed and incorporated into UN peacebuilding operations and the concern with institution-building. The peacebuilding apparatus then focuses on states as institutions, aiming to (re)build states by creating Weberian bureaucracies. In turn, statebuilding activities connected to UN peacebuilding are geared toward building capacity and strengthening the institutions of the state—primarily through training, reforms, financial support, and deploying international experts to national state institutions. Some analysts within this school of thought explain failed statebuilding projects in terms of their focus on project design or lack of resources (Ghani and Lockhart 2008; Paris 2004). Others (e.g., Autesserre 2005, 2010; Richmond 2009) describe the failures of statebuilding projects by reference to how international peacebuilding operations tend to employ standardized approaches and statebuilding methods. Researchers like Alex Bellamy and Paul Williams (2005, 2010), Oliver P. Richmond (2011), Roland Paris (2002, 2009, 2010) and Michael Pugh (2004) have questioned the practices of peacebuilding in relation to the prevailing global norms and the global order that peacebuilding serves. (For an overview, see also Center on International Cooperation 2005.)

While many of these scholars claim that liberal peacebuilding is a relatively new enterprise that has gained pace since the turn of the new millennium, others hold that this has been the focus of the UN since its first peacekeeping operation with a significant military contribution was deployed in the Congo in 1960 (Orford 2011). Scholars such as David Chandler claim that international and domestic-level actors and their depoliticized view of statebuilding act to shape the politics of statebuilding. Stein Sundstøl Eriksen, building on Chandler, stresses the importance of examining aspects of statebuilding pertaining to not only the state, but

also the society in question, and the connections between state and society (2011). To do this, Eriksen maintains, we must "look beyond the study of international relations and engage with broader analyses of the state" (2012, p. 4), combining a perspective on institutions with a perspective on the state's ability to produce state effects, as described by Trouillot (2001, 2003). Thus, Eriksen employs anthropological literature on the state in order to explain what statebuilding actually means.

I will return to Trouillot and state effects, but first a few words about the trajectory of the literature on the anthropology of the state. These scholars hold that peacebuilding tends to be flavored by dominant ideologies; by contrast, I employ the lens of *ownershipping* to see how peacebuilding *happens* by investigating practices and framing the issue as an epistemic field extending across significant geographical distances.

Anthropology of the State

A common misconception in current anthropology has been to regard the anthropology of the state as a latecomer to the academic debate. Influenced by classic works like those of Weber, Marx, and Durkheim, with roots in the European academic context, substantial anthropological work on the state was produced already in the mid-twentieth century: here we may note Radcliffe-Brown (1940), Gluckman (2006), Nadel (1942), Dumont (1980), Wolf (1973), and Geertz (1980). In 1940, Radcliffe-Brown proposed replacing the term *state* with *government* because the conventional concept of the state consistently referred to the bureaucratic systems governing a territory. Although grounded in a European philosophical frame, several of these anthropologists searched for variations of the state outside Europe. Kapferer and Taylor (2012) highlight Leach's *Political Systems of Highland Burma* (1965), according him an important role in developing an anthropology of the state: Leach wrote about aspects of the state highly relevant today, such as dynamical and transformational aspects of institutional orders and how state institutional orders structure a range of relations (Kapferer and Taylor 2012, p. 2). With the increasing focus on formations of modern states, such studies have triggered alternative ways of thinking about states. Western thinkers shaped the idea of a distinction between the state and civil society at a specific point in time. That Eurocentric perception of the state has proven to be biased toward the European experience, with its specific version of the state (Durkheim 2001[1912]; Weber 1922; de Tocqueville 1856; Marx 1967).

More recent literature with an empirical focus outside of Europe shows different state formations, as also this book does. Such perspectives are in line with Foucault's writings (1991a, b) on the modern state that place the state/society distinction under scrutiny. As noted earlier, Foucault held that one had to "cut the king's head off" to understand the decentralized, multiple, and complex power of the state as it manifests itself throughout society. Philip Abrams (1988) further rejected the view of the state as an opposition to society: what was needed was wider and more open approach to the state. And Michel-Rolph Trouillot argued: "the State power has no institutional fixity on either theoretical or historical grounds" (2001, p. 126).

Both Abrams and Trouillot have been part of a trend in anthropology that seeks to understand the state ethnographically, as produced through continuously shifting relations and practices and as shaped by power relations and the production of meaning. In his "Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State," Abrams inverts the idea of the state as a fixed, preempirical institutional entity: it is the idea of the state and how this idea is articulated and manifested in various contexts and effects that should be the focus of study (1988, p. 69). Jon Harald Sande Lie (2011) elaborates on Abrams and explains how the idea of the state gives legitimacy to the different government institutions of the state system: "These institutions, themselves open to anthropological analysis, constitute a set of institutional structures and practices under the auspices of and orchestrated by the larger whole of which they are part, the state" (p. 71). His main point is then "to focus on the effects produced as well as on who produces them" (Krohn-Hansen and Nustad 2005, p. 6)—a point also followed up by Bob Jessop (1990). For Foucault, the state is everywhere: but Abrams operates with a somewhat narrower concept of the state as an object of anthropological exploration. As Krohn-Hansen and Nustad put it, Foucault cut off the king's head, whereas Abrams replaced it with a number of smaller kings (2005, p. 6).

Trouillot (2001, 2003) has built further on both Abrams and Foucault, claiming (with Foucault) that state power should be seen as decentralized and fluid. Jessop (1990) Scott (1998) and Trouillot (2001) have continued in Abrams' footsteps, arguing that the state must be studied through a focus on state effects, but they point out that these effects have been produced historically. In order to study the state, says Trouillot, it is necessary to focus on sites where "state processes and practices are recognizable through their effects" (2001, p. 126). Trouillot's idea about state effects has been inspired by Nicos Poulantzas' "isolation effects" (1972). To iso-

lation effects, Trouillot adds *the identification effect*, *the legibility effect*, and *the spatialization effect* (2001, p. 126; 2003, p. 90). In *Global Transformation* (2003), he further develops his thoughts on the state, holding that the state should be studied as a set of practices and processes, and that one way to understand these practices and processes is to examine the effects they produce:

> we need to track down these practices, processes, and effects whether or not they coalesce around the central sites of national government. In the age of globalization state practices, functions and effects increasingly obtain in sites other than the national but that never fully bypass the national order. The challenge for anthropologists is to study these practices, functions and effects without prejudices about sites or forms of encounters. (Trouillot 2003, p. 89)

Trouillot further emphasizes that the effects of states are not produced solely by national institutions or in governmental sites, and that globalization has intensified this tendency: "State power is redeployed, state effects appear in new sites, and in almost all cases this move is one away from national sites to infra-, supra-, or trans-national ones. An ethnography of the state can and should capture these effects in these changing sites" (2003, p. 90).

Now that is a tall order. It requires a studying-through approach, where the anthropologist can trace policy as well as connections and disconnections across systems, bureaucracies, organizations, and levels. Trouillot's identification of the legibility effect has been inspired by Scott's legibility practices in *Seeing Like a State* (1998) and is described as effects produced by "the tools that enable government planning, practices ranging from the production of language and a knowledge for governance to the elaboration of theoretical and empirical tools that classify and regulate collectivities" (Trouillot 2003, p. 90). When developing the legibility effect, Trouillot continues to lean on Scott, particularly in the way Scott highlighted how NGOs and international organizations are producing similar effects and are "at times better than states themselves" (Trouillot 2003, p. 90). Trouillot here explicitly refers to international organizations such as the UN, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank.[2] Further, he holds that these are state-like institutions and that their effects can best be grasped ethnographically in postcolonial societies (ibid., p. 91).

In the case of Liberia, I see these tools as part of the peacebuilding industry that is geared toward statebuilding. The legibility practice produces two paradoxical effects in Liberia: the reproduction of state capacities pertaining to ideas of sovereignty, combined with an undermining of the state, and state sovereignty by making the state apparatus into a client of international organizations in order to build such state capacity.

Krohn-Hansen and Nustad continue along this path, but find Jessop and Trouillot overly Eurocentric in their historical approach: "there is no reason to assume a priori that a state that is differently embedded in a global history will function in the same way and produce the same effects" (Krohn-Hansen and Nustad 2005, p. 7). This approach constitutes a strong argument for the need to the study the state empirically through everyday practices and effects. Krohn-Hansen and Nustad pay considerable attention to ethnographic studies of current practices, formations of meaning, and state effects. From this perspective, a state agent is identified, not by its "inherent characteristics, but [by] the effects that are produced" (p. 13). Further, state formations are understood as "outcomes of encounters and forms of interaction: they have been shaped through struggles over influence, resources and meanings. Any state formation that exists in reality has been produced through constant negotiation 'on the ground'" (ibid.). As such, their explorations of the state can be seen as a continuation of Radcliffe-Brown's focus on replacing the state with government. One result has been that the state apparatus has not attracted scholars of the anthropology of the state. Instead, we have two separate disciplines: the anthropology of bureaucracy and the anthropology of the state.

Focusing on "vertical encompassment" as a central feature of states, Ferguson and Gupta (2002, p. 982) hold that research on the state has focused too much on the larger scale, neglecting the everyday practices of bureaucrats and how these affect the populace. They argue for the importance of understanding processes that can make the state look like an entity that encompasses its citizens. "Vertical" in this context refers to the idea of the state as something *above* the grassroots, civil society, communities, and family. Conceptually, "encompassment" pertains to the nation, within ever-widening series of circles, from the family, through the local community, and to the international system of nation-states. According to Ferguson and Gupta, it is the states themselves that produce these spatial and vertical hierarchies through their "embeddedness in a host of mundane bureaucratic practices" (p. 994). By encouraging anthropologists to

cut across established lines such as state/society and national/international when studying governmental practices, Ferguson and Gupta contribute to putting government and bureaucracy back into the anthropology of the state.

Furthermore, if states are to be studied through practices and state effects (as described by Jessop and Trouillot) and if we (as Abrams holds we should) study those who produce such effects, then we must include in our analyses actors entangling the state apparatus: international organizations, NGOs, other countries, and companies. Such actors are all working in ways that make them state-like institutions, producing state-like effects, blurring the lines between actors internal and external to the state system. Focusing on UN peacebuilding in Liberia, I found it highly relevant to explore how external actors to the Liberian state system were producing state-like effects, and how these effects were articulated and manifested within the Liberian state apparatus or bureaucracy.

Chapter 9, describing a UN project aimed at establishing a peace committee program in rural areas of Liberia, illustrates the concern with the conduct of conduct that Foucault identified as a central aspect of "governmentality." From this standpoint, it becomes possible to comprehend state complexity through studying bureaucracy and practices of everyday life. Bureaucrats have considerable influence on producing the images that constitute the state, and this can be studied as state effects in everyday encounters between local representatives of the state (Ferguson and Gupta 2002). The empirical chapters describe how peacebuilding processes, at various levels, concerned the Liberian state and thereby how peacebuilding activities came to resemble statebuilding activities.

Because peacebuilding processes trigger a range of state-like activities and effects in host countries, we can capture important perspectives on state complexity by studying peacebuilding activities. Many of these state effects are produced, not by the state, but by the UN and other external actors. If, then, the UN and other external actors produce effects similar to those identified by Abrams and Trouillot as state effects, we must ask: what has happened to the Liberian state? Has the UN *become* the state in Liberia? To grasp these questions empirically, we must study the effects in the state organization, the bureaucracy and policies. As Radcliffe-Brown (1940, p. xxiii) noted, the state should be understood as an idea or "a fiction of the philosophers. What does exist is an organization i.e. a collection of individual humans connected by a complex system of relations." These relations can be studied through anthropological fieldwork.

Studying how external actors produce state-like effects in the Liberian state apparatus should then draw on Trouillot's concern with sovereignty. We return to this toward the end of this chapter, but to further prepare the ground for *ownershipping* and *franchised states*, we need to take a brief look at the anthropology of bureaucracy, of policy, and of development. Then we can turn to the legibility practices that produce taxonomies and categories, which, in turn, connect and disconnect certain practices and spheres or sectors of the society. Because this activity in my study is closely linked to aspects pertaining to international organizations interests in creating ownership, I refer to it as *ownershipping*.

International peacebuilding, with its emphasis on national ownership, creates a social space where actors representing different parts of different systems can meet and exchange opinions. In focusing on establishing national ownership to the peacebuilding process, UN officials simultaneously turn the post-conflict country—Liberia, in this—into an object of governance. In this process, the UN tends to rely on the national elites. As a corollary, a focus on processes in state apparatuses geared toward creating national ownership shows how the peacebuilding process serves to (re) produce state capacities. The specific relationship between the UN and the Liberian government also positions international actors within the state apparatuses, while disconnecting other groups, systems, interests, and parts of the Liberia nation and society—thereby undermining national ownership of the state.

Anthropology of Bureaucracy

Max Weber (1922) described bureaucracy as a system that demands accountability. The main scholarly disagreement within this literary tradition emerges from divergent interpretations of Weber. Some hold that bureaucratic accountability is based upon a universal rationality; others holds that it is socially produced and thus culturally specific. This book follows the second interpretation.

Bureaucracy can be seen as the administrative aspect of organizations. How bureaucracies make choices, classify, and make connections and disconnections is of interest to anthropologists. In the 1980s and 1990s, anthropological studies of bureaucracy gained momentum; in 1995, Heyman initiated a debate with Don Handelman, Michael Herzfeld, and others. In his article, Heyman proposes putting *power* into the anthropology of bureaucracy. The anthropology of bureaucracy, as the approach of

sociology and political science to bureaucracy, builds on Weber: his view of bureaucracies as ideal systems of modernity and rationality, and his focus on the internal aspects of these systems (see e.g. Weber 1922). Such a view, seeing modernity and rationality as typical of bureaucracies, has been criticized for reading Eurocentric aspects into Weber's modernism. In particular, it has been contested by anthropological cross-cultural studies of bureaucracies (see Britan and Cohen 1980; Heyman 1995; Papakostas 2001). Gerald M. Britan and Ronald Cohen (1980) have argued that the formal aspects of bureaucracies traditionally associated with Weberian criteria for rational organizations are likely to be influenced by the informal aspects. This view has also been put forward, less directly, by Susan Wright:

> The formal system is the map of the organizational structure, job descriptions, the hierarchy of decision making, the goals, rules and policies. The informal system is the way individuals and groups in the organization relate to each other, which might influence the formal system and achievement of the organization's aims. (Wright 1997, p. 17)

This point is important for understanding the taxonomical aspects of bureaucracies as a catching-up phenomenon and the related power perspectives. By recognizing bureaucracy as a post hoc process, through catching up, the significance of classifying processes and why it is important to study such phenomenon become clear. Here, "catching up" as an analytical term is useful for understanding historical contingency and explaining variation in social systems such as states, bureaucracies, and social institutions. Further, it helps to make anthropology engaged in redressing the Eurocentric understanding of bureaucracy.

The making/remaking of taxonomies is an essential property of bureaucracies, as Handelman points out: "There is no bureaucracy without classification, without the invention of categories of inclusion and exclusion. This premise is integral to bureaucracy whether it is viewed from within or from without" (1995, p. 280). Herzfeld (1992, pp. 18–19) has described how this activity produces categories of insiders and outsiders, where insiders are included and outsiders are excluded. Whereas Handelman and Herzfeld, according to Heyman, see bureaucracies as arising through history as a Hegelian Eurocentric idea, Heyman argues that it is important to explore "how characteristic ideas are produced and reproduced in societal-historical contexts" (1995, p. 263). And that

makes it important to explore historical trajectories of bureaucracies including global connections.

Through *shipping* stories, practices, cases, reports, research, evaluations, and buzzwords up and down and back again in the bureaucratic hierarchy, between formal and informal levels, certain aspects of peacebuilding become subjects of externalization and objectivation (Berger and Luckmann 1979)—or, as Handelman (1995) would put it: bureaucratic taxonomies get invented and made. Through the flow of knowledge and communication in the peacebuilding community, certain activities—but not all—have become reified and institutionalized parts of the UN bureaucracy. These activities pertain to the sovereignty of post-conflict countries. Thus, we may say that sovereignty, or ideas of sovereignty, constitutes distinct interactions between levels in an institutionalization process. Here it is useful to view sovereignty less as a principle and more as a *template* for practices pertaining to the state. This recalls a point made by Bartelson: "sovereignty can be seen neither as an inalienable right of states, nor as a bundle of competence integral to statehood, but rather as a set of capacities that have to be continuously produced and reproduced, if necessary through intervention from without" (2014, p. 84). Using a studying-through approach has enabled me to follow up on Heyman's (1995) call for tracing where bureaucratic taxonomies come from, by pursuing processes of taxonomies in the making. Through this exploration, I identify the distinctiveness of this process as a *catching-up* dynamic within the bureaucracy (see Chap. 7).

In Liberia, with activities taking place, evolving and dissolving in the field, policy sections at HQ found themselves constantly striving to catch up on these activities at the interface of different systems, in order to incorporate new aspects into formal levels and stipulations of the organization. Understanding such interfaces requires both diachronic and synchronic exploration. In this view, bureaucracies are anchored in their specific historical contexts and evolve very differently from place to place. In line with this, Heyman maintains that bureaucracies and bureaucratic side effects, or emergent properties, must be understood in their contexts. This approach highlights variations between different bureaucracies and seeks to explain their emergence in the surrounding cultural, political, and historical contexts (Britan and Cohen 1980; Wright 1997; Du Gay 2000; Papakostas 2001; Nicholson 1997, pp. 83–83).

In Liberia, as we will see in Chap. 4, the specific trajectory of the state and national bureaucracy has nurtured elite interests and networks

constituted by an ability to refer to certain historical characteristics associated with this elite. A perspective on historical institutionalization that includes temporality and contingency is necessary for understanding bureaucracies, how they create accountability and thus the institution-building aspects of peacebuilding in today's Liberia.

According to Kanninen and Piiparinen (2014), international organizations have traditionally derived their power base from a "Weberian rational-legal authority, which refers to the lack of bias, objectivity and superior precision of bureaucratic decision-making." Since the early 1990s, however, a new post-Weberian bureaucratic rationality has emerged, they hold. This post-Weberian bureaucratic power resides in "the capacity of today's IOs to 'blend their intellectual energies' and expertise with external actors, for example, civil society organizations to work in teams rather than only through hierarchical structures" (Kanninen and Piiparinen 2014, p. 47). They also show how this network-oriented way of working has given middle-level officials considerable influence on output, policy, and execution with their organizations. This is in line with my findings, as presented, for instance, in Chaps. 6–9.

We return to this later, in connection with the bureaucracy of the UN organization. Here let me simply establish the link between theories of social construction, bureaucracy, and institutionalization with the bodies containing these mechanisms and processes—organizations—to provide underpinnings and content to *ownershipping* as an analytical term.

Anthropology of Policy

Many scholars have studied international policymaking, particularly within the discipline of IR. Also anthropologists have studied policy and policymaking, and have already produced a substantial body of literature. As early as in 1966, the views of sociologists Berger and Luckmann were adopted by many anthropologists who chose to approach policy as a "fundamental 'organizing principle' of society which, like 'family', 'nation', 'class', or 'citizenship', provides a way of conceptualizing and symbolizing social relations, and around which people live their lives and structure their realities" (Berger and Luckmann 1979, quoted in Shore and Wright 2011a, p. 2).

In their *Anthropology of Policy*, Cris Shore and Susan Wright (1997) focus on policy as a governing or organizing principle in modern societies. Echoing Foucault, they discuss the extent to which policy as an external

construction is internalized and adopted, or not. Later, in *Policy Worlds* (2011), the editors (Cris Shore, Susan Wright, and Davide Pero) attempt to show how anthropology may provide new perspectives and new insights to the study of policy, global governance, and how the world is shaped. Policies are produced within a certain cosmology and reflect the "world" in which they are embedded. However, once they have come into being, they also have effects and consequences that may continue to change or create the world that they were reflecting in the first place. Instead of taking policy as something external to the actors working within a setting, the contributions in *Anthropology of Policy* view policies as being "productive, performative and continually contested" (Shore et al. 2011, p. 1) These authors are interested in studying the effects of policies and how they create new spaces, relations, knowledge, and meaning. In this approach, policies are understood as "windows onto political processes in which actors, agents, concepts and technologies interact in different sites, creating and consolidating new rationalities of governance and regimes of knowledge and power" (p. 2). Shore and Wright (2011b) also offer a biography of policy referring to studies that have theorized policy in various ways. Arjun Appadurai (1986, reprinted in Shore and Wright 2011a, p. 3) approaches policies by comparing them with complex social lives, focusing on how policy interacts with its surroundings: people and institutions. For Shore and Wright, Bruno Latour's term "actants" provides a useful tool for investigating how policies "(…) have agency; (…) shift action, and, like machines, (…) perform tasks and are endowed with certain competencies" (Shore and Wright 2011a, p. 3).

The studying-through approach proved especially useful for exploring the purpose of policy, and how policymaking can play a role in establishing connections within global processes such as peacebuilding—and how policy reflects the world in which it is embedded. At the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations Policy and Best Practices Section, in the UN Secretariat in New York, my fieldwork involved producing UN policy and guidelines. These policies and guidelines were intended for UN officials tasked with restoring local state apparatuses in rural areas of post-conflict countries. Producing such policies and guidelines involved merging peacekeeping resolutions from the UNSC with best practices from the field, through workshops, the digital community of practices, discussions between HQ and the field, HQ meetings, meetings with think-tanks and

research institutions, and regular Skype conversations with researchers and field officers—but rarely with national bureaucrats or officials.

Several interesting things happened. We produced guidelines for the field on, for instance, how to restore and extend state authority. While working on this topic, we came to realize that it was seldom one of the primary tasks mandated by the UNSC. In the section where I was working, we came to see there was a need to put this concern higher on the agenda in order to "produce language" (fieldnotes, Peacekeeping Best Practices and Policy section 09/10) on our activities[3]—to get aspects of field activity included in annual reports of peacekeeping as well as in UNSC mandates.

Analytically, this activity could be said to be part of producing bureaucratic taxonomies in the UN intended to strengthen policies and thereby direct actions in the field. Following up on the latter point made it possible to understand how the peacebuilding process in Liberia connected and disconnected with various groups. UN policy was in many ways the vehicle of ownership as articulated by the UN. By tracing the effect of such UN policies in Liberia, I could explore ownership as aspects articulated in bureaucratic processes within the UN bureaucracy and the Liberian national bureaucracy, particularly at interfaces between these different systems. With this approach, I could analyze peacebuilding as an *ownershipping* process, understanding the processes surrounding the making of taxonomies and the creation of communicative processes. In this way, the paradox of peacebuilding came to emerge as a process that undermines and reproduces sovereignty at the same time.

The concept of ownershipping draws on the anthropology of policy to analyze how practice may shape policy so as to maintain support, legitimacy, and funding from donor countries for ongoing activities. Creating connections between the bureaucratic organization of peacebuilding and its inherent intentions with activities taking place on the ground results in the inclusion and exclusion of social groups and patterns; it constitutes the policy aspect of ownershipping as an institutionalization aspect of peacebuilding. These mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion, I argue, relate to ideas about ownership and sovereignty as a template. The UNSC (see Chap. 5) as well as the policy section in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (see Chap. 8) are instrumental in turning such ideas into concepts and terms or in equipping these ideas with a potent bureaucratic language.

Anthropology of Development

The anthropology of development has produced a growing body of literature in recent decades. This increased focus in anthropology has resulted in literature geared toward providing an ethnography of aid (see Gould 2004; Escobar 1991, 1997; Mosse 2011; Lie 2011). In *Cultivating Development* (2005), David Mosse focuses on development and policy, questioning the very purpose of policy and the driving forces behind policymaking. He shows how development practice is shaped by the need to maintain relationships within organizations, rather than by policy. Mosse also questions whether policy might serve a completely different purpose than operational support to the field and the implementation level. Might its purpose be to gain legitimacy and political support? This point connects with my analysis of peacebuilding in Liberia and how I frame the paradox of peacebuilding through ownershipping.

In his edited volume *Adventures in Aidland: The Anthropology of Professionals in International Development* (2011), Mosse focuses on the power producers in the development industry, with chapters focusing on the construction and distribution of global poverty, as well as the everyday lives of aid professionals. An overarching explorative ambition of the book is to investigate the crossing of activities, concepts, and knowledge between anthropology and policymaking. In the chapter "Alice in Aidland: a seriously satirical allegory," Raymond Apthorpe discusses professionalism and expertise. He asks questions about how the expertise of international development is produced and in which ways this knowledge penetrates the global system. These questions propel investigation of how power is invested in global policymaking and the making of ideas that can travel and shape the world. As the contributions to Mosse's volume point out, ideas are embedded within their social contexts and social relations in institutions and the everyday lives of experts. The contributing authors explore how they "travel with undisclosed baggage, and get unraveled as they are translated into the different interests of social/institutional worlds and local politics in ways that generate complex and unintended effects" (2011, p. 3). Finally, it is argued that the main work of all kinds of professionals, also those in the development industry, is to sell the idea that change can be implemented on big, generalizable policy ideas that transcend specific contexts and times.

Arturo Escobar (1997) draws a distinction between the *anthropology of development* and *development anthropology*. Development anthropology,

he holds, describes the work of practitioners involved in forming, producing, and implementing development programmers, whereas the anthropology of development sees the development industry as its empirical field and draws on this field in order to analyze and critique the development sector. The latter has been criticized for not offering instrumental alternatives to the critique, but this criticism has been regarded as too simplistic. Identifying and providing alternatives should be an activity distinct from demonstrating why development projects do not work (see Nustad 2001). Much recent anthropology of development draws on Foucault and *governmentality* (e.g., see Escobar 1984). This focus draws attention to "processes by which the conduct of a population is governed: by institutions and agencies, including the state; by discourses, norms and identities; and by self-regulation, techniques for the disciplining and care for the self" (Ferguson and Gupta 2002, p. 989). One recent contribution in this tradition is provided by Tanya Murray Li (2007), who, focusing on development projects in Indonesia, identifies continuities between colonial period and present. Studying the aid architecture in Tanzania, Maia Green (2010) noted how the relationship between peacebuilders, civil society, and national elites was symbiotic, and that this pattern was replicated at the local level: the local state apparatus became a *system of access* to resources and opportunities for the local population.

Although focusing on the peacebuilding establishment, my study has many parallels with the anthropology of development, like Green's project in Tanzania. However, my empirical focus is mainly on actors within the bureaucratic apparatuses involved with the peacebuilding processes in Liberia, national and local state apparatuses, as well as international organizations and NGOs. Using a studying-through approach to the UN, I seek to explain how intentions travel through the global system of peacebuilding, getting adjusted, rearranged, and contextualized to the different settings in which they appear and reappear.

Understanding Peacebuilding Through *Ownershipping*

In the literature concerning states like Liberia that are especially exposed to international organizations and donor countries, it is often pointed out that sovereignty may be seen as highly limited and often fictional: informal and customary practices reign. However, that has not been my claim.

Focusing on practices that have contributed to producing images of state spatiality, together with an emphasis on practices and sovereign frontiers instead of borders, I capture activities pertaining to the peacebuilding process in Liberia with relevance to current conceptions of sovereignty. The focus on establishing national ownership to international peacebuilding processes has had considerable influence on the making of connections and disconnections and social institutions. When people involved in the peacebuilding process in Liberia worked to provide national ownership, they also produced effects and emergent properties. Employing ownershipping as an analytical approach, a study of these effects can describe how peacebuilding simultaneously reproduces and undermines sovereignty in Liberia.

This chapter has provided a theory-based background for how these processes can be grasped anthropologically and analytically through *ownershipping*. Describing how decisions are made in the UNSC and at the executive political level of the global peacebuilding process, and then trickle down, I will show how intentions travel. I was able to trace zones where aspects pertaining to sets of state capacities, values, and norms were negotiated—all the way back to the Council's horseshoe table at UN HQ in New York. Furthermore, the establishing of Women and Children Protection Sections in Liberia has shown how UNSC resolutions may enable donor countries to challenge traditional ways of dealing with violence and criminality. Ultimately, as we will see, the Scott Fellows in the Liberian ministries—by acting as brokers between different systems, and by defining the interface between Liberia and the international apparatus—showed the ambiguity and dynamic aspects of sovereignty, and thus why sovereignty must be studied through qualitative methods and participant observation.

My study draws on the tradition in political science that treats sovereignty as socially constructed (Weber 1995, 1998). One way of pursuing this tradition is through a focus on performativity. Here, some have held that we need to move beyond sovereignty as social construct, and instead examine how sovereignty is performed and how it is created and recreated in actual encounters between people. According to Timothy Mitchell (1991, p. 81), for instance: "a construct like the state occurs not merely as a subjective belief, incorporated in the thinking and action of individuals. [but also in] the language of legal practice, the architecture of public buildings, the wearing of military uniforms, or the marking out and policing of frontiers." Through fieldwork in Liberia, focusing on Scott Fellows

in Liberian ministries, the construction of new police office buildings or the establishing of peace committees in Lofa, I have explored how practices get adapted to a globalized world, and vice versa. This has meant a focus on sovereignty as a template for activities that constitute a process of inclusion and exclusion, connections and disconnections, in turn (re)producing Liberia as a franchised state.

Notes

1. These questions could concern identifying the forces, power, and patterns that modify and shape state formations.
2. For other studies of NGOs and international organizations, see, e.g., Hopgood (2006), Bornstein (2003), and Englund (2002).
3. "Producing language" was frequently mentioned in this department in combination with the need to increase the status and legitimacy of field activities. See Chap. 8.

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CHAPTER 3

Studying Through: People and Places

Introduction

The previous chapter established the concept *ownershipping* as an analytical approach for capturing contradictory aspects and effects of peacebuilding processes. In this chapter I operationalize this conceptual approach by outlining the methodological framework and research design. Because of the differing topographies of the different sites, as well as time and resource constraints, some of the chapters build on short-term, intensive qualitative data collection, others on long-term fieldwork. I present a brief overview of the *various stages or legs* of the fieldwork and data collection, all of which form part of the same overarching fieldwork. The various legs of fieldwork are the result of my efforts to employ a *studying-through* approach (Reinhold 1994). This well-established anthropological approach is a way of tracing processes through and between organizations, tracking organizational connections and disconnections, mapping and analyzing key concepts, and tracing bureaucratic intentions and decisions.

Anthropology has typically involved long-term fieldwork and participant observation of the classic "ideal type" described by Malinowski (1984/1922). Anthropology differs from other disciplines because of its fieldwork as a distinct and specific methodology for uncovering and understanding. The understanding of *field* as pertaining to anthropology and in relation to *fieldwork* has sparked debate about anthropological *locations*,

N.N. Schia, *Franchised States and the Bureaucracy of Peace*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65569-7_3

particularly about redefining the fieldwork from the "old ideas about territorially fixed communities and stable, localized cultures and to apprehend an interconnected world" (Gupta and Ferguson 1997, p. 4). This implies a shift of focus, from the *local* to an "attentiveness to social, cultural, and political *location* and a willingness to work self-consciously at shifting or realigning our own location while building epistemological and political links with other locations" (ibid., p. 5). Although long term and based on participant observation, my fieldwork has not been conventional fieldwork like that conducted by Malinowski, but is more similar to fieldwork as described by Gupta and Ferguson. Studying systems pertaining to peacebuilding implied a more *nonlocal* approach where I focused on tracing connections and abstractions from concrete observations.

Concepts are important elements of methodology. This book employs *ownershipping* as a key concept deduced from my empirical findings and from discussions of anthropological theory perspectives of organizations and sovereignty that also draw on the various "anthropologies"—the anthropology of bureaucracy, of the state, of policy, of development, and of power. In gathering the empirical data necessary for the analysis, I employed various methods. Participant observation and long-term fieldwork were followed up by interviews, observation, focus groups, meeting attendance, archive studies, and short-term fieldtrips to Liberia and New York.

Mode of Investigation

Had my fieldwork been limited to the UN Secretariat only, my data would have been different, and perhaps more relevant for analyzing the nitty-gritty micro-social processes within the bureaucracy of the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Not to say that this would have been of without interest—but tracing connections from this fieldwork site to others in Liberia and to the UN Security Council enabled me to capture other aspects. To pursue and strengthen the validity of this research, *multi-sited fieldwork* was necessary. In this way, my choices and methods contributed, together with the analytical concepts and theoretical approaches, to turning observations into the data used in this book.

I have employed various strategies for strengthening the reliability of this research. Of course, the reliability of the findings hinges on my own role in the field and how my informants perceived me. This probably also influenced the kind of people and informants I met and connected

with, and thereby the kind of information to which I gained access. With the fieldwork at the UN in New York, most of my colleagues were of about my age, from similar educational backgrounds. Also in Liberia, many of the people I spoke with were similar to me in age and education, like the Scott Fellows presented in Chap. 7. But I also met with people with very different backgrounds, age, and education, both in New York and in Liberia. Through observations of interactions made during participant observation in New York, I was able to test, interpret, and thus gain a better contextual understanding of my earlier observations from Liberia. Then, returning to Liberia during and after New York, I could further fine-tune these interpretations and understanding not only of observations in Liberia but also those made during fieldwork in New York.

In this way, the studying-through approach and multi-sited fieldwork became instrumental in turning field observations into data that could be used for improving my analysis of the peacebuilding process in Liberia. Moreover, observations of interaction through participant observation have been complemented with interviews. All this provided a set of interpretation which helped me turn observations into data. It was important to travel to Liberia to do interviews; likewise, to note what people in New York were talking about when they referred to peacebuilding. But it was also important to do fieldwork in New York to interpret the observations made in Liberia—not least because observations made through conversations are qualitatively different than those gained through experience and observation. What people *do* is not necessarily the same as what they *say* they do. These two qualitatively different kinds of observations need to be interpreted in relation to one another. Furthermore, the expectations and motivations of people in Liberia and how these individuals were positioned vis-à-vis the in-country peacebuilding process differed from how bureaucrats, officials, and diplomats in New York were positioned. Liberians had an inherent and embodied experience of history and the recent conflict in their country, as well as being very differently positioned and engaged in its future. Observing and studying these different positions represented potential access to various aspects of the peacebuilding process in Liberia. To ensure data reliability, I have emphasized the importance of triangulating methods, including participant observation, observation, interviews, and conversations—as well as reading up on the history of Liberia (see Chap. 4) and relevant anthropological literature (see Chap. 2).

While international organizations and peacebuilding as an empirical field have been studied and investigated from various angles, few anthropologists have studied the UN system specifically by concentrating on the political culture surrounding policy-making, peacebuilding, and practices pertaining to sovereignty. Without such research, however, there is a risk of not seeing or understanding important parts of the organization and its policy-making, such as the production of knowledge and aspects of power. This has been recognized by researchers and parliamentarians who have noted the dearth of studies on parliaments and large international organizations elsewhere (see Hansen 1984; Helland and Rasch 1998; Rasch and Rommetvedt 1999). Sociologists and anthropologists have shown how anthropological methodology can provide supplements crucial to a deeper understanding of the internal processes in parliaments and organizations (see Abeles 1993; Fenno 1973, 1988, 1992; Gusterson 1996; Zabusky 1995). In Hylland Eriksen's edited volume *Globalisation: Studies in Anthropology*, Keith Hart offers an interesting twist by asking whether anthropologists can study *world society* (Hart 2003, p. 217). Also Radcliffe-Brown (1957) noted this potential in anthropology. His approach was criticized for being unable to accommodate social change, but others have claimed that his view of society was more dynamic than these critics claimed, as Hylland Eriksen points out:

> The positivism in Natural Science of Society [by Radcliffe-Brown] is complemented by an acute attention to inner tensions and frictions between the institutions that make up a society and a conscientious examination of ethnographic detail. Radcliffe-Brown's fundamental question, concerning the mechanisms that create stability out of a natural state of flux, remains crucial to contemporary anthropological theorizing. (Eriksen 2013, p. 681)

Further, my mode of investigation has been inspired by Fredrik Barth's approach to motivations and the anthropological curiosity in studying who does what, with whom, and why. Here I am thinking especially of his generative model for studying variation by seeing how people are differently situated and how they make improvised choices depending on their own individual cosmologies and intentions (Barth 1993, p. 159). Because peacebuilding involves activities found within different rationalities at different levels and places, it cannot be understood by long-term fieldwork in one locality alone. A UN quick-impact project in a rural village in Liberia is part of something infinitely bigger than solely the actors and recipients

involved on the ground. It was necessary to investigate through multi-sited fieldwork, moving along, following people, connections, and relations across space and time.[1] However, in order to grasp aspects of power and specificities of the peacebuilding process in Liberia, it was also necessary to consider the country's historical trajectory as well as ideas concerning sovereignty.

My fieldwork involved epistemological globe-hopping, where I gathered data through experiences, interviews, and participant observation, immersing myself in these various fields, in language as well as practices and engaging with the field. With the study of complex organizations, engaging with the field has, according to Garsten and Nyqvist (2013a, b), implications for how the researcher can approach the field, analyze, and produce knowledge about it. They also note "how the organizational context influences the research process, the methodological adjustments and innovations that may be needed and the openings that may be entailed in the fieldwork in such milieux" (2013a, b, p. 1). This context implied the need for multi-sited fieldwork, to enable triangulation of methods and data. With this approach, I could capture how words, concepts, and ideologies were being used and put into action, creating connections and links between various parts of peacebuilding processes.

Concerning the reciprocal relationship between the global and the local, anthropologists have argued that these are different perspectives on the same process, event, or point (see, for instance, Nustad 2003, p. 127). Studying global and local perspectives related to social processes or phenomena thus requires methodological and theoretical triangulation—for which multi-sited fieldwork is especially well suited. Here, the strength of anthropology lies in the long-term fieldwork and qualitative methodology that enable the anthropologist to trace connections and also identify disconnections. In today's world, there are no places that are dominant to the extent that they can rightly be called "global"—nor are there are any places that are self-sufficient enough to be called "local" (see Latour 2005, p. 204). This insight proved highly relevant in my study of peacebuilding: it was necessary to include both external and internal aspects of the field, because both were involved in constituting the study object. What is perceived as global and what is perceived as local are connected—and that entails studying peacebuilding as "several sites in one" (see Hannerz 2003). On the deconstruction of *locality*, Simone Abram has argued that one cannot explain

> the local situation without recourse to a broader field which follows the effects of decisions in one place through their many transformations into decisions at another place. It is for this reason that locating fieldwork in the mental space of a policy, rather than the geographical space of settlement, makes accessible processes of globalisation, flows of concepts, and the networks that span the local and the global. (2003, p. 143)

In this perspective, the relations between sites are as important as the relations within them. Because peacebuilding is constituted by the connections between people, we can call it a "field" as defined by Hastrup: "for a field to emerge, we must establish connections between its constituents" (2013, p. 157). Through participant observation of peacebuilding, my focus has been on practice and connections, but texts at all levels have also been relevant, as constitutive elements for policy discourse and the formal system. That made it important to understand how texts were produced and applied at the various levels of peacebuilding.

Moving Along: Studying Up and Studying Through

In studying dominance, anthropologists have tended to focus on the "underdogs," the dominated. However, Susan Wright and Sue Reinhold (2011) suggest that anthropologists should be more interested in studying the perspectives of those who dominate. That could prompt questions including the perspectives "of those who dominate and an analysis of the ways in which they sustain their dominance" (ibid., p. 87). It was Laura Nader (1972) who coined the term *studying up* as a call for anthropologists to focus more on studying the colonizers rather than the colonized. Formulating this as a strategy to find out how networks of power work, she also emphasized the importance of combining studying *up* with studying *sideways* and *down*. Nader thus stressed the need to study up via a "vertical slice" and called for ethnographic studies of processes of bureaucratization and the organization of such processes (1972, 1980). This has been followed up by many anthropologists, like Hannerz (2006) and particularly by Reinhold, who developed the concept of *studying through* as a "strategy which enables researchers to follow a process of contestation as it tracks back and forth across different sites in a policy field and over time, so as to reveal how a new governing discourse emerges and becomes institutionalized" (Wright and Reinhold 2011, pp. 87–88). Roberto J. Gonzalez and Rachel Stryker also build on Nader's call for studying up,

down, and sideways while emphasizing the need to confront "some of our day's biggest challenges—corporate hegemony, development thinking, environmental oversight, and the standardization of thought and action" (Gonzalez and Stryker 2014, pp. 19–20). Nader's approach proved particularly useful in my inquiries into peacebuilding and political transformation through space and time, because it allowed for a nonsequential or a nonlinear perspective on organizations and policy production. The approach proved instrumental for developing *ownershipping* as an analytical term.

What I present in this book is based upon a presence in the field which was as close as it is possible to get without being a permanent UN diplomat or official. I worked as a UN official for one year—an arrangement that made it possible to do participant observation within the organization. Many sociologists and anthropologists, including Olsen (2007, 2010), Douglas (1986), Scott (1998), Shore (2005), and Herzfeld (1992), have written impressively on institutions and organizations. However, they have not based their work on participant observation from within the organizations they study. Anthropologists who can study organizations from the inside, through participant observation, are better-positioned for writing about organizations and their emergent properties. Theorists like Olsen (2010) write about emergent properties, but from a more abstract perspective.

By *moving along*, tracing practice and communication processes as they unfold in interfaces where different cosmologies are expressed, anthropologists can analyze what kinds of values different arguments represent and how fields are constituted. I traced ideas and social processes from Liberians in rural areas of the country, via Monrovia and officials working in various Liberian ministries as well as in international organizations also located in the capital, to donor countries and UN headquarters in New York, and then back to Liberia again.

This is what Reinhold has called "studying through" (1994, pp. 477–479) and Kirsten Hastrup refers to as "tracing connections" (2013, p. 157). Through this approach, recent anthropology has begun to understand scale as epistemic knowledge, with diverging perceptions on the same kind of knowledge. This understanding has made it possible for the discipline to embrace *new* kinds of empirical fields. The lines along which comparative research can be conducted are shifting, perhaps helping the discipline towards a renaissance. The "social" today, when all societies are interconnected, has become an elusive frame of temporary

orientation. Some things are universalizing phenomena, whereas others remain more specific. The list of topics for comparison in anthropology has shifted, from matters like religion and witchcraft to, for instance, international organizations, NGO, expectations, acceleration, and climate change. Shore and Wright have followed up on Reinhold's "studying through" by further describing the role of anthropology as a way of "tracing ways in which power creates webs and relations between actors, institutions and discourses across time and space" (1997, p. 14). Studying transnational processes at the three different sites offered substantial comparative possibilities and made it possible to explore *peacebuilding* as a transnational process.

With fieldwork in three sites, the methodological approach underlying this book became a *studying-through* or "*tracing connections*" approach where I apply a focus on three very different arenas on very different levels to investigate how the world is connected in a global institutionalization process. Highlighting the multi-sited character of the *studying-through* approach, Shore and Wright see the key aspect of this methodology as grasping:

> the interactions (and disjunctions) between different sites or levels in policy processes. Thus 'studying through' entails multi-site ethnographies, which trace policy connections between different organizational and everyday worlds. (Shore and Wright 1997, p. 14)

Using the "studying through," I follow constitutive elements from the top of the organizational hierarchy in the UN Security Council via DPKO headquarters in New York, to the capital and rural areas of Liberia. However, I also traced connections from constitutive elements formally outside the organization that constitute the field of peacebuilding. Because of the considerable differences between these sites, I continually had to adapt and fine-tune my presence. Doing participant observation requires a certain *moving along*, which implies a degree of tuning in with the situation. In making clear the anthropological approach to the field, Hastrup quotes Lee and Ingold:

> Moving along implies a degree of tuning in with the situation; to participate is not to walk "into" but to walk "with"—where "with" implies not a face-to-face confrontation, but heading the same way, sharing the same vistas, and perhaps retreating from the same threats. (Hastrup 2013, p. 155)

In this way, anthropology is about ways, or modes, of knowing and how this is interlinked with the relation between the researcher and the persons being researched.

Scale, Sites, and Fields

The empirical topic under study here is what anthropologists would traditionally define as large scale. In order to operationalize my studies, I build on this tradition which started to emerge in anthropology back in the 1950s. In 1954 Edmund Leach published his studies of political systems and political change in Burma, based on fieldwork focusing on large and multiple areas with high degrees of complexity, rather than one small-scale location with a low degree of complexity. At about the same time, Fredrik Barth, who had studied and worked with Leach at the London School of Economics and at Cambridge, was studying the larger social structures, or political processes, in the Swat Valley.[2] Both of these anthropological studies have become widely read classics (Edmund Leach 1954; Fredrik Barth 1959). More recently Kirsten Hastrup has celebrated large-scale studies, insisting that fieldwork should be "an exercise in following the connections that are traceable prior to any attempt at summing up the ingredient of the whole. This is where multi-sited dissolves. Either there is a traceable connection, and therefore a field, or there is not" (Hastrup 2013, p. 157).

Peacebuilding, I argue, is such a field, but one where the disconnections or the disconnecting activities are as interesting as the connecting ones. Focusing on *encounters* or the interface between different levels in the institutional chain of peacebuilding, I explore different *sites* of the *field* where individuals were confronted with institutional complexities and dilemmas. The "studying-through" approach made it possible to see how bureaucratic or institutional patterns were being shaped through informal processes and actors representing different systems at different places and thus also *emergent properties* of bureaucracy. As this included the Liberian state apparatus and bureaucracy, the empirical exploration also led me to ponder anthropological conceptions of the state and sovereignty.

The various actors involved in peacebuilding participate with various properties, from a range of angles and geographical locations, with different kinds of non-codifiable knowledge. This perspective leads into the anthropological debate about scale pertaining to the number of social

statuses in a society. Here I will argue with Hastrup, but in line with Grønhaug (1972), that scale "is not a matter of more or less, but of different points of perception. This implies that the local and the global are not endpoints on any absolute scale; empirically, they are enfolded in each other" (Hastrup 2013, p. 148). Scale does not relate to size or distance, according to Hastrup: "it is a function of knowledge interest and therefore of epistemology" (ibid.). Hastrup further embraces scale as an analytical perspective that can be used to highlight certain aspects of peoples' everyday lives "Rather than providing the anthropologist with a fixed frame of reference, the act of scaling is a profound matter of putting a particular perspective to work, and of identifying the complexity of any detail or fragment" (ibid.). In peacebuilding, the actors come equipped with various properties, angles, knowledge, and so on. These intermingle across geographical space and contribute to the specific constitution of the field.

I did this by studying officials and bureaucrats and by tracing connections across different levels through anthropological fieldwork in institutions, state apparatuses, and international organizations. Through fieldwork in different locations, I traced how people who were directly involved in or concerned with peacebuilding processes worked with each other and employed various kinds of knowledge, as well as contributing various kinds of knowledge-making. Understanding this analytically through *ownershipping* made it possible to analyze these activities as they pertained to large political processes of transition, systems of global governance, and sovereignty.

Because peacebuilding understood as a global process stretches over vast geographical, temporal, and social spaces, there are different perceptions of the same kind of knowledge. Nevertheless, whether in Manhattan, in Oslo, in Monrovia, or in a village in rural Liberia, people do have knowledge about, and are involved in everyday practices of, peacebuilding. Scale is epistemic, and peacebuilding represents one global dimension where it is possible to do comparison. What kinds of perceptions do those involved in peacebuilding have about the process, about what is happening, about whom to blame, and about what they can do? Because knowledge is anchored in people's sociality, different actors' perceptions of the epistemic knowledge are a matter of interest. Institutions or other governing units produce policy in order to guide their activities towards achieving their goals—but also in order to maintain support, legitimacy, and funding for ongoing activities. Thus,

perception, production and reproduction of policies are relevant in calibrating forms of peacebuilding.

Space, Place, and Location

Diffusionism is a tradition in social anthropology, rooted in Germany, which emphasizes the geographical spread of cultural elements and systems. Where an evolutionist would hold that the source of social or cultural evolvement lies inherent in all societies (see Spencer 1867; Tylor 2010[1871]; Frazer 1993[1890]), a diffusionist would focus on external influences (see, for instance, Wolf 1982). Diffusionism, as a way of understanding cultures and social systems, lay dormant for much of the early twentieth century, as many anthropologists were occupied with mapping isolated cultures that were disappearing rapidly. Then, as the world became more integrated and global through modern means of communication, economy, and mass media, with increasing flows of people, goods, ideas, and money, diffusionism reappeared in anthropology, opening new fields for anthropological inquiry. The scrutiny of space and place further helped in preparing the ground.

As will be shown throughout this book, peacebuilding as a social practice enforces typical "several sites in one" phenomenon understood as encounters between involved people who are differently positioned in the field. Such sites bring to the table various ideas, intentions, experiences, and knowledge about peacebuilding, and may result in new arrangements. Peacebuilding processes involve people, organizations, groups, products, and services that reflect not only global standards, but local ones as well. This can be grasped by using *ownershipping* as an analytical concept. The universalizing forces inherent in the resolutions and mandate of the UN Security Council, and the particularizing forces reflected and inherent in national and local traditions and standards, are present at the same time. Thus, peacebuilding processes, propelling transnational motion, make transnational social spaces or sites where people representing global as well as local forces interact.

Thus, we can also say that peacebuilding processes contribute by producing heterogeneity. This resembles tendencies inherent in the concept of "glocalization," which describes phenomena where universalizing and particularizing tendencies come together (Robertson 1995)—precisely what unites the actors and constitutes peacebuilding as a field. And the fact that these actors are positioned differently also generates variations within the field of peacebuilding.

Access

Throughout, my aim has been to shed light on the making of organizational and bureaucratic connections. This has entailed anthropological enquiries in what might appear as rather boring and uninteresting formal, static, and transparent organizational structures. However, I share Nyqvist's enthusiasm for "the endless corridors of state authorities [as] real hot spots, the meeting rooms of public and private organizations are *the* place to be, official documents provide intriguing reading, and people in business suits are *the* people to hang around" (2013, p. 93).

Nyqvist highlights Sweden as the place to be for such studies, but I would add the UN organization. There I was welcomed and generously granted access to people, places, documents, policies, and strategies, as well as workshops, meetings, and informal settings. However, it is important to consider *what* I have been granted access to and *where* I have been. I have not pursued an understanding of my informants as individuals; the focus has been on what these people do at work as officials, bureaucrats, and diplomats.

Nyqvist further lists various ways of performing fieldwork in such locations (ibid., p. 99); the first ones are to "follow suit" or to "tag along" and "shadowing," which implies asking permission to follow people around during their working hours in order to observe what they are doing. Such activity was part of my fieldwork, but I was generally more involved in the processes than as a mere tag along, since I was involved in work in the UN offices in New York. But rather than doing *para-ethnography* as described by Nyqvist as a collaborative ethnographic fieldwork with informants (ibid., p. 101), I engaged in the work of the UN officials in order to better understand their perspectives from their point of view. This was combined with something similar to what Hugh Gusterson (1997) has called *polymorphous engagement*. Such engagement is used in anthropological exploration where ideal-type participant observation is difficult or even impossible. Gusterson coined the term "polymorphous engagement" to describe a way of:

> interacting with informants across a number of dispersed sites, not just in local communities, and sometimes in virtual form; and it means collecting data eclectically from a disparate array of sources in many different ways. Polymorphous engagement preserves the pragmatic amateurism that has characterized anthropological research, but displaces it away from a fetishistic obsession with participant observation. (1997, p. 116)

Gusterson sees such engagement as involving combination of other methods, like formal interviews and document study. In my fieldwork I was able to conduct participant observation, combined with other methods where necessary. In order to fit in, I had to buy a few business suits and learn how to talk the *UN language* with all its abbreviations and organizational buzzwords. The learning curve was steep, and there were many awkward situations. On the other hand, because I was interested in my informants at work, it was fairly easy to know where to draw the line, how to know where a connection could be traced and where it could not. Although it was relatively easy to understand when to stop tagging along, my polymorphous engagement also took me to *off-stage* places and happenings. Some of these were sorted out and rejected during the process of writing, while others contributed to illustrating demarcations, highlighting important aspects of my explorations. When meeting new people, I always made it clear that I was a researcher conducting anthropological fieldwork. Together with the fact that I never became comfortable speaking the UN language, this prevented me from being perceived as native, or as a UN official: I remained the anthropologist. My fieldwork can be divided into three sites, or the study of three interconnected fields, to which I now turn.

Entering the Peacebuilding Field: Multiple Sites

Fieldwork for this book ran from 2009 to 2016, but I also draw on findings from research conducted prior to 2009.[3] At times I was more deeply involved in traditional anthropological fieldwork; but throughout these years, I have participated and been engaged in various processes pertaining to the international community and peacebuilding. Some of the time was spent on shorter NUPI research projects on peacebuilding; other periods have involved more long-term, location-based traditional anthropological fieldwork based on participant observation. This experience has put me in a unique position for investigating peacebuilding anthropologically. Additionally, as noted, I have conducted more location-based anthropological fieldwork, which included participant observation. This fieldwork features throughout the book, especially in Chap. 5 on the UN Security Council, and Chap. 8 on the UN bureaucracy in New York. Let me now present the three fieldwork sites, and how I adapted my methods to the various sites depending on time, resources and contexts.

Site One: Liberia

There were several shorter field trips to Liberia between 2007 and 2016, focused on the implementation of peacebuilding activities and programs. On these trips I participated in workshops, seminars, and meetings and conducted interviews with UN officials, UN officers, and Norwegian police officers deployed to the country, with international and local NGOs, and with officials working in national ministries, all dealing with the peacebuilding process in Liberia through a focus on restoring state institutions. Meetings varied in size, from 25 people to 2 including myself and, in formality, from formal meetings and interviews at executive offices in the UN or Liberian ministries to informal conversations over lunch or dinner or during long hours in helicopters or vehicles en route to various destinations in the country.

I have not conducted long-term anthropological fieldwork specifically in Liberia per se, because my long-term fieldwork was focused on identifying the links and connections between processes occurring in several different places. As a corollary, the data from my fieldwork stays in Liberia have been shaped by the methods employed—interviews, observations, and conversations: I do not claim to have "thick" descriptions of interaction and relations in Liberia. My findings are based on what I have seen and what people have told me. This, in turn, has been interpreted and linked with the long-term anthropological fieldwork focusing on peacebuilding connections and participant observations in the UN in New York. In Chaps. 6, 7 and 9, I use data from these fieldtrips to illustrate how various topics related to peacebuilding are connected and disconnected in systematic ways. By studying processes in Liberia pertaining to Security Council resolutions on the peacebuilding process in Liberia, I explore not only institutionalization but de-institutionalization as well.

Sitting on the veranda at the Mamba Point Hotel in the Liberian capital, in the middle of the day, you may well get the impression that you are having lunch with the entire international community of Monrovia[4]—from the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) of the mission, police officers from Norway, development and humanitarian workers, politicians (also Norwegian MPs), to researchers and PhD students from universities around the world, and the people in focus in Chap. 6: the Scott Fellows from the USA, working in Liberian government ministries.

In general, the "thought style" is fairly well established through a set of common denominators: these people speak the same expat language and

are usually interested in the same policy processes and the same gossip. The veranda proved to an excellent place for getting access to and observing international actors involved in the peacebuilding process in Liberia. However, if I had limited my fieldwork to that hotel veranda, I might as well have interviewed such people in Oslo or in New York. It was essential to combine these observations with interviews and observations in UN office buildings in Monrovia and elsewhere in the country, and within various Monrovia ministries, as well as in villages and rural areas and in county state apparatuses. I needed to travel around in the country and talk with people who were differently positioned to the peacebuilding process in Liberia.

Chapter 9 focuses on rural Liberia and is based on a fieldwork conducted in September and November 2011.[5] This was after I had finalized my fieldwork at UN DPKO headquarters in New York: I now went back into the *field*, to Liberia, where I engaged people from Liberian civil society organizations (CSOs) for consultations and focus groups. The aim was to get as broad a data material as possible from the rural areas of the country, as well as to include more Liberian voices. I decided to try out *para-ethnography* as a method. Including Liberian consultants and researchers from the University of Monrovia as well as from Liberian civil society was meant to help circumvent some of this difficulty, thereby contributing to triangulation of methods. Our research team in Liberia conducted a total of 80 extended interviews and 20 short interviews in four counties; Chap. 9 draws on some of the data collected from this fieldwork.

The methods and tools used throughout the research were qualitative. I employed a mixed-method case approach involving three steps to fuse theory, method, and empirics—and to ensure the credibility of the empirical findings. First, close "engagement" with the UN in a peacebuilding context permitted observation of how the organization dealt with input and output. Second, desk studies provided an overview of the literature and an empirical and theoretical basis for analysis. Third, participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and informal discussions were conducted with UN officials at national and local levels; with state officials at national and local levels; and with representatives of CSOs and local populations. Focus-group discussions were held in local markets, on the university campus, and among rural villagers. Discussions were aimed at outlining key experiences and challenges of local-level peacebuilding, including strategies for contextualizing the mandate. I conducted interviews and had conversations with a broad range of people, to enable a

triangulated perspective on various aspects of the peacebuilding process in Liberia. These individuals included UN officials (Liberians and internationals); officials working for international organizations such as Oxfam, the Red Cross, the Norwegian Refugee Council, Save the Children, the Mano River Women Peace Network, the Carter Center, the American Bar Association, and USAID; Liberian officials working in ministries and county state apparatuses; Liberian taxi drivers; Liberian academics working at the University of Monrovia; police officers (Liberians and internationals); representatives of civil society groups in Liberia; correction officers; and prison inmates.

Accessibility challenges came mainly from traffic and infrastructure problems—most of the people I met with were more than willing to talk with me. There could be various reasons for this: coming from Norway, I could be confused with potential opportunities related to donor relations, but by always making it clear that this was an independent research project, I lessened the chances of misunderstandings regarding my role.

These encounters helped to acquaint the team with local expectations and understandings of UN missions in general, and "civil affairs" in particular. Individual case studies were also explored, to supplement our data. The chapters on Liberia offer insights and reflections on the UN's local-level peacebuilding work in Liberia from the perspective of UN officials, international actors, and Liberians as well.

Site Two: UN DPKO Policy and Best Practices Services

At the second site, the headquarters of the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) Policy and Best Practices Services (PBPS) in the Civil Affairs Section,[6] I conducted long-term fieldwork and participant observation for one year, 2009/2010. I became an insider situated at the link between the field and the big politics between member-states at UN headquarters. Our job in this section was to transform resolutions into practical guidance for the field and to bring accounts and best practices back from the field, so that the institutional concepts and politics of peacebuilding could be further developed and improved. Basically, this job involve making connections and disconnections between HQ and the field, and much of our work entailed providing organizational language on peacebuilding activities (see Chap. 7).

This fieldwork offered the opportunity to observe relations and interactions within the UN bureaucracy. I was searching for aspects that could

help me understand how people at the various sites within the peacebuilding industry managed to connect. I helped to produce guidelines and handbooks for the field, as well as normative frameworks, principles, and taxonomies; I was involved in negotiations and discussions with officials in the field as well as with delegates from UN member-states, for instance, at the annual C34 meeting for UN peacekeeping. This method gave me opportunities to see how UN officials developed ways of talking about links and connections that could shed light on questions I had started thinking about during earlier fieldwork on the Security Council.

I became responsible for the Civil Affairs Section's digital Community of Practice, a network set up to improve contact between the field and headquarters. This network included a mechanism for queries, discussions, and a site where best practices, cases, and dilemmas from the field could be posted and discussed. This enabled us at HQ to feel the pulse of the field, but also to provide the field with the latest updates from New York. Through this work, I was also able to note the bureaucratic connections and links between these sites, observing how words, notions, and concepts were producing connections and bureaucratic taxonomies.

The primary focus of my work here was on the preparation of a handbook for the UN's Civil Affairs Section (published in 2011). Contributors to the handbook were researchers and practitioners occupied with peacekeeping operations. This work gave me the chance to become involved in the day-to-day international bureaucracy and diplomacy at UN headquarters. Collaboration with *colleagues* in the UN DPKO provided me with the opportunity to make observations useful for interpreting the peacebuilding process in Liberia. Attending events and workshops, such as the workshop where heads of Civil Affairs from all the current peacebuilding operations were flown in to New York to discuss the new handbook for civil affairs officers in the field, provided data essential for interpreting and understanding individual choices in the organization. By participating in processes and meetings in connection with the annual meeting between the DPKO and the UN member-states (the C34) I was also able to capture bureaucratic categories and connections in the making. Applying anthropological methods (like participant observation) at UN headquarters offered a rare opportunity for gaining a better understanding of organizational complexity, the UN, and international policy-making.

The building at 380 Madison Avenue, which housed several sections of the DPKO due to the renovation in the UN building on first avenue, was a huge structure in midtown Manhattan. The DPKO occupied several

floors in this building. The Policy and Best Practices Services (PBPS) and the Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training (DPET) were located on the 19th floor and arranged in a combination of office cubicles and open office landscapes, with people dressed in neutral business attire. During my stay, most of the staff in the Policy and Best Practices Services were working two or three to an office cubicle. My desk was in one of larger cubicles, with room for four or five people. The supervisor's office was right across the corridor, with head of the department a few doors further down. Altogether, the Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training and the Policy and Best Practices Services employed around 30 staff members.

My fellow staff members came from all over the world, although the majority were from Western countries and held master's degrees from top Western universities; they were in their late thirties or early forties—much like myself. Their degrees ranged from Masters in Law and Diplomacy, Political Science and International Affairs, International Development, to International and Public Affairs, International Relations, and Public Policy. Our work was very much aimed at producing bureaucratic documents and policies. Through meetings, workshops, and Skype conferences with field officers, officials, researchers, and other experts, we turned best practices and lessons learned into concepts and terms in bureaucratic documents. I took part in the taxonomic work of the UN bureaucracy, gaining important insights into how this organization produces classifications. I took part in events modeling the everyday practices and challenges in the fields. In this way, I got to know how the UN, through producing taxonomies and following up with implementation (in Liberia), makes changes in continuous, routine ways. This engagement uniquely positioned me for observing and understanding the linkages between the field and headquarters, between realities in the field and big politics at UN headquarters.

Site Three: Doing Fieldwork in the UN Security Council

My third fieldwork site was the UN Security Council (UNSC). This is the venue where the general formal framework for the rest of the peacebuilding field is authorized, through the Council's adoption of resolutions and mandates. It has evolved to become the most powerful UN organ, with the capacity to make decisions binding on the member-states. This formalized power structure is unique in international politics, as other international organizations are more dependent on consent.

With its focus on the overarching decision-making level, Chap. 5 on the UNSC is central to the analysis in this *studying-through project*: this is where the formal overarching framework is created and from where this framework trickles down through the rest of the organizational hierarchy. The relevance of the UNSC to peacebuilding is significant indeed, as the Council seems more occupied with peacebuilding than ever before. In 2012, nearly two-thirds of all its resolutions concerned threats to international peace and security under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. These resolutions were primarily concerned with the 14 peacekeeping operations and the 13 sanction regimes, most of them located in Africa. Chapter 5 of this book, focusing on the Security Council, draws on interviews and conversations conducted between 2009 and 2016.[7] Realizing that the Security Council would constitute a crucial piece of the puzzle, I chose to utilize data, methods, and analysis from my previous fieldwork (see Schia 2013), making sure to supplement and update with more recent data collection. Gathering data for this chapter has been a *polymorphous* engagement.

Chapter 5 discusses the overarching framework for the rest of the book—the decision-making arena—and explores the Security Council's internal dynamics. Decisions made in the Security Council have a trickle-down effect on the rest of the organization, and especially on peacebuilding activities, since most Council decisions concern that topic. The anthropological study of the diplomats, ambassadors, and bureaucrats served as an entry point for gaining access to these dynamics. Additionally, it made me curious about the rest of the organization and interested in following how Council decisions trickled down through the UN organization and the bureaucratic hierarchy.

Watching and Wondering

Activities at these three different sites are important elements in constituting peacebuilding as a process. The UNSC provides a peacebuilding process with legitimacy and defines the overarching aims and intentions. Those working at the headquarters of the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations then transform these intentions into guidelines and policies for the field. In Liberia, these guidelines and policies were to be put into practice. By exploring these sites, I was able to see how actors at the various sites were differently positioned vis-à-vis the peacebuilding process. I could observe activities from

different parts of the same process—and, more importantly, explore how they were interconnected.

Because I see power as embedded in relations and in the making of taxonomies (see Chap. 2), my approach to the field included a focus on how aspects of power are shaped. Studying empirical sites through participant observation where the effects of power may be explored can provide a better understanding of transnational processes and peacebuilding. By combining this with a historically oriented anthropology, I could trace this not only as a process of translation but also as one of reception, acceptance, rejection, and resistance (see Chaps. 4, 6, 7). Theorists or analysts of discourse may counter this by claiming the precedence of discourse over practice, and argue that the discourse has a formative or definitional character on individual choice. However, Ray Kiely has noted the Achilles' heel of this approach:

> The conception of a constructivist discourse and its power is based on the assumption of Foucault's notion of power; that power does not operate over and against individuals, but rather is "a machine in which everyone is caught", which thus neglects the agency behind discourse. (Kiely 1999, p. 36)

Where Foucault focused more on structure than process, Kiely maintains that neglecting agency makes the concept of "power" worthless because it does not say anything about who distributes or uses power, or in what ways. Power, Kiely continues, is constituted, manifested, and articulated through interaction; and anthropologists can study this by approaching power eclectically through empirical studies. In this perspective, the making of bureaucratic taxonomies in international organizations becomes a real hotspot for studying power in international politics. Through participant observation and studying through, anthropology has a unique capacity for studying global processes and systems of global governance.

Cato Wadel (1991) has offered a good introduction to qualitative research. He focuses on *inductance*, highlighting the hermeneutic approach between problem, theory, method, and data, and pointing out how qualitative research may diverge from the initial project description—largely because qualitative research is open to the possibility of multiple truths or answers to an issue or a question.

I embarked on this project by going to Liberia to study aspects of the peacebuilding process there. Failing to find what I was looking for on that

trip, I realized it would be necessary to trace connections of the activities studied in Liberia to other places, such as Oslo and Manhattan. When I arrived at those places and started further enquiries, I realized that the answers were not to be found there either, and that I would have to return to Liberia. In each place, divergent perceptions emerged about the kind of knowledge produced on peacebuilding and perceptions of national ownership that I sought to trace. Tracing these connections provided greater knowledge of peacebuilding as a field. I began to get a grasp on peacebuilding by following and tracing connections to the empirical questions I had initially sought to investigate in Liberia.

This, I would argue, is also one of the main strengths of this project. Because it is ethnographically driven, I have adjusted the methodological approach accordingly. Combining these methods and findings with the use of *ownershipping* as an analytical concept made it possible to explore these as systems of global governance and political transition, without losing the perspective of how they are practiced on an everyday basis by real people, in real life.

Notes

1. For more on multi-sited ethnography, see, for instance, Marcus and Fischer (1999), Ulf Hannerz (2003), and Mark-Anthony Falzon (ed.) (2009).
2. As the Swat Valley region in northern Pakistan was at that time a stateless society, Barth demonstrated that political complexity was not something found solely in societies with modern states apparatuses.
3. Parts of the fieldwork on the UNSC were done in 2002.
4. Similar places are found in most post-conflict/developing countries, like the Ihusi Hotel in Goma in DR Congo and the Speke Resort in Munyonyo Kampala in Uganda.
5. Chapter 9 is based on a NUPI comparative research project on local-level peacebuilding in Liberia, South Sudan, and Haiti. See the three project reports: Diana Felix da Costa and John Karlsrud, (2012a) and (2012b), and Hannah Neumann and Niels Nagelhus Schia (2012). This fieldwork was conducted with Hannah Neumann, Felesu Swary, and Saah N'Tow and the Kofi Annan Centre at the University of Monrovia.
6. The UN Civil Affairs Section is a civilian component of the peacekeeping department. It works at the social, administrative and subnational political levels to facilitate the countrywide implementation of peacekeeping mandates and to support local populations and governments in strengthening conditions and structures conducive to sustainable peace. There are currently

around 1000 UN Civil Affairs Officers deployed to UN peacekeeping operations worldwide (UN DPKO Civil Affairs).

7. Also from earlier anthropological fieldwork conducted in 2002 (three months in Oslo and three months in New York). A previous version has been published as an article in *PoLAR (Political and Legal Anthropology Review)* (Schia 2013).

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CHAPTER 4

Liberia and the History of a Franchised State

Africa's participation in "globalization" [has] been a matter of highly selective and spatially encapsulated forms of global connection combined with widespread disconnection and exclusion.
(Ferguson 2006, p. 14)

Introduction

Liberia has an intriguing history: established as a settlement for freed American slaves in 1822, it became an independent nation-state in 1847, making it the oldest republic in Africa.[1] Although Liberia has never been colonized, a small elite took control of the state and the political institutions already before it became an independent nation-state. The way in which this powerful elite ruled the country for more than a hundred years has certain patrimonial or neo-patrimonial characteristics. For instance, the Constitution of 1847 made a distinction between *civilized* and *natives*, denying indigenous people citizenship and the right to vote until 1964. However, a strictly patrimonial reading of the rulers and the historical trajectory of the Liberian state would not be totally accurate, as it is important to bear in mind other aspects like global connections with the USA, international engagements, the influence of other global forces, and parallel state structures.

Drawing on ethnography, this chapter provides a historical account of how foreign countries, foreign organizations, and foreign private companies

N.N. Schia, *Franchised States and the Bureaucracy of Peace*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65569-7_4

began building relations with the Liberian elite even before the country became an independent nation-state. This relationship, which has continued with a series of involvements throughout the country's history, is relevant for exploring the organization, honing and maintenance of political functions in Liberia and how such practices relate to concepts of sovereignty. The historical account describes how relations between foreign actors and the Liberian elite have contributed in developing parallel state structures.

Liberia's history as presented here shows how the country, represented primarily by the elite, has been able to mobilize resources from its external environment or its international relations. These relations have forged practices of extraversion, leaving the Liberian state in a position between internal and external patrimonial-like relations.[2] In my view, this situation can best be grasped by analyzing the interconnectedness of practices related to state structures (which in turn requires an anthropological study of connections and disconnections of formal and informal structures and processes) through *ownershipping*.[3] Thus, this chapter serves to anchor *franchised states* as a concept that incorporates not only temporality but also resistance, brokerage, resilience, and reciprocity within patrimonial relations. The current peacebuilding presence of the international community and the UN, to be examined in the ensuing chapters, can be seen as the most recent addition to a series of involvements in which the USA has been the most prominent actor for more than 150 years. In this way, franchised states are not a new phenomenon.

It is not my intention here to claim historical necessity or a teleological dimension, but rather to avoid "silencing the past" (Trouillot 1995). I describe how Liberian history has conditioned and established a framework with which today's elites and the international community engage with each other. The historical background is relevant for understanding the social patterns and forms of the global connections and thereby the organization of the state in Liberia. With this chapter I offer a diachronic perspective on aspects pertaining to the state and state effects in today's Liberia that will complement the ensuing empirical chapters. I draw on the vast and strong anthropological and ethnographical literature on Liberia which has been produced throughout the twentieth century and provides windows to important aspects of Liberia's history.

The historical context of Liberia can help in explaining current state formation, global connections, and subaltern patrimonial links. I map and analyze accounts of how Liberia was formed as a nation-state and has evolved into the current situation. These stories describe how international

actors have been involved in refashioning the lives of people living in Liberia for more than 150 years. One effect of this involvement has been the creation and sustainability of an elite, a class struggle between *natives* and *civilized*, and the formation of parallel state structures. I begin with a chronological overview, from the formation of the state and the close relationship with the USA, to the current post-conflict phase. This includes a brief presentation of state formation; the formation of national bureaucracy, modernity, and traditions; and the conflict lines that led to the two coups (1980 and 1989), the subsequent Liberian civil war (1989–2003), and the post-conflict phase from 2003.

Elites

The perspective on Liberia's unique historical trajectory makes it possible to discern how social patterns, patterns of extraversion, as well as the honing of state mechanisms have served elite interests and strengthened patrimonial relations. Elisabeth Tonkin (2002) holds that elite interests in Liberia have been reproduced in a personalized climate:

> the near identification of public office with economic opportunity in a patron–client mode of government has been identified as a means of continued Americo-Liberian dominance […] Political, administrative and commercial functions were fused as scarce resources in a poor and undeveloped country. (Tonkin 2002, p. 139)

Further, she maintains that elite survival in Liberia depends on kinship structures, networks and institutions "Settlement origin helped, since settlements had unequal access to the capital, as did financial resources and social connections with power brokers which enabled networking and clientage" (ibid.). In this chapter I provide a thicker ethnographical account along the lines of Tonkin's argument. William Reno has noted how elite networks govern Liberia as an "alternative institutionalization of political authority heavily dependent upon external resources for survival" (1995, p. 109). This adds to an understanding of the survival of ruling elites as presented by Whitfield and Buur (2014), where the emphasis is on how the "government's policy choices and its ability to implement them, as well as its interaction with businesses, are shaped by incentives arising from the imperatives of ruling elites to remain in power and thus build and maintain political support" (p. 127). They further contend that, because

no state is completely isolated and ruling elites are never completely autonomous, it is important to study "how coalitional pressures shape the political costs of certain policies and the ability to implement them, given the resistance or support form factions and individuals within the ruling coalition and those financing it" (ibid., p. 128).

In this chapter I explore and trace such coalitional patterns through their historical and global connections. These patterns reveal continuities and discontinuities not easily detected by studying contemporary events through fieldwork. Liberia has had substantial involvement from international actors in developing the nation-state, the state apparatus, and a bureaucratic system. Although not a post-colonial state, it could be regarded as a *neocolonial* one—or, rather, a *franchised state*.

Liberia: Facts and Figures

Geographically and demographically, Liberia is among the smaller African countries: it covers an area of 111, 369 square kilometers (43, 000 sq. mi.) and is home to some 4.7 million people. Together with Guinea to the north and Sierra Leone to the west, Liberia is situated in the Mano River region of West Africa. Further, it borders the Ivory Cost to the east and the Atlantic Ocean to the south. Liberia has a tropical climate, and large parts are covered by rainforest. The capital is Monrovia and the official language is English, but some 30 indigenous languages are also used throughout the country.

Various customary structures and secret societies have responsibility for societal tasks that a Eurocentric perspective would reserve for the formal state. In Liberia these systems are old, dating back to at least the sixteenth century (Little 1965, pp. 349–350). Functions like political and economic control, justice, education, medicine, distribution of land and labor, fertility, and diplomatic relations across social groups and kin are regulated and distributed through "secret societies," especially in the rural areas (see Murphy 1980, 1987; Watkins 1943; Ellis 2007). These are hierarchical systems reflecting the organizations of village communities. They are not secret to villagers "[o]n the contrary, not only is the existence and general purpose of these societies known to every grown-up person, but in many places the wide range of their activities makes them the dominant force" (Little 1965, p. 349). These societies are very hierarchically organized and clientelistic in function. They play an important role in Liberia and throughout the Mano River region, and are linked with the formal state structures

and systems in various ways.[4] They stand testimony to how what is today Liberia were territories that had various societies with their own traditions and customs long, before Liberia became an independent nation-state.

Because accessibility to the secret societies in Liberia is difficult and the literature is deficient, I will not go into further detail concerning them. However, it should be borne in mind that they exist and play an important role in the country, and they illustrate how the (re)production of the franchised state continues to connect and disconnect with various social structures.

Postwar Liberia is a unitary presidential republic, governed from 2006 to 2017 by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of the Unity Party. Although most Liberian are farmers, the country is far from self-sufficient in the production of cereals, for instance. Rich in natural resources like rubber, timber, iron, gold, diamonds, oil and other minerals, Liberia is nevertheless a low-income country heavily dependent on foreign aid and assistance and is struggling with the material and social devastation inflicted by years of civil war and government mismanagement. The civil war, which began with the revolt against the government and the execution of President Samuel Doe in 1989, ended in 2003. The turbulence and mismanagement had started some ten years earlier, when Doe seized power through a military coup in 1980 and executed President Tolbert, together with 13 cabinet members and several of Tolbert's supporters. Since 2003 the country has experienced improvements and economic growth, with GDP increasing by 8.3% in 2012 and 8.1% in 2013. However, this economic recovery has been dominated by foreign investments in commercial agriculture and extractive sectors, without much apparent impact on the high unemployment rate. The domestic sector (health, rule of law, security, and the private sector) remains weak, and high youth employment constitutes a major challenge (World Bank 2014). On top of this, the country experienced a state of emergency in 2014 with the Ebola outbreak. The outbreak revealed a weak state apparatus and an almost nonexistent health sector, as well Liberia's heavy dependence on international aid and support.

Early State Formation and the American Colonization Society

The USA was instrumental in founding Liberia as a country. To find a place for the increasing numbers of freed slaves, in 1821 the American Colonization Society sent agents to West Africa to find land and establish

a colony for these people.[5] The area in which they settled was called Cape Mesurado[6] (also Cape Montserrado), close to today's Monrovia. When the settlers arrived, there were already complex social, political, and economic structures in the area (d'Azevedo 1962, 1969; Davis 1975, p. 227; Johnston 1906; Martin 1968; Murphy 1987). Segmentary kinship organizations had evolved into a "semi-bureaucratic administrative apparatus directed by war chiefs and councils of clients usurping the functions of the traditional custodians of chiefdom authority and the councils of lineage elders" (d'Azevedo 1969, p. 10). Some degree of centralization had already begun in Liberia by the time the settlers arrived. Many of today's larger towns in rural areas of Liberia were once key administrative and trade hubs for older federated chiefdoms which became focal points for the Liberian government in the beginning of the twentieth century (ibid.).

Warren L. d'Azevedo, an anthropologist who was a pioneer of Liberia studies, has outlined Liberia's historical trajectory (1962, p. 533) and highlights two major events as important adjustments in the nineteenth century: the decline of slave trade in the first half of the century due to the British and US slave trade embargo (1807–1865) following the British Slave Trade Act [Embargo] of 1807; and the colonization of parts of the coast of Sierra Leone and Liberia. This situation led to wars over the control of the remaining market, but the most important effect was, according to d'Azevedo, "the shift of tribal economy to an emphasis on large-scale agricultural activities and the harvesting of forest products by means of the surplus in slaves" (1962, p. 536). The continuous migrations, which had populated the forest, now began to stabilize; these populated areas gradually turned into boundaries of chiefdoms and ethnic groups. Leaders of several of these ethnic groups—the Kru, Dei, Gola, and Bassa—who had lived in this area for generations, ceded the area to the American Colonization Society in 1821. Sir Harry Johnston describes this event: "On December 15th, 1821, not only was the future site of Monrovia bought, but in addition, the chiefs (…) made over to the American Colonization Society [represented by Dr Eli Ayres and Captain Stockton] a strip of coastland one hundred and thirty miles [209 kilometers] long and forty [64 kilometers] broad" (1906, vole 1, p. 129).

In 1822, the settlers arrived and the American Colonization Society succeeded in establishing a part of what we now know as the country of Liberia as a colony for freed American slaves. The settlement was first called Christopolis (1822–1824), before being renamed Monrovia after

the fifth US President James Monroe (1817–1825), who was a strong supporter of the American Colonization Society and the colonization of Liberia. Although a private organization, the American Colonization Society was closely associated with the US government, which donated USD 100,000 and ships for the initial establishment phase, thereby fortifying the clientelistic relationship between the two countries. Members of the Society included, in addition to the US president, other leading US politicians of the time, like senators and congressmen. One of them was Senator Henry Clay, the founder of the Whig Party in the USA.[7] He was instrumental in establishing the American Colonization Society and became its president in 1816. Clay also ran for the US presidency in 1824, but was defeated by John Quincy Adams. Also among the founders of the American Colonization Society were John Randolph, a congressman from Virginia (House of Representatives at various times between 1799 and 1833 and the Senate 1825–1827), and Francis Scott Key, the Maryland lawyer, district attorney, and poet who wrote what became the US national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Between 1822 and 1867, almost 19,000 colonists settled in Liberia: 5957 of these were former slaves who had been freed to go to Liberia; 5722 were recaptured Africans sent by the US Navy; 4541 were born free; 344 had purchased their freedom; and little is known of the origins of the others (Liebenow 1969, p. 8). Utilizing the surplus in slaves after the slave trade embargo, this group initiated extensive farming, forestry and plantation operations at various centers along the coast and became a dominant elite in a country with 16 other ethnic groups. They established a patrimonial settler state or a plantation state, not unlike what they had left behind. Members of this elite group—the "Americo-Liberians," "Congos," and "Settlers"—are still referred to in everyday language in Liberia and have remained politically relevant.

In 1847, only 25 years after the establishment of the colony, the country was founded by the settlers as a national state and declared independent from the American Colonization Society. Its constitution was modeled on the Constitution of the United States. This origin helped the people to escape the European colonialism found elsewhere in Africa, but exposed them to a "regime of 'democratic feudalism' imposed by a group of freed American slaves, the Americo-Liberians, who perpetuated themselves as a ruling class for more than a century" (Abiodun et al. 1999, p. 12). The result was the emergence of two broad socio-political groups: the descendants of freed slaves, the Americo-Liberians, on the one hand,

and the indigenous population, consisting of 16 ethnic groups, on the other. Although constituting only some 3–5% of the population, the Americo-Liberians formed the ruling elite and developed a segregated society in which the indigenous people were denied citizenship and voting rights until 1964. The Constitution of 1847 defined the boundaries and the patrimonial relationship between the *civilized* (the Americo-Liberians) and the *natives* (the indigenous people). This distinction became important for the trajectory of the Liberian state, but I will leave this discussion here, returning to it after presenting the chronology.

The True Whig Party and the Evolution of National Bureaucracy

The political party of the Americo-Liberians was established in 1870 and named the True Whig Party, heavily influenced by the Whig Party in the USA. In practice, the True Whig Party dominated Liberian politics and produced all Liberian presidents until the coup in 1980. In addition to this social segregation, the country became segregated geographically as well. Americo-Liberians settled down in Monrovia and along the coast, while most the indigenous people lived in the rural areas outside the capital and in the hinterland. Consequently, the capital gradually became modernized, but not the periphery. Furthermore, it was the True Whig Party that defined administrative boundaries and administered the periphery through district commissionaires and local chiefs. This, in turn, may have further aggravated the differences and tensions between the various ethnic groups.

What was initially an area inhabited by indigenous communities gradually turned into settlements, county provinces, and counties. d'Azevedo describes how the major towns along busy trade routes through rural areas that used to be Gola chiefdoms turned into "centers of political power and wealth" (1969, p. 17). Many indigenous communities, like the Gola, saw the arrival of the settlers as bringing new opportunities for trade and influence:

> Liberian national aspirations were well understood, and the idea that a powerful coastal society was coming into existence is not presented as a threat in Gola retrospect, but as a source of highly advantageous political and economic relations within a new confederacy of chiefdoms. Monrovia had replaced the old Bopulu, and the Gola could only profit from the stability

> brought about by this situation as long as there was no interference with their autonomy in the interior. (d'Azevedo 1969, p. 18)

However, a disconnection in the administrative division of the country remained. Instead of incorporating indigenous people into bureaucratic positions, these bureaucrats were, according to Tonkin, "'civilized natives,' who had access to some posts and superior opportunities within the state, distinguished from 'Tribal' natives culturally, sometimes legally too, in a changing category (…) which created exclusionary but permeable frontiers" (2002, p. 134). This involved a mixture of an old kinship system, structural changes of chiefdoms, and the introduction of a settler state or a patrimonial state.

At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, rituals from traditional structures and secret societies were often adopted by the settler state to honor officials and ensure the support of key state officials with responsibilities in the hinterlands. Many settlers were active members of the freemasonry that had found its equivalent in Liberian secret societies such as the Poro. The acculturation resulting from the encounters of the different systems also led to the enlargement and institutionalization of the secret societies' administrative structure. As a result, also today there are customary structures and secret societies overlapping and existing in parallel with the statutory system throughout the country—as is particularly evident in the rule-of-law sector. Despite this acculturation, with flexible kinship structures and widespread mobility across ethnic groups, the formation of the settler state took the shape of a patrimonial one. This, in turn, paved the way for a specific kind of clientelism or patrimonialism, which in turn brings us towards the civil war in the late twentieth century. This pattern, now in new and subtler forms, is being re-enacted and reinforced with the international community's current presence in the country (re)producing Liberia as a franchised state.

1930–1970: Formation of a National Bureaucracy

The expansion of the Liberian state beyond the coastal strip and into the hinterlands was triggered first and foremost by competition for land with the British and the French, who were active in the same region. By the early twentieth century, the settlers or the elite in Monrovia who had established a central state administration, based upon the US model, were confronted with the need to incorporate the hinterlands into the republic.

The settler elite undertook initiatives aimed at bringing the interior under military and administrative control, and at collecting taxes. The expansion of the state caused tensions; incidents such as the Kru uprising during World War I (Davis 1975) and the League of Nations[8] intervention regarding forced labor in 1930 paved the way for social reforms and the transition from forced to paid labor, challenging the settler elite's control over the indigenous people and the interior.

The League of Nations report led to the resignation of President Charles D.B. King (1920–1930), and Edwin Barclay assumed the presidency. During his presidency, Barclay initiated reforms aimed at reorganizing the administrative service in the hinterlands. Some of the Whig leaders who had been accused in the League of Nations report felt threatened by Barclay's new initiatives. They opposed his reforms and pushed the Barclay administration into a suppressive regime, leading to instability and an attempted coup (Liebenow 1969, p. 70). In addition to fending off the coup attempt, Barclay has been credited with steadfastness vis-à-vis the League of Nations and the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company. However, this did not come without costs. The Firestone Company had signed a contract with the King administration in Liberia in 1926, giving the company a 99-year concession with exclusive rights and tax benefits to one million acres of land—the largest rubber plantation in the world. Together with the contract, Firestone provided a USD 5 million loan to the Liberian government. The ensuing economic depression resulted in a collapse of rubber prices that almost turned Liberia bankrupt in the 1930s. The Liberian government was unable to pay the debts it had accumulated with the Firestone Company. Refusing to comply with Firestone's repayment terms, Barclay appealed to the League of Nations. However, the League replied with a proposal that Barclay and his administration saw as a denigration of the country's sovereignty. The proposal suggested putting delegates from the League of Nations in key positions within the Liberian government (note the parallel with Scott Fellows, Chap. 7). Nevertheless, Liberia's efforts through the Barclay administration to "acquire the income necessary to function as a sovereign state was […] achieved only by placing itself under the diplomatic protection of the United States and by leasing a vast area of land to the Firestone Company" (Ellis 2007, p. 44). There are clear indications of how sovereignty is unbundled and organized through practices of governing where state actors are only one among a range of actors. The Barclay administration had to continue on the path that had begun with the King administra-

tion's connections with Firestone. While Liberia maintained diplomatic relations with the League of Nations as well as with the USA, the "1926 loan and the royalties paid by Firestone enhanced the power of the executive branch of government relative to the judiciary and legislature, since the president became less dependent on taxes voted by the House of Representatives and the Senate" (ibid., p. 44–45). The elite, or the president and the executive branch of government, began preferring to grant trade concessions and contracts "to foreigners, whether Europeans, Americans, Lebanese, or Mandingo traders, since non-nationals were less likely than Liberian citizens to use their commercial positions to build political constituencies" (ibid., p. 45).

In the 1940s Liberian President William Tubman (1944–1971) initiated a series of reform processes, including a national unification and integration policy intended to address the divide between the Americo-Liberians and the indigenous people (Dunn 2012, p. 4). This process was tentatively continued by his successor William R. Tolbert (1971–1980). Tubman initiated an open-door policy acknowledging that the Liberian hinterland could no longer be isolated from the economy and from modernity:

> There was a danger, too, that a further delay in the exposure of the tribal people to the twentieth century would build a time bomb under the archaic political, social, and economic structure that the descendants of the settlers had inherited. Economic development, instead of undermining Americo-Liberian control of the Republic, might finance more modern and efficient means of control. (Liebenow 1969, p. 71)

The state apparatus enhanced its relations with society. In this way, the administrative incorporation of the hinterland population became a means to political stabilization in Liberia during the Tubman years. These populations were now included in the political hierarchy, but their place was a subordinate one, and it did not entitle them to a say in government policies. This expansion of the Liberian bureaucracy provided the existing settler elite with control of the indigenous population and the generation of "revenues from which the larger part of the salary bill of the hinterland cadres were paid" (Brown 1989, p. 372)—thereby also becoming a means for the elite to continue reinforcing social differences.

That said, the expansion of the bureaucratic polity was a double-edged sword for the Liberian settler elite, and a potential oppositional challenge would have to be controlled by that elite. In the public sector, wages to

indigenous people were kept low, fees were high, and the sector was organized so that "the more prosperous an [indigenous] individual became the more closely did he also become bound to the political status quo" (Brown 1989, p. 373).

In addition to economic means, ideological mechanisms in the Liberian bureaucracy contributed to maintaining the subordination of the hinterland population. As a patrimonial system, the Liberian bureaucracy was dependent on "central actors, particularly the President, [retaining] a personal interest in the affairs of the periphery. This central tendency was reinforced by means of a strongly replicative emphasis in the political structure" (Brown 1989). Stephen Ellis describes President Tubman in similar terms, noting how he made use of revenues from the concessions to build and fortify Liberia as a party-state: "The whole country was incorporated in the vast True Whig Party patronage machine dominated by the President" (2007, p. 47). Ellis puts emphasis on the role of Tubman in explaining the increasingly patrimonial state in Liberia during this period, but global connections with Firestone, the USA, and so on are even more important for explaining the specific trajectory of the statebuilding process in Liberia.

Thus, it could be said that the Liberian state had established both internal and external patrimonial relations. In its external relations with, for instance, the USA and the Firestone Company, the Liberian state adopted the role of a client, with the USA and Firestone as patrons. Such patrimonial relations with external actors ensured revenues for the executive branch of the government, while it incapacitated potential Liberian political opponents by granting the larger concessions to foreign actors. Even more importantly, these external relations fortified the relations of the Liberian state apparatus with the international community and continued to develop Liberia as a franchised state.

The idea of being "civilized" constituted the gateway to elite incorporation. This was replicated with the expansion of the Liberian bureaucracy in which there were weak or low degrees of internal boundaries, but clear, overstated external boundaries. This, Brown argues, favored *participation* in favor of a more Weberian *performance* as a motivation for joining, and working in, the Liberian bureaucracy (1989, p. 376). Further, this civilizing ideology was also instrumental in developing a "'dual economy' in a society marked by parallel and, to the ruling stratum, functional ethnic and political cleavages" (ibid., p. 374; see also Brown 1982).

Thus, in the 1950s and the 1960s, the incorporation of the hinterland population into the Liberian bureaucracy worked as a way for the settler

elite to control the forces for social change. Economic growth and reform processes, and the fortification of a patrimonial state, characterized those years, but the reform processes were halted by economic depressions and political turbulence in the late 1970s, and continued in a destructive patrimonial circle in the 1980s.

1970s and 1980s: Tensions, Turbulence, and Coups

Tolbert was re-elected in 1975, but in his second period, he was increasingly blamed for the growing economic disparities and was accused of nepotism. The economic situation deteriorated further, culminating in what has become known as the Rice Riot of April 14, 1979, when tanks, soldiers, and police were deployed to control a demonstration where more than 2000 unarmed citizens participated. The police lost control and began firing into the crowd. This prepared the ground for popular acceptance of the coup that took place one year later. On April 12, 1980, Samuel Doe and 17 indigenous officers overthrew the presidency of Tolbert and seized power. This coup is also often interpreted as a revolt against the Americo-Liberians domination. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, elected to the presidency in 2006, served as Minister of Finance 1972–1973 and 1979–1980 in Tolbert's government. In 1980 Sirleaf, who was one of four ministers in the Tolbert administration not to be executed, left the country and worked for many years for international organizations like the World Bank and the United Nations.

Doe led an increasingly repressive regime until 1989, causing tensions among the indigenous people and between indigenous people and the Americo-Liberians. Charles Taylor, an Americo-Liberian who had returned from the USA to lead the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) took advantage of this situation. Doe was overthrown and assassinated by Prince Yormie Johnson, who had allied with NPFL. Taylor took control of most of the country and gradually led Liberia into civil war.

Civil War, Peace Accords, and International Organizations

Several peace-making attempts were made between 1990 and 1993. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) undertook initiatives aimed at a peaceful settlement, supported by the UN. These efforts included establishing an ECOWAS observer force, the Military Observer

Group (ECOMOG) in 1990. After a peace agreement was signed in Cotonou, Benin, in 1993, the UN Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) was established to support ECOMOG in implementing the agreement. Fighting resumed, however, and supplementary peace agreements were negotiated.

Eventually, a 1997 cease-fire allowed new elections. Taylor won, and the UN Peacebuilding Support Office in Liberia (UNOL) was created to assist the government in consolidating peace following the elections. Disagreements continued, however, and reconciliation was undermined by systematic abuses of human rights, the exclusion and harassment of political opponents, and the lack of security sector reform.

Civil war resumed until peace finally was settled on August 18, 2003, under pressure from the UN Security Council.[9] Again, Liberia's patrimonial relations to the USA became evident:

> Especially in the weeks preceding President George W. Bush's tour of Africa in early June, the bloodshed and suffering of Liberian citizens seemed to cry out for some response from the United States, the country's traditional patron. Nightly news images of Liberians depositing the bodies of their dead relatives at the gates of the American embassy in Monrovia were a graphic reminder of both the violence unfolding on a daily basis and the unmet expectations of US aid. (Moran 2005, p. 458)

When the war was over, some 270,000 people had been killed, one-third of the population had been displaced, and institutions, infrastructure, economy as well as relations between state, civil society, and market were in ruins.[10] Between Doe's military coup in 1980 and the peace settlement in 2003, some 100 000 Liberians had moved to the USA. Basic services had to be rebuilt, land disputes settled, roads constructed. The UN moved in with 15,000 peacekeepers and its various agencies—at the time the largest peacekeeping operation in UN history and made a significant impact in this small country of some 3.7 million people at the time. Along with this came an influx of international NGOs, all with their own purposes, plans, and policies for Liberia. Given the history of Liberia, it should be obvious that the peacebuilding process in the country would have to adapt or contextualize its activities to the local situation. And that would require knowledge of the political, cultural, social, local, and economic situation as well as an understanding of the country's historical trajectory. Disagreement about what it means to be a Liberian and how

the polity should be constituted entered a new, albeit peaceful, phase, becoming more and more complex as the international community kept increasing its presence for 15 years.

Liberia Today

In 2017, Liberia was still recovering after 14 years of war (1989–2003) that ended with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Accra, Ghana, on August 18, 2003. The peace talks prepared the ground for the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). UNMIL was established in September 2003, organized as an *integrated mission* with a multidimensional mandate to support the peace process.[11]

Two years later, in 2005, Liberia could hold elections. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf won, becoming the first woman to be elected head of state in Africa. She was re-elected in 2011.

By early 2013 the situation in Liberia was improving, reflected in the longest period of stability since the outbreak of war in 1989, as well as in the World Bank's *Worldwide Governance Indicators*. According to this 205-country index, Liberia 2005–2007 had shown the best improvement in the world in controlling corruption, advancing 72 places from 185th to 113th on the list (World Bank 2008). Still, corruption has continued to attract international attention; after a donor meeting in Copenhagen in 2005, a program was launched to target these challenges: the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme (GEMAP). This could be seen as a continuation of a long series of international involvement in Liberia targeting mismanagement.[12] Reno (2008) has noted how GEMAP and this cycle of foreign interventions

> challenges established rights of sovereign states to run their own affairs while placing non-Liberians at the centre of Liberia's internal administration. International experts hired by the GEMAP consortium—the UN, IMF, World Bank, the European Commission, the United States and African regional organizations—have counter-signing authority in the country's central bank, state enterprises and the government's accounting office to prevent or permit spending. (Reno 2008, p. 387)

The UN Security Council expressed concern about the regional situation in West Africa, fearing that instability in neighboring countries could affect the situation in Liberia (UNOWA 2009; Securitycouncilreport.org

2009).[13] There were sporadic riots in the Monrovia and throughout the country. The Liberian government had difficulties in handling these riots on its own, largely because of the weak security sector caused by an inefficient national police and justice sector. Additionally, poor infrastructure, high illiteracy levels, and a generally weak or centralized state presented the Liberian government with challenges in achieving control not only in the regions but also in the capital. Furthermore, despite the period of stability, the postwar truth and reconciliation process had not proven very strong.

The challenges facing the Liberian state, forcing it to turn to the international community for solutions, became particularly evident during the Ebola outbreak in 2014, when the Liberian state apparatus was totally dependent on foreign assistance and aid in order to gain control of the situation. The health sector is not the only weak part of the Liberian formal state apparatus, however. Also the rule-of-law sector is struggling with multiple challenges and has links to strong parallel structures in the traditional or customary justice system.

Complexities and Connections

Much of the literature on colonialism, post-colonialism, as well as peacebuilding has tended towards a Eurocentric understanding of neopatrimonialism, placing the blame for corrupt leaders and brutal autocracy on a "passive" population (see Moran 2006, p. 28). According to Charles Piot, this "long informed scholarship about Africa" tends to associate the West or Europe with modernity and Africa with tradition (1999, p. 2). To avoid this trap, we must recognize the importance of including temporality and historical contingency as well as global connections and disconnections in the picture.

Firstly, portraying Liberian history as anchored in a history of state formation risks ignoring everything that predated the arrival of the first settlers in 1822. There exist several historical ethnographies describing the political, economic, ethnic, and linguistic elements in the area before that time (see, for instance, Martin 1968; d'Azevedo 1962, 1969; Davis 1968, 1975). Secondly, explaining Liberian history through a Eurocentric focus on state formation may yield a limited understanding of the political context. When social crises or patterns in Liberia are interpreted solely in relation to state formation, aspects related to complexity, mobility, social

change, and global connections may be neglected. These properties of Liberia's historical trajectory are also important for understanding the effects of the UN's presence and how this has served to reproduce elite dominance, undermining traditional structures—and fortifying Liberia as a franchised state.

Perspectives focusing solely on state formation, through the settlers and how they have dominated the Liberian nation since its foundation in 1847, or even since the settlement in 1822, may neglect important parts of the trajectory pertaining to temporality and contingency as well as to global connections which, if explored, could reveal important aspects of the franchised state. The state-formation focus has tended to see the democratic features in Liberia as merely a cloaking mechanism that conceals the dominance or the patrimonial character of the small settler elite. Liebenow (1987), Gretchen and Taylor (1996, p. 64), Sawyer (1987, 1992), and Dunn and Tarr (1988) also fall within this tradition when they describe how the opposition and the challengers had converging interests in keeping up the façade of democracy in order to maintain credibility internationally.

Other scholars have highlighted the role of secret societies in maintaining the position of the elite in Liberia (see Little 1965; Murphy 1980; Ellis 2007). Prominent secret societies in Liberia are the Sande, the Poro and the United Brothers of Friendship (UBF): the first two are found throughout the country and are inclusive in their recruitment strategy, whereas the UBF is seen as being part of, and as maintaining the position of, the elite culture in Monrovia.

Highlighting perspectives on complexity, anthropologists working in countries on the African continent have made important contributions to relativize such historical essentialism. Together with historical sociologists such as Jean-Francois Bayart (2000, 2009), some of these anthropologists have made efforts at describing how societies in rural as well as urban areas in Africa have evolved through encounters with Europe, the USA, and the East through history—see, for instance, d'Azevedo (1962, 1969), Moran (2006), Piot (1999), Comaroff and Comaroff (1993), More (1986, 1994), and Ferguson (1999). As Piot points out, apparently traditional features of societies in African countries may "owe their meaning and shape to that encounter as much as to anything 'indigenous'" (1999, p. 1). Together with other anthropologists (see, for instance, Appadurai 1996a, b), Piot has argued that these are in fact

alternative modernities. Mary Moran (2006) describes how the rural and the urban parts of Liberia have long been connected through constant streams of people and goods, and discusses what it means to be Liberian and how the country should be constituted. Further, she contests the above-mentioned scholarly tradition that characterizes Liberia as "dominated by secrecy, distrust, and hierarchy; as religious and cultural systems that explicitly impede democratization. (…) These authors, of course, acknowledge that a range of political orientations exists within the region, but see alternatives to hierarchy and secrecy as suppressed or underdeveloped" (Moran 2006, p. 6).

Also other scholars, among them the anthropologist Paul Richards, have put forward perspectives on complexity (2005). Richards encourages scholars to unravel the complexities of war and how it connects at the global and the local levels (2005). Ronald W. Davis (1975) has emphasized the importance of capturing complexities when explaining the history of Liberia:

> [the] simplistic, popular image of a Liberia of indigenous subjects administered by a tiny Americo-Liberian elite is inadequate for the post-World War II period, but Kru Coast politics suggest that this is far from a suitable model for any period in Liberian history. Notwithstanding the public emphasis on national integration prevalent in Liberia since the end of World War II, the Liberian political elite had, and continues to have, serious problems in consolidating itself. Relations with indigenous peoples and outside powers have been complicated enormously by competing influences within the settler community and its descendants. (Davis 1975, p. 265)

By failing to include the global connections, one may end up putting the blame for the patrimonial destructive dance in Liberia on "passivity and tolerance for corruption of the suffering masses" (Moran 2006, p. 28). If Charles Taylor is characterized solely as a neo-patrimonial ruler, Moran continues, the explanation for his action will be that he was "behaving like a 'traditional chief,' only on a larger scale. What is obscured is the role of United States policy in supporting and funding men like Taylor and his predecessor, Samuel Doe" (ibid.).

As Taylor is not the object of this book, I leave discussions about him here. However, the point about including global connections and relations between the Liberian state apparatus and the international community remains important. These should also be understood in relation to temporality, which is the purpose of this chapter.

Class Struggle: Native and Civilized

Highlighting perspectives that enable a focus on complexity, some have held that the history of conflicts in Liberia could be understood as a class struggle, mobility between *native* and *civilized*, rather than ethnicity (Moran 2006). This in turn must be understood in relation to the historical context of Liberia, where the settlers established themselves as a "civilized" national elite, whereas the indigenous people were viewed in terms of "tribal" connotations. In many ways, this parallels Heyman's (1995) presentation of recent bureaucratic contradictions in the USA, between protecting the ideology of citizenship on the one hand and making possible cheap and undocumented labor immigrants into the US economy on the other. Using his empirical findings, Heyman aims to direct anthropological attention to bureaucratic power and to study how social orders "bind differentiated wholes together" (Heyman 1995, p. 262). In Liberia, this distinction has also been strengthened by two separate legal systems: the law of the hinterland, and the statutory system, to which we return in Chap. 6. Although these separate classes have been relatively static in Liberia, there has been some degree of class mobility, as with intermarriage. In general, however, intermarriage, adoptions, and also trade have been used as means of strengthening the distinctions between the dominant and the dominated classes.

Moran describes the fall of Samuel K. Doe in terms of his failure to claim "civilized" status. When he took power through military coup in 1980, Doe was 26 years old, a young soldier with no schooling after 10th grade. He belonged to a remote ethnic group, the Krahn, and was thus generally perceived in terms of "tribal" connotations. His repeated public insistence, attempts, and claims to be "civilized" often failed, leading to ridicule, especially among the upper classes. Moran further notes out how Doe's struggle to become "civilized" re-invoked a "contest" about how Liberia would constitute itself as a civilized nation, which in many ways challenged the patrimonial state. Realizing that he could not achieve status as civilized, Doe turned to ethnicity as a way of gaining power and wealth. This in turn unleashed ethnically defined resistance and opposition, bringing a new kind of politicized ethnicity in Liberia (2006, pp. 98–100).

In other words, the situation in Liberia in the late twentieth century could also be understood as a conflict about a complex, multifaceted set of issues. This complexity entailed a continuation of certain historical

patterns and the class struggle—but it also brought something radically new: the tensions between ethnic groups that were accelerated in the 1980s and a potential change in the elite and thereby the patrimonial state. The increased presence of the international apparatus, through the UN peacebuilding operation deployed in the first decade of the new millennium, has contributed to reproducing the state and the bureaucracy as an important arena for elite interests in Liberia, further constituting the Liberian state as a franchised state.

Much of the literature on international peacebuilding has continued the tradition focusing on state formation. By contrast, I follow up and build further on the tradition represented by Moran and Richards. Moran aims at explaining Liberian history through focusing on the interplay between the local and the national levels. Here I offer two main contributions: firstly, by adding an international layer of complexity; and, secondly, an updated perspective. Both were made possible only through long-term and multi-sited fieldwork where I was able to trace how connections and disconnections were being made between the international apparatus, the Liberian state apparatus, county administrations, and traditional structures—and at a time in Liberia's history where the presences of international actors had become almost ubiquitous.

Global Hopping and Franchised States

This chapter has chronicled the war in Liberia, described the trajectory of the state, and noted some distinct features, like shadow structures, as well the Liberian state or executive branch of government as both client and patron at the same time. These aspects are central for understanding *how* and *why* the Liberian state—as represented by elites—has been honed to be a client of international organizations and donor states. Thus, the chapter has provided the historical background for understanding how the Liberian state can be regarded as a franchised state, which is further explored in the subsequent empirical chapters.

Internal and external clientelism in Liberia has been formed through historical trajectories where an elite, through its connections with donor countries like the USA and foreign companies like the Firestone Company, has been able to control the political institutions and the state. Client–patron relations with the USA have enabled the elite in Liberia to control the executive branch of government and establish a franchised state. In this way, the historical trajectory of Liberia has

forged clientelistic and patrimonial relations that have shaped power and class struggles. This, in turn, has led to parallel state structures, or shadow state structures, that must be included if we are to understand how international actors, focusing on reproducing state capacities, participate in *global hopping*, or selective forms of global connections in combination with disconnections and exclusions (see Ferguson 2006, p. 41). The point about *global hopping* also provides an important backdrop for the understanding of Liberia as a franchised state. Sovereignty as a template for the international system implies that "properly governmentalized states is necessary in order to improve the life of populations as well as the predictability of the international arena" (Bartelson 2014, p. 85). The interface between the UN organization and the Liberian state is very much organized according to the UN's organizational way of seeing and sorting the world through the making of bureaucratic taxonomies. Ideas about sovereignty appear to be a modus operandi or template for these activities. This, in turn, builds connections between the international community and the state apparatus, and thereby franchised states where history and large parts of society are excluded. Despite coups and civil wars, these features and connections have remained basically intact, ensuring the continuation of the Liberian state as a franchised state and an elite-dominated entity. This particular trajectory, propelled by the American Colonization Society's establishment of the settlement in 1821, is crucial for understanding the patrimonial and clientelistic aspects of the Liberian state today.

Bureaucracies have their own particular trajectories that must be interpreted in terms of the specific historical and political contexts in which they have been shaped. *Incorporation* and *participation*, as opposed to the Weberian *task orientation*, have been important objectives within the Liberian bureaucracy. We can say that the Liberian state exists between an internal and an external clientelism. Access to the international—shipping, rubber, and positions in international organizations—goes through access to the state, further reinforcing Liberia as a franchised state.

A bias towards a Eurocentric understanding of patrimonialism or neopatrimonialism may neglect important connections and complexities between rural and urban areas, traditions and modernity, and flows of people and goods (Moran 2006, p. 28). By delving into the history of Liberia, this chapter has shown that there are other actors, as well as other internal bureaucratic abilities, that produce state effects than those traditionally identified in the Weberian literature; further, that sovereignty is

organized through practices of governing where state actors are only category among a broad range of actors.

The entry of the UN and the international apparatus in Liberia in the early twenty-first century has served to strengthen the franchised state. Landing a job with the UN or another international organization can be a ticket out of poverty. While the UN has been (re)building the state in Liberia, it has failed to see the historical trajectory and properties of the country—and has ended up reproducing elite dominance. The presence of the UN and the international apparatus has accelerated or enhanced the aspect of inclusion/exclusion and connections/disconnections in the Liberian context.

The next empirical chapters follow up on the aspect of international organizations by exploring how international actors or organizations produce state effects in Liberia. These chapters also trace one effect of international peacebuilding: how states may become clients of the international community in order to maintain their sovereignty and status as sovereign countries, so essential to recognition by the international community.

Notes

1. Ethiopia had been a monarchy and an empire before becoming a republic in 1974.
2. On ownershipping, see Chaps. 1 and 2. For more on the history of extraversion see Bayart (2000, 2009).
3. In the anthropology of development, anthropologists have focused on similar aspects: for instance, *interfaces* of social systems and organizational levels (Long 2001, p. 243), see also Chap. 2 in the present book.
4. Fascinated by these secret societies, the settler introduced Freemasonry, which became highly influential in the ruling party the True Whigs from independence and until the coup in 1980 (see Ellis 2007; Moran 2006).
5. Their motivations were multiple, but those most commonly mentioned in the literature include repatriation, philanthropy, the spreading of Christianity and civilization—but it was also a way of getting rid of a potential threat to the white slave-owners (see for instance Persons 2002, p. 372)
6. Portuguese sailors named it in the 1560s.
7. The Whig Party, founded in 1833, had four US presidents before it was dissolved in 1860.
8. The League of Nations, the predecessor to the United Nations, was established in 1920 but was dissolved (in practice, replaced by the United Nations) in 1946.

9. The Liberian parties signed a Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Accra requesting the UN to deploy a force to support the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) and assist in the implementation of the Agreement. With the subsequent deployment of the ECOWAS Mission (ECONMIL), the security situation improved. UNMIL took over peacekeeping duties from ECONMIL and 3500 West African troops were provisionally "re-hatted" as UN peacekeepers.
10. See, for instance, CIC (2009, p. 111, 2010).
11. UNMIL was established by Security Council Resolution 1509 of September 19, 2003, to support the implementation of the cease-fire agreement and the peace process; protect United Nations staff, facilities, and civilians; support humanitarian and human rights activities; as well as assist in national security reform, including national police training and formation of a new, restructured military (UNMIL 2009a).
12. Mention has already been made of the League of Nation and the USA's involvement under the Barclay administration; in Chap. 7, I discuss the role of international consultants in Liberian ministries.
13. As of *January 31, 2009,* the UN had 11,963 total uniformed personnel, including 10,595 troops, 167 military observers, and 1201 police, supported by 489 international civilian personnel, 975 local staff, and 206 UN volunteers (UNMIL 2009b).

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CHAPTER 5

Producing State Effects: Everyday Practices and Diplomacy in the UN Security Council

Introduction

The UN Security Council (UNSC) is the executive decision-making arena of the United Nations. Not only do the Council's decisions have effects across the world, from big capitals to small villages in isolated rural areas (as in Liberia)—its decision-making is also to a considerable extent affected by big politics. The Council produces far-reaching and extensive policy, but has an inward focus. Although this chapter does not deal specifically with the Security Council's handling of issues regarding Liberia per se, it takes up important properties of the Council, thereby also shedding light on the dynamics of peacebuilding activities in Liberia. Without this decision-making body, there would be no such thing as UN peacekeeping missions and UN peacebuilding. The UNSC is empowered to make legitimate and binding decisions manifested in its resolutions, which can include a mandate for a peacekeeping mission like the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). Such resolutions are at the core of the Council's responsibility for maintaining international stability and security, and provide direction for activities on the ground in peacebuilding processes, as in Liberia.

We cannot analyze decision-making processes in the UN Security Council without studying the connections, discussions, and concerns emerging in the field—but it is also essential to transcend the purely local situation. This requires immersion in the orientation frames of the actors

N.N. Schia, *Franchised States and the Bureaucracy of Peace*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65569-7_5

working in the UNSC, as well as an understanding of the Council's constitutive elements as part of peacebuilding as a global institutionalization process.

It is easy to forget that this Council is also a bureaucratic forum affected by global processes of institutionalization. Here, the institutionalization process is first and foremost a matter of how the states of the world manage to come together, agree on issues, and in the end reach binding decisions. In practice, UNSC resolutions are often the result of a consensus-making process focused primarily on an efficient Council, and only secondarily on the actual needs of the situation.

Institutional-organizational designs shape the Security Council's decisions in significant ways. In this chapter, I show how, even in a highly formalized diplomatic setting like the UNSC, informal processes are central to understanding how states operate, as well as how the Council itself functions. When concepts, norms, terms, and intentions are included in the Council's resolutions or mandates, that gives power and legitimacy to activities in the field. The decision-making process in the UNSC is thus an essential part of the making of connections and disconnections and the making of bureaucratic taxonomies. I explored how people in Liberia and officials in the UN bureaucracy in New York had to relate to the content of Security Council resolutions while also trying to get activities and concerns included into new mandates and resolutions. This way of making connections and disconnections could be grasped by studying peacebuilding through the lens of *ownershipping* (see also Chaps. 6 and 8).

The Council produces and formalizes the intentions that must be translated and adapted to local contexts. Intentions, translation, and negotiation can all cause friction—and are aspects that can be grasped analytically through ownershipping. This chapter constitutes an important part of the argument about franchised states, for two main reasons: because it is from the UNSC that peacekeeping and peacebuilding evolved to become the substantial and powerful field and instrument that they are today; and because this politically overarching decision-making arena of the UN is primarily occupied with maintaining international peace and security.

Nearly two-thirds of all the Security Council resolutions adopted in 2012 concerned threats to international peace and security. Most of these resolutions concerned the 14 peacekeeping operations and the 13 sanctions regimes, mainly in Africa. The events, activities, and decisions made in the Security Council have a trickle-down effect that frames the rest of the field I investigate, in Liberia as well as in the UN bureaucracy in

New York. That makes it important to establish a clear understanding of what this Council does, how it works and how it produces such frameworks.

Today the UN has 193 member-states, all with the same rights in the General Assembly. However, responsibility for maintaining world peace and international security lies exclusively with the 15 member-states that constitute the sole organ empowered to adopt resolutions internationally binding on all member-states: the UN Security Council. This chapter explains the role that the Security Council plays in organizing and shaping peacebuilding activities through decision-making. To make sense of the emergent properties of the global institutionalization, it is important to understand how the UN's executive decisions are made, and the constitutive elements of its decision-making process. How these decisions then trickle down in the hierarchy, influencing, organizing, and shaping the organization's peacebuilding activities, is a theme that will recur in the following chapters.

Diplomacy and World Politics

Without qualitative studies of delegates' everyday practices, the UNSC may give the impression of being a formalized and static decision-making body. After all, it expresses itself through established channels like resolutions, presidential statements, and press statements, and conducts its meetings in a special chamber, behind two security checkpoints. The Council may appear to be managed by delegates who are "humorless automatons" dressed in correct and anonymous business attire, impersonal and working solely as representatives of their states (Herzfeld 1992, p. 1). However, rushing between buildings, chambers, and offices in midtown New York in order to meet and talk with diplomats, I came to realize that a focus on the *internal* dynamics between the delegates in the UNSC could reveal more about the rationale behind the Council's decisions and its autonomy—essential for understanding sovereignty as a template in international politics.

My entry point to this field was Norway's UNSC membership in 2001/2002, and its actions and behavior in the Council during these years. Mary Douglas (1986), Bruno Latour (1993) and others have shown how *faith* is part of modernity; Michael Herzfeld (1992) has argued that modern bureaucracies, despite differences of scale, are no more rational than traditional societies, and that national bureaucracies cannot be

understood without including internal dynamics and "culture." Further, Cris Shore (2005, p. 235) notes the importance of examining "culture" to better understand states and organizations. Writing about the development of diplomacy, Iver B. Neumann emphasizes the relevance of such a cultural-analytical perspective: "If one views world politics as an historically emerging and social phenomenon, then diplomacy plays a key role in it" (2003, p. 342). Studying diplomacy is important, he argues, not only for understanding international relations but also for understanding the state (2013, p. 2). The study of world politics should be more concerned with diplomacy, the engine room of international politics (Sending et al. 2015). Ole Jacob Sending argues for the need to study the liquid features of authority to account for global authority and pockets of *solid* authority in international diplomacy (2017).

Here we find an entry point for a typical anthropological field where it is possible to study the details of actual life in order to answer some of the big questions. Moving from national to international bureaucracy, a discussion of why it is necessary to include informal processes in order to understand how the UNSC works is important. I found that, rather than becoming paralyzed when faced with inconsistent demands as described by Brunsson (2002, p. 13), the Council manages to deal with such challenges, by means of informal processes. Delegates entered these informal processes with a profound faith in the UN and its mandate, and being *part of the parade* became an important goal for delegations (see also Schia 2013, 2015).

The Making of the UN Security Council

The composition of the Council has had consequences for the evolution of peacekeeping/peacebuilding. No UN peacekeeping mission may be deployed without a mandate from the Security Council. The composition of the Security Council reflects the global balance of the world back in 1946, so let me offer a brief description of why the Council was established and the rationale underlying its composition. The formal structures of the Security Council (constitution, power structures, agenda, members, etc.) were determined in 1946 when the Council was established. However, it was built on experiences from the League of Nations, a prior attempt at organizing international security. The idea was to achieve peace through the commitment of all member-states to mediate in the Council of the League before a dispute erupted into open conflict. Furthermore,

the Council of the League was mandated to impose sanctions and economic boycott of countries deemed responsible for conflicts.

The term "collective security" was central here: the principle that all member-states should respond with collective action against any country that threatened the security of another state (Sütterlin 1995, p. 2). The League of Nations was in many ways equivalent to today's UN Security Council. The League was active during the 1920s, but with the worsening of the international situation in the 1930s, there were conflicts, like Italy's attack on Abyssinia in 1935, that the League was not able to deal with or process. Several of the great powers of the time later withdrew from the League of Nations. It became increasingly irrelevant, bereft of the legitimacy it needed in order to play its intended role in world politics. Due to the formal terms in the rules of procedure, difficulties began already from day one, as the USA withdrew from cooperation even before the League became operational.[1]

On April 8, 1946, the League met for the last time, to finalize the decision on its liquidation. By then, the victors of World War II had joined forces to form the United Nations, which was established on October 24, 1945, building on lessons from the League of Nations. In order to avoid the same fate as the League of Nations, the idea of "collective security" backed by sanctions was abandoned. Additionally, the new UN Security Council was equipped with five permanent members with veto power: the USA joined the Council as a permanent member together with China, France, the UK, and the USSR [later: the Russian Federation].

The mandate, functions, and tasks of the Security Council are formalized in the UN Charter, signed on June 26, 1945. The Charter defines the Security Council's mission with regard to maintaining international peace and security, where a peacekeeping mission is the organization's strongest muscle. The Charter further specifies that the Security Council shall at all times consist of 15 members. Besides the P5, the ten remaining members are to be elected by the General Assembly.[2] Elected members on two-year commitments fill these ten seats; and an outgoing member-state cannot be re-elected immediately after its membership period has ended. Each member of the Security Council has one vote. Resolutions are adopted with nine votes or more, but must include the votes of the five permanent members, the P5. Security Council resolutions are binding under international law. The Council shall, at the request of the Secretary-General, determine for each case whether there exists a threat to international peace and security, as well as determining the types of solutions it recommends

for dealing with a potential threat. Furthermore, the Council is mandated to request members to apply economic sanctions as well as other nonviolent methods to stop an aggressor. If these means fail to work, the Council may call for the use of military force against the aggressor. The Charter also authorizes the Council to recommend new members and propose new candidates for the post of Secretary-General to the General Assembly.

Rules of Procedure

The Rules of Procedure of the Security Council were established at its first meeting, on January 17, 1946. Later, there have been a few changes or amendments.[3] Included in this text are rules for meeting, agenda settings, presidency, representation and accreditation, secretariat, voting, and official languages. Additionally, the procedural rules provide guidelines on whether the Council should hold closed or open meetings, how to address new members, how to cooperate with other UN agencies, and more. In the following I present the main points in these Rules of Procedure.

Presidency

The members rotate, in alphabetical order by the English name of their country, in assuming responsibility for the presidency of the Council. Each president is to sit for one calendar month at a time. The tasks include acting as chairperson for the Council and representing the Council externally, including through presidential statements. Such presidential statements must be approved unanimously by the Security Council, but, as they are not binding under international law, they are regarded as weaker than Council resolutions—as well as being easier to conclude. When the Security Council deals with matters that directly affect the president's own country, the next member in alphabetical order assumes the presidency while the case is being dealt with.

Meetings

The Rules of Procedure set out five points concerning Council meetings: how the president shall call meetings, when the president shall convene meetings, the maximum permissible interval between meetings, where the Security Council shall meet, and that the president may convene meetings whenever he or she deems necessary (but not more than fourteen days shall

elapse between each session). The president shall convene a meeting if one or more of the member-states so requests, or if a conflict or a situation threatening international peace and security is reported to the Council.[4] The General Assembly may also take the initiative to a Council meeting by requesting that the Council treat a situation under Article 11.[5] In addition, the Secretary-General may also ask the Council to meet if he/she believes that there exists a situation that may threaten international peace and security.[6] Meetings of the Council shall normally be held in the UN building, but any member of the Security Council may propose another venue. Council meetings are normally to be public, unless otherwise decided.

Council Agenda

The Secretary-General is obliged to make the members of the Security Council aware of all communications from states, UN agencies or the Secretary-General that deal with issues affected by UN Charter regulations. Council meeting agendas are to be drawn up by the Secretary-General and approved by the president of the Council. Besides cases that have previously been dealt with by the Council, this is the procedure for getting the Council's attention. Members of the Security Council are to receive the meeting agenda from the Secretary-General no less than three days prior to the actual meeting. In emergency situations, exceptions can be made, and the agenda may be sent out together with the invitation to the meeting in question. Approval of the agenda is to be the first item of the meeting. Meetings are to be conducted by the Council president; exceptionally, however, the Council may appoint a commission, a committee or a referent in order to deal with the case more thoroughly. Proposals on matter of principle and draft resolutions shall have precedence. Voting is to be conducted in accordance with the relevant articles of the UN Charter. According to the Charter, for a motion to be considered adopted, it must get 9 or more votes from among the 15 members, but 5 of this number must be the votes of the P5. If any of the P5 vote(s) against a motion, that motion is not considered adopted.

Transparency

The Council's meetings are, as mentioned, to be public unless the Council decides differently. As regards Council documents and reports, the Secretary-General will provide a list of documents that have been kept

confidential so that the Council can vote on which of these documents shall be made available to other members of the UN, which shall be made public, and which should remain confidential. Thus, the Council itself determines the degree of public transparency: it may decide to meet in special premises and to keep the minutes of its meetings and other documents confidential.

The UN Security Council and International Relations

There are three main approaches to the study of order in international relations. Two traditional approaches oppose each other: *Realpolitik* (see Morgenthau 1973[1948]; de Vattel 1916[1758]; Waltz 1979), and the liberalistic tradition (see Bull 1977; Grotius 1853; Keohane and Nye 1977; Wendt 1999). However, as both approaches use the state system as their entry point, they do have a common feature. The third approach builds on an understanding of order and social practices as regularity in interaction, and provides opportunities for thinking about global politics without taking the state as the point of departure.

This chapter is inspired by the third tradition. It may offer new perspectives, as the literature on the UNSC and international organizations has otherwise tended to take formal structure as its starting point (see Ambrosetti 2012; Bailey and Daws 1998[1975]; Bedjaoui 1994; Hurd 1997, 1999, 2007; Kirgis 1995; Malone 2004; Prantl 2005; Schweigman 2001). Anthropological literature on the UN is rare, but we may note Ronald Niezen and Maria Sapignoli's edited volume *Palaces of Hope (2017), The Network Inside Out* by Annelise Riles (2001), Sally Engle Merry's *Human Rights and Gender Violence* (2006), Christina Garsten and Kerstin Jacobsson's "Transparency and Legibility in International Institutions: the UN Global Compact and Post-Political Global Ethics" (2011), and Michael Barnett's "Peacekeeping, Indifference, and Genocide in Rwanda" (1999), as well as works by Amitav Ghosh (1994) and Ilana Feldman (2010). Kishore Mahbubani's *The Permanent and Elected Council Members* is also an interesting read on relations, in theory and practice, among the members of the UNSC (2004). The best ethnography on the UNSC is probably Andrew Boyd's *Fifteen Men on a Powder Keg: A History of the UN Security Council*; however, it was published in 1971, and the UNSC is very different today. As some of these authors and

others have argued, it is difficult to understand organizations solely through a focus on structure, pretending that these exist independently of the actors that constitute the various positions in the structures. The Council's inclination towards consensus-making offers a fruitful perspective on its internal dynamics.

Consensus-Making

At a meeting that took place in 2013 in one of the corner offices on the 40th floor of the Manhattan building that houses the Norwegian permanent delegation to the UN, I asked a Norwegian delegate about his views on how delegations could exert influence in the Council. He started to talk about informal processes and channels, outlining the kinds of informal options the delegates could use in their work with the UNSC. Simply phoning delegates from other Council delegations or the lead country about a certain process, he explained, was an effective way of influencing a process even before it had actually been started. Furthermore, delegates often talked with the president of the UNSC about the creation of the monthly program. This was seen as an opportunity to inform and influence the Council agenda. Delegates could also tell the president that they would like to have a resolution on a certain topic, that they would like to see a UNSC text on a topic, or that the UNSC should arrange an "Arria meeting."[7]

Another example of how informal practice may provide an opportunity to exert influence in the Council is the role of the *penholder*. Around 2008, three of the permanent five—France, UK, and the USA ("the P3")—began a new division of labor that evolved into a new informal system, or practice. As a result of the increasing workload in the Council, the P3—seen by many delegates and others as especially active among the P5 as regards legislation—began dividing situations that emerged on the agenda among themselves and claiming the role as *penholder*, that is, the de facto leader on an issue. This role includes taking the initiative on all aspects concerning the situation in question and the drafting of possible resolutions. The penholder produces a draft that the P3 usually agree on before they start the often painstaking process of negotiations with Russia and China. Thereafter, the text is circulated to the elected members, who usually are discouraged from making amendments after what may be a fragile consensus has been achieve among the P5. The penholder on issues pertaining to Liberia has been the USA.

Although these arrangements have been informal and unwritten, they seem to have become institutionalized to the extent that changing this practice will be difficult. In 2012 Portugal, an elected member of the Council, chaired the body dealing with Council working methods. When Portugal proposed changing this practice into a system where all members would get an opportunity to be penholders or co-penholders, the Council was unable to reach consensus, and the idea was dropped. Thus, the gap between the permanent and the elected members seem to have increased substantially through informal processes and practices in the Council.[8] The penholder arrangement contributes to the marginalization of the elected members, preventing a more democratic distribution of burden, diversity, and dynamics in important matters. This imbalance between the "P3" (France, the UK, and the USA), the "P2" (China and Russia)—together the "P5" (the permanent five veto-power states)—and "E10" (the elected ten member-states) seems to have become further segmented over the past decade. It can be argued that, in practice, the Council has become a battlefield of interests between the P5, where the *will of the Council* boils down to what these five permanent members see as being in their own best interest. These five possess considerable institutional power vis-à-vis the ten elected members—which is utilized in the internal and informal decision-making processes and preliminary negotiations of upcoming resolutions, for instance.

In addition, the UN building offers various informal meeting areas for Council members: the canteen, lobby, café, and delegates' lounge. There are two categories of spaces—formal and informal—with diametrically opposing functions. The main arena, the UNSC Chamber, is the formal meeting room. This is where the Council's official positions and statements are produced. Meetings here are usually open to other UN staff and UN missions outside the Council, as well as to the public. Delegates read out their countries' statements and cast votes. Minutes are always written and distributed. The second space is a small meeting room with enough chairs only for the ambassadors and a few delegates. Meetings here are conducted under Chatham House Rules: no observers, and no minute-taking. Because it is not considered good form to quote from discussions that have taken place in the room, "this room allows for creativity and personality" (fieldnotes, Interviewee 3, November 6, 2002).

At the same time, the P3 are generally seen as dominating the *doxa* in the Council through cultural capital and their power to define situations through the role as penholders. This emerges as even more skewed when we consider the composition of the Council and how it has become disconnected from the current global balance of power. The world is becom-

ing more and more integrated in the economic field, accompanied by dynamic shifts and changes of power from the old great powers to the new ones—but this is not reflected within the field of international peace and security and peacebuilding, certainly not in the Council. Nevertheless, there is strong consensus among the P5 about the importance of the Council with regard to the legitimacy of these five countries in the field of international peace and security.

I became curious about the internal dynamics, *the patterned ways of doing things*, of the Council and how the informal processes had consequences for the internal culture and practices in the Council—and thus also for peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities in Liberia. John Van Maanen has highlighted the study of informal processes and activities as one of four key areas for organizational anthropology, in particular the focus on how informal processes may or may not "resist or oppose what is organizationally prescribed—at times even buttress official procedures—but it flows from a logic of institutionally segmented and stratified groups trying to accomplish what they regard as their real work" (2001, p. 242). This can help shed light on the internal dynamics and the production of official Security Council statements, mandates, and resolutions. In Chap. 6, I trace the intended and unintended consequences of the implementation of such Security Council resolutions in Liberia.

The internal dynamics of the UNSC's informal processes seem to favor the permanent members and countries familiar with the work style of the Council. The internal dynamics of the UNSC have evolved through practice and custom over more than 60 years. The P5 have had delegations working in the Council since it was established and have therefore played a more dominant role in defining good practice and style related to peacebuilding, as well as to other UN activities, than the case for other UN member-states. However, such practices and actions generate social patterns that could alter the distribution of power in the UNSC, making it even less representative than initially defined in the Charter. How does this affect the decisions, resolutions, and mandates of the Security Council?

Potent Small States?

Related to the main problem under discussion here is the question of whether small states can exert influence on international politics, where there exists no legitimate sovereign power. The UN Security Council is the arena that most resembles such an actor and one can study small states

and their roles in shaping internationally legitimate resolutions. Because UNSC resolutions constitute the overarching framework for peacebuilding activities in Liberia, this is a particularly relevant aspect to study in seeking a better understanding of peacebuilding as a global process. This point applies also for drawing conclusions on how the UNSC works, as well as on how its actions concern peacebuilding in Liberia (see Chap. 6) and the other way around (see Chap. 8).

Power

Of the many different types of councils, agencies, and assemblies of the UN, the Security Council stands out because it can follow up its decisions by mandating the use of force. The Security Council was initially based on a compromise about maintaining the interests of the great powers on the one hand and the principle of state sovereignty and equality on the other. Further, the Council was organized in order to be both as legitimate and efficient as possible. As we shall see, these compromises have had significant consequences for its decision-making process. In San Francisco in 1945, the victors of World War II managed to legitimize the tensions between an understanding of all states as sovereign and equal on the one hand, and on the other hand the institutionalization of a skewed distribution in terms of weighting of votes. The great powers were tactically savvy: they recognized the importance of a legitimate Security Council, but they also demanded veto powers. The veto question attracted considerable attention and was controversial at the San Francisco Conference in 1945. Nonetheless, in the negotiations the great powers managed to secure their privileges and the veto relatively easily. Ian Hurd (2003) believes that one main reason was that disagreements between the various states primarily concerned details in the formulations of the UN Charter itself.

The term "collective security" was not regarded as political, so there was no fundamental disagreement as to special power status for the great powers:

> The foundational concept "collective security" was not at all controversial at San Francisco despite the significant institutional inequality that it implied. Quite the opposite the essential matter of great-power superiority was accepted as legitimate by the small and medium states, and formed the foundation upon which a legitimized but unequal Security Council was built. (Hurd 2003, p. 3)

This was to be the main source of the position of the P5 in the system under the Cold War and then throughout the 1990s. Even today there is little to indicate that their veto powers will be discontinued in the near future. Most countries in the world accept UNSC resolutions as legitimate, even though the underlying decision-making process is not particularly democratic. Ian Hurd describes how international organizations are not dependent on democratic outcomes to achieve legitimacy: "certain kinds of deliberative procedures [are] potentially very important" (2003, p. 1). He further explains how international organizations maintain legitimacy with their audiences. Particularly interesting is his emphasis on certain forms of counseling processes, with less weight on the importance of democratic outcomes in terms of creating legitimacy. In line with Hurd, we can conclude that it is *not* democratic processes that provide the Security Council with its legitimacy and serve to justify its existence.

That makes it all the more relevant to focus on the degree of consensus concerning the decision-making processes when searching for sources of the Council's legitimacy, by exploring the decision-making process and how this in practice relates to the standardized formal structure. I found that much of the Security Council's work takes place in informal forums, and that these practices have been shaped over many decades. But then we must ask whether the Council still functions in accordance with the initial intention. This calls to mind the question posed by Barnett and Finnemore "Do international organizations really do what their creators intended them to do?" (1999).

There might be a difference between the factors that legitimize the outcomes of the Council externally, anchored in the 1945 agreement on the consultative processes (the formal processes), and how this work takes place in informal processes.[9] This calls for investigation of the relationship between the formal decision-making procedures and the informal part of the work. If it is true that the legitimacy of international organizations is based on specific forms of procedures, then it is important to understand how these procedures work in practice. If the codified procedural rules differ from the informal decision-making processes, we may have to revisit Hurd's conclusion as to the legitimacy of international organizations. Perhaps the Council's legitimacy is maintained by the dynamics between the formal and the informal, as this dynamic ensures both legitimacy as well as the ability to solve institutional problems or obstacles. If so, Hurd's conclusion remains valid, but it would need to include informal processes.

In order to investigate this further, let us turn to the connections between the formal and the informal processes, to see how they overlap.

Unlike the elected member-states, the permanent member-states have the advantage of being continuously present on the Council, thereby acquiring but also *designing* the unique *metis*-knowledge required for navigating efficiently there. The P5 dominate the Security Council not only through the formal structure and their veto power, but also through the informal working methods and through their superior know-how or cultural capital. They can master the activities of governing in the Council better than the elected members.

This makes the distribution of power even more skewed as regards how Council membership reflects the current world situation. Pessimists highlight that the informal consultations act to weaken the legitimacy of the Council through a deficiency of transparency. Optimists point out that informal consultations grease the machinery that helps the Council to function effectively and thereby also acquire and maintain legitimacy. Already in 1946, the importance of informal consultations was noted by a clear-sighted Norwegian representative: "Norway thought that if the Council could not hold closed meetings, informal meetings would be held, and this would tend to even greater secrecy" (cited in Bailey and Daws 1998, p. 10).

In the formalized system of informal consultations, we find an arena that safeguards the existential dilemma of the Council: that between enforcing the formal constitution on the one hand while safeguarding international peace and security in a constantly changing, pluralistic world on the other:

> "formal informals" […] are perhaps the single most important procedural loophole in the functioning of the Security Council. As the representative from France said in 1994: "[i]nformal meetings are not even real Council meetings; they have no official existence, and are assigned no number. Yet it is in these meetings that all the Council's work is carried out." There are no written records, and only Council members and certain Secretariat staff may attend.[10]

Already in 1946 the Norwegian representative identified this concern—and also recognized the danger of a closed and *secret* Security Council that would produce most of its decisions in a completely informal arena. The closed, internal consultations are thus legitimized by the way they are con-

nected with, or integrated in, the formal system. Furthermore, we have seen how this arrangement also legitimizes power potentials for the P5 in the Security Council's decision-making process, beyond the formalized distribution of power.

The previous sections showed how the power potentials in the informal processes become invisible when the focus is solely on the formal procedures. This logic is in many ways conditioned by the institutional organization of the Security Council, so its members need to be flexible in order to maintain the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Council. This also means that Security Council resolutions and mandates might be skewed in relation to realities in the field; Chaps. 6, 7, and 9 explore intended and unintended consequences pertaining to the implementation of such Security Council resolutions in Liberia.

The continued existence of the Security Council depends on its relevance in international politics through the adoption of resolutions. As explained, resolutions require sizable agreement in the Council: nine votes, including the support of all five permanent members. This responsibility rests on the delegates and involves a patchwork or jigsaw puzzle of instructions from the various countries instructions. The solving of these puzzles is often kept internal within the Council, through informal processes. Next to the ministerial instructions and desires for influencing processes, responsibility for the Security Council's legitimacy is a vital aspect of the work of the delegations. Within the field of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, there have in fact been a few major crises concerning the Council and its legitimacy—notably, the UN's inability to halt the genocide in Rwanda in 1994. The decision to support regime change in Libya also represented a weakening of the Council's legitimacy related to the maintenance of international peace and security. This situation demonstrated the difficulties entailed in combining a UN mandate and legitimacy with regime change. A more recent example has been the humanitarian crisis in Syria.

The legitimacy of the Council must constantly be maintained, defended, and further developed, building an efficient decision-making process, a consensus focus and the ability to produce resolutions. Influence is thus conditional on the relationship between each delegation's instructions and the Security Council's working methods.

I have described elsewhere (Schia 2013) how Norway was concerned that the consensus focus in the decision-making process could involve a dilution of Norwegian foreign policy. Consequently, it could also be

argued that Norway was merely tagging along—and the explanation for such behavior may lie in the working procedures of the Council.

Being a member of the UN Security Council involves a responsibility for its legitimacy and efficiency, as well as for representing the national interests of one's country. This creates a substantial demand for informal processes, in turn, opening the way for a *third culture* in the Council. This third culture placed constraints on the member countries (Schia 2017).

The Security Council has, through its almost 70 years of existence, survived several major international changes. Its informal processes create an organizational plasticity that provides the delegates with opportunities for dealing with and managing many different and often conflicting interests and interfaces at the same time. Through a common platform for discussion in the informal processes, its diplomats can test the strength of their arguments and arrive at decisions acceptable to all parties. However, as we have seen, the P5 are privileged—and not only because of their formal veto power. Their permanent membership empowers them to define the *doxa* as well as setting the pace of the Council.[11] In this way, the elected members can be kept fairly powerless through cultural capital and practices used in informal processes (see Schia 2013, 2017; Pouliot 2016a, b).

How the UNSC Contributes to Constituting Peacebuilding as a Social Field

International organizations like the UN, the World Bank, and the IMF produce action plans and programs for countries, and their people, around the world. When a democratic state produces schemes and plans, it is, in principle, accountable to its legislative assembly and its citizens. Similarly, delegates to the UNSC are, in theory, answerable to their home countries. The internal dynamics within the Council, however, are autonomous and accountable to no one. Once in the game, delegates from the elected countries (as opposed to the five permanent members) tend to abide by the informal rules, and responsibility towards their home countries becomes overshadowed by responsibility towards the Council.

This chapter has investigated how the countries of the world manage to come together and make plans, programs, and resolutions in the UNSC. Since studying the positions of the various countries in formal Council meetings reveals little about how this happens, I chose to focus on actors representing member-states in the UNSC and the rules of the game in the *informal* parts of the decision-making process. This focus

revealed how the UNSC's introspective way of *seeing* comes from the organization's internal dynamics, its internal working culture and interaction patterns, which have evolved over more than six decades. We have seen how the internal dynamics put constraints on the delegations. To be able to exert influence in the Council, some elected delegations, paradoxically, have had to adapt so much that their own foreign policy at times became paralyzed. The production of mandates and resolutions concerning peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations is dominated by this dynamic, making these statements and documents somewhat skewed with respect to realities on the ground. In Liberia I explored, through the lens of *ownershipping*, emergent properties pertaining to this setup (see Chaps. 6, 7 and 9) and how this institutional skewness or asymmetry produced bureaucratic *catching-up* activities (see Chap. 8).

By being able to establish accepted mindsets, patterns of interaction, and definitions of internal dynamics through good practices, the P5 emplace constraints on the elected member-states in the Council (Schia 2017). This implies that the P5 have possibilities for acting as an authoritarian group within the UNSC to an extent exceeding the power provided by their formal veto alone. Political horse-trading and power struggles may easily come to dominate how cases are dealt with in the UNSC. The rules of the game further indicate that the focus on big politics and relations among the members of the UNSC are more important than the interests of the intended recipients of its plans and resolutions. Supporting the consensus focus lies at the heart of Council activities, so the Council can be understood as a battlefield of interests first and foremost among its five permanent members—China, France, Russia, the UK, and the USA. Peacebuilding activities conducted by the UN will always be shaped by the lowest common denominator among these member-states, which in turn will depend on the national interests of these five. On the other hand, this battlefield of interests is underlain by a consensus about the significance of the Council and the legitimacy it can provide to the foreign policies of these countries. Additionally, as we will see in Chap. 8 on the headquarters of the UN bureaucracy, there are many nitty-gritty but important details or aspects concerning peacebuilding activities that are not sufficiently "tabloid" to be reported back to the capitals. Together with the rapid turnover in member-state delegates to the UNSC, this causes a *tabloidization* dynamic in UN peacebuilding, where sovereignty as a template organizes influences and shapes peacebuilding policies and

activities. Feedback and catching-up mechanisms from the field play only a marginal role.

Resolutions adopted by the Security Council are primarily concerned with the peacekeeping operations of the UN. Council decisions generally present intentions that have been expressed at the topmost executive level of the organization. Through UNSC resolutions, these intentions influence, guide, and affect peacebuilding activities around the world in countries hosting UN peacekeeping missions. To explore peacebuilding as a global process, we must see what this Council does and how it actually works, if we are to understand the origin of the trickle-down and catching-up effects of the intentions behind the resolutions adopted by the Council.

The UNSC has an introspective focus but its policy reaches far; and there is a high likelihood of gaps between plans and the challenges to be resolved. What occupies the delegates working in the policy world determined by the Security Council is very different from the everyday focus and concerns of a peacebuilder working in Liberia. Activities in the Security Council are quite distinct from those on the ground, not least in Liberia. The Security Council is not a tool that can be used to solve conflicts, challenges, and problems on the ground: its main task is to reach compromises by incorporating various processes, ideals, and structural differences and providing a course for the way ahead. The informal rules of the game in the UNSC provide the Council with an inward focus while at the same time producing extensive and far-reaching policies. The distance between this level and the level where the conflicts, challenges, and problems have to be solved in practice is enormous, a huge gap. This is where the interface between the Liberian state apparatus and the international community can provide a bridge, a bridge that further constitutes Liberia as a franchised state.

This, in turn, triggers negotiations, connections, disconnections as well as solutions. The next chapter shows how bureaucracies fill such gaps by making connections and disconnections between systems that function according to divergent principles. We explore such phenomena through the lens of *ownershipping*, tracing what the consequences for the efficiency and sustainability of Security Council programs and resolutions in the implementation phase of peacebuilding on the ground.

Notes

1. Germany, Italy, Japan, the Soviet Union, and Spain (Germany was accepted into the League at a later stage than the others due to World War I) were among the great powers that withdrew from the League of Nations. In the USA, the Senate blocked President Woodrow Wilson's ambitions to join the League of Nations.
2. Norway has been an elected member of the UNSC four times to date: 1949–1950, 1963–1964, 1979–1980, and 2001–2002.
3. In 1946, 1947, 1950, 1969, 1974, and 1982 (http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/scrules.htm; accessed June 4, 2004).
4. In accordance with Article 35 and Article 1 of the UN Charter. Article 35 states:
   (1) Any Member of the United Nations may bring any dispute, or any situation of the nature referred to in Article 34, to the attention of the Security Council or of the General Assembly. (2) A state which is not a Member of the United Nations may bring to the attention of the Security Council or of the General Assembly any dispute to which it is a party if it accepts in advance, for the purposes of the dispute, the obligations of pacific settlement provided in the present Charter. (3) The proceedings of the General Assembly in respect of matters brought to its attention under this Article will be subject to the provisions of Articles 11 and 12.

   Article 1: The Purposes of the United Nations are:

   1. To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace;
   2. To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace;
   3. To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion; and
   4. To be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends.

5. Article 11:

1. The General Assembly may consider the general principles of co-operation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments, and may make recommendations with regard to such principles to the Members or to the Security Council or to both.
2. The General Assembly may discuss any questions relating to the maintenance of international peace and security brought before it by any Member of the United Nations, or by the Security Council, or by a state which is not a Member of the United Nations in accordance with Article 35, paragraph 2, and, except as provided in Article 12, may make recommendations with regard to any such questions to the state or states concerned or to the Security Council or to both. Any such question on which action is necessary shall be referred to the Security Council by the General Assembly either before or after discussion.
3. The General Assembly may call the attention of the Security Council to situations which are likely to endanger international peace and security.
4. The powers of the General Assembly set forth in this Article shall not limit the general scope of Article 10.

6. Article 99: The Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security.
7. The term derives from the practice of Ambassador Diego Arria of Venezuela and refers to informal meetings that the UNSC can arrange, mainly to meet with other delegations or NGOs or special representatives.
8. See: http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2013-09/in_hindsight_penholders.php
9. It is often said in the General Assembly that all important decisions are taken "in the Seventh Committee." There are only six committees: the "seventh" is the lounge bar in the UN building.
10. Natalie Reid. http://globalpolicy.igc.org/security/informal/natalie.htm; accessed June 5, 2004.
11. As an extension, it would be pertinent to explore whether there is an informal "Permanent one" (P1) among the P5, as indicated by David Malone, editor of *The UN Security Council: From the Cold War to the 21st Century* (2004, p. 8).

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CHAPTER 6

Implementing the Franchise

NGO Manager: Gender is mainstreamed into all activities. Gender is already at the heart of all our activities. We are now working on making gender more tangible.
Me: What does that involve?
NGO Manager: That's what we are trying to find out.

Introduction

The UN Security Council has adopted several resolutions on peacebuilding, the resolutions on women, peace, and security (UNSCR 1325, 1820, 1888, and 1889) have drawn both attention and resources to peacebuilding missions. How have they been implemented in Liberia? This chapter investigates that question, drawing on fieldwork conducted between 2007 and 2010. During these fieldwork stays, I visited Women and Children Protection Sections and interviewed NGO workers, UN officials, and Liberian government officials.[1] These were not long-term fieldwork stays: the chapter is based on observations, interviews, and conversations, interpreted and analyzed in relation to my long-term, studying-through fieldwork at multiple sites.

The chapter explores how UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding projects *touch ground* in the host countries where they are operating: do they build on, take into account, and connect with existing structures? Or do

N.N. Schia, *Franchised States and the Bureaucracy of Peace*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65569-7_6

they bypass the political, historical, and social context in these countries? Such questions can best be dealt with by long-term anthropological fieldwork involving a studying-through approach combined with a historical account. Having presented the inward focus of the arena that provides the overarching framework for UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities (Chap. 5), I now examine how this framework is unpacked at the implementation level in peacebuilding, by empirically exploring a project aimed at improving the situation of women and children in Liberia. As we will see, peacebuilding activities and practices in Liberia proved to be geared more towards international than national bureaucratic autonomy and horizontal concerns. The result was a lopsided statebuilding process that consolidated relations between international organizations and the Liberian state apparatus—Liberia as a franchised state.

It emerged that the intentions incorporated in UNSC resolutions concerning the security of women and children in post-conflict countries presuppose existing and well-functioning state institutions. In real life, however, post-conflict countries tend to have poorly functioning state institutions, and in Liberia this situation revealed the paradox inherent in these resolutions. I proceed by describing how the effects of this paradox trickled down to the implementation level, with many activities and actors trying to establish what had been assumed to be pre-existing institutions. By empirically describing such activities in Liberia, this chapter contributes to my main argument about peacebuilding as a depoliticized statebuilding project that acts to constitute franchised states.

With the adoption of UNSC Resolution 1325 in 2000/2001, the situation of women and children in conflict and post-conflict situations became anchored within the international community as a core concern of UN peacebuilding activities. The intentions set out in Resolution 1325 have since been followed up through the adoption of several additional related UNSC resolutions.[2] Donor countries and international organizations have invested substantial resources and attention in seeking to realize the intentions in these resolutions. The result has been a top-down approach, where responding to donors, guidelines, and reporting about own activities has come to overshadow the initial intention, which was to improve the situation of women and children living in post-conflict countries.

Empirical examples from my fieldwork show how some projects intended to target the security of women and children in Liberia had little relevance to the actual concerns of the recipients and local realities. At the

recently established Women and Children Protection Sections (WACPS), I saw how such projects in the peacebuilding industry have served to limit the autonomy of certain groups, neglecting local or national preferences and social groups. These donor-country activities were disconnected: they involved the international level and the national-state apparatus, without recognizing the societal and historical particularities of Liberia. What mattered was achieving the target numbers and measurements in line with the formal schemes established at the international level, adopted and authorized by the UNSC. On the ground, however, a great many everyday processes pertaining to justice and rule of law in Liberia were handled through what the international actors would brush aside as "customary justice structures."

The donor-country projects discussed here were set up or organized in a way that made Liberian women and children peripheral—so peripheral that it made no sense to talk about them as recipients in relation to the formal schemes and policies. What mattered to the donors was tabulating results, like new office buildings, staff, budget, and equipment—while the local people continued to use their customary structures. These donor activities resulted in the reproduction of shadow state structures, leaving the new office buildings as empty shells, symbols of the peacebuilding process that was producing Liberia as a franchised state.

Background

I went to Liberia to study projects that aimed at restoring state apparatuses and the making of policies pertaining to this goal—what I expected to be a bottom-up study of processes related to the creation of national ownership to the peacebuilding process there. But, traveling around the country in search of this, I came to realize that policy was being made elsewhere—especially in New York. My bottom-up study was turning upside down.

Peacebuilding is a matter of institutionalization. And such institutionalization should be understood as a process that unfolds simultaneously at many levels, through the making of connections and disconnections. In this process, various kinds of perspectives, knowledge, and topics get shipped *up* and *down*, *back* and *forth*—which is where *ownershipping* enters as an analytical perspective.

On several occasions during my fieldwork in New York and in Liberia, critics in the practitioner community pointed out how the efforts of international donors and the UN to combat conflicts and violence in Liberia

have been more adapted to the donors' own agendas than to actual needs on the ground. Anthropological fieldwork that included a "studying-through" approach proved useful for capturing often-neglected aspects and emergent properties of peacebuilding. Seeing how the government of Liberia, the UN, and other practitioners worked to improve the security situation of people in Liberia is well suited as an empirical case for investigating this, not least as regards the focus on justice and security reforms as a means of building peace.

Peacebuilding processes involve many different actors coming from different systems, organizations, and bureaucracies. This may affect the actors' ability to listen, consult, and in general demonstrate greater understanding of a society in a post-conflict situation. In 2009, I traveled to Liberia on a research project initially aimed at studying how the international community had been tackling gender-based violence there. However, it proved difficult to find updated information and literature on customary law and traditional practices in Liberia. The final report of the research project argued that there were, within the liberal peacekeeping/building paradigm, few analytical tools that could be used to gain a solid understanding of the post-conflict country "from below." This area remained a professional blind-spot, a gap in the efforts of the international peacekeeping/-building community to build sustainable peace in the country. Analyzing aspects of the peacebuilding process pertaining to UNSC Resolution 1325 through the lens of *ownershipping* made it possible to explore how this blind-spot could emerge.

Security Council Resolution 1325 and Peacebuilding

Recent decades have witnessed a remarkable growth in international peacebuilding assistance and ambitions to restore and rebuild war-torn states and societies. Security sector reform (SSR) training of civil, military, and police personnel in peacebuilding operations has combined to become an important meeting point between "doctrines" and implementation.

This peacebuilding trend came as a result of the changing nature of conflicts and the increasing effects of these conflicts on civilian populations. Women and children were recognized as especially vulnerable, because these conflicts severely affect their health, economy, and human rights (see, e.g., Heynes 2004; Swiss and Giller 1993). Gradually, putting pressure on the informal channels around the Security Council, Western

governments managed to promote an understanding of the importance of women's experiences in civil wars and their active participation in peacebuilding processes and post-conflict situations. The issue became recognized internationally and, as part of the Security Council agenda, formalized in 2000 with UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UN S/RES/1325 2000).

Resolution 1325 was not adopted in a vacuum. The story can serve as a clear example of how thematic issues can be strengthened through maintaining momentum and pressure. It was the result of an internally driven UN process promoting women's rights, but the campaign behind it was also heavily influenced by external forces. The adoption of this resolution shows how elected member-states can influence the Council agenda by strategically choosing their agendas and reconfirm the internal dynamics of the Council described in Chap. 5.

With the passing of this resolution, and the follow-up resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889, and 1960, gender issues and combating sexual violence became anchored at the core of UN peacekeeping missions. Increasingly, problems specific to women and children which had been ignored in the past were now being framed, addressed, and attended to by UN peacekeepers and peacebuilders in peacekeeping missions.

The complexities and practical implications of the topic become increasingly evident as we move through the organizational hierarchy from the executive decision-making level towards the implementation level. At the Security Council, the focus had been on formalizing the attention of peacebuilding on women and children through the adoption of Resolution 1325. When peacebuilders set about implementing this resolution through activities in host countries, the effect was a change in the attention paid by the international community, making women, peace, and security an especially attractive area for Western governments to fund. However, the international community and donors have tended to measure the successes or failures of Resolution 1325-related projects and initiatives in cold figures, depriving local actors of autonomy—or, seen through the lens of *ownershipping*, disconnecting them from the process. The massive focus, and the considerable amounts of money suddenly invested, proved difficult to digest at the implementation level. This left the actors in Liberia—people working in UN offices, NGOs, Liberian organizations, and government as well as other international organizations present in the country—with the feeling that they had to have a policy on women, peace, and security. As pointed out by the NGO manager quoted at the beginning of this chapter,

gender was on the top of the agenda—but just what was this supposed to involve?

Viewed through the lens of *ownershipping*, many of the activities pertaining to Resolution 1325 initiatives could be interpreted as an effect of an organizational overload or lopsidedness. For instance, one reaction at the implementation level took the form of Quick Impact Projects that could be featured in reports as well as on posters and banners, proving that something was being done. Traveling across vast distances of Liberia, to various counties and county capitals, I visited, observed, and discussed projects related to the peacebuilding process with Liberians, including members of the police forces. New buildings equipped with computers, diesel generators, and digital fingerprint readers had been constructed around the country. I was told that these innovations, together with campaigns encouraging victims of violence to report the crimes to these newly established police sections, were intended to make a difference for the security situation of women and children. However, I also found that these computers, diesel generators, and fingerprint readers were rarely used by the police officers, and reports were generally not followed up through the other parts of the justice system. There had not been enough space to include the horizontal level: the views, backgrounds, and opinions of the people who would actually be working with these tasks.

The result of this top-down peacebuilding approach was that local knowledge, routines, and traditions were disconnected from the process, leaving little or no interaction between levels. In terms of *ownershipping*, the situation emerged as a lopsided global process where local community *skills* in policing were systematically discredited or disconnected. This is one of the reasons why Resolution 1325 has only scratched the surface in Liberia. These unintended consequences have served to undermine other processes, placed in the shadow of this high-modernist rationality that uses sovereignty as a template for organizing peacebuilding activities which in fact presuppose the existence of certain state institutions. This has created a paradigm of large-scale schemes resembling those described by James Scott (1998), where approaches from below and *the needs on the ground* have been systematically neglected in the peacebuilding industry. This, in turn, has contributed to parallel state structures in the country and (re)producing Liberia as a franchised state.

Since the end of the conflict in Liberia, a main priority of the UN mission (UNMIL), UN agencies, NGOs, and INGOs has been to tackle the high levels of violence against women and children. This has also been a

priority of the Security Council, with its several resolutions on women, peace, and security since 2000. Central to the efforts in Liberia have been a series of rule-of-law reform initiatives, notably the establishment of Women and Children Protection Sections (WACPS) as units physically adjacent to over 30 police stations throughout the country, staffed by teams of police officers and dedicated to dealing with sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

This focus has led to a range of initiatives from the international community, including a joint UN/government of Liberia national strategy on the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 (see Government of Liberia 2009) and several campaigns aimed at raising awareness. All the same, the problem has remained. Few perpetrators have been brought to justice; even fewer have faced trial and been found guilty.

In September 2013, ten years after UNMIL was established, the UNSC once again extended the mandate of this mission. During the briefings, Liberia's Minister of National Defense, Brownie Samukai; the Secretary-General's Special Representative in Liberia and head of UNMIL, Karin Landgren; and the chair of the Liberia configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador Staffan Tillander, spoke of the limitations of the Liberian security forces, the limited resources of the police, and the dire need to develop a capable and accountable justice and security sector. While acknowledging and welcoming the country's overall progress towards greater peace and stability, the Security Council underscored the continuing problems: "Women and girls in Liberia continue to face a high incidence of sexual and gender-based violence."[3] The Council further called on the government of Liberia for a continued focus, in coordination with UNMIL, on combating sexual violence and fighting impunity for perpetrators of such crimes, in order to improve the situation for the victims. The need for the government to "develop and sustain a self-sufficient, capable and competent security sector to build the confidence of all Liberians" was particularly emphasized.[4]

Much of the problem may lie in the fact that security of women and children has not been dealt with in the broader context of (re)building rule-of-law institutions as a whole, or by taking into account how local traditions and systems of justice administration work in practice. Furthermore, there is in supply-driven humanitarian and development aid a tendency to fund short-term projects that resonate with donors, at the expense of longer-term infrastructure projects. This has been apparent also in efforts to deal with rule-of-law institutions. Some critics have

argued how operating on a *tabula rasa* basis appears to be the preferred option of international reformers in the wake of armed conflicts (see, e.g., Jensen 2008).

It seemed as if implementation of policies aimed at dealing with violence against women in Liberia led to actions that served to reproduce the policies rather than improving the situation for women and children. There appeared to be a disconnection between the international level where policies were devised, and the historical, political, and social context (see Chap. 4) where these were implemented. Erik Jensen (2008) has argued that international donors and the UN often assume that *nothing* in the target country is functioning and that everything in the post-conflict environment will have to be built anew. Measures implemented are often ineffective or counterproductive, and peacebuilding actors are largely left to deal with the symptoms when compared with goals and aims as presented in Security Council resolutions.

Rather than exploring peacebuilding through an assumption that nothing is working, I employ *ownershipping* to explore peacebuilding through bureaucratic complexities where ideas about sovereignty work as a template for the making of taxonomies, connections, and disconnections. One implication that follows from this is that peacebuilding processes tend to create interfaces between systems that can be recognized by their actors. This in turn evokes social spaces that incorporate international actors and Liberian state actors. The activities are performed and organized in a way that builds relations between international actors and the state, further constituting Liberia as a franchised state.

Gender Issues in Peacekeeping and Post-Conflict Liberia

The determination of Liberia's President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in addressing gender issues together with the UN and including women in peace processes is widely seen as a major success. Indeed, in 2011, President Sirleaf was among the recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize. As stated by one commentator in the aftermath of the International Women's Colloquium, "Liberia [is] Africa's inspiration on gender equality" (Murimi 2009).

Criminality was a major problem in 2013, and crime rates of violence against women also remained high.[5] In 2009, rape was one of the most frequent crimes on the national police crime statistics; the frequency of

sexual exploitation of women was also reported to be high (UNMIL Office of the Gender Adviser 2009). The UN recognized that violence and abuse of women and children were a serious problem for the victims, as well as representing a comprehensive challenge for the Liberian government and society at large. However, all this seemed to have no influence on the international image of Liberia as the success story of the international community and UNSC Resolution 1325. If progress was not measured in terms of less crime, less violence, and better security for Liberians, how was it measured, then?

Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in Liberia

As a result of UNSC Resolution 1325, an Office of the Gender Advisor (OGA) was established in every UN mission, mandated to support, monitor, and coordinate implementation of 1325, and later also the other follow-up resolutions. But because this office did not have field officers, it became necessary to ensure that other sections had the requisite capacity and knowledge for implementing the content of the resolution(s).[6] In Liberia, the Office of the Gender Advisor has played an important role in integrating gender issues into other UN and national guidelines, strategies, and action plans, as well as working with actors outside the UN mission. It has promoted gender policy recruitment and provided guidelines for training on gender, gender-based violence (GBV)[7] for the armed forces of Liberia and the Liberian National Police. This work resulted, inter alia, in a gender advisor appointed to the police based in Monrovia. Furthermore, the Office of the Gender Advisor worked with NGOs present in Liberia and assisted a gender expert network.[8] The OGA has also worked closely with the government of Liberia and the Ministry of Gender, resulting in the Liberian National Action Plan on UNSC Resolution 1325.

This comprehensive four-year plan for 2009–2013, which incorporated some of the content of Resolutions 1325 and 1820, specified time-limits for implementation and was intended as a monitoring tool for the government of Liberia and the UN in their work on promoting gender equality. It was the product of collaboration between the UN through the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and UNMIL's Office of the Gender Advisor, civil society organizations, and the government of Liberia through the Ministry of Gender

and Development. The action plan also complemented the Poverty Reduction Strategy and the UN/Government of Liberia Joint Programs.

The action plan identified protection, prevention, participation, and empowerment as the four key areas for implementing the goals defined in UNSC Resolutions 1325 and 1820. Each pillar identified strategic issues and priority areas to be addressed, with expected outputs and indicators. Monitoring and impact evaluations were highlighted activities and encouraged the mainstreaming of the plan into other existing strategies such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy. In order to strengthen these activities, the action plan promoted an "Observatory" with participants from government ministries, key women's groups, the 1325 National Steering Committee, NGOs, and other relevant actors. The UN would monitor the four-year plan, but responsibility for implementation remained with the government of Liberia.[9]

Concerning security for women and children and the justice system, the action plan sought to promote an examination of the system in order to identify "gender blind codes of conduct underpinning the statutory and traditional systems." It further stressed the necessity of greater collaboration between the Ministry of Justice and the judiciary, harmonization of the statutory and traditional justice systems, and strengthening the capacity of the justice sector and the judiciary as so to improve access to justice for women and girls.

More than a decade after Resolution 1325 was passed and five years after the national action plan was launched, it might be assumed that implementation of 1325 had become systematically and widely incorporated in UN peacekeeping operations. Liberia, with a female president, a female UN SRSG (the only currently serving female SRSG), and the first all-female unit of UN peacekeepers (deployed by India), might give the impression of a post-conflict country where the content of 1325 was well implemented, with successful impacts.[10] However, creating a foundation for legitimacy, accountability, sustainability, and putting an end to impunity remains one of the most critical tasks for the Liberian government. The dimension of representation seems to have been much better developed than the security, safety, and welfare dimension (Mehler and Smith-Höhn 2006; Reisinger 2009). In 2009 UNICEF found that gender-based violence was still rampant (UNICEF 2009). In September 2013, the Security Council, renewing the mandate as Phase 2 of the drawdown of the peacekeeping mission in Liberia, identified the high incidence of violence against women and children as a main concern.[11] However,

despite the many efforts made by the international community and the government of Liberia, these figures have remained very high.

Women and Children Protection Sections (WACPS)

Through campaigns against SGBV (including billboards along main roads and the 1325 theme song aired on radio nationwide), UNSC Resolution 1325 and the follow-up resolutions as well as the Liberian National Action Plan have become well known. However, the implementation process has proven cumbersome, and there has been limited impact beyond the international and national bureaucracy elites based in Monrovia.

Seeking to look beyond the symbols of success of the women, peace, and security campaign, I decided to investigate actual implementation in rural areas. Was the implementation of measures aimed at countering SGBV actually improving the situation for women and children outside Monrovia? From field visits to Women and Children Protection Sections (WACPS) and interviews, I found that many of the measures tended to fragment the holistic understanding necessary for dealing with SGBV within the larger framework of the rule of law and that many of the measures implemented—like the WACPS—fitted neatly with the agenda derived from UNSC resolutions, without necessarily addressing the root causes of SGBV.

Based on priorities in accordance with UNSC Resolution 1325 and through a grant of USD 1.6 million from the Norwegian government administered through the UNDP, the Liberian National Police have established WACPS in over 20 locations in Liberia. These sections are meant to address the protection of women and children, by providing them with understanding, support, and a place to report safely. As I was told by an official working for a local NGO: "One of our employees witnessed by chance a woman wanting to report a GBV case to the police, but they did not allow her to report it in other ways than in front of everyone." The WACPS were established to address issues like these.

During fieldwork in 2008 and 2009, I visited WACPS facilities in four counties: Monrovia, Robertsport, Voinjama, and Tubmanburg. It became clear that, while these facilities marked one step further in the process of achieving political goals, not only did challenges remain, but that establishing such specialized units without taking into account the historical context and other rule-of-law institutions could also lead to new problems.

Although recognized by the UN as representing a landmark effort, these sections were not functioning as intended. There was a dire lack of resources for running them; furthermore, GBV was not addressed comprehensively. Although they were well-trained, willing, and qualified, police officers involved in the WACPS often simply went through the motions rather than trying to tackle the substantive challenges facing women and children.

Despite the efforts made by international actors to have the WACPS working to provide women and children with special recourse to justice institutions, several challenges remained unaddressed. The reason was also a product of the emergent properties of the international community. When projects like the WACPS are installed by the international community, the outcome will depend on the degree of bureaucratic autonomy at the implementation level in the process. Many issues needed to be settled—how these sections were to be established and funded, the lack of a coherent and comprehensive understanding of the functioning of justice institutions in Liberia, the challenges involved in reforming or building these institutions, and how these new institutions should interact (or not) with customary institutions and practices.

In September 2005, UNICEF announced that 25 officers of the police had completed their certification in "women and children protection" and were to staff the newly established Women and Children Protection Sections. These police officers had been given training in order to "improve their skills and techniques in managing and handling sexual violence cases" (UNICEF 2005). UNICEF had established this in collaboration with the police and the police of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (CIVPOL). Three years later, there was a WACPS of the police in every county capital in Liberia, and the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG) of the UN mission hailed WACPS as a success story.

Throughout the entire country, new national police county headquarters had been constructed or renovated by UNDP. In order to assist the national police in addressing issues affecting women and children, all new police buildings now have a Women and Children Protection Section. As UNMIL confirmed, "WACPS are now active in 21 locations throughout Liberia"; further, the Swedish UN police commissioner stated: "Women and children need not be subjected to further victimization" (UNMIL 2008). That buildings had been physically constructed were tallied up and seen as progress and success—but nothing was said about whether the sections were fulfilling their initial purpose.

Sexual violence against women and children remains a central reality of life in Liberia. How this is managed by international donors and the UN in general has been widely criticized in the literature: lack of coherence, no comprehensive or deep understanding of how the issues to be addressed related to each other, and channeling resources into projects in line with donor perspectives rather than the needs of the community. Work against sexual and gender-based violence and for the protection of women and children was clearly important; and, as I saw it, it also fitted well with Scandinavian priorities.

It gradually became clear that I was merely just scraping the surface of the topic that I was supposed to be investigating. What did peacebuilders in Liberia actually do? What effects did the peacebuilding process have, and what were the emergent properties of this process? Who were the people working with this peacebuilding process? And how were the overarching and far-reaching peacebuilding decisions made? These questions gave rise to issues of time and space. Back on the hotel veranda after a long day of interviewing international actors based in Monrovia, I realized that investigating these questions would require pursuing, tracing, and studying them through long-term, multi-sited fieldwork. Observing the mix of people, Liberians and internationals, on that hotel veranda, I also realized that the boundaries between them were only rarely crossed. Social relations on the veranda, although limited and one-dimensional, in a way reflected the shadows, or constituted a limited micro-cosmos of the field. There and then I could observe the connections and disconnections between the different worlds—and, as a thought experiment, this micro-cosmos could also be scaled up, to resemble Liberia as a franchised state.

The next chapters explore the hierarchies and follow the bureaucratic processes back and forth, investigating the complexity of what can best be understood as a global process or institutionalization process where ideas about sovereignty work as a templated for activities. I noticed how all the actors involved with peacebuilding who I met, spoke with, or interviewed would always stress how they were occupied with the making of *ownership* in one way or another—having ownership, creating ownership, and giving ownership (for more on ownership, see Chap. 1). Studying through the UN hierarchies and traveling between New York, Oslo, and Monrovia gave me the opportunity to triangulate empirically the issues I had begun to grasp during my first stay in Liberia, and view them in another way. *Ownershipping* became one such way, which in turn led me to describe Liberia as a *franchised state*. But first let me return to the first fieldwork in Liberia and the WACPS.

When I was in Liberia in 2008/2009, not all police county headquarters had separate buildings for the Women and Children Protection Section. In some police stations, the sections consisted of one room dedicated to women and children protection (like the one in Robertsport, the capital of Grand Cape Mount county), in which the officers detailed to this work were supposed to have their working space. However, that was not necessarily the case. In practice these rooms were used for many purposes, including storage and sometimes even providing accommodation for police officers attending training courses.

Other WCPS were more impressive. The one in Tubmanburg, for instance, was better equipped than the main police station, and employed about half of the police officers in the city. Their buildings and facilities were also significantly better than those of the main police station, and included two PCs stacked on a dusty shelf. The police in Bomi County were reported to have one vehicle and two motorcycles. Here too, WACPS rooms were used to accommodate police officers.

Undermining State Authority

Liberia suffers from a severe lack of educated and trained judges, and the police rarely have adequate investigative tools, resources, training, and education. The WACPS were established to address urgent concerns of the situation for women and children. That women and children now had a specific section within the police was meant to ensure that these issues would be dealt with. Here I will describe problems related to this *innovation* by examining how these offices were in fact disconnected—from large parts of the population, and also from other parts of the justice system. Those who did report crimes lost faith in the state institutions of justice, because reported criminals were seldom convicted, as we shall see below.

Increasingly, I came to recognize that the particular setup of these sections was related to how specific donor programs wished to address certain issues. This setup emerged as being more in line with priorities in the donor country than with any Liberian historical and social context or how this related to judicial reform.[12]

While the institutions of rule of law were at least partially in evidence in Monrovia, they were often lacking outside the capital. In most cases, reporting crimes became an enormous challenge: the WACPS were based mainly in county capitals—but the police had little presence in rural areas, and transportation was scarce. As an advisor of one rule-of-law NGO said,

"No place outside of Monrovia has all the pieces of rule of law—prisons, state attorney, sober judge, holding cells, etc." When I traveled to four of the county capitals and visited state justice facilities, I could observe what the NGO advisor had described. I visited prisons without proper fences. I visited police facilities and police officers lacking the most basic resources: they could not provide victims with much help. The counties had a very limited number of vehicles available for the police. Some counties had only a motorbike or two, and even fewer means to pay for fuel. Victims who came to the police were often left in the difficult position of having reported a crime and identified the perpetrator (very often someone known to the victim), without the police having the means to investigate or follow up. Moreover, reporting a crime required the victim to travel to the nearest WACPS, which could be a problem in practical and economic terms. I could observe what an official working for an NGO in Monrovia had explained, "In rural areas police are available, but the victims have to go to them." These impressions and observations were made not only through interviews, but also by personal observation. I showed up at police stations without appointments, and through these unexpected visits, I was able to collect what could be used as reliable data.

Problems with dealing with crimes through the court system started already before they were reported. Although the investigation started with the police, few officers had received the necessary training. Too often, the national police were simply incapable of upholding the rule of law. Faced with a dire lack of infrastructure and resources, it was natural for them to wonder why such cases should be prioritized. Why, one police officer in Lofa asked me, should we use the only police vehicle available in the county and the little fuel available, drive maybe a hundred kilometers to try to investigate a crime that had taken place several days earlier? The perpetrator would most certainly have fled by then. It might take three or four days before the police could get to the scene of a crime. In rape cases, the police have only 72 hours to collect medical evidence. However, largely due to lack of proper equipment and training, there was no proper scientific backup for police investigation.

While it is doubtful that the provision of equipment alone would solve these problems (much of the equipment that had been provided was incompatible with Liberian police methods), there was a case to be made for inquiring into how these methods could be made efficient and secure. Liberian women, NGO staffers, and UN officials all confirmed that victims reporting a crime were often asked to contribute money towards

solving the crime: "Assuming the police gets the perpetrator, then the victim will be asked to contribute money," one legal expert told me.

Once a crime had been reported, the police were supposed to start investigating. However, as the police had little mobility, given the lack of vehicles and fuel, victims often had to pay for the police to come and investigate. Depending on where the crime took place, this could entail quite an investment. Furthermore, as the police lacked investigative resources and manpower, the perpetrators were rarely caught. The police had no means to follow up on crimes committed, so crimes generally ended up in the "Kept In View" category (KIV), I was told at the police station in Tubmanburg. Many cases of SGBV were simply never reported to the police. Instead, people would often seek help through customary structures (Solhjell 2016).

The point here is not to minimize the efforts made by international donors and the UN. Dealing with SGBV in Liberia at this stage could not have been done without international support. However, I was increasingly left with the impression that efforts tended to fit the donors' own agendas and templates for statebuilding, and not the needs on the ground. One consequence was that international efforts at reforming and (re)building rule-of-law institutions were often conducted without the necessary background knowledge on how the administration of justice functioned in Liberia—and often without considering the consequences these efforts would have on other rule-of-law institutions (Isser et al. 2009). As a result, efforts such as the WACPS did not function as well as they were intended. Budgets for logistical follow-up were lacking, the equipment provided did not fit the working routines of the Liberian national police, and while the WACPS functioned to some extent if viewed separately, when seen in relation to other rule-of-law institutions, the work seemed misplaced, as few efforts were made at addressing the system comprehensively. Providing for a safe place for women and children to report to the police had only a marginal effect in terms of addressing the culture of impunity towards SGBV, because little was done after a crime had been reported. Nevertheless, people kept talking about "progress," and the peacebuilding process in Liberia was seen as a success. And indeed, if one focuses on the progress of Liberia as a franchised state—or a franchise of the international community as articulated through international organizations such as the UN, the World Bank, and major donor countries—this makes more sense.

SGBV and the Rule of Law

While the building and establishment of the WACPS were hailed as steps in the right direction towards implementing the political decision to improve the security of women and children, they can also be seen as manifestations of policies not backed up by, or disconnected from, local and national institutions. In the long run, the fact that these specialized sections were not part of a larger and more comprehensive effort to (re) build the institutions of the rule of law may undermine efforts to combat SGBV in Liberia.

Projects like these do not draw on an understanding of local historical and social contexts. This echoes the findings of Mahmood Mamdani (and many others) on colonialism and the effect on local structures: how the British colonial power empowered some local chiefs, fundamentally transforming the traditional structures and created difficulties in the relations between the state and its citizens (Mamdani 1996). This left only two options for post-colonial African governments: a "noncoercive clientelism" maintaining the decentralization of the state dependent on chiefs and customary structures or a "centralized despotism" (ibid., p. 300). With SGBV efforts in Liberia, donors dominated the connections that were being made. Using the lens of *ownershipping*, we could say that this part of the peacebuilding process was lopsided and geared towards activities focusing on practicing and organizing sovereignty. Sovereignty thus worked as a template, *catching up* did not take place, and relations were strengthened between the state apparatus and actors and organizations working in the name of the international. Liberia was being reproduced as a franchised state while relations between the Liberian state and the society became undermined, and the people turned to the familiar customary structures. These structures in turn were left in the shadows: a *doubling* of state systems was (re)produced.

Legal Pluralism: Customary and Statutory Systems

The efforts to address SGBV and the impunity of perpetrators as well as the general (re)building of the institutions of the rule of law could also be seen in the context of the functions that the new institutions were to fulfill, and which ones were already encompassed by the traditional system of justice. Rather than seeking to supplant the traditional structures, another official working for an NGO in Monrovia pointed out, one could

seek to understand how these systems or legal pluralism could supplement each other. It was important to understand how they were interacting in practice, he continued. It became clear to me that victims did not always get their cases investigated. As one police officer told me, once a victim has reported a crime the police "investigate, but sometimes compromise." Recourse to the WACPS was still no guarantee that the case would be investigated or pursued through the court system. And as long as the international community lacks an understanding of how the traditional system works, there is little chance that effective measures will succeed, the NGO official concluded.

Moreover, many issues and crimes were dealt with through the customary law system and monetary settlements: "If the perpetrator is known, a compromise is often reached through a monetary settlement. In some cases, he may be asked to marry the girl." Throughout the NGO community, there was a sense that the customary system did not see SGBV as a serious crime. "It is a problem in the communities, but it is not reported. Compromises are reached at the traditional level," an official working for the American Bar Association explained. This was confirmed by a Liberian government official: "Not every case is reported. The [local] chief sometimes deals with it, and forces [the perpetrator] to pay a certain amount, then lets things continue."[13]

"We Cannot Get Rid of the Traditional Structures Now"

Organizational power relies on, or is closely connected with, knowledge. This in turn has effects on implementation. Actions, policies, guidelines, mandates, and resolutions that serve to constitute the franchised state are produced by the international community—actors such as the UN DPKO and the UN's Security Council. The effects on the Liberian bureaucracy include social practices and arrangements that help to maintain shadow structures, and can be seen as emergent properties of the bureaucratic knowledge and expertise of the peacebuilding establishment and the UN organization.

By focusing on the state apparatus, the UN has neglected the customary system, or seen it as an anomaly or something undesirable. However, given the current lack of resources and qualified magistrates, both systems are likely to continue to co-exist in Liberia for a long time to come. As one Liberian government official explained, "The traditional system must remain in place, as there is a lack of resources and the state or government

system is relatively new." She went on to say, "The traditional structures are essential to carry out justice as long as the government system is establishing itself. But some cases should be brought before the government. Domestic violence can be handled by the traditional structures, but not rape and armed robbery. We cannot get rid of the traditional structures now."

Viewed through the lens of *ownershipping*, the lopsidedness and lack of connections and *catching-up* processes of this part of the peacebuilding process was also evident in the logistical support provided to the police. PCs and electricity generators were included in the equipment provided for the WACPS—computer literacy was often limited, and the generators required fuel that had to be saved for driving. Surely, the dire lack of resources for actually going out and investigating crimes was a far more pressing issue than providing computer equipment, which could not be used because of poor computer skills, as well as lack of electricity and generator fuel. Indeed, it was unclear why these computers had been provided in the first place, as the working methods of the police did not require them. The logistical support for the WACPS had been arranged without taking into account the historical, social, and practical context, the working methods of the local police and their needs, and without having made any attempt to budget for running costs.

But having two legal systems working alongside each other also entails challenges. "The problem with customary law is that no one has ever mapped the customs in Liberia. This represents a problem in terms of getting them [the two systems of law] to work together," my informant at the American Bar Association in Monrovia pointed out. "Customary law needs to be mapped." From this perspective, which represents only one dimension of my long-term and multi-sited fieldwork, what I witnessed in Liberia when tracing processes aimed at improving the security and safety situation for women and children in the country resembles what Sarah Cliffe and Nick Manning (2008) call the *terra nullius* fallacy. Due to rapid turnover in international staff and policy-makers as well as frequent changes in the initial phase of a peacebuilding operations, few of the peacebuilders have a chance to reflect on *pre-existing* institutions and the general assumption that everything must start from zero (Cliffe and Manning 2008, p. 165). However, exploring peacebuilding activities in Liberia through the lens of *ownershipping* implies broader explanations focused on sovereignty as a template and bureaucratic tendencies to make connections and produce disconnections constituting Liberia as a

franchised state—rather than individual ignorance of historical and social contexts.

Chapter 4 described how Liberia's historical trajectory has influenced and shaped its bureaucracy, the state apparatus, customary structures, and formal state structures, and why it is important to understand the political and historical context of Liberia. The *ownershipping* perspective can also shed light on the exercises of power that disconnected certain aspects of the society while connecting the state apparatus and the elite to a global institutionalization process, thereby producing franchised states. This situation implies an exercise of power that resembles Wolf's (1990, p. 587) mode of dealing with power that structures the political economy; see also Chap. 2. The *ownershipping* perspective in this context reveals activities the influence the making of new classifications, the invention of new categories of inclusion and exclusion. As Handelman (1995, p. 280) has pointed out, "Bureaucratic classification impacts the social orders that generate this kind of organization of information. This impact is the exercise of power. Classification cannot be only an internal characterization of bureaucratic organization." Heyman (1995) has emphasized the need to put *power* into the anthropology of bureaucracy, which implies studying where the classification and taxonomies come from and what effects their implementation has on people. The UN's peacebuilding agenda and the decisions made by delegates in the Security Council influence and change the Liberian state apparatus. Shadow state structures in Liberia can be understood as emergent properties of this process and of Liberia as a franchised state. Studying the making of taxonomies concerning the peacebuilding process in Liberia can reveal the UN engagement in Liberia as a continuation of an international story, or the US involvement in Liberia early in the nineteenth century. We see how Liberia has been a franchised state ever since it was made, almost 200 years ago.

"Where the Rubber Meets the Road"

In applying *ownershipping* to analyze my fieldwork in Liberia and the interviews conducted there, I found that the UN seemed trapped into seeing what it expected or wanted to see, rather than realities on the ground. The result has generally been recourse to standard responses—which, in the case of the UN, other international organizations, and Western NGOs, means a propensity to build institutions and institutional responses based on the Western liberal model (see Sending 2009), combined with the

imperative of results-based management. With institutions of the rule of law, this often leads to a strong belief in formal and centralized institutions, as well as measures that can deliver clear and measurable outputs.

We have seen how intentions, issues, and concepts that may seem unifying and easy to handle from the perspective of actors working at the diplomacy and headquarters level of the international community often fracture and change when they hit the ground. This characterizes the UN bureaucracy and thus illustrates some of the emergent properties of peacebuilding. The empirical findings of this chapter have indicated how intentions within peacebuilding processes, as formulated in diplomatic and world politics settings, may take many realities on the ground for granted, or ignore them completely. It was too often assumed that the rest of the Liberian justice sector was ready and waiting to handle the cases that were reported to the police officers working in these sections. That was not the case, as we have seen. Encouraging SGBV victims to travel to the WACPS in the county capitals in order to report such crimes to a system that was unable to follow up on their reports served to reduce, not build, trust in these institutions. And all that came about as the result of a gap between headquarters and the field: a gap between assumptions of existing and functioning state institutions as integral to intentions aimed at improving the security of Liberian women and children on the one hand, and the realities on the ground where such state institutions were weak or nonexistent. The attempt at filling this gap took the form of establishing Women and Children Protection Sections: building new state institutions. This resembled a *catching-up* tendency in the peacebuilding process, where certain aspects are transposed into something quite different: here, concerns for women and children became statebuilding. In the end, while this project contributed to reproducing state capacities in Liberia, the undermining of already fragile state institutions seemed to be an emergent property of the architectural setup of the peacebuilding establishment itself.

The renewed Security Council mandate for the UN peacekeeping mission in Liberia, adopted on September 18, 2013, identified SGBV crime rates as still a serious and difficult problem. Further, it identified "well-functioning, accountable and sustainable government institutions" as a requirement for long-term stability in Liberia (UN Security Council Resolution 2116). The international community, donor countries, UNMIL, UN agencies, and other international organizations in Liberia were all trying to tackle these problems. However, it seemed to me, doing fieldwork in Liberia, that the bureaucratic machinery had

become entangled in small, neat, manageable projects that could show quick and easily measurable results, thereby confirming "progress" as a self-fulfilling prophecy. "Progress" might mean new buildings, like those of the WACPS, as well as the launching of plans—but it also could bolster the belief that the problems were being dealt with when they often were not, creating a self-sustaining bubble. Through the perspective of *ownershipping*, we could say that the process was lopsided towards the donors. The international response to sexual and gender-based violence in Liberia never hit the ground, because the formal processes failed to incorporate local needs and concerns. Even though the intention was to improve the security of women and children, the recipients, the Liberian people, were placed so firmly on the periphery of the franchise that they were almost not part of it.

The next chapter takes up the interface between the government and the international community through a study of policy-making in Liberian ministries. It describes some dilemmas facing a national government in a post-conflict country and discusses matters concerning national ownership and the implications of using *ownershipping* as an analytical perspective.

Notes

1. This chapter draws on, and further develops, data, methods and analysis published in a peer-reviewed article (Schia and de Carvalho 2011).
2. See, for instance, UNSC Resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960. http://www.un.org/en/sc/documents/resolutions/
3. UN news center: "Security Council extends UN peace mission in Liberia for another year" (accessed September 30, 2013): http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45888&Cr=liberia&Cr1&utm_content=buffer6c50d&utm_source=buffer&utm_medium=twitter&utm_campaign=Buffer#.UkmIPryITcm
4. "What's in blue: Liberia Mission Renewal: Phase Two of the Drawdown Begins" (accessed September 30, 2013): http://www.whatsinblue.org/2013/09/liberia-mandate-renewal-drawdown-phase-two.php#
5. See for instance Security Council Resolution 2116 (2013): http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2116.pdf. Accessed March 12, 2014.
6. The OGA in UNMIL consists of one senior gender advisor (P5) and one gender affairs officer (P3). Additionally, the office has a training gender officer, a communication gender officer, a national professional officer and two administrative employees.

7. Also subsumed jointly as SGBV.
8. For instance, the Women's NGO Secretariat of Liberia.
9. UN agencies are also assisting GOL in implementing four joint programs that are complementary to the LNAP (Liberian National Action Plan on UNSC Resolution 1325). The first of these deals with prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence (UN JP SGBV) stating that a holistic approach to addressing the issues of SGBV is necessary. When it comes to combating SGBV, however, much of the strategy rests on the WACPS of the Liberian National Police. As to increasing the ability of attorneys to address and prosecute SGBV, the plan aims at training ten county attorneys in GBV. Given the dire lack of attorneys today, it is doubtful whether this will be sufficient. The second focuses on food, security, and nutrition (UN JP FSN) and targets groups of women farmers in order to improve their livelihoods and their agriculture production capacity. The third program deals with gender equality and women's economic empowerment, and the fourth program promotes the employment and empowerment of young women and men.
10. About the "Ellen factor," see Mehler and Smith-Höhn (2006) and Reisinger (2009).
11. See http://www.whatsinblue.org/2013/09/liberia-mandate-renewal-drawdown-phase-two.php. Accessed January 22, 2014.
12. See Chap. 4 for a historical perspective on the Liberian social structures, parallel state structures, and centralization of the state.
13. There are various issues related to the way the victims themselves perceive the importance of the administration of justice, and possibly even the pressure they experience from their own community. As a UN human rights officer pointed out, "The release of perpetrators of mass killings in December 2008 happened after pressure from the victims."

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CHAPTER 7

Bureaucratic Entrepreneurship: Liberian Ministries, International Consultants, and Making Connections

Introduction

Studying peacebuilding in Liberia through the lens of ownershipping implied a focus on how formal schemes and informal processes impinge on one another, and led me to study parts of the peacebuilding process that involved activities within Liberian ministries. For the Liberian government to be able to absorb the complexity of the international operation and presence in the country, these ministries needed assistance and international consultants. Because the UN is normally dependent on host-country consent before a peacekeeping mission can be deployed, it is the sovereignty of the country in question that usually forms the basis of a UN mission (the difference between Chapter VI and Chapter VII of the UN Charter was described in Chap. 2).[1] Such consent, in turn, presupposes a sovereign state. That was also the case with the UN mission in Liberia. However, the very presence of the UN and a sizable international community in a country may signal that the host government lacks either the capability or the will to solve the country's own problems: some would claim that the state has failed to

The original version of this book was revised. An erratum to this chapter can be found at https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65569-7_11

"This chapter is based on a research project involving fieldwork in Liberia carried out together with Benjamin de Carvalho. The chapter draws on a report from the fieldwork (de Carvalho & Schia 2011)".

N.N. Schia, *Franchised States and the Bureaucracy of Peace*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65569-7_7

maintain the credentials which gave it its status as a sovereign state in the first place. That is not what I claim. By focusing on ownershipping and franchised state, I see sovereignty as unbundled and as a template for peacebuilding activities. That makes it possible to move beyond the views that focus on how peacebuilding undermines state sovereignty, and explore instead how sovereignty is organized and performed, not only by state actors but also by actors working in the name of the international.

The present chapter concentrates on the empirical encounter or the interface between Liberian bureaucrats and internationals, by focusing on one program among the many that have accompanied the UN's peacebuilding activity: the Scott Family Liberia Fellows Program. This was the private initiative of a US donor who was also the founder of a think-tank in Washington, DC, intended to assist the peacebuilding process in Liberia. The initiative was established as a program four years after the peace had been secured, in 2007. The program and the donation of US$1 million were managed by the think-tank. The program was geared towards assisting Liberia in securing the fragile peace by providing assistance for restoring the state apparatuses of the country. This assistance came in the form of US Ivy League college graduates sent to serve as consultants in various Liberian ministries. This idea builds on the assumption that one must build institutions to build and secure the peace. And that assumption reflects what has increasingly become recognized among academics and practitioners alike: to be successful and sustainable, peace must be anchored in and built on capable state institutions (see Call and Wyeth 2008). This, in turn, gives rise to questions about legitimacy and the role of international actors in peacebuilding processes. In this chapter I discuss these issues through empirical examples, demonstrating the role of the Scott Fellows in Liberian ministries as regards the making of national *ownership*. I show how a focus on creating national ownership to the peacebuilding process has in fact led to practices geared towards turning the Liberian state into an object of governing, or a franchise.

Some seem to think that the idea of peacebuilding is that, in order to build a sustainable peace in a post-conflict country, the country must be rebuilt from scratch. Basically, the world must become more institutionalized to become more peaceful. Does this mean that the traditions, institutions, and structures already existing in a country that hosts a UN peacekeeping/peacebuilding mission must be replaced or overrun by standards representing the donor countries' priorities? Are donor countries taking over the role of the nation-state in defining those who belong and those who do not? And what about concepts of sovereignty?

Through the lens of *ownershipping*, I explore in this chapter how peacebuilding practices invoke national ownership to the peacebuilding process.

These practices have contributed to (re)produce Liberia as a franchised state—an object of governing—while simultaneously contributing to the (re)production of state capacities. Operationalizing *ownershipping* as an analytical perspective took me in a direction where concepts of sovereignty, and how this was being organized and performed, became highly relevant. This chapter shows how Liberian ministries have been struggling with activities aimed at forging connections. *Holding worlds together* seemed the most important task, as the ministries constituted an interface between the international and national apparatus.

Returning to Monrovia

2010. I was back in Monrovia.

One year earlier, I had literally got lost in a ministry there. I had phoned in advance to set up an interview with a deputy minister to talk about issues relating to SGBV, but when I arrived for my appointment, it seemed that the deputy minister did not exist, or had gone out, or did not work in the ministry, or never had done so. And then X[2] had arrived like a whirlwind and dragged me with her down the stairs. She had blown a few kisses and told everyone they were great and were doing a *great* job, and then proceeded to locate the right deputy minister (the one I *actually* wanted to talk to, she said, because the other one *really* didn't have anything to do with my research). A few moments later, the new deputy minister had been briefed about her daily schedule and had been asked if she could meet with me. The person I should have talked to, I soon realized, was not a Liberian minister, but X herself.

I had soon learned that she was not alone in Monrovia, and that there was a large program designed to bring top US graduates to work as consultants in the various ministries appointed by the Liberian President. This was the Scott Family Liberia Fellows Program. I was curious: who were these people, where were their loyalties, and what did this imply for the sovereign political process in Liberia? What ownership could ministries have if they did not produce the policies themselves? The Scott Fellows, by virtue of their position, represented exactly the boundary or interface which I was trying to capture. They were *translocal brokers* in the middle of a global institutionalization process.

This chapter takes as its starting point the UN's emphasis on ownership which the development industry and UN professionals have been advocating as a solution to the perceived legitimacy gaps of peacebuilding/development (see Chap. 1). The solution to legitimizing the actions of the UN has been to ground these efforts in the relevant Liberian ministries.

However, a precondition for the success of such a process is *national capacity*, so various programs have been devised to enable officials to assert ownership over political, social, and developmental processes.[3] One of these has been the Scott Fellowship Program, through which US graduates are embedded in Liberian ministries as advisors to the minister in question.[4]

Concerning the Scott Fellows, I wondered whether that type of capacity-building program could be a viable and sustainable way to ensure ownership—or if it worked to implement "international" priorities instead. From in-depth interviews with Scott Fellows in various ministries, from their final fellowship reports as well as from interviews with Liberian and UN officials, I found that the answer may very well lie somewhere in-between. Rather than solely representing local or "international" interests, these embedded experts served as the necessary "translocal" go-betweens, actors who could render the priorities of both international and national actors intelligible to each other. They were the "brokers" needed to enroll new parts of the world into a global institutionalization process: they were the embodiment of the franchise.

The Scott Fellowship Program

In February 2007, the Center for Global Development (CGD), a think-tank based in Washington, DC, announced the new Scott Family Liberia Fellows Program that would be supported by a USD 1 million grant from the founder of the think-tank, Ed Scott, and his family. The new program was intended to assist Liberia in managing its reconstruction by providing five or six young specialists each year, to work as special assistants to key government ministers and other senior government officials in Liberia for three years. The program was looking for young professionals with master/bachelor degree-level training and preferably some related work experience to fill the posts. Since 2007 the program has employed people to work with the Ministers of Finance, Gender, Planning, Health, Education, Public Works, Commerce, Agriculture, the Office of the President, the Central Bank, and others. Scott Fellows have been given responsibilities for a range of tasks, but a core objective has been to help "key Ministers and officials with designing and implementing high-priority programs in the transition from conflict to reconstruction and development" (CGD 1 2007). Further, Scott Fellows have been tasked with coordinating and communicating within the ministry/agency, across other government

agencies, and with major international agencies: providing research, analysis, and advice on policy issues and drafting policy papers, speeches, letters, and so on. The idea was to help the government jump-start the reconstruction process. The Fellows would also be given a unique opportunity for jump-starting their own careers, as they would be able to work at the executive level in a government just after graduating. In early 2010, the program had been linked up with the Nike Foundation, and more than 30 Scott Fellows had been enrolled. They have been employed by John Snow Inc. Research and Training (JSI R&T), reporting to the relevant senior government official (CGD 2 2007).

What had caught my interest was the function these Scott Fellows performed in ministries. How essential were they, and on whose side were they? Where did their loyalties lie, and what were the implications of these embedded international bureaucrats for sovereign political processes in Liberia? What kind of policy ownership can national ministries have, if policy is produced by internationals? The answer, I found, lay in neither of these camps, but in-between the two. By virtue of their position as insiders from the outside, the Scott Fellows represented the boundary between local/national inside on the one hand, and the international/global outside on the other. They had a set of knowledge, skills, and autonomy that became very relevant at the interface between the Liberian government on the one hand, and the international organizations, NGOs, donor countries, as well as other actors on the other. They participated in facilitating and shaping the outcome of processes in Liberia. I realized that their capacities (knowledge, skills, autonomy) constituted certain forms of *metis* that might prove highly relevant for understanding institutions. By understanding the role and function of these Fellows, I tried to comprehend where the boundary between inside and outside went, and how it was articulated.[5]

Is National Ownership National? The Perspective of INGOs

International organizations, NGOs, or nonprofit organizations may be important agents in indirectly constructing *translocal* communities that connect people from multiple places in the expat community. This perspective is useful for understanding the role of the Scott Fellows as *translocal* brokers in Liberian ministries, their relation to national ownership, and thus their role in the processes of global institutionalization. With the

myriads of international and national actors in Monrovia who were invested in state processes, national ownership to policy processes and state apparatuses soon became blurred. The accounts from the Scott Fellows made possible a perspective that viewed these processes as something else than a battle between global and local, donor and recipient. What did national ownership really mean? Who were the state officials, and what processes did they run? *Ownershipping* as an analytical means serves to explicate how the different actors were invested in the process, how communicative processes created common, or *translocal*, platforms for action, and to see how these produced not only connections, but also disconnections. In this way, *ownershipping* as an analytical lens made it necessary to discuss topics pertaining to sovereignty, which in turn evoked an understanding of Liberia as a franchised state.

The emphasis on "ownership" as invoked by the UN system and international NGOs (INGOs) is a very specific concept that may conceal the substance or the matter of politics. What is it the international community sees as important to have ownership over? Which elements are addressed, and which are left out? What are the consequences of the UN emphasis on ownership over a given field? Such questions do not figure on the UN agenda. It seemed that it was precisely when the UN decided that there should be "ownership" over a given field that ownership over that field vanished.

My interviews in Monrovia started with a visit to an INGO that had been working closely with Liberian ministries. I was interested to know who wrote policy documents on any specific topic.

"We can tell you that: it's the international consultants," said the INGO official, who continued: "In a meeting, the Minister of Ministry A admitted that he hadn't read the policy of the ministry because 'they hadn't written it.' It wasn't written by ministry staff."[6]

The understanding I got of Liberian policy processes was one where international experts were largely leading the way. Also in Ministry B, I was told, "UN staff has written most of the policy." In the UN County Support team, it was the UNDP that had produced most of the ministry's policy. The international NGO workers I spoke with that day in Monrovia seem a bit upset about this: "Generally, they [the ministries] say that they write policy, but it is always written by international consultants. And not a word or mention of having received any assistance." Somewhat resignedly, they told me about a Liberian minister who had been rude enough to accuse the international NGOs, in the Liberian press, of being self-centered, present

in Liberia solely for their own benefit, and with no impact on the population. The only thing NGOs cared about, this minister had asserted, was to "put up signboards with their logo." Such accusations did not go down well with the NGO community, they pointed out.

International experts in Liberian ministries also seemed to have an impact on the funding of "their" ministries. As I was told further, it was the ministries with most international secondments, like the Ministry of C and the Ministry of D, that generally received the most funding. "There is nothing more sexy than to fund projects for dealing with Gender-Based Violence," I was told. This confirms the findings and the conclusions from Chap. 6 on how the international community's intentions of improving the situation of women and children in post-conflict countries, by establishing Women and Children Protection Sections, partially deprived Liberians of autonomy. I was told of one ministry that had been able to secure funding from a US foundation for one of its *own* ministry projects. Once that had been achieved, that ministry was no longer interested in sharing information with the NGOs. This, I was told, was problematic, because some ministries were already suspected of having received funding from many different donors for the same projects.

According to these informants, the NGOs were also central in making the wheels of ministries turn. For their projects to be able to run, they had to provide practical assistance to the relevant ministries, such as transport. It appeared that the NGOs needed to keep a close eye on the ministries to ensure that they delivered their "national ownership" bit in accordance with the plans of the NGOs.

The first interviews left me with the clear impression that "ownership" was a term that conceals how practices pertaining to creating national ownership also help to turn the state apparatus and the country into an object of governing. What was happening within the ministries, in fact, seemed to be precisely the opposite of national ownership, with the international community dictating the terms and ministries playing along in order to receive funding. In that case, I thought, ownership could hardly be the best way for the UN to increase its legitimacy in peacebuilding operations.

The impression from that first day in Monrovia was that "national ownership" meant having international experts embedded in Liberian ministries, making sure the ministries played the UN tune. That first day also made me want to understand more about the limits of national ownership. If the ministries were playing along with the UN, and international experts

produced most of their policies, what then was national ownership? But I also had suspicions that the case might not be so clear-cut. Liberian ministries, it seemed, did not represent ownership per se. On the other hand, they did not represent a global governmental scheme either. At the time, I thought that the distinction between national ownership and global governance processes was being made somewhere *within* the ministries, through a constant process of demarcation.

Circling Stadiums and Walking Stairs: Some General Remarks

I visited many ministries, but did not always meet with the Fellows, often because I could not locate them or because they simply were not there at the time. Moreover, finding my way within the maze of ministries was not easy, and I had no overview of the relevant Fellows to interview. For instance, one of the ministries proved to be situated within the Samuel Kanyon Doe Stadium somewhere below the seating section. Other ministries were lodged in war-torn buildings, where the lifts did not work and where any unannounced visitor was bound to get lost. In one case, after having gone up and down, asking for the Scott Fellow and getting no satisfactory answer ("Scott Who?"), after being guided from one office to another, and being asked to sit down, to leave, and to wait, I was finally brought to the innermost circle.

Searching for Scott Fellows in the maze taught me two things. First, Scott Fellows were influential. Time and again I found them by heading for the offices in the inner circles of ministries. Second, Scott Fellows were not the only international experts in Liberia's ministries. In some ministries, UN agencies even had their own section, with a sign and everything. On one occasion, the person I met was no longer a Scott Fellow, but had moved on and was now managing a program between the government of Liberia and the UN. But I did not have the chance to discuss his new position, as he wanted to talk mainly about his time as a Scott Fellow.

Liberian Ministries and International Fellows: A Conflict of Interests?

"The UN says there is a need for ownership, but it does something else," was the first thing that Y told me. He was a Liberian, trained abroad. Throughout the interview, I felt there was some uneasiness when Y was

describing his position and role. On the one hand, he was a Liberian national who had been in Liberia during large parts of the hostilities; on the other hand, he was now partly an expat: he had studied abroad, and now paid by a generous US foundation to work in a ministry in his home country. Was Y *local* or was he an expat? Was he both? Or neither? "The UN structure is untouchable," he told me. "There are lots of untouchables." While many Liberian would be qualified for various posts within both the UN and the NGO community, they are seldom considered. The problem with emphasizing ownership in a peacebuilding operation, I was told, was that post-conflict countries often lack the necessary capacity. As he further explained, UN programs are run by expats. And when the UN leaves, there will have been little impact and no transfer of expert knowledge: "The UN structure does not speak to ownership," he told me. Y went on to stress the "huge disconnect between national and expat staff." The few locals working for the UN, he said, are largely left to their own devices and are not mentored by anyone. Again, he noted the lack of transfer of knowledge. The same applied for NGOs who, he continued, leave nothing behind once their programs are over: "After the UN and NGOs leave, whose capacity have they built?"

National ownership was not possible as long as there was no local capacity—was the point that Y stressed: "ownership means that an NGO has to remain on the ground, but with a local country director… But that doesn't happen."

I pressed him a bit more about the importance of ownership, and whether working in a Liberian ministry and having his salary paid by a US foundation—which must have its special interests and own priorities—entailed a conflict of interests. "Sometimes" was the reply. Perhaps I was onto something here. If global foundations, NGOs or the UN, dictate the terms of national ownership, can one really speak of *national* ownership?[7] By viewing this through *ownershipping*, I began to think of peacebuilding as a method of distributing concepts and ideas about states and state capacities and of Liberia as a *franchised* state.

Wondering about possible conflicts of interest between national ownership and global priorities, between Ministry E and the US foundation, I mentioned a joint program between the foundation and an international NGO. The program had organized a workshop, and the Scott Fellows were expected to participate. However, due to other engagements at the Ministry E, Y had not been able to attend—and the organizers had seemed unhappy about this. This might not have been much of a

conflict of interests, I thought, but it made me think that I was on the right track. I kept circling in.

A key priority of the Scott Foundation is adolescent girls ("Investing in the girl effect: the most powerful force for change"), so it is desirable for Fellows to work with issues concerning adolescent girls. But as Y explained, "the Ministry's priority is not adolescent girls, so to speak, but 'youth' as generic." Y could not always prioritize work with adolescent girls, as he had to do what the ministry wanted him to do. I glimpsed the contours of what I had been looking for, but the conflict was not as clear as I had expected. I pressed further, and was told of the dilemmas facing the ministry in trying to address problems that were specific to Liberia, but that conflicted with international standards that emphasized that the government should not interfere.

Leaving the ministry, I thought to myself that these Fellows might be playing an important role for the ministries. I also felt somewhat vindicated in my belief that there was a conflict of interest between global agendas and local priorities. Maybe the focus of Ministry E was one of the fields that had been left to its own devices. Y had provided me with a list of other ministries that had Scott Fellows, but with no names. I decided to try Ministry F.

The Maze of National and Global Ownership

Knocking on a random door in the Ministry F, I was greeted by a somewhat puzzled young man named Z. In fact, he proved to be a Scott Fellow.

Z had thought about these issues before. Almost without hesitation he embarked on a lengthy monologue "ownership is difficult. Firstly, can the country identify its needs? Secondly, can donors understand these priorities, or do they impose their own?"

The example we discussed was the recently drafted Long-Term Plan. The process of writing the plan had taken ministry staff around the country, to county meetings and consultations. Still, the question remained: was this plan something the *people* wanted, or something imposed by the UN? The plan had been drafted by the central office of the ministry ("with help from experts"), before "the people" had been given the chance to comment. However, many Liberians are illiterate, so commenting on the plan made sense only if it could be simplified before circulating it at county-level meetings and consultations. In the end, Z said, it was "very difficult to assess the extent of local vs. international content."

I nudged him onto the track which I had left at Ministry E, hoping for clearer vindication of the hypothesis of international interference in the work of the ministry. Z replied that there was "no interference in terms of what to do in the ministry." But, he added, people in the ministry were not always able to get so involved in projects with outside funding. He felt it was expected of him to work as a counterpart to international funders.

Z had a formal background in a relevant field, and felt relatively at ease in his role, although he also gave the impression of not being quite sure as to what that role really was. Was it to be part of the ministry? Or was his main function that of a go-between?

I had noticed several international agency sections in the building, and wanted to understand more about the role of international experts in the ministries. What was their role, as opposed to that of the local staff? If the ministries were full of international staff, could one really speak of national ownership in any meaningful way? International experts, Z explained, "give technical support to the ministry." What counts as technical support, and what distinguishes it from the substance of politics? I asked. He replied: "the key question, of course, in talking about ownership, is: whose agenda is it?" While processes emphasizing national ownership generally rely on donor support, their legitimacy depends upon meaningful political decision-making by the national authorities. And, as I was repeatedly told, the capacity to control these processes is usually lacking.

That conversation took me back to the Long-Term Plan. What role had international experts played in its formulation? "The [plan of a similar country] had been previously written, and was used as a template," I was told. An international organization working for another international agency which worked closely with the Ministry had been responsible for the leg-work. An expert from a liberal think-tank had written one chapter. In the end, then, did the document capture what the minister wanted? "Yes. To a large extent." I poked and prodded a bit more about "technical support." What did it really refer to? "Work plan implementation, procurement, tender processes, budgeting, economists," Z paused. "Yes. Technical support is a very broad catch-all."

One reason for this, Z explained, was the extensive process of consultation. "Generally, they [the ministry] identify the need, and they get the technical help from us." "They" referred to the ministry for which he was himself working, and "*us*" to the international experts embedded in the ministry. Just as in the previous interview, there was some uneasiness about the boundaries between local and global involvement, the distinction

between "us" and "them". Was Z part of the ministry, or was he an international expert? Were these questions even relevant? Z was obviously a bit wary of his role too: "There's an attitude in this country that what the people have here is not good enough. And that's not good. It shouldn't be necessary to have people like me come and show people that they can." The problem, he argued, was that "So many departments have been neglected for so long that they don't really feel that they have a stake anymore. What I want is for Liberia to own its process, and that there won't be a need for people like me anymore."

Talking to Z, I got the clear impression that national ownership was more a matter of re-branding global processes of governance than a reference to any meaningful process. Did it make sense to expect Liberian ministries to take the lead in the processes of reconstruction the international community was engaged in—with all the bureaucratic requirements, their own bureaucratic audits and budgeting languages? Was it a good idea to have young expat experts working for the ministries, or did it simply make it easier to promote a global liberal agenda at the local level? Did people like Z empower the ministries, did they negotiate between national authorities and the international community—or were they simply making the painful transition to a Western liberal democratic form of bureaucratic governance easier, faster, and more inevitable?

A Deviation: In the Wrong Ministry?

The next conversation took place in Ministry G. There I met with R, now involved in coordinating an international program there. This was a long-term program implemented by the Liberian government through Ministry G. It was supported by international donors and governments, its budget administered by a UN agency. The maze was not getting any clearer.

R explained that the ministries have many programs with international donors. These programs are funded outside the ministry budgets, but add up to the ministries' budget line. Who oversaw this program, I wondered, who makes the decisions? A large part of his job, R told me, was to "keep the [international donors and administrators] on top of stuff, but ultimately the ministry is in charge." These programs between the government and the UN were based in many ministries and included a range of activities. Each program had a coordinator who, although based at the ministry in question, was salaried through a UN organization (in fact, such persons often had a UN business card with an address at one of the

ministries) and reported to both the ministry and the UN. The idea behind these programs, R explained, was to serve as a catalyst, bringing actors together and channeling funds towards areas that the government and the UN had prioritized for coordinated action.[8]

During the conversation, I learned that while these programs seemed to have addressed the problem of channeling funds towards prioritized areas, they failed to deal with the coordination difficulties between international actors and the government. The problem, I was told, was that "the UN knows more about what happens in the programs than the government does." UN agencies are represented in the programs, but those involved in doing the work on the ground were not involved in the meetings. However, that did not go for all the programs, R noted. In his own program, the minister was "involved in every single question, including minutiae. The minister was the one who went out and said 'we want this!'"

If the minister is in full control of the program, I wondered, why is someone like R needed to coordinate the program? He replied, "the fact that they have me in this position is because of the onerous procurement process of the [international agencies]. The Ministry knows a lot about the project, but ministers seldom have the time […] to make sure that the reporting is formatted according to international standards." It suddenly occurred to me that the reason why expats were needed in national ministries might not have anything to do with the ministries' lack of capacity to own the political process, but that they were not able to work in the specific way the international community wanted them to. But R assured me that the ministry did have that capacity: "The ministry just did a policy thing. They did it all. All ministry. No international experts. The Minister of G has this group of amazing people that are just awesome."

It seemed that I was being told that if I was looking for traces of international interference in local political processes, then I had come to the wrong ministry. Ministry H, I was told, was really the place to go. Another US foundation had been working with them since the beginning, "embedded on a really big scale."

Returning to X

I was not able to meet with anyone in Ministry H. My next attempt at meeting with international experts in ministries was also not particularly successful. This again goes to show the extent to which these experts become part of the environment they work in. I identified a few experts

who never returned my calls, or were uncomfortable with talking about their role. When asking a Scott Fellow at Ministry I about ownership, I was told that "I'm a corporate lawyer, so most of what I do isn't relevant to your questions… You know… Well… It's corporate law." The only option left was to retrace my steps to where the investigation had started—the mysterious X I had encountered at Ministry G one year earlier.

Ownership is not a straightforward issue, she told me. "The Liberian government speaks of ownership as anchoring in the counties, whereas the international community wants the Liberian ministries to want the same as them." X gave a Liberian council as an example of how ownership in this context should be understood. Representatives of each county are elected as leaders, and whenever Ministry G has a project or funding proposal, they discuss it with the local leadership structure. Then the monitoring of these projects is carried out in collaboration with local leaders. X added: "those programs are going exceptionally well." These people are accountable to each other, she explained: "they wouldn't accept a project not in line with their needs." An idea which should have fallen within the remit of Ministry F, for instance, came from Ministry G through the local leadership structure. It had been impossible to get Ministry F on board.

But who decides what the ministries' projects ought to be, I asked. X paused and looked at me: "The Minister of G is [not new in the game] and probably sick of being told what to do." But this had not always been the case. "Initially, no one asked what the minister wanted to do. The ministry was a partner, but would just sign off. The minister felt that signing was required, otherwise money wouldn't come to Liberia." There was a pause. As if to make the point even more forcefully, X continued: "I have worked with the minister a while, and I know what the minister would have said, so I can speak for the minister." Slowly circling in on her role as a Scott Fellow, I started thinking that maybe these international fellows performed some sort of a broker function between the national authorities who were meant to take the lead in political processes but did not always have the capacity, and an international community eager to spend money but not able to legitimize it in terms of national priorities, not always knowing what was needed: "Often people lacked knowledge of specific processes, but they still needed to be consulted." X continued: "I still had to sit down with this guy who had absolutely no idea of what this was actually about."

I came back to ownership of policy processes. X paused. "The ministries don't own the policies they produce… no, they don't", and gave some examples:

> Ministry G has been trying to write an important strategy for a few years. The UN has supported this, hired consultants who worked closely with the ministry. But in the end the ministry was not ok with it. The spiel has gone to the counties, done the consulting with the population etc. but the ministry can't use anything.

She told me how the ministry had wanted to produce a shorter, more "useable" version. The UN agreed but wanted to bring in the same consultant who had done the job in the first place. When the ministry refused to have the same consultant, the UN had said that they "refused to have someone else come in and redo all we've paid for." The UN was appalled by the fact that the ministry had gone ahead and passed the strategy. They complained that the ministry had done it without them, X told me. The result was two different strategies: a full policy with no national ownership—which in effect remained filed away in a drawer, as it could not be used by the ministry—and an abridged policy with national but no UN ownership—which was useful to the ministry.

Why couldn't all the ministries just go ahead and produce national policies themselves? I wondered. The answer lay in the staffing, X explained: "Below very intelligent and good ministers, there is no one qualified." International fellows and experts are therefore crucial, because they are "able to help ministers speak the UN or partner language." I was getting the same point as I had heard from R previously. National authorities may have had what it took to formulate policies, but there seemed to be a disconnect when the UN was the interlocutor, when things had to be written in the "language" of the UN, the international agency or the partner. As X explained, "Ministers have few people who can critique a proposal. The Scott Fellows break up huge documents, summarize them, and make it possible for the minister to fulfill his duties." I felt I was coming closer now. Might it be that the reporting procedures and bureaucratic processes of the UN and big NGOs simply fail to take into account that there is no one trained in dealing with such processes in national ministries after a prolonged conflict? And are the demands placed upon national bureaucracies by the international community unreasonable in light of this? X simply said: "It is impossible to be a minister and your own technocrat."

That was the space that the Scott Fellows were filling. These young graduates, qualified from top US and UK universities and working alongside ministers, seem to provide the national authorities with a way for dealing with the international community in its own language. The Fellows were "100% government," X explained. "The UN hated me. 'Cos I pushed against them. I gave the minister ammunition to back up what the minister was fighting for." National ownership was not possible without expertise, she explained. She recognized the paradox: international fellows seemed to make ownership possible; they seemed to enable it. The paradox was an uneasy one. What made it possible for such experts to work so closely with a minister was largely the fact that they were *foreign* and were therefore not seen as a threat by the rest of the ministry. I was told of two Liberian former Scott Fellows who had been appointed deputy ministers. Colleagues in the ministry came to perceive them as a threat.

But the uneasy position was not only that of Liberian fellows who were neither entirely national nor entirely foreign. As X explained, the UN and other expats would not consider her as a full-fledged member of the ministry: "They would go straight to the Fellows and ask for 'shit' or dirty laundry on the ministry." Was it easier to talk to the Fellows because most of them were white, she wondered. Being by function part of the national political structure, and by virtue of being foreign a part of the international community, these Fellows—as I saw it—were daily in the impossible position of having to negotiate the sovereign *frontier*.[9] As I would discover, this was a distinction that constantly had to be renegotiated by international fellows employed by the international community to work for national authorities.

Going Through the Motions?

The next morning, I met with another Fellow, Q, who worked for the Ministry of J. "As most projects are funded by international donors, is there ever going to be truly local ownership?" he began by saying. He mentioned a recent survey. Although the ministry had contributed questions, it was the donor that had determined the level of participation and the number of questions.

I turned to the question of international consultants. Was it meaningful to speak of ownership? "The bigger NGOs and UN agencies provide consultants to ministries. Their advice must be in line with the priorities of the agencies," Q answered; then, back to the issue of money. Ministries have

little freedom, he explained, because UN agencies control the funds. "There is no real or full ownership of policies." He pressed the point further, arguing that it was not likely that the UN would even allow ministries to develop national ownership if that ran counter to UN priorities.

But then again, he said,

> the concept of local ownership is so vague and kind of misleading. The idea is that the funding should be international but the ideas generated locally. Local NGOs always draft reports and file them to ministries. But the financial aspect compromises local participation. The policy formulated may not have too much local ownership in the end.

Here too it became clear that ministries suffered from a lack of capacity. In the Ministry of J, UN agencies had undertaken a capacity assessment report. The report had been initiated by the ministry itself, but UN agencies had been brought in. The report offered one recommendation, he told me: to change the staff of the unit in the ministry, so that the unit could carry out its work. One of his first tasks had been to find training for ministry staff. But the UN did not want to contribute. Unless the staff was changed, they would not provide training.

But if national ownership is not what we find in national ministries, what should it be? Q responded by describing how ownership, at the most basic level "means considering the realities of the country. The problem is that international consultants don't do that. They start with an assumption of internationally accepted universal standards can constantly refer to 'in this country we did this, in that country we did that, etc.'"

The problem encountered in ministries, it appeared, was that when local participation is sought, it often seems to clash with the international standards brought in by international experts. The funder wins. How do these priorities clash? I asked. "The UN has an issue with prioritizing. I am shocked at what they prioritize." In the face of massive problems, UNMIL addresses symptoms rather than causes, Q said. "The UN is interested in information and contributions to processes, but they don't do anything about it." National ownership, rather than giving any meaningful contribution to the legitimacy of peacebuilding efforts, seemed to be largely a matter of going through the motions.

But what about his position in the ministry, I asked. Did he not in some way represent those same international standards? "I'm here in a personal capacity, but the job is facilitated by a foundation—they expect me to do

the job of my unit so that they can advertise it on their website. They don't really expect me to work with local employees." Again, the issue of knowledge transfer and the problematic capacity building came up. There was little contact between Q and national staff, who did not seem very eager about learning. He felt this was largely because many of them thought that the resources brought in with the Scott Fellows, like transport and internet, would disappear again when these Fellows left.

"I Act Like I'm Part of the Ministry, But I Am *Not* Part of the Ministry"

I went back to the Ministry of J after lunch. I had never met P and could therefore not describe him to the guards at the front entrance. Nor did I know which section he worked in. Nobody had heard of any Ps in the ministry, and it was not until someone shouted "P, the white guy?" that I thought I might have a chance to finish the series of interviews. The "white guy" was indeed P, and we moved to a dark bar nearby to talk. We had started off our conversation in one of the meeting rooms in the ministry, but P was not comfortable talking about the topic where others in the ministry could hear.

It was difficult to get the interview going. P seemed skeptical to my project, and I was getting a bit tired of asking the same questions over and over. The problem with national ownership, as he saw it, was that while Liberians often wrote the policy to begin with, they had no capacity for taking an idea and turning it into actual steps. If Liberians had written the Liberian Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), he said, it would have contained technical assistance to break things down into actual steps. "The problem is, the PRS wasn't written by Liberians." And yet the PRS is described, by all actors involved, as the piece of ownership *par excellence*. P told me he had spoken to many internationals who had taken considerable pride in their contribution to the PRS: "There's definitely a lot of international ownership to it."

Why does the international community seem to multiply strategies for everything? "It's always easier to write a new strategy than to implement an existing one." But are the policies favored by the international community flawed? I asked. "I don't think they're flawed, because they come from the same Western educational system that I come from." But there he was, working for the Liberian Ministry of J. "The UN has a 'false consciousness thing' about Liberians. The UN assumes that if only they could

understand how the [Western standards] work, that's what they would want."

There was a certain bitterness to what he said, and that surprised me at first. Did that come from the fact that he had to work in the ministry to solve the issues that NGOs would only criticize? "It's easy for INGOs to say that [certain issues are a violation of international standards]," he said. "They don't have to deal with the [actual problems]." I started talking about his role as a non-Liberian working for the Ministry of J:

> I'd rather be working for the US government. I don't mean to say "work for the US Ministry of J," but if I'm to advise as an outsider, I'd rather be explicit about it. Many technical issues have political repercussions, and I think it'd be easier to be explicitly out of that.

As a way of ensuring national ownership and capacity building, many international fellows worked with a Liberian counterpart. In the past, ministers had come to rely heavily on Scott Fellows ("who knew everything about the ministry"), only to find that their knowledge left with them, when their time was up. "I now have a Liberian counterpart on everything", P told me. The Liberian counterpart, I understood, was useful in terms of identifying protocol issues. Asked about how the cooperation was going, he replied "all the ideas are mine, the work plan is mine; the Liberian person could not be more disinterested." But the issue, P explained, was not just one of "Liberians vs. non-Liberians." Again, the conversation brought us over to the Liberian diaspora, who have become more involved in Liberian ministries. "They're ideal," he said. Not only did they grasp the politics, but they seem "less timid about telling people that things should be different." It was clear to me that P experienced a certain unease about passing judgment on how things should or should not be done, and was afraid of being more a representative of a Western governing logic rather than a staff in the Liberian ministry: "They don't agonize—like I do—about whether or not they dilute local ownership. 'Cos everything is 'cultural.' But sometimes things aren't cultural: they're just inefficient."

The conversation had taken a turn that brought me straight to the heart of the matter: "I act like I'm part of the ministry, but I'm *not* part of the ministry." For instance, P recalled a meeting where the seating was arranged so that ministry people would sit together in the middle: "I was placed at a table for ministry people in a meeting, but that wasn't right.

Other [Scott] Fellows were placed there too, but they were Liberians. On the other hand, I would have felt slightly out of place sitting in another place, I'm not a donor either." He continued: "It's weird, because a lot of donors will come to me to have access to the minister, because they assume that I'll be more sympathetic to them than others in the ministry—which I am, because they make sense to me—gosh… I'd rather work for USAID." We continued talking about his role as both outsider and insider: "Sometimes we make things more complicated and difficult than they are, by thinking too much about the issues. This intern who was here for three months improved things a lot, he just went in and told them how things could be more efficient." I realized the conversation was nearing an end, as the bar was starting to fill up. I asked him if he ever felt part of the ministry, or if he always felt like an outsider: "The only time I feel like I'm part of the ministry 100% is when NGOs ask me to do stuff that the minister should sign off on; when expats try to take advantage of my position, assuming that I'll be more on their side by virtue of being Western." He told me how difficult it had been when the minister had once accused him of siding with an NGO. Why, I asked, was his advice important to a Liberian minister, as opposed to the advice from other international experts? "It might be a relief for the minister to have an international who is not part of politics, so that the minister can rely on the technical advice." P, the "white guy," then returned to his ministry.

By focusing on national ownership of processes in Liberia and understanding this within a global/local framework through the lens of *ownership*, I began to see how actors connect, resist or re-channel various initiatives and agendas. Localities, or *translocalities*, a term coined by Arjun Appadurai (1996), emerged. According to Appadurai, *translocality* is a means for moving beyond the nation in order to gain a better understanding of sovereignty. "On the one hand, the production of locality challenges the order and orderliness of the nation-state. On the other hand, human motion in the context of the crisis of the nation-state encourages the emergence of translocalities" (Appadurai 1996, p. 42). He goes on to explain how localities "are life worlds constituted by relatively stable associations, relatively known and shared histories, and collectively traversed and legible spaces and places" Further, localities, when they are produced, are often in conflict with the nation-state. It is difficult to pinpoint the global community and local people.

However, in meetings with people who represent the different agendas, I found that *translocalities* were constantly being produced and repro-

duced. Ties of work and business were interwoven: "various circulating populations with various kinds of 'locals' to create localities that belong in one sense to particular nation-states but are, from another point of view what we might call translocalities" (Appadurai 1996, p. 44). In these localities, the international community was defined in contrast to the local community by people who belonged to both of them—the Scott Fellows. Or perhaps it is more correct to say that they *did not* belong to either, that they were betwixt and between as "'interstructural' human beings" (Turner 1964, p. 4). From this position they had eyes and ears in different *camps*, and were thus especially well situated for negotiating between these structures or *worlds*. With the arrival of the Scott Fellows, the Liberian ministries had received their *translocal brokers* and franchise agents.

Go-Betweens: National Ownership, Everyday Practices, and a Franchised State

The Scott Fellows had knowledge, a high degree of autonomy, and skills that contributed to facilitating processes at the interface between the Liberian government and the international organizations in the country. They could work fairly autonomously and navigate through the myriads of national and international guidelines, policies, plans, and strategies in the post-conflict country. The Scott Fellows thus provided navigation skills to the processes: they had one foot in both systems and thus were particularly good at navigating the interface. Even though this chapter builds mainly on interviews and observations, the perspective of *ownership* made it possible to examine the merging of systems and how this process pertains to notions of sovereignty or sovereignty as a template for actions. This I was able to do because the short-term fieldwork was part of a long-term fieldwork project that included participant observation of peacebuilding processes across several geographical sites and settings. However, doing long-term participant observation fieldwork within these ministries could probably provide further interesting findings on how knowledge, autonomy, and informal processes shape governmental institutions.

By focusing on how formal schemes were adjusted and turned into practice and new policies through informal processes in the Liberian ministries, I was able to examine how different actors representing different *systems* were negotiating, cooperating, and struggling to come together, rather than fighting to promote certain agendas.

In terms of understanding the meanings of national ownership, and the conditions for a meaningful national political process, the conversations with the Scott Fellows took me to a site where I could study empirically practices resembling what Bartelson (2014) has described as the governmentalization of sovereignty or a continuous maintenance of functions often carried out by non-state actors. As he notes: "a global civil society now functions as the main conveyor belt of governmentalization and hence also as an important mechanism for monitoring and regulating the international system." (2014, p. 86). One of the many functions of the Scott Fellows within the ministries was to make connections and disconnections between systems. For my work, these findings were useful for describing how actors seek to combine peacebuilding mandates and resolutions from the Security Council (as well as from other international organizations, like the World Bank) with realities on the ground. This, in turn, indicates that statebuilding is an emergent property of peacebuilding processes; further, that statebuilding activities aimed at capacity building of Liberian ministries were deemed necessary primarily in order to build a sustainable peace. The making of connections and disconnections that entailed the peacebuilding process in Liberia became largely depoliticized.

Long-term fieldwork on the Scott Fellows and their role in the ministries would of course provide more flesh to the bones and thus a more detailed analysis of social relations and interactions within the ministries. However, my aim was not immersion in the ministries in Liberia, but to trace connections, disconnections, and processes pertaining to peacebuilding across levels and distance. This chapter draws on short-term fieldwork of one aspect of Liberian ministries—but, as this aspect has been traced as part of the interconnectedness involving a peacebuilding process, it should be regarded as more than just an empirical snapshot.

The inside/outside distinction reified in international relations scholarship makes what is inside ipso facto a part of national or local politics and the outside the sphere of global politics: but this cannot grasp the processes of articulations of sovereign politics and global governance unfolding daily in post-conflict countries (Andersen and Sending 2010). It relies on the distinction being fixed. However, this distinction must be reinforced and rewritten continuously by placing insiders at one table and outsiders at another. Thus, capturing how sovereignty is being performed and organized becomes more interesting than just claiming that peacebuilding activities undermines the state. By quoting from some

conversations conducted in the course of a week in Monrovia, I have tried to show how go-betweens like the Scott Fellows are crucial to upholding these practices of boundary demarcation. Through their function of insiders by virtue of their position, they confirm the distinction in practice. Working in a ministry, they are no longer supposed to be international, and so the ministries are seen as having inherent qualities of "national" ownership.

The conversations also brought out another important element: that the possibilities for a meaningful local or national political process may lie not in *where* that process takes place, but in *how*. National ownership over a political process involving interactions between, on the one hand, a country devastated by civil war, and the well-oiled large-scale bureaucracies embodying the international community on the other, can be meaningful only if the distinction between the two is porous. National ownership relies not on the distinction between local and global being fixed, but on the porousness of that boundary. That is how the focus on ownership in peacebuilding process in Liberia resulted in practices that helped to turn the country into an object of governing. The focus on ownership resulted in practices that worked to (re)produce sovereignty, while simultaneously undermining national ownership of the state apparatuses and further (re) producing Liberia as a *franchised state*. The central role that Scott Fellows play in Liberian ministries is not as intermediaries. They help translate contexts, whether bureaucratic or cultural. As one Liberian informant put it: "They are able to translate questions, they help the minister respond in a way that is in the best interest of our country."

What the UN as an organization does is infinitely larger than what is happening in Liberia on the ground at any given time. It can best be understood as part of a global institutionalization process that, at the simplistic level, is about people and cosmologies coming together. In countries hosting a UN peacekeeping operation, such as Liberia, the global institutionalization process is often presented through an *ownership* lens in order to make it appear legitimate and sustainable. There are many different worlds potentially colliding in this process. People working in the midst of these processes are stakeholders of the relevant national communities and of the international community, at the same time.

The role of the Scott Fellows was an effect of the assumptions made at the higher and executive levels of the UN organization. In order to build peace, a whole range of other institutional factors were assumed necessary. When deploying the mission and setting up the peacebuilding project,

other actors were immediately needed, to provide the mechanisms that had been assumed to be essential. As we will see in the next chapters, the outcome of this process hinges on individuals and the institutional relationships between them. Comprehending this dynamic in the field required tracing the connections to the executive decision-making level as well as the policy-making level in the UN headquarters in New York.

Notes

1. Recent trends have included new norms for deploying operations to a country. One such example is the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), established in 2005 as a UN norm. This norm holds that sovereignty is not only a right: it also entails the responsibility for the state to protect its population. In 2011 the R2P norm triggered the Security Council's adoption of Resolution 1973, which led to the intervention in Libya that year. The outcome of that intervention has, however, stalled the Security Council from using the R2P norm in more recent relevant situations, as Syria in 2013. Protection of Civilians is another example of such a norm. Because these norms are relatively new and have not yet become fully established, and because they were not relevant when UNMIL deployed in 2003, they will not be discussed here. However, it should be noted that these norms serve to broaden the zones where sovereignty is being negotiated and constituted.
2. A former Scott Fellow (see below), later on a Nike Fellowship working in Liberia.
3. Note the parallel with the League of Nations' proposal to position delegates from key government positions in Liberia in the 1930s, which was turned down by President Barclay. Nevertheless, the country had to be put under the diplomatic protection of the USA, see Chap. 4.
4. Fellows were generally in their 20s and held degrees such as Masters in International Affairs from the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University, MPAs in International Development from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, Georgetown University's Master of Science in Foreign Service program, or Masters in Law and African Studies at the University of Oxford in the UK.
5. See also Harrison (2004), Walker (1992), Bartelson (1995).
6. Interview with international NGO employee, Monrovia, January 19, 2010.
7. Paige West made a similar point about capacity building in her talk "The Elusive Concept of 'Capacity Building' in International Development" (Institute of Social Anthropology, University of Oslo, January 22, 2014).
8. For more on this, see http://www.unliberia.org/

9. On sovereignty as frontier see Harrison 2004. Exploring the intervention of the World Bank in African indebted states, Harrison stresses the importance of understanding sovereignty as a frontier rather than as a boundary. See also Bartelson (1995), who speaks of sovereignty as a frame which divides the picture (inside) from the wall (outside), while being a part of neither.

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CHAPTER 8

Being a UN Bureaucrat: Policy-Making in the UN Secretariat

Introduction

March 2010. I had already been working in the Civil Affairs Section of the UN DPKO in New York for more than half a year. Because the Special Committee of Peacekeeping (C34) meets in February/March every year, these months are central in the DPKO headquarters calendar, with much of the staff occupied with meetings and workshops with member-states in the UN building. The section where I was working, Policy and Best Practices Services (PBPS), provides operational support to field officers by producing guidelines and policies for activities in missions, and was very busy. Since most of the DPKO staff had been moved from the Secretariat building to Madison Avenue 380, due to renovation of the UN building, everyone was running back and forth between Madison and 1st Avenue to attend meetings. On March 19, something out of the ordinary happened. In a plenary session, some member-states had accused Civil Affairs Officers of being Western spies who were being deployed to developing and post-conflict countries. The head of the Policy and Best Practices Services, who had been attending the meetings, immediately requested the Civil Affairs Office to provide documentation on field activities, at once. This was the first time ever that the Office had been mentioned in C34 sessions. His message to our office was:

N.N. Schia, *Franchised States and the Bureaucracy of Peace*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65569-7_8

> Civil Affairs is getting a late bashing. I need to defend. And quick. I need those examples of real mission accomplishments of Civil Affairs. NAM (Non-Aligned Movement) is responding with a request for a report on origins of Civil Affairs mandate. (Fieldnotes, March 19, 2010)

That job ended up on my desk. I asked my supervisor why this was necessary: I thought everyone attending the C34 would have read both the Civil Affairs policy and mandate and would be quite familiar with the office's activities. No, she told me, nobody ever bothered to notice Civil Affairs. Civil Affairs didn't involve any "hot stuff" activities that the diplomats could report on back to their capitals. Furthermore, she explained, the rapid turnover in member-state diplomats to the UN leads to tabloidization of the organization's peacekeeping/peacebuilding activities. Only the topics that are highest on the agenda really gain attention. Civil Affairs had existed more or less below the radar of the member-states until now. Fortunately, I had spent much of my time in the office corresponding with Civil Affairs Officers working in the field, and had amassed information on a great many cases, with examples of field activities. These examples were originally meant for the Civil Affairs handbook that we were working on, but they proved very useful that day. All I had to do was to compress the data and make a selection of a few cases that could explain the section's work in the field.

Having sent the examples of field activities to my supervisor, I went out for a coffee nearby. Sipping the coffee, I replayed the events of the day, thinking about how things had unfolded, struggling to put the pieces together. I had thought I was working in a Department of UN peacekeeping that was supposed to provide operational support to the field by producing policy and guidelines. I had also thought that these policies and guidelines were based upon mandates provided by the UNSC and the annual report of the C34. Today's event made me uncertain about all this, as well as about the purpose of our section. Was our primary task to provide a framework for activities in the field—or was it to gain legitimacy and political support for ongoing activities? Until now I had been sitting at my desk gathering data for the handbook and other internal documents for the Civil Affairs Office, so as to produce policies and guidelines. I had thought that this was a typical top-down kind of work and that field officers would have only marginal impact at the level where I was working. To me, DPKO headquarters and the PBPS had appeared as the "cerebral" part of the UN or the place where instructions for the UN activities in the

field were being formed. In this way, I thought, the headquarters determined the activities in the field. But had I turned this picture upside down? How in fact was UN policy being formed, framed, and negotiated?

In this book I argue for the need to understand peacebuilding as a global process. This implies that it is important to understand what this global process consists of, the social practices and the social institutions, before one criticizes peacebuilding for being inefficient or unsuccessful, for instance. The social practices related to peacebuilding, or within the global process of peacebuilding, unfold simultaneously in a great variety of locations, from rural villages to capitals all over the world and metropolises like New York City.

This chapter deals with the headquarters level and discusses the purpose of policy. This is directly relevant for understanding what was shown in the previous chapters, for it explains how people on the ground do not relate to everyday activities at the UN in New York, and vice versa. And yet, there are connections. The driving force behind actors' activities at headquarters level is that of giving *legitimacy* and providing support to the field. The PBPS connects the two other levels (implementation and executive decision-making) and thus represents an interface between the politics and the implementation levels. In this chapter, I draw on *ownershipping* in order to explore how peacebuilding becomes institutionalized when intentions travel back and forth between bureaucratic hierarchical levels, and describe how this is in turn characterized by *catching-up* activities at headquarters level.

It would not have been possible to grasp these catching-up activities as a characteristic of the UN bureaucracy without participant observation and lengthy fieldwork focused on the relation between structure and social organization.

In *How Institutions Think*, Mary Douglas sets out to clarify how thinking is dependent upon institutions, and how institutions can fulfill their purpose only as long as people believe in their work and have "faith" in the outcome (1986, p. 2). This implies that a well-functioning institution is based upon its individuals' shared categories of thoughts as well as control of uncertainty. From my fieldwork in the UN bureaucracy, focusing on activities pertaining to policy-making (formal schemes), I argue that these actors play an important role in the making and unmaking of connections across time and place. They are the ones who hold the institutional ends together (Lien and Melhus 2007), but they also serve to foster disconnections. They relate to peacebuilding as a modernistic project with standards

that need to be maintained. They act in an ideational world, or a world of abstractions. Their impact on the procedures or the "laboratories" where the different perspectives are connected in practice are limited, but they are still somehow the cerebral part of the UN DPKO, maintaining and producing shared categories, ideas, words, faith, and *language* on peacekeeping activities.

Bureaucratic Interface

Much of the attention of the officials, or bureaucrats, working at UN headquarters was dominated by a *catching-up* tendency. The formal stipulations in the broad peacebuilding mandates and resolutions, as adopted by the Security Council, result in a multitude of activities and actors on the ground, all seeking to realize the formalized intentions in UNSC resolutions in the peacebuilding context in the post-conflict country. The degree of autonomy on the ground affects the institutional output and the linkages of the peacebuilding process, between the peacebuilding recipients and the donors. The protagonists in this chapter, the UN bureaucrats, were working at UN DPKO headquarters in New York and were geared towards a catching-up modus, trying to put language on activities emerging on the ground or in the field as a result of broad Security Council mandates.

Based on the empirical findings through qualitative fieldwork and participant observation, as described in Chap. 3, this chapter focuses on performers and producers of UN peace operation strategies, the actors working at UN DPKO headquarters. These actors represent an interface between the political decision-making level and the implementation level on the ground in peacekeeping missions. They also represent an interface between the external and the internal, the global, and the local, where political, cultural, and knowledge processes are continuously challenged and (re)built. Inspired by how Fredrik Barth (1987) argued that cosmologies can be understood only if studied as knowledge in communication processes, my empirical focus is on social encounters, in order to investigate UN cosmology.

My fieldwork and everyday life at UN headquarters were described in Chap. 3. Because this empirical description is a relevant part of the thick description of life at UN headquarters, I will give a brief resume here. I was a UN officer for a year working at UN headquarters in Manhattan, taking part in the everyday life of the organization. My main tasks in the

Policy and Best Practices Services of UN DPKO involved preparing a handbook for the UN's Civil Affairs Section as well as facilitating the Civil Affairs' Community of Practice network. Work on the handbook put me in contact with various researchers and practitioners who were contributing chapters or other inputs to this book. Through my experiences, colleagues, people I met, and events I participated in, I got to know the organization's everyday bureaucracy from the inside. This provided unique insights for interpreting actions and activities related to peacebuilding. The Policy and Best Practices Services reported directly to the Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training, which in turn reported to Office of the Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Field Support. This chain of command and organizational hierarchy are described in detail in Chap. 3: suffice to note here that the main task of the section where I was working was to provide operational support for field officers by producing guidelines and policies, and, of course, "best practices."

Although the physical surroundings on Manhattan were very different from those in Monrovia, there were also similarities, particularly as regards the people. Among the approximately 30 persons working in my section, the majority—but not all—came from Western countries. Most held prestigious master degrees from world-class Western universities. Rather like myself, they tended to be between 30 and 40 years old. And yes, they closely resembled the people I have described socializing and networking at the veranda on Mamba Point Hotel in Monrovia.

Civil Affairs

The Civil Affairs Section has evolved in parallel with the increasingly multidimensional character of peacekeeping and the need for the international community to engage with intra-state conflicts. Its activities and purposes emerged rather inductively as a response to the needs on the ground in the Balkans and elsewhere during the 1990s. In that period, increasingly complex civilian tasks in a wide range of various kinds of missions became a more substantial part of the UN agenda than during the Cold War. The establishment of the Civil Affairs Section reflects the shift away from traditional peacekeeping, but also the wide range of qualitatively different civilian tasks with which the UN has been gradually mandated. This inductive, or bottom-up, way of becoming a DPKO

section relates to perhaps the distinguishing feature of Civil Affairs today: the intention to respond to many and diverse needs in totally different places and settings. This component is meant to function throughout the various mission phases, with the evolving needs of mandate implementation. It is expected to be able to adjust and adapt activities in line with shifts in the surroundings and as the situation changes, but also in relation to the capacity and presence of other international partners at the local level. Aspirations are very high as regards the Civil Affairs Section.

Propelled by the events and activities in the 1990s, the UN system recognized in the early years of the new millennium the greater need for governance assistance in order to build a more substantial peace in post-conflict countries. Civil Affairs support to host countries was increasingly emphasized by the missions themselves (as in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Burundi) and evolved "to the point where 'support to the restoration and extension of state authority' was officially articulated, in 2008, as one of the three core roles of Civil Affairs" (UN Lessons Learned Review 2012, p. 18). In 2008, the Civil Affairs Section finally got its own policy, having been active for almost two decades and having become the largest civilian dimension of UN peacekeeping.

According to the Civil Affairs Policy Directive of 2008, Civil Affairs Officers are deployed to facilitate the implementation of peacekeeping mandates at the subnational level. The policy outlines three main roles for Civil Affairs Officers in the field: cross-mission representation, monitoring, and facilitation at the local level; confidence-building, conflict management, and support to reconciliation; and support to the restoration and extension of state authority (UN DPKO/DFS 2008, p. 3)

These roles of course depend on the mandate and the stage of mandate implementation, but the Civil Affairs component in the field is increasingly mandated and utilized. This has resulted in the "integration of the technical capacities of UNDP and political and operational capacities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in several countries" (UN Lessons Learned Review 2012, p. 20). Focusing on re-establishing local functions by involving a substantial local component, these programs have attempted to restart or develop local government functions. The three main roles constitute the core mandate of Civil Affairs, but they are also the lowest common denominator for the substantial variety in the work expected of officers in the field.[1]

HQ Versus Field

At the DPKO, I would normally begin the working day by checking the inbox of my UN email address as well as looking for activity in the Civil Affairs' Community of Practice network, where we ran queries and discussions with officers in the field on various field dilemmas and best practices. During the time I worked in this section, running the Civil Affairs Community of Practice (COP), as it was referred to internally, was my responsibility. According to the internal website, the COP was:

> a knowledge sharing initiative to link colleagues working in similar job functions across the Department of Peacekeeping Operations /DFS missions, Headquarters and the UN System in general. They are online forums where members can ask questions and exchange knowledge. […] This system includes functions such as wikis, blogs, a shared calendar/workspace and e-discussions, while maintaining standard features such as queries and replies, a common library and expertise-location through member profiles. […] In addition, there are COPs open to all staff members and others targeted to a set of practitioners in different functional areas. Membership policy is determined by the Administrator of each of them. (DPKO internal web site, accessed January 2010)

For my office, the COPs were one way of gauging the pulse of the field. These communities of practices were conducted under Chatham House Rules, where no one is to be quoted by name. The Civil Affairs COP network linked Civil Affairs Officers performing a wide range of tasks in peace operations around the globe—support to public administration, local-level conflict resolution, support to civil society, field office liaison, and more. The COP proved very useful for gathering background data and cases for the Civil Affairs handbook we were working on. There were many different COPs that were administered from the Policy and Best Practices Services; most offices had their own, and one would have to send a request to the facilitator in order to become a member. There was the Rule of Law Network, bringing together UN civilian police officers as well as staff working on judicial and legal systems, human rights, and correction officers. There was a Best Practices Network, open to all staff to share their knowledge and useful tips within and between peacekeeping missions. The Gender Team also had their own Gender COP, which served as a forum for gender advisors and focal points and other UN peacekeeping personnel interested in issues related to gender and peacekeeping.

Most of the Civil Affairs documents we produced either started with a query or were shared with the COP, to get comments and input. This was a good way of anchoring the documents in the field, "the COPs are very useful in order to get the pulse on the field" (fieldnotes, Best Practices Officer, January 10, 2010). However, it became clear through many conversations with colleagues that the COPs could not replace *real fieldwork experience* for the officers working at UN headquarters in New York. In a conversation at one of the watering holes in the corridors, I brought up the topic of HQ versus Field. My colleagues immediately set about discrediting desk officers who had not been to the field:

> they should travel to the country they are working on and work there for at least three months, it is difficult to understand the needs in the field from HQ in New York. Everything produced in HQ is based on an overarching perspective. Take for instance Sierra Leone, the elections were successful and then all of a sudden everything is ok, and the mission withdraws, but what are actually the real needs? This is what the Department of Peacekeeping Operations needs to understand. We have to go more regularly and frequently to the field, otherwise our activity turns into just another academic discipline. (Fieldnotes from a conversation with three PBPS/DFS staff members, January 28, 2010)

This field sensitivity was also reflected in many of the internal meetings I attended and in conversations with colleagues in the course of my year at the PBPS. One highly regarded staff member in this section told me that "the purpose of policy is to get legitimacy for existing activities" (corridor conversation, December 10, 2009). The relation and the interconnectedness between the field and headquarters gradually became clearer. This left me with an impression of UN bureaucrats as the *translators* of the global institutionalization process represented by the UN. One colleague, the deputy leader of the section, further highlighted this aspect in an informal corridor conversation about a query I had in one of the section's COPs. My question had concerned the role of peacebuilding vis-à-vis certain aspects of civil society and local perceptions in host countries. Asked why there existed no official policy on this topic, he parried: "sometimes activities on the ground haven't matured enough to write policy on it" (February 26, 2010). These bureaucrats or officials had been put in a position where they functioned as brokers between big politics and the real needs on the ground.

The DPKO

In October 2012, I invited the former deputy chief of the Policy and Best Practices Services to an internal roundtable on UN culture at NUPI in Oslo. He started to talk about internal culture in the DPKO and told the story about how the West had come to dominate the department and how this department had grown so powerful in the UN.[2] In order to understand why he chose this entry point, we need to take one step back and look at the brief history of the UN DPKO.

The official Department of Peacekeeping Operations was formally created in 1992 when Boutros Boutros-Ghali took office as UN Secretary-General. The structure of the DPKO as it is today has been heavily influenced by how this came into place in 1992 when the new Secretary-General tried to define new and different roles. His report on UN reform, An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping (1992), emphasizes the traditional peacekeeping role of the UN, as well as its responsibility for peace enforcement. In its early days, the DPKO was poorly resourced, and had to turn to international partners and donor countries to plan missions and cover the military aspect. This funding structure provided Western countries with substantial influence over the department. Then, in 2000 this structure was changed and formalized into a complex formula of apportioning peacekeeping expenses in accordance with the relative economic wealth of the respective member-states.[3] Additionally, the five permanent members of the UNSC were required to pay a larger share because of their special responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.[4]

Another stocktaking report was finalized, the Brahimi Report (UN General Assembly/Security Council 2000). The conclusions in this report resulted in a further expansion of the DPKO. The report stressed that half-measure operations should be replaced by a clear and well-supported plan of action, including more troops, more staff at headquarters, and stronger political, financial, and material support from the member-states. Equally, it underlined the importance of standards for judging the performance of the peacekeepers. The core of the report is a call for more effective conflict prevention and for multidisciplinary approaches to peacekeeping, including civilian police, interim administration alongside traditional military functions. Furthermore, the report located peacekeeping as one of the UN's "core activities" rather than a "temporary responsibility." This resulted in an expansion of the activities, strategies,

knowledge development, and concept development; the DPKO gradually became an even stronger organization within the UN. This continued until Ban Ki-Moon took over after Kofi Annan as Secretary-General. One of the first things Ban Ki-Moon did in his new post was to split the department in two: the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support Office. The former department had grown too big and needed to be downsized. According to a former PBPS officer, "the organization could at this point win every debate bureaucratically just by picking up the phone—it had become too powerful" (fieldnotes, April 2010). In conversations with colleagues in the Policy and Best Practices Services, I was further told that Department of Field Support Office had been created as a "new hammer" (fieldnotes, April 2010). The structural adjustments resulted in a balancing of powers between the UN agencies where "any department of the UN should be able to go out in the field and design solutions; DPA [Department of Political Affairs] supported this, and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was left sulking in the corner" (fieldnotes, April 2010). This left the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in an existential crisis they were still contending with in 2012: the various sections, also the PBPS, had to find ways of fitting into the new framework.

New partnerships and cross-departmental cooperation seemed to be the result of the adjustments, but the culture of protecting one's interests was still highly prevalent in 2012 (fieldnotes, October 3, 2012). During the NUPI roundtable on UN culture, it became clear that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had managed to maintain most of its substantial power, but through other channels, or new ones. Underneath the organizational reforms, reorganizations, and structural adjustments, the staff still protects their interests, such as the Office of Operations (the political part of the DPKO) and the Office of Rule of Law (a relatively new structure) (fieldnotes, October 3, 2012). However, the DPKO had managed to secure another platform of influence in the new power structure: the new Office of Crisis Center would represent an important structure above the departments, with a direct line to the Secretary-General. This office was staffed largely by former senior DPKO officials.

"Game the Same"[5]

According to UN staff, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was, in 2012, somewhat in the pockets of Western countries, suffering from the impact of the early days of the department (fieldnotes, former PBPS staff,

PK, October 3, 2012, NUPI seminar on internal culture of the UN). In addition to the formalized funding formula for peacekeeping, member-states may also exert influence through supporting specific projects or processes by deploying seconded personnel, establishing new positions, or supporting the production of policies, guidelines, training manuals, and the like. When I questioned delegates about how countries could do this, several of them explained that the countries could provide considerable funding for the major UN think-tanks located in New York, the International Peace Institute (IPI), Center on International Cooperation (CIC) and the Security Council Report (SCR). In this way, countries could significantly influence the DPKO through, for instance, documents such as "A New Partnership Agenda: Charting a New Horizon for UN Peacekeeping" (UN DPKO/DFS 2009) which was produced by one of these institutes (fieldnotes, Norwegian delegate, March 30, 2010, New York). Others mentioned that countries could deploy expert teams on, for instance, gender issues to peacekeeping missions and advisors to DPKO headquarters, or simply request work on a specific topic. Furthermore, according to a Norwegian delegate involved in the negotiations with the C34 report,

> Norway does not need the report when the NAM countries [the non-aligned movement] are taking a different position. Norway can push through much of its policy on peacekeeping through other channels, such as for instance the Policy and Best Practices Services. (Fieldnotes from conversation with Norwegian delegate, March 30, 2010)

Consequently, UN peacekeeping activities may easily end up as a compromise between donor-country interests and the interests of the UN peacekeeping bureaucracy.

During my time at the Civil Affairs Office, I attended several meetings with various delegations. Among other things, we were looking for funding for a venue that could launch three pilot projects on training Civil Affairs Officers in the field. One of these meetings was with the Norwegian UN delegation. After we had presented our plans, the delegates responded as follows:

> the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs would probably be interested in this project, but if you could include something on gender it would be much easier to secure the funding, and furthermore, if we could locate one of the three pilots in MONUC instead of the three original missions it

> would be even better in terms of funding. (Fieldnotes, meeting in the Norwegian Permanent Mission to the United Nations, February 2010)

This is a telling illustration of how the rationality of member-states interacts with the rationality of the UN bureaucracy, and how UN bureaucrats have to compromise to get things done or to implement and operationalize improvements, new plans, or reforms. It further shows the complexities relating to national ownership in connection with peacebuilding. UN bureaucrats working at headquarters must confront the field, the member-states, and the UNSC all the time. Their job is to try to make all the different interests come together—preferably resulting in nothing less than sustainable peace in war-torn countries. As a UN bureaucrat working at the DPKO, I had to feel the pulse of the field, the member-states, and the big politics of the General Assembly as well as the UNSC, trying to merge needs with funding and big politics. Usually the way to move forward is to ship suggestions and drafts back and forth between field level and the member-state level. The output will normally be a policy document anchored in Security Council concepts and language on peacebuilding, focused on statebuilding activities.

Producing Bureaucratic Taxonomies: Catching Up and Breaking Through with Language to the C34

The Special Committee for Peacekeeping Operations (the C34) is an annual report-writing committee, a large priority-setting body for the DPKO. It is a forum for discussions of peacekeeping policy and practice among member-states. The Committee, authorized by the UN General Assembly in 1965 with the adoption of Resolution 2006, was established to conduct a comprehensive review of the whole question of UN peacekeeping operations, to be submitted to the General Assembly. The Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly determined the membership of the Committee. In 1989, China became its 34th member, and the Committee came to be known as the C34. In 1997, the General Assembly increased the size of the C34 once more and began the expansion to the current level of 144 member-states and 14 observers. Member-states are primarily past and current contributors to peacekeeping operations; they have one vote each, with majority voting among the

member-states present, for both procedural and substantive matters. There is a strong consensus focus, and there are no privileged member-states with veto power. The voting rules apply to voting on amendments, draft report segments, and portions of draft report segments. Member-states must vote in favor or in opposition: abstentions are not allowed.[6]

Each year the UN Secretary-General issues the Report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, but it is the Security Council that ultimately adopts the mandates for peacekeeping operations. The report of the C34 is not necessarily taken into consideration when the Council decides on these mandates, however. In Chap. 5, I showed how the internal dynamic among the delegates indicates that the *consensus focus* and *big politics* are more immediate concerns in this arena.

The C34 is the only body that comprehensively reviews the UN's peacekeeping operations. It has been able to set the agenda and promote several reforms, institutional and operational. According to several PBPS colleagues, the C34 often turned into a forum consisting of opposing groups: the troop-contributing countries together with the police-contributing countries on the one hand, and the top financial contributors on the other. The non-aligned movement (NAM countries) would also very often unite in their opinions in the C34, as elsewhere in the UN.

When I was working in the PBPS in 2010, the main issue for the four-week session of the C34 was *Robust Peacekeeping*. Discussions became mired down in a debate on how to label this activity. Participants could see that this would be the case already from the first day. The NAM members preferred the term "effective peacekeeping" to "robust peacekeeping." The latter was considered to be too aggressive, and they felt that the name could jeopardize strategic relations with the host governments. The EU, Canada, and the USA shared the position expressed in the Secretary-General's report to the C34 on Robust Peacekeeping, while Japan asked about lessons learned. Everyone in the PBPS seemed to think that Brazil was the only member-state that had really been to the point in the general debate that day, asking: "What is Robust Peacekeeping and aren't we doing this already?" (fieldnotes from the first day of the general debate of the 2010 Substantive Session of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, February 22, 2010). To my colleagues, it was not really clear how Robust Peacekeeping distinguished itself from ordinary peacekeeping—but there was general agreement that it was not peace enforcement,

that it was a posture rather than a military term, and that it would have to be conducted in accordance with the principles of UN peacekeeping.

In fact, for the Civil Affairs Office, the primary concern was not so much the general debate on Robust Peacekeeping as it was how to get through to the C34 in order to get some "language" on Civil Affairs activity. The Civil Affairs Section was not widely known beyond DPKO circles at the time when I was working there. Still, I can recall several conversations with delegates, UN bureaucrats, and researchers who were familiar with the office and its activity in the field. All of these people who were "in the know" seemed to acknowledge its importance, while also recognizing the absence of general recognition and even the lack of awareness about its existence among most member-states. When I asked my supervisor at the Civil Affairs Office about the C34 and what *we* wanted to get out of these sessions, she started to talk about the importance of getting Civil Affairs activities included in the final report of the C34: "we need to get some language on our activities" (fieldnotes, February 2010).

Until 2010, Civil Affairs had existed "below the radar" and had never been on the agenda of the C34, but this year it really was. As noted, in one of the sessions, Civil Affairs personnel were accused by NAM countries of being Western spies deployed to developing and post-conflict countries. This created a need for more "language" on Civil Affairs activities. And since I was at the time a UN bureaucrat with Civil Affairs as my responsibility, this ended up on my desk. I immediately began contacting Heads of Civil Affairs in all the current UN missions, to get an overview of who the Civil Affairs Officers were and where they came from. In one way, these accusations served to move Civil Affairs further up the hierarchy. More member-states became aware of the section and its activity; and, in 2012, Civil Affairs was at last mentioned in the final C34 report.

In order for ideas to come into life in this way, the ideas or the activities need to become part of *the language* and connect with other phenomena or activities: "It is in such processes that such things as 'society' come into being and start making themselves relevant as something distinct from, but to some degree determinant of, individual action" (Vike 1996, pp. 302–303). Terms like "peacebuilding," "ownership," "local-level peacebuilding," and "women, peace, and security" are abstractions. For the people involved in these activities, these terms become tools that are handled and used as if they were tangible *things*, whereas reality is far more complicated and bewildering.

However, this makes it easier for individuals to navigate, act, and manage complex tasks. This activity could be described as the making of taxonomies which is central to the making and developing of bureaucracy; as Handelman notes: "There is no bureaucracy without classification, without the invention of categories of inclusion and exclusion. This premise is integral to bureaucracy whether it is viewed from within or from without" (1995, p. 280). Herzfeld (1992, pp. 18–19) has described how this activity produces categories of insiders and outsiders, where insiders are included and outsiders are excluded. Whereas Handelman and Herzfeld, according to Heyman, see bureaucracies as arising through history as a Hegelian Eurocentric idea, Heyman argues that it is important to explore "how characteristic ideas are produced and reproduced in societal-historical contexts." This means that it is important to explore historical trajectories of bureaucracies including global connections. This is the main point in Lakoff and Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By* (1980); however, they do not incorporate the idea that individuals are aware of this phenomenon and allow themselves to be "governed" by such simplifications.

My findings indicate that it would be more in line with empirical findings to say that individuals are aware of, make use of, act upon, and welcome these terms and words. On the ground or in the field, things are complex, heterogeneous, and messy; nevertheless, UN officials at headquarters and elsewhere readily employ terms like "peacebuilding" "ownership," and "women, peace and security". In that context, these words become mechanisms that provide meaning and belonging to a multitude of experiences across a great range of locations and contexts. The production of such *language* is a crucial part of the production of bureaucratic taxonomies and tells us how social categories are invented. This, in turn, is central to the process of inclusion and exclusion or connections and disconnections. In a sense, these words are tools necessary for the actors in the organizational hierarchy to be able to communicate with each other across sections, departments, and levels. The delegate who asked "what is robust peacekeeping, and aren't we doing this already?" and the one who called for language on their activities were thus referring to bureaucratic taxonomies in the making.

This chapter has shown how many of the efforts of headquarters bureaucrats are characterized by a catching-up tendency. The Security Council produces broad peacebuilding mandates, the formal stipulations for peacebuilding. These mandates result in peacebuilding activities on the ground. But the intentions embodied in formal stipulations do not exist

until they become realized through social practices. The setup of organizations and the informal processes thus become crucial to the outcome. The UN official who called for a need to put "language" on activities, together with the delegate who asked, "aren't we doing this already," can indicate a tendency in peacebuilding that would place peacebuilding activities in the field in the periphery. Together with the narrative of the Civil Affairs Section, this provides an empirical example that describes the process of how emergent properties of peacebuilding can be provided with institutional language and institutionalized at the formal level. In other circumstances, as with the project of establishing WCPS across Liberia, such emergent properties were ignored, or at best provided with "wrong" institutional language. This we saw in Chap. 6, which described how processes clearly associated with statebuilding were labeled with institutional language that focused on the security of women and children. Chapters 4 and 610.1007/978-3-319-65569-7_9 also showed how the making of bureaucratic language or bureaucratic taxonomies is essentially an exercise of power, as seen in the empirical examples showing how customary justice and secret societies with roots in the Liberian society and history were systematically being disconnected and how shadow state structures were being (re)produced.

It is clear that the catching-up tendency is also closely connected with the bureaucratic making of connections and disconnections in the franchised state. These catching-up activities show the importance of understanding peacebuilding as a process. Activities in the field emerge from a broad Security Council mandate, but they may exist for decades without a formal policy, as was the case with the Civil Affairs Section. Consequently, the peacebuilding bureaucracy is not static: it is an instrumental machinery, but it is also capable of incorporating new activities and innovations. This catching-up tendency entails a bureaucratic plasticity that makes it necessary to understand institutionalization as a process. It also implies that it is possible to provide an alternative explanation of why bureaucracies remain stable. This alternative explanation is not based solely on an understanding of bureaucrats as automatons adhering to formal standardizations. On the contrary, and as a continuation of how Douglas (1986) describes institutions, bureaucracies remain stable precisely because of the ability of bureaucrats to transcend both the rational and the irrational in reacting to changing environments.

In turn, that makes a historically oriented anthropology necessary for understanding the variety of bureaucracies and institutions. UN

peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities have evolved and adapted to a changing global environment for almost 70 years now. This includes the end of the Cold War as well as substantial changes in types of conflicts and threats to international peace, security, and stability. This catching-up phenomenon, or ability, also became clear during my fieldwork and was experienced through participant observation at DPKO headquarters. Peacebuilding becomes institutionalized when intentions travel and activities move across levels and between formal and informal processes. Focusing on this dynamic has made it possible to follow up on Heyman's call for "a variety of approaches to bureaucracy [...] that contribute to understanding issues beyond bureaucracy" (1995, p. 283). Combined with Handelman's focus on bureaucracies as organizations designed for making and implementing taxonomies, it became possible to trace, "where the taxonomies come from and what implementation does to people" (Heyman 1995, p. 283), how ideas about sovereignty worked as a template for incorporating activities from the field into new and updated peacebuilding policy.

Bureaucratic Walkabouts

This chapter was based on participant observation in the Policy and Best Practices Section of the UN DPKO. I have shown how constitutive elements within the UN organization are formed, and how this process looks, seen from headquarters. As one informant working at the top of the hierarchy of UN peacebuilding explained, UN activity and policy are made through bureaucratic "walkabouts": "The result is sold on the big ideas and implemented on the small ones" (interview, New York, November 18, 2010). In these bureaucratic "walkabouts," there are almost no limits as to whom to involve. In order to gain momentum, support, and legitimacy, governments and ministries of foreign affairs as well as NGOs, think-tanks, and research institutes are engaged. The efforts put into the battlefield of words and meaning float back and forth between all these practitioners.

This is all very much a question of creating language on activities or establishing reifications or collective representations that the peacebuilders can live by. Examples of such reifications are "peacebuilding," "robust peacekeeping," "responsibility to protect," "ownership," "local-level peacebuilding," "protection of civilians," and more. An important task for the bureaucrats in the section where I was working was "breaking through" with language on "their" activity in the field—as in the C34 final annual

report. This would not only give recognition within the system but also gain momentum among UN member-states, NGOs, think-tanks, and so on, finally resulting in greater activity and more attention to the section. When I began working in the Civil Affairs Office in 2009, there was only one official at HQ and approximately 500 staff deployed to the field. In 2009, this office had already started an initiative to give the section more recognition. In 2011, Civil Affairs achieved "language" by being mentioned in the annual C34 report, and its activities and focus were increasingly recognized by a larger group of practitioners, diplomats, bureaucrats, and academics. By 2013 the section had more than doubled its staff, in the field and at HQ.

While I was doing participant observation at UN headquarters in 2009/2010, Civil Affairs transformed into a new "thing." Previously it had existed below the radar of the member-states and without "language." The section had come into being in the Balkans in the early 1990s because UN officials working in the field had encountered certain areas or needs, and got an idea of how they could help to improve the situation in rural areas. Gradually these actors who began doing peacebuilding activities in rural areas under the label of "Political Affairs" did not fit into this category anymore. These activities were therefore excluded from this section and renamed Civil Affairs. And eventually, as we have seen, Civil Affairs also got their own policy and were ultimately also included, with language, in the final report of the C34. If by "institutionalization" we mean that certain phenomena are sorted into categories, with the creation of offices responsible for these categories, and that people are trained to sit in these offices to solve the tasks they have been assigned, then we could indeed say that Civil Affairs had become *institutionalized*.

When "things" or activities become visible or institutionalized in the bureaucracy, they become objects for bureaucratic systems. Here, communication of the words or the collective representations must be maintained throughout the hierarchical system. Different parts of the system, different individuals in different sections, departments, and levels are connected through various subjective meanings of the words and the practices. The *catching-up* actions of the processes become crucial to the continuity of the organizational chain, because they build connections, make sense, and facilitate communication. This points towards peacebuilding as a bottom-up enterprise, since what the bureaucrats, or the policy-makers, did was very much to *run after* the activities in the mission countries in order to provide formality through *formal language*, thereby

gaining and maintaining legitimacy from the UN member-states. But the policies and guidelines that were being produced and updated based on *catching-up* processes were nevertheless incorporated into documents that had to fit with existing peacebuilding policy as well as with previous Security Council mandates and resolutions. In this way, the production of peacebuilding taxonomies was skewed towards HQ and concerns in international politics in favor of *catching-up* activities and reports from the field.

Thus, the next step would be to go back to the field and pursue the formal processes by tracing the connections to see how they made sense in a totally different setting. And so I returned to Liberia. The next chapter explores the international organization, the UN, at the "local level" in rural areas of Liberia. To borrow a phrase from Tsing (2005, p. 6), I went back searching for situations "where the rubber meets the road." Having added a crucial part of the studying-through approach to my fieldwork since last visiting Liberia, I was able to trace, detect, and include more connections, disconnections, and practices as well as more detailed formal stipulations, across the different levels, in studying peacebuilding activities in rural Liberia.

Notes

1. A representative selection of empirical examples on how the role of Civil Affairs officers may typically be played out in the field will be presented in Chap. 9. For further details, see the three reports from the project "Contextualizing peacebuilding activities to local circumstances," by Diana Felix da Costa and John Karlsrud (2012a, b), Hannah Neumann and Niels Nagelhus Schia (2012).
2. At the time of the roundtable, he was on leave from DPKO, working for the UNDP in the field in an African country.
3. The top ten providers of assessed contributions to UN peacekeeping operations 2013–2015 [A/67/224] were (1) *USA* (27.14%), (2) *Japan* (12.53%), (3) *United Kingdom* (8.15%), (4) Germany (8.02%), (5) France (7.55%), (6) Italy (5.00%), (7) China (3.93%), (8) Canada (3.21%), (9) Spain (3.18%), and (10) Republic of Korea (2.26%).
4. This was formalized by the General Assembly and formalized in General Assembly Resolution A/RES/55/235 of December 23, 2000.
5. Slim Charles, The Wire, TV Show.
6. http://www.nmun.org/ny13_downloads/BGGU13C34.pdf. Accessed March 14, 2014.

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CHAPTER 9

Fringes of the Franchised State and UN Civil Affairs in Liberia

Policy worlds open up ambiguous spaces in which actors and agents compete for influence. Even if they cannot overturn a particular policy, they use tactics and strategies to make to that policy something quite different from what its authors intended.
(Shore and Wright (2011, p. 19))
Some things in Liberia are quite different and it just doesn't work based on international best practices. That's where we assist our international partners with providing context.
(National Civil Affairs Officer, Monrovia, September 2011)

"Kick-Starting Lofa"

This chapter explicates and illustrates to what extent rural areas/periphery in Liberia are encompassed by the franchised state. Drawing on Anna Tsing's "friction" metaphor, I explore the fringes of the franchised state, beginning with an empirical snapshot from my fieldwork on rural Liberia.

This chapter is based on a research project involving fieldwork in Haiti, Liberia, and South Sudan, carried out together with John Karlsrud, Diana Felix da Costa, Hannah Neumann, Felesu Swary and Saah N'Tow. The chapter draws on reports from the fieldwork and an article published in *International Peacekeeping*. (Schia and Karlsrud 2013)

N.N. Schia, *Franchised States and the Bureaucracy of Peace*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65569-7_9

In an interview with one of the UN's Civil Affairs staff in Monrovia, I was told how the UN had "kick-started" Lofa, a rural county in the north of the country on the border to Guinea. In 2007, Lofa became a pilot for a new UN project in Liberia, when UN HQ in New York mandated UNMIL's Civil Affairs (CA) Section to carry out 30 county consultative forums throughout the country. However, CA was not allocated a budget or any extra resources for this. The task was interpreted and translated by the Civil Affairs Officers (CAOs) working in Lofa County, who identified what expenses would be necessary. With no budget for the work, the sole kind of funding they could request was for covering water and food expenses. They deliberately kept the actual water and food costs low, to have at least some funding for transportation, crucial for implementation and attendance at meetings. In the end it was only the Civil Affairs Officers (CAOs) who saw the *actual* budget.

The CAOs thus manipulated the budget in order to provide a platform which could give people in the county an opportunity to express their concerns: "there was a great need for this; you could tell that people had not previously been listened to" (International CAO, interviewed in Monrovia, September 2011). Several other international and national interviewees concurred with this view. This could be seen as an example of "organized hypocrisy" and divergence between plan and action, where working-level officers circumvent or bend rules and regulations in order to achieve an end result beneficial to the overall mandate of the mission (Brunsson 2002).

The consultative forums project had been designed in New York and included in the terms of reference, which also featured the usual buzzwords like "inclusiveness," "land disputes," "youth issues," and so on. On the ground these concepts were translated into practical arrangements and ultimately peace committees. Due to the scarce budget and resources, the role of CA facilitators became very prominent. When the CAOs first arrived, the villagers met them with a whole range of demands: "we want UNMIL to do a,b,c,d" (international CAO, Monrovia, September 2011). To this, the CAOs replied that they had no resources and could only provide transportation. The villagers became perplexed when they learned that they would have to deal with the challenges themselves. Our interviewee had pressed the point further and had asked at one of the meetings:

> What do you do if UNMIL leaves tomorrow and you are all on your own? Yes, we will leave, PAKBAT [UNMIL's Pakistani battalion] will leave and

> you will be left on your own, what do you do? Is there anything you can do before this happens?

The villagers discussed among themselves and suggested the establishment of peace committees—which are now active in all the 15 counties of Liberia. Corresponding with the district commissions and working with the political districts, these peace committees serve as focal points and are called upon to mediate in various issues, including land disputes, ethnic and religious tensions, and GBV.

Thus, we can see that, although the mandate had been produced in one of the UN buildings on Manhattan, when it *touched ground* or was to be converted into activities, it encountered problems. The CAOs of UNMIL then contextualized the budget as well as the content, and served as facilitator at the meetings. Negotiations then ensued, which resulted in an interpretation and contextualization of the mandate so that it would fit with the local circumstances. The overall encounter involved actors from around the world, with very different backgrounds and ambitions: the actors in New York who wrote the mandate and the instructions, the UN officers at the UNMIL headquarters in Monrovia, the UN officers out in the field, and the people of Lofa. All of them were trying to make ends meet within their own *habitat*, but were also connected by a global institutionalization process. The *friction* that occurred at this *site* merged the different rationalities of these different habitats into something new and resulted in an interpretation and contextualization of the mandate suited to local needs and problems.

The Plasticity of Peacebuilding

> Civil Affairs doesn't have money. Civil Affairs has knowledge. Civil Affairs has contacts and we are present. That's what we are offering to the authorities and to other UN partners.
>
> (International CA Officer, Monrovia, September 2011)

By focusing on empirical encounters between different systems in rural Liberia, this chapter underscores how informal processes adapt. The plasticity of peacebuilding contextualizes the intentions in formal processes, schemes, and stipulations—in the process, leading to variations of peacebuilding.

It was 2011 and I had started planning for new fieldwork in Liberia. I had now been to the country several times and visited Monrovia as well as

many other towns, county capitals, villages, and rural areas. I had also studied the executive decision-making arena of the UN organization as well as the headquarters of the UN's Department for Peacekeeping Operations in New York. These trips, or this long-term fieldwork, had made me increasingly aware of the complexity and the expanse in the field of peacebuilding, as well as the multifaceted character of peacebuilding activities. Now I wanted to go back to Liberia in order to focus on the civilian dimension of the UN's peacebuilding component: in particular, the components aimed at kick-starting and facilitating local processes. I decided to do follow-up fieldwork on the Civil Affairs Section and its officers who were deployed to the field, often in rural areas described as "hardship posts." That would enable me to follow up on how HQ-level intentions embodied in the peacebuilding mandates, policies and guidelines were operationalized at the field level.

These field studies in Liberia in 2011 made me especially aware of the good intentions among external or international actors and their will to analyze and understand the local political economy and reflexivity on their own role as part of this political economy. I also noted the various strategies employed to further peacebuilding goals, through the use of assets like helicopters and other infrastructure, the development of small-scale projects to increase buy-in of the larger peacebuilding agenda, and others.

Based on the findings from this fieldwork, this chapter is concerned with some of the challenges facing the UN and its efforts to adapt its peacebuilding activities to local needs by pursuing conflicting power structures and cumbersome processes caused by the complexities of the field inherent in the peacebuilding project as such. Focusing on *friction sites*, I take another path than the tradition in the literature on peacebuilding that has tended to explain the challenges as caused by "blind spots" concerning the role as external providers of material and ideational resources. Through fieldwork, I explored several components and activities in the UN apparatus designed specifically for this purpose. Going back and forth between rural areas and the capital in Liberia provided a chance to trace this focus from the field where the work was being implemented to UNMIL headquarters where bureaucratic concerns to a larger extent dominated the agenda.

We will see how peacebuilding mandates, policies and guidelines become contextualized through activities at the local level. According to Fredrik Barth (1993), people embody different potentials through their

specific biographies or acquired knowledge, experiences, and values. Focusing on the specific and contextual terms, intentions, and practices, Barth designed a generative model that could explain variation. Situational contexts affect the positions from where people act in the world. People are differently predisposed, and use embodied skills, intentions, and preconditions to improvise. In this way, Barth argued, variation is generated. This resembles Tsing's (2005) conception of *friction* and *awkward engagements*.

Drawing on the empirical findings from my fieldwork and inspired by Barth and Tsing, I have chosen to use *friction sites* as an entry point for this chapter. By highlighting the encounters between different sets of interests, experiences, or positions, focusing on *friction sites* in combination with *ownershipping* can facilitate inquiry into the challenges related to ownership in the peacebuilding process in rural areas in a post-conflict country (see also Schia and Karlsrud 2013). I focus on how peacebuilding intentions were contextualized in Liberia and thus how peacebuilding, understood as a global institutionalization process, generates variation at the local level. Within this perspective, local people in Liberia are not regarded as helpless victims, or solely as actors of resistance, but as actors who could play an active role in processes, as participants of the franchised state, that established global connections through everyday practices in post-conflict environments.

After briefly revisiting the concept of friction and how this can provide new insights into the field of peacebuilding as a global institutionalization process, I apply this concept to local peacebuilding, drawing on fieldwork in Liberia. Finally, I argue for the usefulness of an ethnographically driven approach to the study of peacebuilding and the special insights to be gained from focusing on this phenomenon as global encounters or friction sites. This chapter will show how variations in the peacebuilding industry, and thus franchised states, are generated at the local level through the making of connections.

I was back in Liberia, this time for two weeks in September and in November 2011. With me was a research team consisting of a German research fellow and two Liberian researchers. During the fieldwork we spent considerable time discussing the interface between the UN and Liberians, particularly exploring the Civil Affairs Section as a facilitator of this interface. In total, our team visited four counties and undertook 80 extended interviews as well as 20 shorter ones. I met with Civil Affairs Officers (internationals and nationals) working at mission headquarters in

Monrovia and in rural areas. Moving along with these people enabled observation on their everyday context. In the field, I met with local representatives of state apparatuses, civil society workers, youth organizations, and women's rights organizations as well as the CAOs deployed in these areas. I took part in several focus groups with Liberian civil society groups where we discussed peacebuilding and its role in the everyday lives of the people. In this way we were able to triangulate the views of the various actors.

Restoration and Extension of State Authority

Propelled by events and activities in the 1990s, as noted in Chap. 1, in the early years of the new millennium, the UN system came to recognize the growing need for governance assistance for building a more substantial peace in post-conflict countries. Soon several organizational initiatives that sought to address these challenges had been taken within the UN system. Missions increasingly emphasized Civil Affairs (CA) support to host countries (e.g., in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Burundi); this evolved "to the point where 'support to the restoration and extension of state authority' was officially articulated, in 2008, as one of the three core roles of Civil Affairs" (UN Lessons Learned Review 2012, p. 18). According to the Civil Affairs Policy Directive of 2008, CAOs are deployed to facilitate the implementation of peacekeeping mandates at the subnational level. The policy outlines three main roles for CAOs in the field:

- cross-mission representation, monitoring, and facilitation at the local level
- confidence-building, conflict management, and support to reconciliation
- support to the restoration and extension of state authority

Of course, these roles depend on the specific mandate and the stage of mandate implementation, but the importance of the Civil Affairs component in the field was from 2010 increasingly recognized, mandated, and utilized. The three roles constitute the core CA mandate, but they are also the lowest common denominator for the substantial variance in the work that CAOs are to do in the field, much of which involves adapting to local needs in order to facilitate local processes that can contribute to peace and stability and the overarching peacebuilding process.

A recent overview by UN's DPKO mapped the nationalities of nearly 1000 UN CAOs deployed to the field. The bulk of these officers came from African countries (see Fig. 9.1).[1]

Furthermore, the number of national staff employed by Civil Affairs in the various UN missions was very close to the number of international staff in 2012 (see Fig. 9.2). In 2010 when I was working in this section, I made the first such overview of the origin of Civil Affairs staff at the request of the Special Committee of Peacekeeping (C34), as explained in Chap. 8.

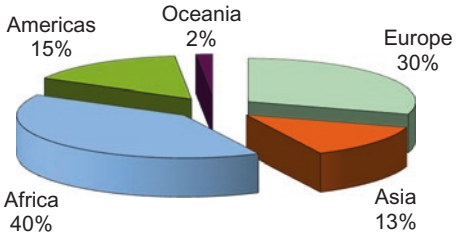

Fig. 9.1 Region of origin of international Civil Affairs staff deployed to the UN's peacekeeping operations. Source: This overview of origin of Civil Affairs international staff as of January 2012 was shared in personal correspondence with the UN DPKO Policy and Best Practices Section (March 16, 2012)

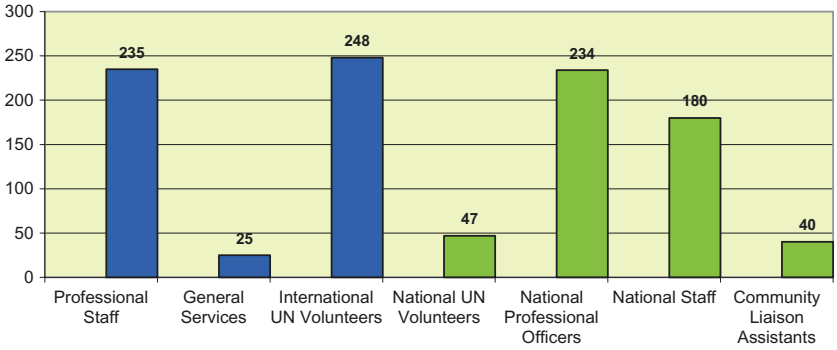

Fig. 9.2. Staff categories. Source: This overview of Civil Affairs staffing as of January 2012 was shared in personal correspondence with the UN DPKO Policy and Best Practices Section (March 16, 2012)

The academic literature that criticizes the international community for being neocolonial and embedded in a Western rationality when deploying to a post-conflict country rarely takes into account these aspects or the components designed specifically for adapting to local needs and political realities, especially at the subnational level (Atkinson 2008; Sending 2009). By 2012, two years after my fieldwork in the Civil Affairs Section at UN DPKO headquarters in New York, the number of CAOs in the field had doubled. This rapid increase indicates that I was moving along with a current trend in peacebuilding during my fieldwork. These officers are usually the first (sometimes the only) representatives of UN DPKO at the local level. Additionally, most of these officers spend several years in the same area, bringing continuity and long-term knowledge to the peacekeeping mission. This also indicates that they may have significant influence and understanding of the local level.

The often-heard criticisms seem deterministic in how they identify and explain the failure of the *international community's* peacebuilding effort. Focusing on the failures and explaining them by labeling the international community "neocolonialist" may be an interesting exercise in theory, but it puts a rather limited aspect of peacebuilding in the spotlight while neglecting a great many other relevant aspects. This often leads to overly homogeneous perceptions of peacebuilding, and is likely to ignore *who* the actors working for these organizations are and *where* they come from. As can be seen from Figs. 9.1 and 9.2, an emphasis on local participation has in fact been implemented within the UN's Civil Affairs Section to a large extent. Because of the tendency towards determinism, criticisms seem to ignore how intentions and interests travel through the organizational levels; moreover, effects and emergent properties from peacebuilding tend to remain unexplored.

The UN's Civil Affairs facilitated town hall meetings, conflict mediation, and engaged with the restoration of county state apparatuses to make the state more understandable at the county level. Thus, the UN produced state-like effects throughout the country, not just in the capital and the national bureaucracy. While seeking to build the state, the UN also becomes part of the state at this level, which in turn makes it relevant to explore Liberia as a franchised state. Although the CA Section to some extent was more geared towards building on established structures and social patterns, the making of bureaucratic taxonomies at the county level built on ideas about sovereignty—and further contributed to the (re)production of the franchised state.

Friction Sites and Peacebuilding

Much of the literature on globalization has been polarized, with the scholars who focus on how the world is becoming universalized on the one hand, and those who search for specificities and uniqueness on the other. In *Friction* (2005), Tsing aims to combine these two traditions by studying global connections in order to comprehend the confluence where "universals and particulars come together to create the forms of capitalism with which we live" (2005, p. 4). She employs *friction* as a metaphor for explaining the importance of how "unequal encounters can lead to new arrangements of culture and power" (ibid., p. 5). Using *friction* as an entry point enables Tsing to focus simultaneously on resistance and how global processes are slowed down on the one hand and how global power is kept in motion on the other. It shows us how

> [r]oads create pathways that make motion easier and efficient, but in doing so they limit where we go. The ease of travel they facilitate is also a structure of confinement. Friction inflects historical trajectories, enabling, excluding and particularizing. (Tsing 2005, p. 6)

Ideas of sovereignty work as "roads" or "pathways", or rather as a template, for peacebuilding activities. They make motion easier and more efficient, but also entail limitations. Thus, the metaphor covers both traditions and makes it possible to study global encounters ethnographically. Few attempts have been made at investigating and empirically analyzing such encounters in peacebuilding, taking into account existing structures and approaches within local societies. Consequently, the practical links between local approaches and international peacebuilding have been poorly covered. I chose to focus on the interface between the international level and the local level, locations where the "rubber meets the road" (Tsing 2005, p. 6) or *friction sites*, and the UN DPKO's local-level peacebuilding components.

Receiving Peacebuilding

The challenges facing CA when engaging with civil society and other local actors are many and complex. Common problems are the pervasive lack of capacity, supply-driven orientation of activities, lack of broad engagement with non-state actors, lack of local CSOs and related activities, and the risk

of creating a culture of dependence. Although peacebuilding is an activity with particular and explicit aims, it can still be adaptable and sensitive to the conflicts it tries to deal with. All the inherent programs within peacebuilding aim at the same goals—to deal with the key drivers of conflict, change the conflict dynamics, and prevent the use of violence as a means of addressing political, social, and economic problems and injustices (Woodrow and Chigas 2009). "Conflict sensitivity" refers to the ability of an organization to:

> a) understand the context in which it is operating, b) understand the interaction between the intervention and that context, and c) act upon that understanding, in order to avoid negative impacts and maximize positive impacts on the conflict. (International Alert et al. 2004, p. 3)

Still, peacebuilders in general seem to view themselves as the people who bring solutions to the table, whereas the recipients of peacebuilding (also generalized) seem to perceive these as resources that can be "(…) used by one or more of the internal parties to the conflict, in order to improve their own position within the conflict itself" (Clapham 1998, p. 306). The understanding of what purpose peacebuilding serves and for whom differs significantly between the elites of fragile states and UN peacekeepers. Christopher Clapham has elaborated on these aspects, also noting that, while national combatants share a more unified and long-term goal unconstrained by the cosmology and paradigm within which peacebuilders are operating, they are nevertheless "very well aware of the domestic and international constrains on the behavior of the peacekeepers, while suffering from few such constraints themselves; and they have a far better grasp of the local political scene" (1998, p. 308).

In their concept of the "peacebuilding contract," Barnett and Zürcher (2009) have emphasized the divergent understandings of the goals, and, perhaps most importantly, who the benefactors of peacebuilding are. Peacebuilders are deployed in order to implement reforms that are couched in ideas and intentions meant to lead to a liberal peace. On the other hand, local elites pursue and seek to maintain their political positions and power. Thus, their activity is focused on how the peacebuilding process may ensure the enhancement of their political and economic interests within the peacebuilding process (Barnett and Zürcher 2009). To this I would add that peacebuilders may make deliberate use of their resources, material, and ideational, so as to advance their peacebuilding goals. One

national CAO explained that the lack of funding presented a problem—but lack of funding could also be turned into an advantage, as we saw with the development of county peace committees in Liberia presented in the beginning of this chapter.

UN peacekeeping missions have limited means of providing funding for specific projects, as they are generally restricted to supporting capacity development through the numerous substantive personnel they have in areas such as judicial and security sector reform and human rights. Missions do have Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) with limited budgets. These are explicitly intended to improve the mission's standing on the national, state, and county levels. These project funds are small compared to those of other international actors like the World Bank, but their advantage is that they can be allocated to single projects in one area, and not spread out over the entire country. In addition, UN peacekeeping has access to significant logistical resources that can be used to bring government officials to the periphery, establish the presence of national authorities, and facilitate national dialogue and conflict resolution on the local level.

"Resource capture" was acknowledged as part of the game by our interlocutors, who were generally well aware that they provided material resources and legitimacy to the partners they would support in a particular activity.

Everyday Friction

However, irrespective of the good intentions, multilateral support and projects are often out of sync with local needs, poorly coordinated with the activities of other international and national actors or even in direct competition. The result is often low implementation rates and ultimately suboptimal outputs and impact (see Schia and de Carvalho 2009, 2015).

Peacebuilding is particularly vulnerable to these problems, as peacebuilding activity is frequently defined and understood differently, depending on which actor you ask, even within the UN. There has been significant resistance to the expansion of peacekeeping operations to include peacebuilding tasks, but in the course of the last two decades, peace*keeping* has increasingly become peace*building*, and in 2010 firm guidance from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon made clear the relevance of this point.[2] Still, aside from the quick-impact project funds, peacekeepers do not have funds included in their budget for project implementation—a fact much lamented. However, we saw in the case of the peace committees in Lofa

County, field personnel can often circumvent this, making the most of the little funding at their disposal. The availability of mission flights and other logistical means should not be underemphasized either, as these resources give significant leverage to the substantive activities, in addition to the political leverage enjoyed by the UN mission and its SRSG, representing the Secretary-General and the Security Council on the ground. The Liberian government, other UN actors, multilaterals, bilateral donors, and NGOs are all, to varying degrees, dependent on the logistical and other resources available to the UN mission. However, friction between these actors is bound to be a continuing feature of peacebuilding and support to post-conflict reconstruction.

As we have seen, peacebuilding actors at the local level have good possibilities for making use of their experience, know-how, and possible *metis* skills through informal processes in order to contextualize their efforts. However, the setting on the national level is much tighter and allows for far less autonomy. The formalized abstract strategic goals of the interventions are preset by the programmatic portfolio of UN peacekeeping. These formal abstract outlines are not negotiable at the formal level. Moreover, strategies for achieving these goals are often based on the organizational know-how of UN peacekeeping. There may be some differences in implementation, but peace operations very commonly feature such strategic goals as the holding of elections, establishing the rule of law, security sector reform, poverty reduction, and protection of civilians. Also here, the procedures for achieving such strategic goals are dominated by international processes. International experts impact heavily on the formulations in concept papers, reporting, and steering committees.

One interviewee in Liberia noted the dominant role of international institutions also with regard to funding. The actors working for the international institutions know the rules of the game: "who has to sit at the table to make sure money is coming." Because most of the funding was coming from international donors, and less from the Liberian government, this was an important aspect for ensuring funding, as well as influence: "when you have the money you have the lead" (Interview with head of a national CSO network, Monrovia, September 2011).

As shown in Chap. 7 concerning Liberian ministries and the role of the Scott Fellows, the complex processes guiding and restraining the production and implementation of policy papers, development agendas, and processing guidelines often overstrain the capacities of national ministries. The Liberian ministries were supported by international consultants and

paid by donors. The role of these consultants was quite frequently to ensure that final documents were in line with donor interests, and that funds could be accessed. Nor is the Liberian/Scott Fellows example unique. Government institutions in post-conflict countries usually have a capacity challenge, so they import international consultants: "of course they had influence on priorities" (interview with leading Liberian political analyst, Monrovia, September 2011). What may seem like a win–win situation in fact often impedes national ownership. This strengthens my impressions concerning the role of the Scott Fellows and the Liberian ministries. What may initially be planned as a facilitating role may easily turn into an implementing role (Wilén and Chapaux 2011).

This was pointed out by the interviewee in Liberia who had begun by describing a situation where the people "for the first time in their history" could make suggestions. Considerable effort was put into getting people to participate—but when the suggestions that had been gathered were processed and adjusted to World Bank standards, most of the input was lost (interview with leading CSO representative, Monrovia 2011). Local people were indeed being included and heard, but in the end they were neglected. Through the World Bank's language and standards in their policy documents, the outsider officials had complete control over the agenda, which issues to include and exclude. There was no room for local suggestions, which ultimately rendered the local people powerless and invisible. These people were so peripheral to the World Bank's project that they were left completely outside of the formal output. The only way it can make sense to include them in the analysis of this process is through the perspective offered by Bachrach and Baratz, as a p*owerless group* (1970).

As interviewees further noted, people on the local level are only *consulted* in such processes. They have no active voice, and are reduced to mere implementing partners, fully dependent on international funds. In consultations, they might be asked "what do you think about a, b, and c?" Interviewees said that they received many invitations and were drowning in such consultations—but this was "never for true cooperation, where they are actually negotiating with us and we have a compromise in the end" (CSO representative, Monrovia 2011). Disagreements and diverging opinions between different systems were negotiated and discussed at these consultations. Solutions and local anchoring to different challenges were indeed pursued—but the solutions and agreements reached in these encounters were not incorporated into the final policy.

It is not inconceivable that such friction sites were staged by the World Bank consultants acting with good intentions, or perhaps ulterior motives such as confidence-building, legitimacy building, or establishing ownership of the World Bank-driven process. The local people were not completely disconnected from the process; but when actual policy was to be made, they were relegated to the periphery. The recipients of the new policy were seen as so peripheral that the policy-makers lost interest in incorporating their views. In the end, the "local people" were left solely as *recipients* of World Bank policy.[3] The Liberian stakeholders became an invisible group in the process of making policy for their own neighborhoods in their own country.

Much national-level policy-making and policy-shaping in countries hosting peacekeeping missions prove to be a negotiation process between national elites and donors, with the donors in the lead. Thus, the critics would claim, ownership gets lost in the need to produce documents that meet international standards, and national ownership is far too often based on international expertise. Nevertheless, the cases in Liberia also indicate that policy and mandates can be interpreted and manipulated at the local level in order to fit with practicalities and needs on the ground. The focus on *friction sites* in connection with *ownershipping* enables us to see how the contextualization of peacebuilding activities is carried out. One advantage of employing *ownershipping* as an analytical perspective is that both these aspects can be incorporated at the same time. Furthermore, while asymmetric relations in peacebuilding processes are captured, the multifaceted character of peacebuilding is also underscored. This in turn makes it possible to explore how effects of actions aimed at creating national ownership in fact (re)produced the Liberian state as an object of governing and a franchised state.

Bureaucracy as Entrepreneurship

This multifaceted character of peacebuilding and how peacebuilders interact on the local level is still significantly under-researched. From fieldwork and empirical material, I have distinguished various parts and levels of peacebuilding from others, showing how some peacebuilders put a premium on understanding the local political dynamics, all the while recognizing that they themselves are part of the political "game". I am not alone in arguing the need for a more nuanced view of the interaction between external actors, local elites, and other stakeholders. As Cedric de

Coning (2013) points out, "The art of peacebuilding […] lies in pursuing the appropriate balance between international support and home-grown context-specific solutions." A focus on peacebuilding as a global institutionalization process seems particularly well suited for capturing such interaction, or interfaces, between different systems.

My empirical findings indicate that peacebuilders are highly aware of the material and ideational resources they posit, and are willing to use these to achieve peacebuilding goals as formalized by for instance the UN Security Council. As Sending (2014) argues, critics tend to juxtapose financial and military resources of peacebuilding with the power to shape outcomes. Furthermore, peacebuilders and peacebuilding are often taken as one homogeneous group when explaining peacebuilding outcomes. This, he holds, is due to the privileged position peacebuilders have for explaining these outcome themselves.

Further underscoring the multifaceted character of such global phenomena, Maia Green (2010) has demonstrated, within the aid architecture, a symbiotic relationship between peacebuilders, civil society, and national elites, and how this is replicated at the local level. The way recipients make use of practices associated with the government, she holds, establishes cultural motions of governing. Governing becomes a purpose in itself, as resources of peacebuilding are juxtaposed to government. The acceptance of the liberal agenda imposed by peacebuilders is also balanced with the ability to capture resources. Thus, we could say that also peacebuilding comes with "governmentality" built into it. In Liberia, people struggle to follow up on the peacebuilding process and also access the money that comes along with it. In this way Liberians are drawn into, or struggle to penetrate, the field of international organizations, NGOs, and civil society. As we saw in Chap. 4, the way to such access is often through the state apparatus. Thus, incentives that enforce and strengthen relations between the state apparatus and international organizations, and thereby franchised states, are integral to the peacebuilding "governmentality". Green (2010) has studied the aid industry in this context, and argues that local government becomes a system of access for resources, rather than the opposite, where the state goes "down" to local areas and people. Below this, there are several other zones of *awkward engagements* or friction sites—between international actors and between national actors, and in the interaction between these.[4]

Those who criticize the liberal peace as a Western concept incapable of adapting to local circumstances may very well be victims of the same

kind of Eurocentric view on the world they were trying to criticize in the first place. I am not saying that they are wrong: simply that when one focuses on the perspectives I have chosen, also other things become evident. Political science, which is the discipline of most critics of the liberal peace, has tended to focus too much on formal processes, whereas the "gold" for anthropologists has been found in informal processes or levels.

As shown throughout this book, it is possible to capture the multifaceted character of peacebuilding through long-term anthropological fieldwork focusing on the interconnectedness of formal and informal processes. This focus has enabled me to study how social relations and processes became entangled in bureaucracies and large institutions. Even though the World Bank process noted above could indicate bureaucracies as something static, the Lofa case and indeed the entire narrative of the UN's Civil Affairs Section have illustrated a different aspect: a bureaucracy able to incorporate and build on new phenomena. As we saw in the Lofa case, the international staff was very much aware of the importance of local efforts and the need to build the peace on national foundations in order to bring about successful transitions.

My fieldwork was conducted both at the central level in capitals and in rural areas of the countries visited. The divergences between these different levels show that it is far more difficult to contextualize peacebuilding activities at the central level than in the periphery. As we have seen in this chapter, there are several sections, programs, and agencies within the UN that are actively seeking to catch up on peacebuilding activities at the subnational level. This catching-up tendency shows dynamic and emergent properties of bureaucracies and organizations, as opposed to the literature that dismisses bureaucracies and bureaucrats as instrumental machineries and human automatons (see Herzfeld 1992).

Bending Tsing's notion of *friction* into *friction sites* made it possible to identify degrees of connections and disconnections in the linkages between different social arenas entangled in global processes. The many contextualized programs identified and the high awareness of the need to build on local forces as noted by the UN staff I interviewed constitute findings that can counter the traditional critique of liberal peacebuilding (see Chap. 2). Those critics argue that it is the Eurocentric rationality of the international community's peacebuilding efforts, basically manifested in a "one size fits all" solution that is the reason for poor delivery and ultimately failure of peace operations.

On the other hand, several peace operations are indeed succeeding,[5] and we do not really know why. Much of the literature has tended to be normative and deterministic, relying on *imperialism* almost as a gatekeeping concept. There have been few attempts at understanding the mechanisms within peacebuilding processes. The empirical findings from my studying-through fieldwork indicate that variation is generated where "the rubber meets the road." Through the lens of *ownershipping*, I have shown that not only Civil Affairs but also several other components in the UN enjoy a degree of bureaucratic autonomy that enables peacebuilding activities and actors to listen and learn from local circumstances. Such activities, in turn, may be "caught up" by policy-makers able to clothe these activities in bureaucratic language, thereby incorporating them into formal processes (see model in Chap. 1). These catching-up tendencies point towards an understanding of bureaucracies as entrepreneurship; they are especially evident when we trace peacebuilding processes from the UN Security Council to the subnational level. They can best be grasped methodologically by a studying-through approach and can be incorporated into an analysis when based on anthropological fieldwork and participant observation.

Encompassing the Periphery

Standardized framework such as peacebuilding mandates, policies, and guidelines are marginalizations of social reality. They therefore imply a dependency on the informal processes, in the sense that organizations should be able to handle also challenges beyond the formal framework. The examples presented in this chapter have shown how the degree of emphasis or inclusion of informal processes may vary. In the Lofa case, there was scope for those involved in peacebuilding activities in Liberia to go beyond the formal processes and framework in order to contextualize activities to the needs on the ground. By contrast, the World Bank example showed a case where local concerns were at first incorporated through consultations, but then later disconnected by the policy-makers: local concerns were not clothed in the right bureaucratic language and were ultimately ignored, excluded from the formal framework.

The "studying-through" approach made it possible to trace how "the native point of view" varied according to how the individuals themselves were positioned in the decision-making processes. The various emic considerations about the peacebuilding process in Liberia have shown that

there were different versions of how the reality of this process was perceived. The differences among understandings in Liberia and New York revealed a complex system in which informal processes aggregated plasticity and variations within the same institutionalization process. Although the informal processes at times diverged from the formal, they also related to the formal templates, schemes and framework and helped reproduce the formal denominations.

The cases presented in this chapter have thus illustrated, with the help of Tsing's *friction*, how formal processes, templates, and schemes (mandates, policies, budgets, and guidelines) depend on the autonomy of the bureaucrats and their leeway to mediate, interpret, and realize its content. This also makes clear the importance of examining the interconnectedness of formal and informal processes for a better understanding of institutionalization processes such as peacebuilding.

Through the cases on contextualization of peacebuilding activities, I have shown a range of approaches within the field, how formal schemes are brought into being through informal processes, how informal processes may facilitate and support the formal process, and how these two levels impinge on one another. Especially the Lofa case has illustrated how the formal process may be dominated by Western ideas of statebuilding, but that these ideas do not necessarily determine how peacebuilding is situated at the subnational level. Peacebuilding actors on the ground have space within which interpretation and choices can be made and *metis* skills employed and contextualized according to a whole range of needs.

Dismissing peacebuilding as an imperialistic or Eurocentric phenomenon seems too shallow, in light of the multifaceted character of the activity and because the effects of peacebuilding depend on its institutional context and the plasticity in the dynamics between the formal and the informal level. Nevertheless, sovereignty prevails as a template for peacebuilding actions and activities, and the impact of contextualizations and catching-up is always within this frame or paradigm. Thus, the franchised state encompasses rural areas and the periphery, although it gets weaker in the fringes.

Notes

1. UN DPKO Peacekeeping Best Practices Sections statistics (January 2012). By August 2012 the number of CAOs deployed to the field had increased to over one thousand, deployed in 17 field missions. This figure and the following have been developed further from the ones I made in order for the

Civil Affairs Section to report back to the C34, as described in the previous chapter.

2. In a meeting in the Security Council in 2010, the UN Secretary-General stressed that peacekeeping missions should be enabled "to have an impact as 'early peacebuilders'" (Security Council discussion on peacebuilding, October 13, 2010).
3. Of course, they had other strategies and channels where they could influence their everyday lives and future, but within this particular perspective they stand out as a powerless group.
4. Note that this is different from Foucault's (1991a, b) concept of governmentality, as the locals set up their own strategies for resistance.
5. Although it is difficult to measure success within this field, there are several countries now experiencing stability and absence of conflict where UN missions deployed to these countries are likely to have had an impact: for instance, UNAMSIL (United Nations Mission In Sierra Leone), UNMIL (United Nations Mission in Liberia), and MINUSTAH (United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti).

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CHAPTER 10

Franchised States and Beyond

I began this book by proposing to conceptualize peacebuilding through the lens of *ownershipping* and *franchised states*, in order to capture various particularities and contradictory aspects related to the peacebuilding process in Liberia. Building on perspectives from a broad range of trajectories within anthropology, Chap. 2 provided the theoretical underpinnings for this conceptualization. These underpinnings were then complemented with methodological ones, especially methods like the studying-through approach and multi-sited fieldwork (Chap. 3). In order to comprehend aspects of power and particularities pertaining to the Liberian state and state apparatus, these theoretical and methodological underpinnings had to be combined with perspectives on Liberia's historical trajectory (Chap. 4). This made it possible to explore the activities of actors representing various systems, national and international, as state-like activities.

Then, in Chaps. 6–9, we saw how the institutional setup of these activities was geared towards creating national ownership to the peacebuilding process and the (re)production of state capacities in Liberia. Paradoxically, it emerged that this setup served to *undermine* national ownership in the state apparatuses in Liberia. Viewing peacebuilding through an anthropological approach promoted a focus on processes and effects, I was able to meet with people variously positioned within the peacebuilding process—UN officials in New York and Liberia; diplomats, officials, and bureaucrats in New York and Liberia; people representing various civil society groups

N.N. Schia, *Franchised States and the Bureaucracy of Peace*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65569-7_10

in Liberia; and Liberians in general—and to trace connections between them. By focusing on how national ownership was emphasized by the UN and other international actors it was possible to see how people involved in the peacebuilding process created bureaucratic and institutional links, and how they produced taxonomies and common communicative platforms. Further, I identified actors also outside of the Liberian state apparatus as producers of state effects in Liberia. These practices contributed to turning the Liberian state into an object of governing for international mechanisms: the peacebuilding process in Liberia was causing activities and effects that not only reproduced state capacities but also undermined national ownership of processes pertaining to the state apparatus.

Ownershipping as an analytical term proved instrumental for exploring these contradictory aspects of the peacebuilding process in Liberia. This was necessary in order to describe, as identified via the focus on effects, how, when seeking to build states, the UN also *become* the state. That is not to say that the UN is undermining its own objective of statebuilding—but it does indicate that we should view states as something else than self-contained entities. Having chosen to understand these practices in relation to sovereignty, I could then analyze how ideas about sovereignty open the door to a set of practices that allow for statebuilding activities as part of peacebuilding. It emerged that sovereignty should be understood more as a template or a modus operandi that can be grasped through studying practices related to the actors involved in international organizations and peacebuilding processes.

Through an empirical focus on peacebuilding practices in Liberia, sovereignty could be understood as a *template* for governmentalization or the will to govern. Here I drew on Jens Bartelson (2014, p. 5), who has described in more theoretical terms how states have become *franchised* and how the international system is epiphenomenal to strategies that keep this system in good shape. While Bartelson tends to ascribe these properties of states to recent global trends, I hold that the *franchised state* in this perspective is nothing new. Chapter 4 described the historical trajectory of Liberia, how it was established and evolved as a nation-state. Given this particular trajectory, Liberia could be called a *franchised state* perhaps not already in 1822 but at least from 1847, when it was founded by settlers as a nation-state.

By focusing on practice through the lens of *ownershipping*, it became possible to study sovereignty analytically as a governmentalized *template*. *Ownershipping* as an analytical concept draws on several theoretical

perspectives. In particular I have built on Mary Douglas' theories of institutions, in explaining how institutions do not think or act independently. They do not have purposes, and cannot build themselves: it is individuals who are "constructing machines for thinking and decision-making on their own behalf" (Douglas 1986, p. 63). By picking and choosing, individuals constitute conditions of possibilities for thinking, as Douglas describes it. She also highlights how different kind of institutions allow for different kinds of thoughts: "each kind of community is a thought world, expressed in its own thought style, penetrating the minds of its members, defining their experience, and setting the poles of their understanding" (1986, p. 128). That makes it important to include a historically oriented approach in order to grasp the particularities of, and the variation between, institutions, state formations, and bureaucracies. It was through such an exploration of the peacebuilding process in Liberia that I began tracing practices that had implications for ideas of sovereignty, which in turn led to an analytical understanding of sovereignty as a *template* or a *will to govern*.

Ownershipping as an analytical perspective made it possible to grasp the characteristic dynamics and properties of the institutionalization process. Studying the everyday practices of state agents or bureaucrats may help us gain a better understanding of states, national ownership, and notions of sovereignty. All the empirical chapters in this book have touched on activities that, in one way or another, concern peacebuilding as a global institutionalization process or a transnational peacebuilding bureaucracy in the making. Anthropological fieldwork of these social activities made it possible to understand how state capacities were being reproduced while national ownership in the state apparatuses was being undermined.

Studying peacebuilding as a social field can shed light on spaces at multiple levels in which ownership of states is negotiated and constituted. The empirical chapters gave rise to questions of the complexity of the state and conceptions of sovereignty. The findings from these chapters indicate that, instead of focusing on sovereignty as a fixed property of a state denominated by state borders, we can grasp sovereignty empirically by studying practices. Such practices can be explored analytically through the lens of *ownershipping*. This in turn implies that sovereignty can be studied through a focus on the sites where state capacities and ownership are being negotiated and constituted. The UN normally requires the consent of the country in order to deploy a peacekeeping mission (on the differences between Chapter VI and Chapter VII in the UN Charter, see Chap. 2). Such

consent, in turn, presupposes the existence of a sovereign state that can grant such consent. That was also the case with the UN mission in Liberia. However, I found that, once UNMIL was deployed to Liberia, a whole range of activities and actors immediately began challenging and undermining national ownership in state apparatuses, while state capacities were simultaneously being (re)produced.

The empirical chapters describe various aspects and perspectives on how the UN peacebuilding process connected with the Liberian state and thereby how peacebuilding activities resemble statebuilding activities. Because these peacebuilding processes triggered a range of state-like activities in Liberia, I could capture important perspectives on state complexity by focusing on peacebuilding activities, studying officials and bureaucrats, and tracing connections across levels through anthropological fieldwork in institutions, state apparatuses, and international organizations.

Despite a heightened focus on the state, anthropology has generally neglected the peacebuilding industry—which includes many state-like activities related to human resources, capital, and big politics that impact on individual lives, families, local communities, and state apparatuses. Some anthropologists have noted how globalization is changing rather than threatening the very existence of states. For instance, Aihwa Ong (2000, p. 55) argues that the crucial question here is how globalization through global markets has changed the state. She calls for studies that can investigate everyday practices of the state and how they manage the web of transnational networks represented by the global market and political community in which they are embedded (2008). Ong shows how the global market has contributed to the strengthening of some state activities while weakening others, still leaving the status of states undisputed. Adherence to major corporations together with international organizations and "global regulatory agencies like the United Nations" has given a boom to countries in South-East Asia (2000, p. 55). This in turn has created new economic and political possibilities, as well as new social spaces and connections. These shifting relations, Ong holds, have "resulted in an assemblage of governmental practices for treating populations in relation to global market forces" (ibid., p. 56). Peacebuilding produces many similar effects to those identified by Ong. Here the crucial point is not only how globalization has changed peacebuilding and UN operations in general but also how peacebuilding has become an expression of globalization.

The research presented in this book combines universalizing forces with those enforcing particularity by studying global connections. In this

way, I have sought to grasp the confluence where "universals and particulars come together to create the forms […] with which we live" (Tsing 2005, p. 4). Using *ownershipping* and *franchised states* as an entry point has enabled me to focus simultaneously on resistance and how global peacebuilding processes are slowed down on the one hand and how global power is kept in motion on the other. This made it possible to study global encounters ethnographically and also capture empirically asymmetrical power relations in global processes. That is of special interest as regards peacebuilding, and inspired my use of *ownershipping* as an analytical perspective. This helped me to identify and understand catching-up mechanisms as practices that contributed to (re)producing state capacities while simultaneously undermining national ownership in Liberian state apparatuses.

Much of the literature on peacebuilding and anthropology concerning states (like Liberia) that are especially exposed to international organizations and donor countries has held that sovereignty is highly limited and often fictional, and that customary practices reign. That has not been my claim, however. Studying how decisions made in the UN Security Council and at the executive political level of the global peacebuilding process (Chap. 5) and then trickled down showed how intentions travel back and forth, how they are negotiated and interpreted. In this way, I could trace zones where state practices were negotiated, all the way back to the Security Council's horseshoe table at UN headquarters in New York. Moreover, examination of the establishment of Women and Children Protection Sections revealed how Security Council resolutions could enable donor countries to challenge traditional ways of dealing with violence and criminality in Liberia. Ultimately, the Scott Fellows in the Liberian ministries showed—by *embodying* friction sites, by being brokers between different systems, and by defining the interface between Liberia and the international apparatus—the ambiguity and dynamic aspects of sovereignty, and thus why sovereignty must be studied as a template through qualitative methods and participant observation.

This is how I could say that UN officials and other actors involved in the peacebuilding process that were in focus in my fieldwork also became state agents. Because those who were involved with the peacebuilding process in post-conflict Liberia came from various levels—international, state, and civil society—it was difficult to identify the limits of the state. Therefore, I have argued that we should view sovereignty not as a principle, but as a template that can be grasped empirically through focusing on

practices and analytically through the lens of *ownershipping*. Many of the people I met who were involved in the peacebuilding process in Liberia were neither external nor internal: they represented a threshold, a zone where inside and outside were blurred. The ownershipping approach enabled me to see how formal schemes, plans, and goals encountered friction at the various levels. The chapters in this book have shown the connections between the various levels and how activities and intentions were shipped back and forth by individuals working within this field—from the Security Council, via UN DPKO headquarters in New York and the Liberian ministries in Monrovia, to rural areas of Liberia. Many of the non-state actors at these sites were involved in the building of state capacities in Liberia and could be seen as state-like actors constituting sovereignty as governmentalization, or a will to govern.

The making of resolutions and mandates in the Security Council, the efforts of officials at UN headquarters to "put language" on ongoing peacebuilding processes, the assistance of the Scott Fellows to the Liberian ministries, as well as the case of the making of the peace committees in Lofa—these are all empirical examples that show how formal stipulations are merely marginalizations of reality and cannot explain what is actually going on. Sovereignty must be grasped by studying practices empirically and as a constant activity rather than a fixed property: "sovereignty is not an attribute but rather an ongoing and variable project of states which is more or less realized in practice" (Alonso 2005, p. 27). Focusing on sites of friction and the use of *metis* skills in the peacebuilding field enabled me to investigate the co-constitutive dynamic between formal stipulations and informal processes. This in turn made it necessary to trace connections of peacebuilding through a bureaucracy that stretched across national and international levels.

Viewed in this perspective, the Scott Fellows do not represent a post-colonial activity that undermines the state and sovereignty. On the contrary, they could be understood as *providers of metis* or *know-how*. But this, in turn, has contributed to undermining national ownership of the state apparatuses as well as (re)producing state capacities. Concepts of state and sovereignty are peripheral to the world of these Scott Fellows, who are fully occupied with trying to solve more immediate challenges and making sense of the bureaucratic labyrinth in which they supposed to work. At the same time, however, sovereignty is a precondition and a template for their activity. As internationals working in Liberia's national ministries, they served primarily as translators or brokers. They joined the process as inter-

mediaries between systems, at sites "where the rubber meets the road," or where the national level met the international. The Scott Fellows emerged as facilitators of institutions in the making, where institutional achievements could be identified through the making of meaningful connections.

There are many international actors and organizations that produce state-like effects, like the UN, the World Bank, and the IMF, and this book has investigated how these organizations can be studied. Focusing on *catching-up* activities and friction in relation to the peacebuilding process in Liberia enabled me to capture universalizing and particularizing tendencies at the same time. The gap between large-scale schemes decided upon in the UN Security Council (and other international organizations like the World Bank) representing universalizing forces on the one hand, and the realities on the ground representing the particularizing forces on the other, has propelled several emergent properties of peacebuilding. These include the *catching-up activities* of actors involved in the peacebuilding process in Liberia. Such activities appeal to local needs, realities, concerns, and history and are best understood through the lens of *ownershipping*. *Catching-up* constitutes mechanisms that produce effects similar to those grasped by Roland Robertson's (1995) *glocalization*, which in turn also contributes to heterogenization.

By investigating how connections were made across the national and international level as well as between states, civil society, and think-tanks, I have shown how peacebuilding is shaped at each level and through interactions between these levels. The chapters of this book have also shown how actors involved in peacebuilding processes have various differing positions in this enterprise, and how shipping ideas, intentions, ownership, and formal stipulations back and forth through the peacebuilding architecture serves to shape peacebuilding. Exploring peacebuilding in Liberia analytically through the lens of *ownershipping* made it possible to show the plasticity of the state. Studying peacebuilding as a global institutionalization process and focusing on the interaction of one state (Liberia) with global forces have shown how such state plasticity challenges traditional concepts of sovereignty as something associated with property and state borders.

This book has highlighted the importance of comprehending sovereignty by studying how this phenomenon is performed in social practices and social spaces. This required a studying-through approach involving multi-sited fieldwork and a polymorphous engagement. That is why I

maintain that sovereignty can best be understood empirically through anthropological fieldwork on practices pertaining to the state and international processes. Through *ownershipping* I was able to pursue analytically how spatial and scalar hierarchies of the state were continuously being produced by officials and bureaucrats at various levels and how the practices related to this had relevance for concepts of sovereignty. That, in turn, is an argument for more empirical and ethnographical studies of peacebuilding as a way of understanding the state by focusing on significant everyday practices.

The combination of *ownershipping* and *franchised states* provided a lens for examining the everyday lives and work of foreign experts and advisors deployed on the ground, and their connections to international and national politics. Compared with related ideas such as *failed states* and *fragile states*, the concept of *franchised states* recognizes in a greater extent a more connected, more complex, more interdependent, more contested, and more global world. It may well be that states like Liberia represent a relatively new kind of state formation, evoked by the rise of transnational rule, where the status of the national-state yields terrain to new types of state formations emerging in a combination of states, NGOs, corporations, and international organizations—or as *franchised states.*

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Erratum to: Bureaucratic Entrepreneurship: Liberian Ministries, International Consultants, and Making Connections

Niels Nagelhus Schia

N.N. Schia, Franchised States and the Bureaucracy of Peace, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65569-7_7

The original version of this book did not include the correct source for chapter 7. This chapter is based on a research project involving fieldwork in Liberia carried out together with Benjamin de Carvalho. The chapter draws on a report from the fieldwork (de Carvalho & Schia 2011)

The updated original online version for this book can be found at https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65569-7_7

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[1] Note: Page numbers followed by 'n' refers to notes.

N.N. Schia, *Franchised States and the Bureaucracy of Peace*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65569-7